

Toyota and Food Bank For New York City Partner on Meals Per Hour To Support Communities Hard-Hit by Hurricane Sandy

April 01, 2013

New York, New York, April 1, 2013 – [Toyota](#) and [Food Bank For New York City](#) today announced [Meals Per Hour](#), a partnership to support a soup kitchen and a mobile food unit in communities severely impacted by Hurricane Sandy — Coney Island and the Far Rockaways. The initiative is led by the [Toyota Production System Support Center](#), Inc. (TSSC), which shares Toyota manufacturing know-how with nonprofits to help improve lives. A short video about *Meals Per Hour* can be viewed at www.mealsperhour.com.

Over an eight-week period, a team from Toyota will collaborate with staff at Coney Island Lighthouse Community Kitchen, a soup kitchen in Coney Island and Metro World Child, a mobile food distribution unit in the Far Rockaways, to help improve their operations, with a focus on reducing wait times so they may serve more people.

Meals Per Hour is not the first time Toyota and Food Bank For New York City have joined forces. In 2011, Toyota began its partnership with Food Bank For New York City to provide the necessary tools for soup kitchens and food pantries across New York City to streamline their operations, maximize their resources – and more importantly – reduce customers’ wait time. The results at five agencies were very positive; the outside line at Food Bank For New York City’s Community Kitchen & Food Pantry in West Harlem decreased from 1.5 hours to just 18 minutes. In all, TSSC has worked with nearly 200 companies and organizations for over 20 years.

“At Toyota, we believe that when you share good ideas, great things can happen,” said Lisa Richardson, Toyota process improvement leader. “We were struck by how many people on Coney Island and in Far Rockaway were still struggling to get back on their feet nearly six months after Hurricane Sandy. *Meals Per Hour* gives us an opportunity to help by donating our know-how with the Coney Island Light House Community Kitchen and Metro World Child mobile food unit. By working together to help more families get their basic needs met, we hope to make a huge difference in improving lives.”

“Hurricane Sandy changed the profile of the people who use our services and the demand for food on Coney Island and in Far Rockaway is still very high,” said Margarett Purvis, president and CEO of Food Bank For New York City. “Organizations like Coney Island Lighthouse Community Kitchen and Metro World Child are more important than ever. That’s why we are so excited to welcome the team from Toyota. If we can make our lines move more quickly and get more food to those who need it, we can ease some of the burden on community members and support them as they rebuild their lives.”

Mini-Documentary and Social Media Campaign To Inspire Conversation

Supermarche, the production company helmed by award-winning filmmakers Rel Schulman and Henry Joost, creators of the feature films *Catfish* and *Paranormal Activity*, will produce a short five-minute film on *Meals Per Hour* that will chronicle the work of the Toyota team and Food Bank For New York City staff as well as its

impact on community members.

In addition to Supermarche, four social influencers, each from a different lifestyle sector and each with their own significant following, will serve as ambassadors by documenting the project on MealsPerHour.com and through Twitter chats and “Blog Hops”, which is when several bloggers raise awareness of a particular issue by linking to each other’s posts about the same topic. The *Meals Per Hour* ambassadors are:

- Vera Sweeney, Lady and the Blog: A New York-based mother of two and one of the nation’s best-known mom bloggers;
- Sian Pierre Regis, Swagger New York + MTV Act: Founder and editor-in-chief of Swagger New York and contributor for MTV Act;
- Migdalia Rivera, Latina on a Mission + Stiletto Media: A New Yorker, single mother of two, and popular Hispanic blogger; and
- Mary Catherine Brouder: Documentarian and journalist with a focus on human rights, who has reported for CNN, CBS, IFC, PBS, among others.