

17th annual 'Operation: Rock Out Hunger' will help feed food-insecure families this holiday season

Food, fund & turkey drive to benefit FeedMore WNY will run from Nov. 15-22

The 17th annual "Operation: Rock Out Hunger" will collect much-needed food items for Western New York families in need this holiday season. From 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 15, through 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 22, 97 Rock's DJ Jickster will live on a FeedMore WNY trailer at Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital's parking lot located at 1540 Maple Road in Williamsville. DJ Jickster will collect funds, nonperishable food items and frozen turkeys to benefit the community members who rely on FeedMore WNY. The drive is a partnership between FeedMore WNY, 97 Rock, Kaleida Health and WKBW-TV Channel 7.

"It is amazing to see the community come out year after year to support this absolutely critical food and fund drive for FeedMore WNY, and I know Western New Yorkers will once again show up to support their neighbors in need," said DJ Jickster, director of marketing and promotions for 97 Rock. "It really is an honor to be able to participate in this drive, and I feel fortunate to be backed by my employer, my coworkers, the sponsors and, of course, all the listeners who make 'Rock Out Hunger' possible."

As a kick-off to the event, Kaleida Health and its affiliates across FeedMore WNY's four-county service area collected food donations from Oct. 10 through Nov. 8.

"We are honored to be part of 'Rock Out Hunger' for the fifth year in a row," said Don Boyd, president and CEO of Kaleida Health. "For the past month, 26 locations across Kaleida Health and our affiliates throughout Erie, Niagara, Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties have been collecting nonperishable food items to ramp up for 'Rock Out Hunger,' and dozens more of our employees will be volunteering at 'Rock Out Hunger' next week. We recognize that far too many individuals and families are struggling for the most basic items, and we are thrilled to have the opportunity to support our community in this way. We are looking forward to another successful 'Rock Out Hunger' event that will truly impact so many in our community."

A press release noted, "Nearly 165,000 people throughout FeedMore WNY's four-county service area are food insecure, meaning they lack consistent access to



DJ Jickster is shown with "Operation: Rock Out Hunger" bins ready to be filled. (File photo courtesy of FeedMore WNY)

enough nutritious food to lead a healthy life. For individuals worried about how they will put food on the table, the holiday season can be especially stressful."

WKBW-TV Channel 7 Vice President and General Manager Marc Jaromin said, "The holidays should be a festive season of food, family and friends but, for so many in WNY facing food insecurity, the holidays are a struggle. Too many of our neighbors, our seniors, even our children are challenged with hunger every day. Buffalo Strong should mean no one in our community goes hungry, ever, and until that happens, WKBW will continue to partner with FeedMore WNY, support their amazing volunteer efforts, and spotlight important community events like 'Rock Out Hunger.'"

FeedMore WNY President and CEO Tara A. Ellis said, "No one should have to worry about where their next meal will come from - during the holidays or at any time. Efforts like 'Operation: Rock Out Hunger' make it possible for FeedMore WNY to provide nutritious meals to food-insecure children, families, older adults and everyone in between throughout Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara counties. Food connects us all, and we want to ensure community members can sit down to a wholesome holiday meal with friends and loved ones. We appreciate the partnership of DJ Jickster and 97 Rock, Kaleida Health, 7-WKBW and all of our Western New York neighbors who will help us 'Rock Out Hunger' this holiday season and beyond."

In addition to the collection at "Operation: Rock Out Hunger," donations of food and funds can be dropped off from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays, and from 8 a.m. to noon most Saturdays at FeedMore WNY's distribution ware-

house at 91 Holt St., Buffalo. Call FeedMore WNY at 716-822-2002 to schedule a Saturday donation drop off. To donate funds online, visit www.feedmorewny.org/rock-out-hunger/.

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