



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

## Food Insecurity in Hudson Valley and Catskill Communities Addressed in New Episode of Metzger's COVID-19 Online Conversation Series

JEN METZGER May 2, 2020

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**Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY...** During the **second digital episode of her online series** last evening, Senator Jen Metzger (SD-42) shared information on local food distribution initiatives in the region, how individuals in need can access resources, and ways that members of the public can help during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Livestreamed on **her Facebook page**, the latest installment of Senator Metzger's COVID-19

**Community Conversations** series featured Michele McKeon, Chief Operating Officer of Regional Economic Community Action Program (RECAP), and Dr. Shelly L. Bartow, Executive Director of Delaware Opportunities Inc., who discussed how their respective organizations are addressing food insecurity during this unprecedented public health crisis. McKeon and Bartow both noted that requests for meals and supplies have significantly increased over the last several weeks, and shared how their organizations are meeting daily challenges, including the continued coordination of deliveries to communities that were vulnerable to food insecurity long before the novel coronavirus hit New York State. In both Orange and Delaware Counties, the organizations are serving community members who are new to them on a regular basis.

"The staff at these organizations are putting in long days in efforts to address increasing food insecurity during this public health crisis, and I am grateful for their service and for the generosity of local businesses, civic groups, and community members who have donated time and resources to support these efforts and help feed those in need," **said Senator Jen Metzger.** "In this emergency landscape, RECAP, Delaware Opportunities Inc., and other organizations in the district I represent are navigating heightened demand for resources and reinventing their processes to distribute not just food, but toiletries and other items to keep up with the evolving needs in their communities."

**Dr. Shelly L. Bartow, Executive Director of Delaware Opportunities Inc. said,** "I am hopeful that with conversations like this, focused on key issues, that we can continue to help shine the spotlight on serious issues that were here prior to the pandemic and will continue to exist afterward and that we will be able to continue to provide a forum for dialogue and innovative thinking in an effort to collaboratively address and ultimately resolve them."

**Michele McKeon, Chief Operating Officer of Regional Economic Community Action Program (RECAP) said,**

“In this time of uncertainty, connections and conversations are important. RECAP applauds Senator Metzger for recognizing this and inviting RECAP, as Orange County’s CAP agency, to be a part of the vital conversation about food insecurity in our communities. We will get through this crisis but the conversation about poverty, food insecurity and vulnerable families must continue and we look forward to working with the Senator and her team on these issues.”

Senator Metzger’s [Community Conversations](#) series will continue to occur via Facebook live, streaming twice-weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:00 PM for the next three weeks, and will include a Q&A period with participating Facebook viewers facilitated by the Senator. The half-hour-long digital episodes all feature local experts knowledgeable on selected topics important to Hudson Valley and Catskill communities. [Tuesday’s episode will focus on Domestic Violence.](#)

A full list of topics and guests is available [here](#), and additional topical episodes in the series will be announced as New York State continues to grapple with the novel coronavirus global pandemic.