

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS



LONG ISLAND COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Serving Long Islanders in Need and Promoting Interfaith Understanding

Every Sunday, Newsday presents another Community Champions organization — groups that reach out to assist fellow Long Islanders.

How To Reach Us:

Long Island Council of Churches

1644 Denton Green

Hempstead, NY 11550

516-565-0290

www.nccusa.org/ecmin/licc

If you know a group worthy of being a Community Champion, make your nomination on:

Newsday.com

or at Bethpage Federal Credit Union Branches

Newsday's Community Champions are selected by the following committee of distinguished Long Islanders: **Linda M. Army**, Vice President Business Development, Bethpage Federal Credit Union; **Lance W. Elder**, President and Chief Executive Officer, EAC, Inc.; **Celeste Hernandez**, Executive Director, L.I. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; **Jean Kelly**, Executive Director, Interfaith Nutrition Network; **Linda Landsman**, Program Director, Children & Families, Rauch Foundation; **Lynn Needelman**, Executive Director, Long Island CARES; **Eileen A. Nolan**, Vice President, Marketing, Communications and Database, Vytra Health Plans; **John T. O'Connell**, President/CEO, Health and Welfare Council of LI; **David M. Okorn**, VP Corporate Relations, National Center for Disability Services; **Diana O'Neill**, Executive Director, Long Island Volunteer Center; **Deidra Parrish Williams**, Manager, Community Affairs, Newsday; **Theresa Sanders**, President, CEO, Urban League Long Island

These are only a few examples of the many ways LICC has been helping thousands of local residents since the nonprofit was established in 1969. Driven by its mission to unite diverse Christians to work together to improve living conditions on Long Island, LICC partners with a network of 800 congregations and more than 50 public and private health and social service agencies. Year after year, the organization assists more than 25,000 Long Islanders with direct services and reaches out to even more through a wide range of support programs.

When one Long Island man lost his job in lower Manhattan after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Long Island Council of Churches (LICC) reached out with a helping hand. Because he lived on Long Island, he was ineligible for most aid programs. Suddenly unemployed, he faced financial hardship. He desperately needed assistance re-establishing himself in the workforce. "We helped him through the process of rethinking his future and retooling for a new career," says Rev. Thomas Goodhue, LICC's Executive Director. "He has now recovered financially, currently serves on one of our committees and is well into a new career through which he has also been able to help others in crisis." Hundreds more Long Islanders received 9/11 disaster relief through LICC, and many others have benefited from resourceful job development services.

Operating one of the largest local emergency food centers, LICC provided 158,328 meals to the hungry in 2004 at facilities in Hempstead and Riverhead.



PHOTO: TONY LOPEZ

Volunteer Brian Yablou, Clerk Marsha Pinkney, Executive Director Tom Goodhue, Volunteer Felicia Brown and Food Pantry Manager Hugh Watts sort and pack food at the Emergency Food Pantry in Hempstead (which has since been moved to 450 Main Street in Freeport).

Every November, it hosts a full-course Thanksgiving dinner for hundreds of migrant workers and delivers holiday baskets to more than 1,000 families. Thousands more have received much-needed assistance with housing, clothing, medical prescriptions, eyeglasses and even MetroCards to travel to work and doctor's appointments. "Our primary clients are the working poor who, despite working as many hours as is humanly possible, cannot earn enough to provide for their basic needs," Goodhue says. "In many cases, our assistance makes the difference between dignity and despair."

LICC also provides pastoral care for inmates in local jails and sponsors a post-release program to help women

make successful transitions back to their communities. Building bridges among the diverse faith traditions on Long Island is also a primary focus of LICC. Through its Multi-Faith Forum, interfaith education teams visit local churches, synagogues, mosques, schools, civic groups and workplaces to promote religious tolerance.

-Claire Curry

Community Champions is proudly supported by



Bethpage Federal Credit Union

Listen every Friday on:



The best value in banking!

Bethpage Federal Credit Union



Banking among friends®

1-800-628-7070 • www.bethpagefcu.com

Welcoming Long Islanders since 1941