



# Food Support Needs for Older Adults

## About the Guest Speakers:



**Alyson Rosenthal** is non-profit leader and nutritionist with two decades of experience developing and scaling successful programs that work at the intersection of health, social justice and sustainable agriculture. Alyson is

currently the Chief Program Officer at the West Side Campaign Against Hunger where she leads all programs at one of the largest and most successful emergency feeding providers in New York City. Formerly, Alyson was the Director of Food and Nutrition Programs at Children’s Aid where she led the organization’s obesity prevention and health promotion initiatives. Prior to her work with Children’s Aid, she spent 7 years at New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, where her work focused on nutrition education and improving access to healthy food in the food retail environment. Alyson is a Registered Dietitian and holds a MS in Food Policy and Economics from Tufts University and a BS in Dietetics and Nutritional Sciences from the University of Vermont. She is dedicated to improving health disparities and is strongly motivated by the power of food to bring communities together and to foster change.



**Cindy Singh** is the Vice President for Older Adult Services at Henry Street Settlement. She joined Henry Street Settlement in September 2007 as the program director for Good Companions Senior Center (now the Older Adult

Center). In 2009, she assumed the position of program director of Healthy Senior Select’s Meals on Wheels, the largest provider in Manhattan. During her tenure at MoW, she was crucial in guiding the program’s vulnerable population through several challenging times in New York City’s history—including Super Storm Sandy, MTA strikes, blackouts, and most recently the Covid-19 pandemic. Cindy holds a master’s degree in public administration from Metropolitan College of New York.



**Jeanette Estima** is the Director of Policy and Advocacy at Citymeals on Wheels. She has spent over 14 years working towards social and economic justice through roles in policy research, advocacy, and fundraising. Most recently, she served as the Director of Policy and

Advocacy at FPWA, leading anti-poverty policy research and analysis on aging services, safety net benefits, the criminalization of poverty, caregiving, wage equity for the human service sector, and universal healthcare. Before joining FPWA, she was a researcher at the Center for an Urban Future where she directed projects on economic and workforce development issues across the five boroughs. Prior to that, Jeanette undertook pre-development research and planning as the Morgan Stanley/ANHD Community Development Fellow based at WHEDco; managed foundation grants at Amnesty International USA; and was the membership manager at Lambda Legal. Jeanette received her MS in Urban Policy Analysis and Management at The New School and her BA in Philosophy from Bard College.



**Katy Tomaino Fraser** is a specialist in nutrition evaluation with a decade of experience developing and evaluating clinical, community-based, and large-scale public health interventions as well as local, state and federal food policy.

Fraser coordinates the Institute’s portfolio of evaluation work, including evaluations of food access and security programming at NYC organizations such as GrowNYC, West Side Campaign Against Hunger, City Harvest, and others. Fraser led the Institute’s Community Food Evaluation Workshop, an effort to increase evaluation capacity at community food organizations through trainings, technical assistance in evaluation. Fraser’s recent projects include an evaluation of an online grocery shopping program in the Mississippi Delta, research on NYC food workers, environmental scan of predatory marketing in NYC, and analysis of the impact of COVID-19 policy on food benefit access and food security. Fraser was named to the 40 under 40: The Rising Stars in NYC Food Policy Class of 2021.



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## About the Moderator:



**Nevin Cohen** is Associate Professor at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate School of Public Health, and Director of the CUNY's Urban Food Policy Institute. His research explores the policies, governance systems, practices, and infrastructure to support socially just, healthy, ecologically resilient, and economically viable urban and regional food systems. Current projects include a five-country analysis of urban agriculture, research on food retail access; a study of the intersections of zoning, planning, and food gentrification; and the effects of social equity policies on food systems. He is co-author of "Beyond the Kale: urban agriculture and social justice activism in New York City" (University of GA Press), which examines the potential of urban farms and gardens to address racial, gender, and class oppression. Cohen has a PhD in Urban Planning and Policy Development from Rutgers University, a Masters in City and Regional Planning from Berkeley, and a BA from Cornell.

## About the forum

On May 30th, join us to discuss our latest research on older adult food needs and use of food programs in New York City. New York City's older adult population (age 60+), which is currently 20.6% of NYC's population overall, is projected to reach 1.86 million by 2040. This forum will share new data on older adult hunger, use of food services and SNAP participation from a population of older adults 60+ years who participate in congregate meals and home delivered meal programs living in NYC. Our panel will review the latest findings and will explore the programmatic and policy opportunities for meeting the food needs of NYC's aging population.

## Additional Resources:

- Citymeals on Wheels. Ending Elder Hunger by 2040, <https://www.citymeals.org/ending-elder-hunger-2040>
- Citymeals on Wheels. About Us. <https://www.citymeals.org/about-us>
- Henry Street Settlement, <https://henrystreet.org/>
- West Side Campaign Against Hunger, <https://www.wscah.org/>
- J. Kim, "Are Older Adults Who Participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Healthier Than Eligible Nonparticipants? Evidence from the Health and Retirement Study," *The Gerontologist*, 55 (Supplement Issue 2):672, November 1, 2015, [https://academic.oup.com/gerontologist/article/55/Suppl\\_2/672/2489236](https://academic.oup.com/gerontologist/article/55/Suppl_2/672/2489236).
- Sarah L. Szanton *et al.*, "Food assistance is associated with decreased nursing home admissions for Maryland's dually eligible older adults," *BMC Geriatrics*, 17(1), 162, 2017, <https://bmgeriatr.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12877-017-0553-x>;
- NYC Aging Home Delivered Meals - EquityNYC, <https://equity.nyc.gov/domains/health-and-wellbeing/nyc-aging-home-delivered-meals>
- Lewis C. How Citymeals on Wheels and other senior services are prepping for NYC's next disaster. Gothamist. November 9, 2023. <https://gothamist.com/news/how-citymeals-on-wheels-and-other-senior-services-are-prepping-for-nycs-next-disaster>
- Magrino N. Wide-Ranging Tactics Address Senior Hunger. Food Bank News. July 25, 2023. <https://foodbanknews.org/wide-ranging-tactics-address-senior-hunger/>
- New York City Department for the Aging. Annual Plan Summary; covering April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024. Published October 2022. [https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dfta/downloads/pdf/reports/APS\\_2022\\_Final\\_10\\_2022.pdf](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dfta/downloads/pdf/reports/APS_2022_Final_10_2022.pdf)
- New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer Bureau of Policy and Research. *Aging with Dignity: A Blueprint for Serving NYC's Growing Senior Population*. March 2017.
- The City of New York Department of City Planning. *New York City Population Projections by Age/Sex & Borough, 2010-2040*.
- New York State Office for the Aging, (2022) *Community Outreach in Focus: 'Food Insecurity'*, <https://aging.ny.gov/news/community-outreach-focus-food-insecurity>