



WHAT'S INSIDE

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| "FCS IS THE CENTER" | 3 |
| HAVING AN IMPACT | 4 |
| A NEW EVENT SPRINGS TO LIFE | 6 |
| FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT | 7 |



REGULAR VOLUNTEERS JAY ESPY AND KATE WYATT HELP KEEP THE BUSY VAUGHNDELLA CURTIS FOOD PANTRY RUNNING.

"OUR FIRST FAMILY"

Over the past year, Freeport and surrounding areas saw an increase in the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness, many of which are refugees and asylum seekers new to the country. Freeport Community Services, together with the support of the community, stepped in to provide services for many of those individuals and families.

One of those families is Edna Contreiras, Dilson Rosa and three-year-old Elezer Rosa Fernando, who arrived to the Freeport area from Angola 8 months ago. The Fernandos have utilized and benefited from services and resources offered at FCS thanks to support from our generous community.

"This organization has been our first family here," Edna said through a Portuguese interpreter.

Edna expressed her appreciation to everyone at FCS and in the greater Freeport community for welcoming them.

"I would like to say thank you very much from the bottom of my heart," Edna said. "You received us with open arms, and you said, 'We are here for you, and we are going to take care of you until you get on your feet and get your work permit, and then you will be free to go.'"

MISSION STATEMENT

To enrich lives, connect neighbors and help those in need in Freeport and Pownal.

2022-2023 BOARD MEMBERS

Jen Panciocco
President

Victoria Winters
1st Vice President

Liza Moore
2nd Vice President

Judy Brown
Secretary

Janice Latulippe
Treasurer

Suzi Benoit
Maury Bohan
Christina Carter
Bo Chesney
Jim DeGrandpre
Gary Goodrich
Deborah McLean
Chris O'Neil
Dean Paterson
Edrol Sandy
Audrey Thomson
Jonas Werner

FCS STAFF

Sarah Lundin
Executive Director

Susan Adams
Volunteer Coordinator

Don Buchholz
Facilities Assistant

Christine Force
Development & Events Manager

Lindsey Furtney
Material Handler

Michele Guillet
Retail Sales Associate

Robin Harriman
Property Manager

Erin Hogue
Retail Team Leader

Kim Hudak
Office Manager

Regina Kusche
Material Team Leader

Jenny Johnson
Communications Manager

Tierney Lynch
General Assistance Coordinator

Marie O'Donnell
AFFP Coordinator

Miriam Tanner
Thrift Shop Program Manager

Michael Tausek
Director of Programs

Yilin Wang
Retail Associate

Andy Wyatt
Food Programs Supervisor

DEAR COMMUNITY

As our wonderful organization approaches its 50th anniversary, we have been asking ourselves “why FCS?” What draws us in, what keeps us engaged? It’s been an honor to hear from folks their “why FCS.” Such variety of circumstances have brought us all here, all together, and I am grateful to be a part of it.

I would like to share with you my “why FCS.”

Eight years ago, when I interviewed for the position of Community Services Coordinator here at FCS, I was looking for the opportunity to truly help people. I wanted to help without asking those in need to turn themselves into pretzels trying to fit into specific eligibility requirements. Stepping through the front doors of the Community Center I really didn’t know what to expect, but it felt different. I remember telling my Mom after my interview that I knew FCS was where I wanted to be.

I came to FCS wanting to help but I never could have anticipated all that I would receive over the years. It is a privilege to work alongside my colleagues who have been a source of support during significant life events, who never hesitate to jump in to help one another and who show up everyday to ensure our neighbors do not go without. Our Board of Directors and volunteers are not only the backbone of our organization, but they are friends, they are like family, enriching every aspect of FCS and the lives of those involved. Neighbors who walk through our doors seeking help hold so much importance in the intricacies of our community, finding personal and unique ways to give back and positively impact the lives of those working alongside them.

The kindness and compassion of our dear community was one of the very first things I noticed when I started, and it envelopes everyone within and everything we do here at FCS. You have graciously and warmly cared for those new to our community and those who have lived here for generations. When a need arises, I know I can turn to you for help. I simply could not treasure our community more, thank you for taking such great care of your neighbors and all of us here at FCS.

Warmly,



Sarah Lundin
Executive Director



"PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATIVE"

Eric Geredien thinks of his father whenever he is giving a ride to someone in need. Now 96 years old, his father is residing in an assisted living home, but in the years leading

up to that transition, he lost his ability to get around independently. “There was a period when he was living by himself, and I know how much trouble he had trying to get around,” Eric said. Eric has been a volunteer driver with FCS for the last 4 years, and with each ride he keeps the memory of his father present. “I treat people how I would want my dad to be treated, and it keeps me going.”

In our car-dependent area, FCS’ transportation program has a steady demand for rides and provides a lifeline for many residents. “People are always extremely appreciative,” Eric said. “They realize you are a volunteer and not getting paid, and they really value your time.”



Volunteers Help Us Grow

- Transportation
- Age-Friendly Programs
- Thrift Shop
- Food Pantry

Find out more:

FCSMaine.org/volunteer

"FCS IS THE CENTER"

The following is written by Victoria Winters, FCS board vice president.

When I was asked to join the board of FCS, I jumped at the opportunity. FCS holds a special place in my heart. It was there for my family 30 years ago when my mom experienced financial instability. FCS helped pay for my sister and I to go to overnight summer camps through the Carol Southall Camp Scholarship program, and I am forever grateful for those experiences.

Summer camp was a pivotal point in my childhood that helped me develop confidence, and when the time came around to look at colleges, helped me feel brave enough to leave the state of Maine. I lived in DC for several years, and, eventually, my husband and I had kids. We started thinking about where we wanted to settle. It was at that point that I realized how lucky I was as a child to live in a place like Freeport,

and that is when we decided to move our family here.

One of the things that makes the Freeport/Pownal area such a wonderful place to live is the support provided by the community and FCS. I have been proud to be a part of this organization. Over the past few years, I have gotten to understand the breadth of their services, from the food pantry, to the school backpack program, to heating assistance, and more.

I have gotten to know some of the staff and see the way that they treat our neighbors that come into the center. I’m proud of the staff in the way they have been able to support our longtime Freeport/Pownal families and our new Freeport/Pownal families and to do it with grace, dignity, and professionalism.

We are a community that takes care of our neighbors without judgment



ON A RECENT TRIP TO JAMAICA TO VISIT FAMILY. IN THE MIDDLE, VICTORIA AND HER HUSBAND, WARREN GRAVER (MOVED TO THE US FOR COLLEGE). THE KIDS ARE KAYLA (STUDYING HEALTH SCIENCES AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY), ALEXANDER (FHS SENIOR, HEADING TO JAMAICA COLLEGE NEXT YEAR FOR A POST-GRAD YEAR ABROAD TO PLAY SOCCER AND RUN TRACK), GREYSON AND JAMISON (5TH GRADERS AT MLS).

and with an open heart, and FCS is at the center. With neighbors’ and other businesses’ support, we can ensure that FCS continues to play a vital role in our community.



HAVING AN IMPACT

When you think about it, Freeport Community Services' Thrift Shop is more of a recycler than a retailer, and it's playing a vital role in our communities' sustainability.

The Thrift Shop is adding its efforts at upcycling, recycling, and environmental awareness to the existing mission of connecting neighbors and helping those in need. And they want more people to get in on the action.



A HEART PILLOW CRAFTED FROM OTHERWISE UNUSABLE PIECES OF FABRIC.

"The wider community and the world at large need to see clothing that has a hole in it or a saucer without its cup as useful materials rather than garbage," said Miriam Tanner, Thrift Shop manager. "I think it can have a huge impact on our thinking as individuals and on our consumption. It has a huge effect when it becomes the norm to rethink our waste and consider, 'What purpose could this have?'"

The Thrift Shop has plenty of opportunity to contemplate this question.

The shop receives and sorts through an average of three tons of items per week. The tiny shop works with several partners who pick up what they can't resell.

Some of the key partners that take many of the unsellable donated items include:

- Apparel Impact
- Area Homeless shelters
- Area Pet shelters
- Goodwill and Salvation Army
- Small business owners mend and repurpose items
- All Sales Are Vinyl



A QUILT MADE FROM OLD SWEATERS.



A DRESS MADE FROM FABRIC SCRAPS.

In addition to serving as a major conduit through which used goods are diverted from the waste stream, the shop encourages and inspires the creative use of the goods it does sell in-house. Ideas about repurposing and reusing, or upcycling, are aimed at going beyond using an old t-shirt as a rag, and rather using the material creatively to make something exciting.

Through social media and its new YouTube channel -- www.youtube.com/@FreeportThriftShop -- the shop shares the work of other creatives and gives tutorials about how to mend, reuse, repurpose and upcycle.

"It's always fun to learn a new skill, but you don't have to become a master embroiderer or use a sewing machine. It could be as simple as using glue!" Miriam said. "If you have even a measure of an idea, experiment! It was going to be garbage anyway!"

For Earth Day this year, the Thrift Shop created a contest where the top upcyclers were awarded gift cards to the shop, and the shop's active Instagram -- handle: [@freeport_thrift_shop](https://www.instagram.com/freeport_thrift_shop) -- will highlight upcycling projects where people took purchased materials from the Thrift Shop and created something useful and beautiful.



BOTANICAL PRINTING BEFORE AND AFTER.



KEN SPARTA

Longtime Freeport resident Ken Sparta first got to know FCS many years ago when he was running camps and programs for the Boy Scouts, who volunteered for the organization. Each Thanksgiving, Ken helped champion the annual Scouting

"IT ALL TIES TOGETHER"

for Food Drive, bringing in thousands of pounds of food during the holiday season for the community. He kept a fond association with the organization over the years as he saw how it helped neighbors and friends in need.

"I don't know how Freeport would be the community that it is without Freeport Community Services," Ken said.

In recent years, he leveraged a move to scuba diving into starting Spartan Sea Farms, which harvests kelp and oysters. In June of 2022, he opened Freeport Oyster Bar on Main Street in Freeport. The restaurant has quickly become a strong supporter of FCS, supporting our Freeze Out fundraiser and donating oysters to the annual fundraising event.

"It all ties together. We have this locally-owned restaurant that can raise money for local charities," Ken said. "Everybody's just kind of working together as a community to bring money and energy into this town to make it a great place for everyone."

"TRUE COMMUNITY"

Freeport Community Services' longest serving employee, Office Manager Kim Hudak, remembers distinctly when she personally realized the organization's impact. She had just come to FCS from a job as a paralegal for an attorney who worked on evictions. "It wasn't but a couple weeks later that I recognized two of the families who had gotten evicted, and they had come here for

help. I understood the importance of this place immediately," Kim said.

Nearly 20 years later, having been a part of major changes within the organization, Kim says she still loves her job. "The people are great, the clients are great, and it's never boring," Kim said.

She calls it "true community," as she lives close enough to walk to work



KIM HUDAK

and has gotten to know many of her neighbors and people around town. "Just a minute ago, a lady brought me an Easter card she made," Kim said. "It's like having 20 grandmothers!"

WHY FCS?

The following is written by Jen Panciocco, FCS board president.



JEN PANCIOCCO

Over the last several months, the FCS Board meetings have started with a couple Board members speaking to their "Why FCS" and sharing what makes FCS special to each of us. It has truly been heartwarming and inspiring to hear our fellow Board members talk about their own life experiences that brought them to FCS and what it means to them to serve such an amazing organization.

For myself, I came to FCS at a point in my life where I felt like I needed to do more for my community. The core of FCS' mission is to provide essential services to our neighbors in Freeport and Pownal and our amazing staff and volunteers accomplish this with such grace every day. While FCS does give me the opportunity to help serve my community, our work gives right back to me a sense of purpose and connection that is so fulfilling. That is my "Why FCS".



A NEW ANNUAL EVENT SPRINGS TO LIFE

A FIRST LOOK AT THE NEW SMITH CENTER. STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION BUT HEADING FOR COMPLETION PRIOR TO FCS' MAY 18 ANNUAL EVENT, A SPRING GATHERING.

As Freeport Community Services approaches its 50th anniversary in 2024, FCS leadership made a key change to its major annual fundraiser, White Nights.

White Nights began over 20 years ago. The event experienced various transformations of its own over the years. In the very beginning, it was a formal sit-down dinner at the stone house at Wolfe's Neck and later at the Harraseeket Inn. It then moved to FCS' Bradley Room as a cocktail party to maximize the fundraising efforts. Due to constraints on the number of attendees, the event more recently moved to the larger Hilton Garden Inn.

"There were always wonderful volunteers over the years who stepped up to work alongside FCS staff to do everything," said Pat Palmer, former FCS board member who has been involved with the annual fundraising event for many years. "There was a tremendous amount of work that went into it, but that also became like a community," Pat said.

FCS' annual event was an exclusive opportunity for community members to come together and bid on high end auction items and support FCS programming. "It was always a showcase of the support of the community" on the part of both businesses and individual community members who generously donated and bid on items for the auction, Pat said.

While White Nights was on pause through the pandemic, the opportunity was seized to re envision the event to be a community celebration with great company, good food, and engaging conversation about the inspiration that is FCS.

Enter the FCS 2023 annual fundraising event, A Spring Gathering, to take place at the newly built Smith Center at Wolfe's Neck Center on May 18. A Spring Gathering will be the first event held in the building, which is a state-of-the-art, fossil fuel-free facility built to Passive House standards. It will also be FCS' first major fundraiser since February of 2020.

While fundraising is still a key component of the event, it is no longer the central focus. FCS engaged businesses and individuals to sponsor A Spring Gathering. Tickets to the event were completely sold out by March 30.

To promote the inclusivity of the event, tickets were put on a sliding scale. Additionally, attendees will not be asked to donate during the event, but there will be a raffle of 4 items, including an LL Bean Paddle Board. The raffle is open to anyone, as tickets can be purchased online beginning May 1, with the winners being drawn during the event on May 18.

FCS hopes the event sets the tone for years to come, with everyone within the community feeling as though they are invited to attend. As the organization plans for the next 50 years, inclusivity, accessibility and involvement of all within Freeport and Pownal remains central to the mission of FCS.

"Even the speaker will be someone who's going to talk about the work of the future at FCS," Pat said. "Not just meeting a person's needs but helping them to succeed."

This year's event already seems to be a smashing success.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Diverse Funding Streams Propel FCS Forward

Maintaining a variety of sources is key to our long-term strategy

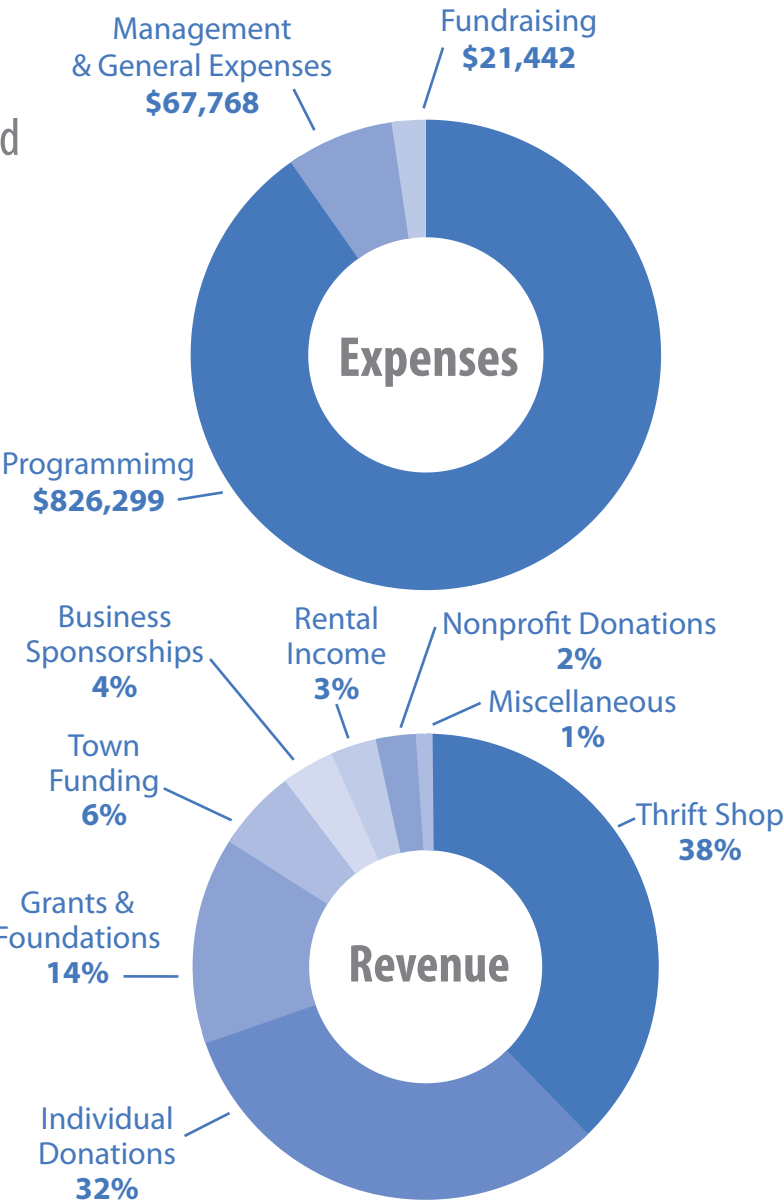
Freeport Community Services maintains a diverse stream of funding from multiple sources, and we believe continuing to implement and develop this strategy is key to our long-term sustainability.

Internally, FCS is able to generate stable revenue through the Thrift Shop, office rentals and community space rentals. These account for almost half of our annual revenue.

We have been successful at obtaining grant funding from private, corporate and government sources, which has enabled us to direct funding to specific programs and activities.

Individual donations and business sponsorships further bolster our ability to help our neighbors in need and maintain the low barrier eligibility process of our essential programs.

Support from the Towns of Freeport and Pownal not only highlights recognition of our organization and the value of the resources we provide in the eyes of the municipalities, but it also reflects each town's commitment to ensuring resources are available for their residents during times of need.



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS



THANK YOU TO OUR FOOD DONATION PARTNERS



NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

NEWS FROM FREEPORT COMMUNITY SERVICES

THRIFT SHOP HOURS

Monday-Friday 12-5
Saturday 10-3
Closed Sunday

Donations

Tuesday & Friday 10-3
Saturday 10-1

COMMUNITY CENTER HOURS

Monday-Friday 9-5

FOOD PANTRY HOURS

Monday 11-3
Tuesday 9:30-11:30
Wednesday 11-1:30

CONTACT US

207-865-3985
Main Office x202
Executive Director x204
Thrift Shop x207
Food Pantry x211
Programs x205
Volunteers x206
Age-Friendly Freeport & Pownal x222
Communications x220
Development & Events x221
General Assistance x239

fcsmaine.org



**Freeport
Community
Services**

VISIT US

53 Depot Street
Freeport, Maine 04032

Freeport Community Center
Mon. - Fri. 9-5 pm

JOIN US!

EVENTS FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

- Free Lunch Friday, first and third Fridays 12-1pm
- Age-Friendly Yoga, every Monday, 9:30am
- Bingo and senior socials every month
- Strength & Stretch, every Tuesday, 5:30pm

STAY IN TOUCH!

Sign up for our digital and
print newsletters:

FCSMaine.org/get-updates



Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Portland, ME
Permit #492