



LifeNet4Families

Providing services to the hungry and homeless of Broward County since 1985

A Message from Our President & CEO

Greetings!

Thank you so much for deciding to volunteer at LifeNet4Families. Your support allows us to serve so many people in our community who are experiencing tough times. It never ceases to amaze me when people decide to make a difference in the lives of others. It's so inspiring to see volunteers roll up their sleeves and stand beside us as we work towards our mission. Our commitment is to provide food and other basic resources to people in need in a manner that makes it easy for them to access all of the services and programs that are available at LifeNet and in the community. Please understand, our mission is no easy feat. In fact, I believe that it is only achievable through the collective efforts of people just like you.

As you prepare to volunteer with us, I want you to know how much I appreciate your time and support. I also want to ensure that you have an understanding of how your efforts help us to achieve the mission. When you arrive at LifeNet, you will encounter many types of people. There will be homeless individuals, homeless families, and low-income/moderate-income individuals and families seeking assistance. You will come face to face with poverty, an experience that can be emotionally draining and depressing. In some cases, you will be able to identify people with mental health challenges, substance abuse issues, and the occasional person who has a sense of entitlement. The latter can quickly shatter the image that you created in which people in need are extremely grateful for any help that they receive. I want to encourage you not to be swayed by such an instance and implore you to seek the good in every person that crosses your path. Here's why:

On any given day at LifeNet, there are people among us who have so much more to their story than is visible.

- Many of our clients are surviving—or living through domestic violence.
- Men and women who have served our country often find themselves at LifeNet, in need of assistance. Sometimes, they are bitter.
- Some of our clients have lost a loved one...a child, a spouse, a parent—and never moved beyond the associated guilt.
- Some of our clients are survivors of sexual or physical abuse.
- Many of our clients are ex-offenders who have repaid their debt to society, but have found it nearly impossible to acclimate—they find it nearly impossible to find any job.



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- Some of our clients are college graduates who made a decision that they can't seem to rebound from.
- Many of our clients are working every single day, but they just don't have enough money to make it through the month.
- Many of our clients are hopeless.
- Nearly all of our clients are struggling to believe again.

So, I need you to understand that this is so much more than serving a meal, or packing a food box. This is your opportunity to have a lasting impact on the life of someone who may be feeling hopeless, worthless, and helpless. This is your chance to connect to people who so often feel invisible. I'm asking that you smile, exchange pleasantries, and look at each person you encounter. Look into their eyes and try not to judge by outward appearances. Find a way to give off positive energy because it may be the only positive experience that they have on that day. All of the tasks you will do are important, but I can't think of anything that you are going to do, that will be more important than what I have asked. I thank you in advance for helping us to restore a sense of hope, self-worth, and dignity as we aspire to help those in crisis to begin, again.