

The Sandwich Project: feeding those in need

In April 2020, Dunwoody residents Lisa Hiles and Marcy Louza began making sandwiches for The Shrine of the Immaculate Conception church in Atlanta and the nonprofit organization CHRIS 180 to be distributed to people living with food insecurity, a need that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Making food was the fastest way to help, particularly because people were staying close to home, given all the unknowns about COVID,” Louza says. “By offering a way for people to drop food off in their neighborhood and have us take it to the recipients of the food, people understood they could make a big impact in a safe and contactless manner.”

Using social media to recruit help, the duo grew their volunteer efforts and, in August 2021, established The Sandwich Project, a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

“I was just trying to make some sandwiches,” says Louza, current executive board member for The Sandwich Project. “It’s pretty amazing the way a community comes together during an emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic. It really touches your heart.”

Today, The Sandwich Project works with more than 4,000 volunteers throughout metro Atlanta who make sandwiches and deliver them to those in need through partnerships with organizations such as Atlanta-based CHRIS 180 and Gateway Center, Eye Believe Foundation in Suwanee and North Fulton Community Charities in Roswell. Volunteers make and deliver sandwiches to one of 30 host homes, and volunteers at these homes pass them on to drivers who take them to partner organizations.

While The Sandwich Project does accept peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for those with dental issues, the emphasis is on fresh, nutritious food, so the preferred sandwiches are turkey or ham and cheese. The organization also accepts fresh fruit and protein bars; these, combined with the sandwiches, make for a nice lunch, Louza says.

The Sandwich Project collects about 8,000 sandwiches per week and has distributed about 850,000 sandwiches to 70



The Sandwich Project's executive board includes (front row, from left) Vicki Tropauer, Marcy Louza and Nancy Miller. With them are some of the project's volunteers.

organizations since 2020. Louza says they expect to surpass 1 million sandwiches this year.

“Initially, there was a clear need for food donations and a strong desire among people to help,” Louza says. “What has been particularly striking to me is how, even as life began to return to pre-COVID normalcy, our organization has continued to grow. Our volunteers have discovered that even a small investment of resources can make a significant difference in people’s lives.”

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If you want to help The Sandwich Project, visit thesandwichproject.org or email info@thesandwichproject.org.