



CHAPEL HILL Towntalk

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RESPONDING TO INCREASED FOOD NEEDS

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, **Faith Brodie** (Housing and Community) has been working alongside volunteers from the Town, Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina, PORCH, and others to meet the increased demands of the community. She estimates a growth in food distribution from the typical 235 people on a given day prior to COVID-19, to about 347 households/1563 individuals.

Faith says community service is in

her blood. She says when this is over, she hopes they can continue having larger weekly events that spotlight community gardens, healthy eating, and "feeding both the mind and the soul." She is looking forward to that day.

Faith has been with the Town for eight years and has been the director of Public Housing since 2016. In her career, she has worked to bridge the gap between residents who may feel disassociated or isolated



from Town decisions, and to help make local government accessible to all who need it.

"As we continue to face an unprecedented public health emergency, you are providing exemplary public service. Your dedication is very much appreciated in these stressful and uncertain times. Thank you for all you are doing."

–Town Manager Maurice Jones

EASING FEARS THROUGH EDUCATION

Police Officer Jason Belcher's focus these days is on outreach and education about the Stay at Home order, rather than enforcement.

He stops to talk with people (from an appropriate physical distance) and tries to ease their fears. "We are working through these challenges with them."

Although you don't see many people around town these days, Officer Belcher said he literally feels their presence. They have reached out to first responders like him with meals, supplies and expressions of thanks. It gives him and his colleagues a feeling that "We are a Community."

Belcher, a K9 handler, has worked for the Chapel Hill Police Department for 15 years. During

this time of change and uncertainty, he particularly appreciates the support from community. "It goes a long way," he says.



MAKING A HUMAN CONNECTION

Employees at the Town Call Center are the human connection during crisis. Many times, their most important service is to listen.

Call Center Manager **Anita Badrock** (HRD) explains that while some residents call with service questions and explanations about stay-at-home orders, many are seeking something more. "Sometimes they need someone to talk to, and to talk through their concerns," Badrock said.

"Quality is paramount," she said. "The Call Center staff is so committed to getting answers and doing the

footwork. We've truly made this a solution center, and not a referral center."

While managing all of her normal HRD duties for Transit, Anita herself has also gone above and beyond to coordinate the Call Center. "She is a kind and empathetic team member and very thoughtful in every interaction," said Call Center staff member Maia James.

Like Anita, **Lauren Ryan** (Transit) has helped to coordinate the Call



Center in addition to her normal duties. Throughout technical issues, complicated calls, and many unexpected changes in procedures, she has been positive and supportive of all the call center staff, even calling to check in on their mental and emotional well being.



Like a lot of us Town employees, **Luis Melodelgado** (Library) loves helping people. This makes his

duties at the Call Center especially rewarding. "It is a time of great need," he said. "You can feel that residents truly appreciate an empathetic voice on the other end of the phone."

The collaborative nature of the call center requires his quick thinking

across culture and language. Serving as an interpreter, Luis fields calls from our Spanish speaking residents.

Luis started with the Town two years ago. His typical day was spent sorting and recommending books, doing reference work, and whatever else is needed. Today that whatever else is being a team member on the Call Center, translating communications from Housing and Community and pitching in to help get information to Spanish-speaking community members at the food pickup site at the library.

Town Ambassadors

The Call Center team serve as ambassadors to our community. They represent all of us, from all Town departments. We're proud of them and how they represent us. This is a dedicated team that includes **Mike Campbell, Sarah Wagner, Frances Rapley, Rachel Wood, Maia James and Rachel Bass.**

Every resident is unique and deserves special consideration. This is what **Ji Nichol** (Library) observes about the approach of her fellow employees staffing the Town Call Center.

"I appreciate that the Town makes the effort to make every resident feel like they're being considered in this situation."

Ji serves as a translator, fielding calls from Mandarin speakers. She moved here from China two years ago,

and started her position at the Library only three months before COVID-19 began. Her library

position now has her working on virtual story times with interactive themes, as well as serving on the Call Center.



How to use a face covering



Clean your hands before putting on a face covering. Be careful not to touch eyes, nose and mouth. Covering should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.

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