

## DISTRIBUTING DONATIONS, LIFTING SPIRITS



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**My role:** I manage the collection and distribution of donations of food, beverage and supplies that have been arriving from all corners of the city and country. I arrived at NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan in February. After one week, the project I was hired to do was put on hold. So, I used my skills to manage donations. It all started with ice cream donations and increased to three meals a day and snacks. That's why I am

now proudly known as "The Ice Cream Lady."

### Shifting Duties in a Pandemic:

The crisis requires that some of us have to step out of our roles to do what is needed. In record time, I figured out how to work with members of our rehab team and other teams to coordinate a system that ensures every member of our frontline staff gets three meals a day, every day. Staff in the ICU and ED units can't leave their areas, so they depend on us. When shipments arrive, we get in an assembly

line, unload everything, and then distribute it. Every day the food offering is different, so it's been incredible working and organizing everything so quickly and efficiently.

**Impact of COVID-19:** After the crisis hit, I became a Staff Experience manager. Half of our staff are in overdrive and half are scared of what the future holds. With distribution of food and goodies, my job has evolved to exchanging a few words to calm them down and giving them comfort. Bringing a smile to a staff member is rewarding. The other day I asked a police officer how she was and whether she needed anything. She said, 'You are the first person to ask me that.' That made my day.

**Managing stress:** I love to paint and cook. I like trying new breakfast, lunch or dinner recipes from cookbooks. My Italian heritage has taught me well. Talking to my family and friends whenever I can during the day and at night also helps. I Facetime with my parents who live in New Jersey and every time a friend checks on me, it relaxes and centers me. I am taking it day by day and focusing and meditating on the present because it's sometimes too shocking to think about the future.