



**THE ATLANTA JAMAICAN ASSOCIATION, INC. (AJA) SERVING THE COMMUNITY IN 2020
HELPING TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER IN GEORGIA
FARMERS TO FAMILIES FOOD BOXES – A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT**

This is the third in a series of reports providing examples of how the AJA Board and members continue to serve the community in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. The first report related to the 2020 scholarship awards programs for students in Jamaica and metro Atlanta. The second focused on the AJA's **Jamaica Medical Supply / Support** Initiative. This report provides an update on AJA's participation in the **Farmers to Families Food Box Distribution** program in 2020.



As noted in www.feedamerica.org, “though many of us may not realize the grave disparities that exist in our own communities, people struggle with hunger in every county and congressional district in Georgia.” In fact, 1 in 8 people and 1 in 6 children struggle with hunger in Georgia. This has gotten even worse during the Covid-19 pandemic. We thank members of the AJA family who are helping to alleviate hunger through volunteering and donating at food pantries, food banks etc. We salute Lions Club and AJA member Marcia Anderson-Esson, who shared the following: *“In 2020 the COVID 19 pandemic took the USA and the world by storm. No one could have imagined the devastation and the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives that would ensue. It has caused the closing of numerous businesses and the loss of jobs and income for millions of Americans. The USDA has partnered with farmers who have experienced a loss in their customer base to establish the “Farmers to Families Food Box” program to distribute their produce to needy families. I saw this as a great opportunity to get involved in helping to serve the needy in the community.”*

Marcia, the Lions District 181 Hunger Chairperson in Georgia, along with Lions Wayne Blake and Sonia Williams-Denham; Tony Gray, President and Beth Powell-Jackson, Family Relations Chair of the Atlanta Jamaican Association Inc (AJA); and Tyrone Jones of the Friends On The Corner (FOTC) came together in this effort. Their first food box distribution was July 23, 2020 in Stone Mountain.



The Atlanta Jamaican Association Inc.



Lions of Georgia



Friends On The Corner

To date Marcia and team above - along with many other volunteers from the AJA, Lions and FOTC, other organizations and community members - have organized 8 food truck deliveries consisting of 9,060 boxes. These boxes have been distributed in Stone Mountain, Decatur, Atlanta, Marietta, Ellenwood and Snellville to approximately 34,000 people. Clients served include the elderly, children, sick and shut in, stay at home and residents of Extended Stay hotels. We extend special thanks to Pastor David Burgher who organized the Extended Stay distributions and to Andrea Sue Chin who organized distributions to churches all over Georgia for us. Volunteers from the AJA, Lions and FOTC who have participated in one or more unloading / distributions include: Donovan Cushnie, Maxine Ferguson, Norm Hoyes, Paulette Leslie, Wayne Leslie, Trevor Oldacre, Errol Ritchie, Evette Taylor-Reynolds, and Frank Watson. Other participating individuals, organizations and businesses include: Act 2 Church / Pastor John Rich, Bible Temple, Community Teen Coalition, Crossroads, Decatur Bible Chapel, HUGS Ministries, Jamaica Project USA, Marietta Closeouts, Milford Road Church, New Hope Church, New Life Tabernacle Church, The Way Church, The Wayne Hall Show and Wings' Kitchen / Leighton Mitchell. We might not have a complete list of volunteers and apologize if we omitted anyone. Know that your efforts are well appreciated.

We extend sincere thanks to Marcia Anderson-Esson for spearheading this effort, and providing timely reports and photos; Evette Taylor-Reynolds who helped to coordinate the Marietta deliveries / distribution, and provided photos for this report; all the collaborating organizations, the proprietors who generously provided space for us to setup, unload and distribute; and all the volunteers. Truly making a difference in the community!





The Lions, AJA and the FOTC will continue this partnership to help alleviate hunger in the State of Georgia. The last three distributions were in October. The team is optimistic that they will have additional food boxes to distribute. For further information, please contact Lion Marcia Anderson-Esson at 860-214-0192. To volunteer please contact AJA Family Relations Chair, Beth Powell Jackson at 404-583-5473. For more facts about Hunger in Georgia and other ways you can help at <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/georgia>.