

SOUTH JERSEY DREAM CENTER

Breaking the cycle of poverty in South Jersey

WHY WE EXIST

According to the last US Census, 1 in 10 people in South Jersey are living in Poverty. We exist to help break the vicious cycle of poverty in their lives...from the inside out.

HOW

We offer people options to change their status quo, to discover their God given purpose and value, and to develop skills to reach their full potential.

WHAT WE DO

We start with helping out with food, clothing, household, baby, and hygiene items. Then begins the personal, spiritual, and professional training. We help develop the WHOLE person.

OUR CORE VALUES

We value sharing God's unconditional love, goodness, and grace

We value engaging in relationship, partnership, and two-way giving

We value serving in and strengthening our local communities

We value being open and intentional about how to do things more effectively

BRIEF HISTORY

The South Jersey Dream Center (SJDC) is a familiar place to low-income families in Gloucester County and the surrounding communities. Founded in 2010, the SJDC has become known among our guests as the "best" distribution program in the area. What began in Sewell, NJ on a cold November day with a Turkey Giveaway to 30 people, has progressively grown into an impactful operation having served over 15,000 people over the decade. Today, the SJDC is poised to become one of the largest, full service, one-stop outreaches to low income and struggling families in the region.

OUR IMPACT

Every month we receive and distribute an average of 10,000 pounds of fresh produce, dairy, meat, bread, pastries, non-perishable items, diapers, baby supplies and equipment, household items, personal hygiene items, and cleaning supplies. Last year we received over 175,000 pounds of resources. Most of the resources that we receive are immediately distributed to the Mother-Child Residential in Woodbury, two Gloucester County Senior Nutritional Program sites, the Rowan University Student Food Pantry, Jericho Baptist Church Senior Program in Deptford, and various other churches, businesses and food pantries in Gloucester County, serving 50-100 people a month.

In addition, thousands of pounds of diapers, baby equipment, clothing, and food are stored at our facility for curbside pickup. Each month, we receive visits from 25-40 seniors, local families, expectant mothers, etc. in need of our resources. Referrals for our curbside pickup come from Acenda Integrated Health, the Woodbury Public Schools, Center for Family Services, the Hispanic Family Success Center in Woodbury, and the Gloucester County Senior Nutritional Program.

Over 700 financial donors, in-kind donors, and volunteers are connected to the SJDC, including BJ's, Sam's Club, Panera Bread, Albert's Fresh Produce, Flowers Foods, Uptown Bakeries, Wawa, Macy's, Acme, Rastelli Foods, Heritage's Dairy Stores, Welch's, local dry cleaners, as well as local schools lost and found, and more.

OUR FUTURE

Though we are currently sharing a donated space in West Deptford, we are seeking a 20-25,000 sf retail/warehouse building to set up like a mini-Walmart where families can come and “shop” for what they need. Along with the retail space, we will have classrooms and a gathering space where we will host life skills workshops, faith-based classes, and job readiness training. We will also have a space designated for local and county government and non-government agencies to share their resources with our guests as a “one-stop shopping” experience for those needing additional information regarding social services, assistance programs, health screenings, and more.

KIM'S STORY

the Dream Center is an absolute blessing to my family and the community! My family had a very rough 2019, we spent the whole summer in a family shelter due to some tribulations. While we were in the shelter we started to get on our feet, my husband started working again, and before you know it we were finally able to move into our new place in October of 2019. Although we were very happy to be in our new home we still needed so much. Being a family of 6 at the time and 8 months pregnant with baby number 5 we needed furniture and the new baby still needed many things! I reached out to several agencies with no luck till I got connected via Facebook to the Dream Center. God sent us Natalie, Tracy and all their staff and volunteers to the rescue. It brought so much joy to them to want to help our family. They heard our story and treated us like family from day one. They reached out to several different people on their end and found my family a brand-new king bedroom set with a mattress included and a brand new recliner and also tons of other baby supplies that we needed. They communicated back and forth and made sure that we received what we needed. They continue to help my family and even check in just to make sure we are ok. Their customer service is outstanding! This organization is extremely friendly, trustworthy and is an excellent example of what God's love truly is. Five stars all across the board! The Robinson's are so grateful and blessed to be part of the Dream Center family! - Kimberly Robinson

CONTACT

Natalie Fortunato, Executive Director
856-845-4500
nfortunato@southjerseydreamcenter.org
southjerseydreamcenter.org
P.O. Box 52, West Deptford, NJ 08086