

BELL ORGANIZATION ANNUAL REPORT 2025



LETTER FROM THE CEO



**KIRWAN
WALSH**

CEO BELL Organization

As we reflect on 2025 one theme stands out: in a year of uncertainty, community care became urgent, not optional. Families across New York City faced intensified pressure as food support systems strained under rising demand and disruptions tied to public benefits and emergency food capacity. Reports from late 2025 described food providers across the five boroughs being overwhelmed with some seeing dramatic spikes in need and even turning people away when supplies ran out.

In response, BELL sharpened our focus on food relief and stability through NYC Nourish, helping communities in need access nutritious food and essential resources. We worked alongside partners and local networks to connect families to emergency food distribution

This kind of coordinated response is exactly why philanthropy matters so much in 2025: charitable giving gives nonprofits the flexibility to act quickly when systems slow down, fill gaps when public resources shift, and keep dignity at the center of support.

To everyone who donated, volunteered, partnered, or shared our work—thank you. Your generosity helped BELL show up when it counted.

Kirwan Walsh

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WHO WE ARE

VISION

To create a future where children and families in underserved neighborhoods across New York City have equitable access to education, STEM opportunities, and essential wellness resources, overcoming racial disparities and fostering a thriving community.

MISSION

BELL (Books Education Learning & Life) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization committed to providing after-school programs, STEM workshops, and wellness initiatives—including hypertension awareness, oral care, and period poverty wellness events—to address racial disparities and improve the well-being of children and families in undeserved communities across New York City.

YEAR HIGHLIGHTS



STEM CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITY

Access to high-quality STEM education is essential. Especially for students from low-income and underserved communities. This year, through a partnership with the Queens Borough President's Office, the Deputy Borough President's team, and JetBlue, we opened doors for CUNY students to attend conferences like NSBE, strengthening their skills, confidence, and professional networks.



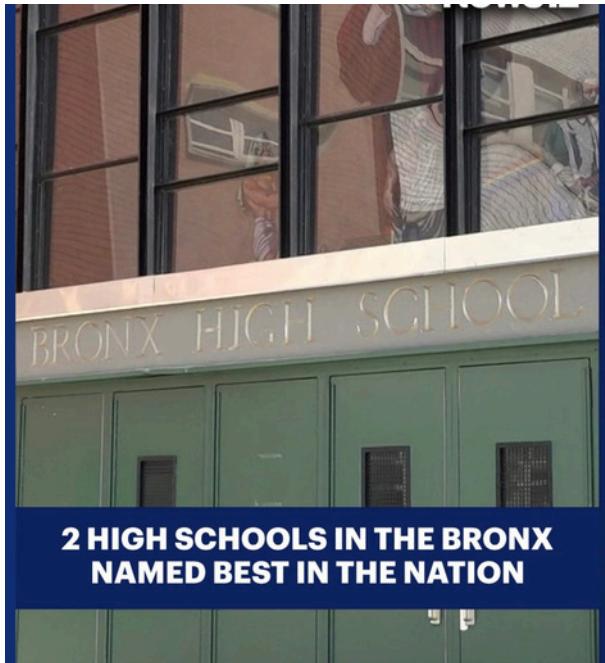
WOMEN HISTORY MONTH

During Women's History Month, BELL Organization and the Queens College Knights Pantry hosted period poverty events at CUNY Queens College. With 60% of CUNY students reporting household incomes under \$30,000, we partnered with companies to assemble care packages and providing essential menstrual supplies and uplifting students with dignity, support, and community care.



STEM LEGO BUILD DAY

This year at South Bronx Charter School for International Cultures & the Arts, we partnered with Pass The Brick ambassadors to donate LEGO sets and host a hands-on STEM LEGO Build Day. Students built, tested, and redesigned creations while strengthening design thinking, spatial reasoning, and teamwork —sparking curiosity and confidence in engineering and innovation.



FREE SHSAT PREPARATION WORKSHOPS

Students of color, particularly Black and Hispanic students, remain significantly underrepresented in New York City's specialized high schools, despite making up a large portion of the city's student body. Admission to most of these schools is determined by the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), which critics argue favors students whose families can afford extensive test preparation, creating an economically discriminatory system and contributing to racial and socioeconomic segregation. Through the free SHSAT workshop hosted by BELL Organization for the students of underserved communities in the Bronx, NYC. In its efforts the two specialized high schools in the Bronx have now been named the Best in the nation which are Bronx High School of Science and High School of American Studies at Lehman College.

CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE



BELL Organization partnered with the employees and staff of the New York State Psychiatric Institute and Columbia University's Department of Psychiatry to host a holiday toy drive benefiting children from families in underserved communities across the Bronx, New York City. This initiative addressed the heightened financial strain many families experience during the holiday season, helping to ensure children could receive gifts and experience the joy and dignity of celebration despite economic challenges.

TOGETHER AGAINST HUNGER



Food insecurity continues to be one of New York City's most urgent equity challenges, especially for families in the Bronx who face the combined pressure of rising grocery costs, high rent burdens, and limited access to affordable, nutritious food. In 2025, many households are still feeling the aftershocks of reduced public benefits, including SNAP reductions tied to the end of pandemic-era emergency allotments. These realities force difficult choices between food, housing, utilities, and healthcare which are deepening disparities and putting health, and long-term mobility at risk.

Recognizing the growing need, BELL strengthened its response to food insecurity by expanding community-based support across NYC. Through partnerships with community organizations, and supporters, we helped connect individuals and families to food resources while promoting dignity, stability, and wellness. In a year when SNAP benefit reductions and ongoing affordability pressures strained household budgets, our work focused on meeting immediate needs and reinforcing longer-term pathways to stability.

19%

Bronx residents experiencing food insecurity

24%

NYC residents who experienced food insecurity in the past year

1.8 mil

NYC residents who rely on SNAP each month



NOURISH NYC

To address these challenges, we launched Nourish NYC. This initiative we, partnered with Bronx Community College pantry , One Love Community Fridge, Riverdale Neighborhood House (The Neighborhood Fridge) and Queens College Pantry.

Our strategy is rooted in community collaboration, youth empowerment, and culturally responsive nutrition education. Here's how:

- **Community Fridge Partnerships:** We work directly with existing and emerging community fridges across NYC. Our team coordinates with local volunteers, families, and donors to keep these fridges stocked with nutritious, culturally familiar foods.
- **Food Curation and Redistribution:** Instead of one-size-fits-all donations, we partner with neighborhood leaders to curate requested items, ensuring that the food provided meets real needs.
- **Youth-Driven Food Literacy:** Through workshops and digital content, we teach students how nutrition affects focus, energy, and mental health—helping them make better food choices for themselves and their families.
- **Volunteer Mobilization:** We engage students, educators, and community members to participate in food drives, fridge stocking events, and awareness campaigns.
- **Emergency Meal Support:** During peak times like summer breaks or public health crises, NourishNYC steps in to provide direct food relief for families in need.

Our funding sources came from fundraising through the launch of our NYC Nourish Gofundme.

MEASURING THE IMPACT



NYC NOURISH OUTCOMES

900,000

people served with the partnership with One Love Community Fridge (OLCF) servicing two fridges in Brooklyn, New York and Riverdale Neighborhood House (RNH) Fridge, also known as The Neighborhood Fridge, serving the entire community, aiming to combat food insecurity by providing free food 24/7.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

700

students served daily at the Queens College Knights Table food pantry

20,000

students served annually at the Bronx Community College food pantry

NEXT STEPS



We intend to expand our NYC Nourish program and network by looking to work with more pantries such as the University of Mount St. Vincent's Vincent Table, meal prep companies, food corporations, restaurants, and supermarkets. Through these strategic partnerships, we aim to increase access to nutritious, culturally responsive meals, reduce food insecurity across underserved communities, and create a sustainable food distribution model that supports families, seniors, and individuals in need throughout New York City.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the partnerships in helping us provide essential food security to those in need across New York City.

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