



## **LEADERSHIP PROFILE**

### **Chief Executive Officer**

### **Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK)**

### **Trenton, NJ**

---

*"People come to TASK because they are hungry. They stay because our meals offer hope and the possibility of a new beginning."*

---

# The Opportunity

Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK) is an exceptional place of hope and impact. As one of Trenton's largest and most effective human service organizations, TASK has fought hunger and poverty by providing over 7 million meals since its founding in 1982. Starting as a volunteer-led effort based in a church basement, TASK has evolved into a dynamic, multifaceted provider of vital resources that serve thousands of men, women and children experiencing food insecurity and barriers to self-sufficiency.

As reflected in its commitment to Radical Hospitality, TASK treats all its patrons with dignity, warmth, and respect. Focused holistically on providing comprehensive support that starts with nutritious food, TASK is much more than a soup kitchen. Its wrap-around services include coaching and case management, education and job readiness, music and art programs, health screenings, identification and mail services, all of which make TASK the "go-to" center that feeds the mind, body and spirit. TASK is dedicated to meeting the immediate needs of its patrons and helping them on their journey to a better life.

Since 2016, Joyce Campbell has served as TASK's CEO. Under her leadership, TASK has become a center of innovation, collaboration and best practices. With her planned retirement due to take effect at year's end, the board of trustees has launched the search for a successor who will lead the organization to even greater impact on behalf of the region's most vulnerable residents.

# The Organization

TASK's vision is *"To be a powerful force in ending hunger and reducing the impact of poverty in the greater Trenton area"*. Through its many services and programs, TASK reaches people in need

As one of Trenton's largest and most effective human service organizations, TASK has fought hunger and poverty by providing over 7 million meals since its founding in 1982.



throughout Trenton as well as across Mercer County and into Bucks County, PA.

With a \$7.5m budget, TASK has been leading the fight against hunger from its main location in Trenton's North Ward and through meals distributed by its 39 partners. New this spring is TASK's [Food Truck](#) which eliminates geographic barriers to access. The increase in food insecurity has meant that the demand for meals has grown rapidly. Currently, TASK provides 11,000 meals per week at its dining room, through community meal sites and from its meal truck.

The staff and volunteers of TASK welcome patrons with a trauma-informed approach. Patrons find a place where they belong and enjoy a warm meal, receive take-home meals, hygiene kits and other supplies, and may participate in many services. Described as an "oasis" and "a family" by patrons, TASK provides:

- [Adult Education](#) classes and tutoring to support patron attainment of GED, US Citizenship, driver's permits and other certifications.
- [Workforce Development](#) for employment and careers through counseling and connections with partners like UPS, Amazon and Sodexo. One onsite program is TASK's [Culinary Academy](#)- a food service employment training program affiliated with [Catalyst Kitchens](#).
- [Case Management](#), As "coach navigators", TASK's team helps patrons resolve problems and roadblocks to their success.
- Patron Services distributes hygiene items, over-the-counter medications, reading glasses, socks, hoodies, and other items to meet basic needs.
- Mail services and a computer lab support patrons who are unhoused or do not have a way to receive mail or access the internet.



Patrons find a place where they belong and enjoy a warm meal, receive take-home meals, hygiene kits and other supplies, and may participate in many services.



- [Creative Arts Programming](#) includes visual arts, music, and creative writing programs and events that feature the talents of patrons. As one TASK team member described, *“Each painting, sculpture, poem, or story reveals something important about the person who created it. If you want to understand patrons, listen to their poetry.”*
- Recognition is another wonderful part of the TASK experience. When a patron visits on their birthday, they receive a specially decorated birthday cake. One patron recently commented that it was the first time anyone recognized her birthday in two decades.

TASK patrons also benefit from strategic partnerships with other community and healthcare organizations to provide:

- Assistance with obtaining county IDs. Many of the patrons have experienced homelessness or otherwise lost access to their identification. TASK helps them attain this fundamental credential for employment and other services.
- Health screenings, vaccination clinics and access to dental care.
- [Capital City Farm](#), located next to TASK provides farm-to-table food, employment, and volunteer opportunities.

TASK’s doctrine and practice of [Radical Hospitality](#)

**Radical Hospitality** goes beyond traditional notions of hospitality, which typically involve being kind and welcoming to guests. Simply put, it is the practice of putting extraordinary effort and emphasis on making people feel welcome. It entails a deep-rooted commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and compassionate environment for all, especially for those who are marginalized, underserved, or experiencing hardship.

## TASK Services in 2023

**495,000** Meals Served  
at **37** Sites in NJ and PA  
(an increase of **200%** since 2017)

**77%** of meals are served  
in Trenton, **23%** served  
outside of Trenton

**82,700** meals  
provided to Seniors

**877** people received  
**1,310** pieces of identification

Case Management helped  
**1,357** individuals

**52** people obtained employment  
and **10** students graduated from  
Emilio’s Culinary Academy

TASK benefitted from  
**21,901** volunteer hours

When a patron walks through the door, they are truly seen, welcomed, supported, respected, and prioritized. TASK employees approach their work with kindness, compassion, and an empathetic understanding of the challenges their patrons face. As CEO Joyce Campbell says- *"TASK staff are humble; no one looks out at the dining room and thinks that could never be them sitting there. They know most of us are one human crisis away from needing help."* Together with the patrons, the staff and volunteers at TASK build a sustained and strong community that focuses on bringing positive change to the lives of individuals.

Another way TASK centers the needs of patrons is through regular surveys and focus groups. As a culture of continuous improvement, TASK uses this data to improve its food offerings and improve its services.

## The Mandate

An organization with a unique ability to pivot and innovate, TASK's dynamic nature was most visible during the COVID-19 epidemic. TASK met the pandemic's challenges (and continuing challenges) with courage, creativity, and excellent results, dramatically increasing meal production and distribution. The care and innovation that permeated this organization were vital to meet the growing number of people in need due to the challenging economy, rising prices and barriers to affordable housing.

The new CEO must leverage TASK's long-standing commitment to excellence and impact and effectively and tactically implement the organization's five-year strategic plan: *Ending Hunger and Reducing the Impact of Poverty (2023-2027)*. The thread throughout the plan is TASK's



### A Meal Can Change a Life

Inspirational TASK video offers a master class in resilience and hope

commitment to equity and dignity. The four strategic priorities are:

- End hunger through the power of nutritious food
- Reduce the impact of poverty through opportunities to thrive
- Strengthen organizational capacity
- Enhance strategic partnerships

**Priorities and challenges for the new CEO include:**

**Embrace complexity:** Leading TASK presents a unique set of challenges inherent to managing a complex, multifaceted organization. TASK operates a wide range of programs and services within an environment of resource constraints. Its work involves numerous stakeholders, including patrons, community partners, donors, volunteers, and government agencies. TASK’s role extends beyond direct service to include advocacy for systemic change, which requires navigating complex political and social landscapes. Leading the TASK team requires fostering a positive, mission-driven culture that motivates and retains staff and volunteers. The CEO must be agile, responsive to emerging needs, and capable of guiding TASK through growth and change. This includes leveraging technology, embracing innovative solutions, and enhancing operational efficiencies.

**Financial stability:** TASK enjoys broad and generous support in the community, and its revenue streams are as diverse as the people it serves. Yet, given increasing demand, TASK faces the challenge of financial sustainability. Excellence and radical hospitality are expensive. As it expands its services, TASK needs to grow its contributed and earned revenue. The new CEO will bring a focus on increases in fundraising and social entrepreneurship, while ensuring fiscal stewardship.



The CEO must be agile, responsive to emerging needs, and capable of guiding TASK through growth and change.



## TASK Hallmark Commitments

- Serving with Dignity, Compassion, and Warmth
- Fostering Equity
- Pursuing Advocacy
- Advancing Thought Leadership

**Operational and financial acumen:** Operational know-how, financial acumen, and resource stewardship are critical. TASK’s next CEO will manage the organization’s resources wisely and lead through growth and challenges. One staff member describes her vision for the new CEO as someone who has “the heart of a social worker and the mind of a businessperson.”

**Relationships and community:** Inside and outside of the buzz of activity in TASK’s dining room, the CEO is the face of the organization. The CEO represents the good work and values of TASK and identifies opportunities for strategic partnerships across the region. It is essential that the CEO enables patrons to share their lived experiences as part of TASK’s transformative narratives. This will allow TASK to connect deeply with stakeholders in the region who can collaborate on solutions and funding. As a natural communicator and coalition-builder, the CEO sees relationships and community connections as the organization’s most critical assets.

**Protect and expand the brand:** TASK has a strong reputation acquired over years of excellent humane service to our patrons, a tenacious search for new and better ways to meet the needs of a rapidly escalating number of patrons, effective use and stewardship of grant and donated funds, and effective advocacy. The new CEO must nurture and expand this key asset.

**Organizational development:** The new CEO will inherit a “can-do” staff that is exceptional in motivation, commitment and creativity, and who increasingly embodies and activates radical hospitality. The CEO must be a strong, equitable, transparent, and inclusive leader who reinforces the culture through every interaction and decision. A trusted leader, the CEO collaborates with the team to face challenges, make data-driven and people-centric decisions, and take calculated risks to grow TASK’s impact.



# The Candidate

The ideal candidate to become TASK's next CEO is someone with successful experience leading nonprofit organizations serving low-income communities and individuals with consistency, excellence, and deep respect for the dignity of every individual. The candidate must bring a demonstrated ability to sustain and strengthen a talented team and a proven ability to sustain and grow broad financial and community support. Experience in working with vulnerable populations is vital. The search committee welcomes interest from prospects who have demonstrated exceptional impact in other environments of comparable complexity. However, it is essential that the CEO embodies both the soul and values underlying TASK's work. The CEO must be a passionate leader who deeply connects with patrons, embraces the tenets of radical hospitality and lives their life in the service of others. The CEO must be a leader who sees this work as a calling, rather than just a job.

**Among other assets, the search committee seeks the following values and characteristics:**

**Empathy:** The CEO will lead with empathy formed by deep respect for patrons, staff, and the broader community. The CEO will deeply understand the realities of poverty and the lives of patrons, including mental health challenges, unemployment, and lack of access to affordable housing.

**Cultural Competency & Resilience:** The CEO will bring experience and sensitivity to TASK's diversity, with a commitment and strong ability to enhance inclusivity and equity. They will thrive in a changing environment, know how to triage, and prioritize, and navigate current and future challenges with resilience and creativity. Given the rising numbers of immigrants to the area, Creole or Spanish-speaking ability is desirable.



The CEO will deeply understand the realities of poverty and the lives of patrons, including mental health challenges, unemployment, and lack of access to affordable housing.



**Passionate Advocate:** The CEO will represent the work of TASK and the needs of the community it serves with government officials, agencies, donors, local businesses and other organizations. A gifted and effective public speaker, the CEO will bring insights from the front lines to advocate for policies and initiatives that address the root causes of food insecurity and poverty. Knowledge of the continuum of care and the region’s service providers is a plus. The CEO will continue the thought leadership of the incumbent and honor TASK’s seat at the table with other changemakers.

**Motivator and Mover:** The CEO’s infectious passion for the mission and tenacious commitment to excellence will attract others to TASK. As an organization that relies on volunteers, the CEO will inspire community members to be part of the solution for their vulnerable neighbors through their time, talent, and treasure.

**Judgment with a “Can Do” Attitude:** Things move fast at TASK! Good judgment, flexibility, and an action orientation are essential to meet the many challenges and opportunities. Decisions must be made with the information on hand and revised as needed. Inaction is not an option.

There is much work ahead for TASK. Growing demand is stretching the organization’s capacity in terms of resources, space, and reach. TASK’s next CEO will join a ready team and engaged and talented Board to lead TASK through current and future challenges and opportunities with collaboration, keen strategy, and sustained growth.

## The Relationships

<p><b>The Chief Executive Officer reports to:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">TASK Board of Trustees</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>And manages a staff of 49 through four direct reports:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• Chief Finance and Administration Officer</li> <li>• Chief Innovation and Programs Officer</li> <li>• Chief Development Officer</li> </ul>
<p><b>While stewarding other important relationships, such as:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local, regional and national program partners &amp; collaborators</li> <li>• Current and potential funders, volunteers and community supporters</li> <li>• Leaders from across corporate, academic, governmental, health, nonprofit and philanthropic communities</li> <li>• Regional and national experts and organizations focused on food insecurity and concomitant factors such as homelessness, mental health, and addiction</li> </ul>

# The Benefits of the Location

TASK's work is experienced all over the region through community partners and its mobile soup kitchen. TASK's headquarters is located on Escher Street in Trenton's North Ward.

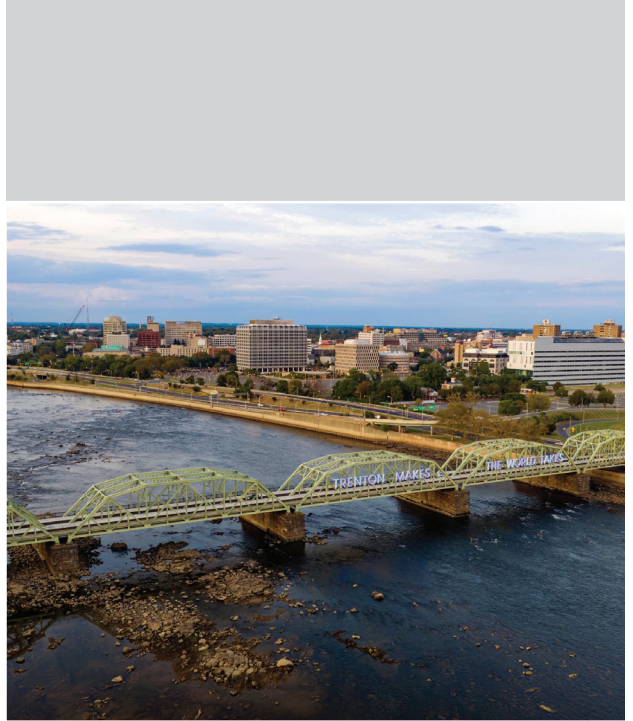
Mercer County, NJ, and Bucks County, PA, offer a unique combination of thriving communities, cultural amenities, and convenient access to major urban centers. It is an ideal location for both personal and professional growth, offering an enriching lifestyle for individuals and families.

**Quality of Life:** Mercer and Bucks Counties are known for their beautiful landscapes. The region is steeped in history, hosts a variety of cultural institutions, and is known for its excellent schools with strong academic programs and extracurricular opportunities. The presence of prestigious institutions like Princeton University, The College of New Jersey, and Rider University enriches the community with educational and cultural events, research opportunities, and intellectual vibrancy. Residents also enjoy a wide array of dining options and numerous festivals, art shows, and music events throughout the year.

Whether you prefer to live in a city, a small town, or a rural area, you will find the right community in close proximity to TASK.

**Proximity to Major Cities:** Mercer and Bucks Counties offer convenient access to Philadelphia and New York City, making it easy to engage with broader business networks. This connectivity also provides residents with additional cultural, dining, and entertainment options.

**Diverse Economy:** The local economy is diverse, with strengths in sectors such as education, healthcare, technology, and finance. Companies like Bristol-Myers Squibb, Johnson & Johnson, and various tech startups contribute to a robust job market.



## Compensation

TASK offers a highly competitive salary and comprehensive benefits package.

---

For potential consideration or to recommend a prospect, please email [TASKCEO@BoardWalkConsulting.com](mailto:TASKCEO@BoardWalkConsulting.com) or call **Michelle Hall** or **Terri Kohan** at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392).

---