

Transcript of Neighborhood Journal Interview with Reverend Brown of Community Outreach Services

Introduction: Now another story about New Jersey residents doing great work in their community. With economic challenges affecting so many in the tri-state area, food donations for residents in need is so important. In Paterson, organizations like Community Outreach Services, Inc. are on the front lines of the battle against hunger. Neighborhood Journal's Dave Turner was in Paterson, and has this report.

Reporter: Paterson, New Jersey, the state's third largest city, has felt the effects of the economic downturn in the last few years. For the economically challenged city, in 2011 the median household income was \$32,419 and the unemployment rate as of April 2013 was 14.9%, as compared to the statewide average of 8.7% as of June 2013.

There's no doubt that the Silk City is in need of a helping hand. And that's where Community Outreach Services, located in the Riverside section of Paterson, comes in. They not only provide food for those in need, but clothing and other goods as well. Though they've been around for over 10 years their new building is making a huge impact. Not only has the vision, which was started by the Reverend Brown, continued to grow, but they also continue to make a huge difference in the community.

Rev. Brown: We realized the need that was so great for those that were less fortunate. A friend of mine was an executive director at another pantry and I told him what I had experienced. He said to me, "why don't you open a pantry?" And that was the birth of Community Outreach Services, Inc. This is where I believe that The Lord has placed us, to service not only this community, but the community at large. It has been a tremendous response—we have been here—it has been about twelve- to twelve-hundred and fifty families per month. Last year we fed over 10,000, this year we're already over 6,000 families fed.

Andrew Scaturro: I met Reverend Brown probably about a year and a half ago. He told me about his vision for the Community Outreach, he was already helping out the community for years. He brought me in as a contractor volunteering and pretty much stole my heart for the local people here in Paterson. I was with him when he first got this space and I've been committed to getting charitable clothes and those types of donations along with food.

Honorable Shavonda Sumter: The Community Outreach Services is one of our community pillars that service a great need for our community. They provide food,

clothing, and furniture for vulnerable populations. They've also partnered throughout this year in working with other churches to establish their pantries, in particular my church, St. Luke Baptist Church. So the pastor and his wife have been phenomenal servants reaching out for jobs, for welfare to work recipients, transporting of materials from homes to the pantries for others to use. So we really want to be supportive of their endeavors and also to highlight that they're available for resources.

Turner: With the pantry ready to serve many families and a dedicated staff of volunteers, Community Outreach Services continues to be a beacon of hope within Paterson. I'm Dave Turner for Neighborhood Journal.