



Food Bank of WNY

Serving Cattaraugus, Chautauqua,
Erie and Niagara Counties

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Food Bank of WNY Board names Tara A. Ellis as new President & CEO

BUFFALO (October 2, 2017) — Michael J. Prendergast, Chairperson of the Food Bank of WNY's Board of Directors, announced today that the Board has selected Tara A. Ellis as the organization's new President & CEO. Ms. Ellis, who currently serves as the President & CEO of both Meals on Wheels for Western New York and the Meals on Wheels Foundation of WNY, will succeed Marylou Borowiak as of October 23, 2017.

In her new role, Ms. Ellis will oversee more than 40 employees and a network of 341 member agencies fighting hunger in Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara counties. Annually, the Food Bank of WNY provides more than 13 million nutritious meals to those in need throughout its four-county service area.

"We are thrilled to have Tara join the Food Bank of WNY as the organization's next President & CEO," said Mr. Prendergast. "Her impressive skill set, passion for helping others and commitment to fighting hunger within Western New York make her an ideal fit for this position. Tara has already proven herself as an exceptional leader within the community, and we are confident that she will advance the organization in its mission to obtain and distribute nutritious food and support to the hungry in Western New York."

Ms. Ellis' hiring is the culmination of a five-month search led by Career Partners International Buffalo Niagara. The Food Bank of WNY's approved succession plan was used as a guide throughout the search and transition process. After extensive interest in the position, the search committee narrowed prospects down to a small pool of candidates and ultimately recommended Ms. Ellis for the position of President & CEO during a recent special meeting of the Food Bank of WNY's Board of Directors.

"I am honored and humbled that the Food Bank's board has selected me as their next President and CEO. I look forward to the opportunity to build on the tremendous foundation laid by Marylou Borowiak and to work with the talented and dedicated team of staff and volunteers who passionately fight hunger each day," Ms. Ellis said. "Hunger strikes every age group, community and demographic. No child should be forced to go to school facing gnawing hunger and no senior should have to choose between a life-saving medication and a meal. Together, we can help eradicate hunger in our community for all of our neighbors."

Ms. Ellis has served as President & CEO of Meals on Wheels for WNY and the Meals on Wheels Foundation of WNY since March 2012. Prior to joining Meals on Wheels, she worked for the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute where her last position was Chief Development and Communications Officer. Ms. Ellis also held various positions at M&T Bank over nearly a decade, including serving as Vice President of Internal Communications – a department she established and grew for the bank from 2001 to 2005. Prior to that, she held positions at the Erie County Legislature and the New York State Senate.

A dedicated volunteer, Ms. Ellis serves on the boards of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services, as well as Meals on Wheels New York State. She has served on numerous other boards including the Buffalo Seminary Alumnae Association, Homespace Corporation and The Junior League of Buffalo.

Ms. Ellis earned her bachelor's degree from the University at Buffalo and her master's degree from the S.I. Newhouse School at Syracuse University. She resides in Derby, NY with her husband Tom Kucharski and her son Austin Ellis-Mohr.

(The Food Bank of WNY is the primary hunger-relief organization in Western New York, obtaining and distributing food to 341 member agencies including food pantries, shelters, soup kitchens, youth programs, and senior centers in Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara counties. Through these agencies, the Food Bank of WNY serves as many as 134,955 individuals in any given month, including more than 44,000 families, 55,000 children and infants, and nearly 16,500 seniors. For more information, visit www.foodbankwny.org.)