TRENTON

TASK earns 4 stars from Charity Navigator

The Trenton Area Soup Kitchen is proud to announce its perfect 100 rating by Charity Navigator, the country’s leading independent evaluator of nonprofits.

While TASK has received Charity Navigator’s highest, 4-star, rating 9 out of the past 10 years, this is the first time it has been awarded a perfect score of 100. TASK is honored to be among the top 1 percent of the charities nationwide Charity Navigator rates every year. Joyce Campbell, executive director of TASK, said, “This 4-star rating and perfect score are a wonderful tribute to the dedication of TASK staff, volunteers and the community. I am honored to be at the helm of TASK.”

Charity Navigator, whose mission is to “make impactful philanthropy easier for all,” explains the meaning of its rating system: “Our ratings provide clear, objective, and reliable assessments of both the financial health and accountability and transparency of charities. Donors can be more confident that in supporting those charities rated highly by Charity Navigator, they will be supporting organizations that are more financially healthy, accountable, and transparent.”

A 4-star rating indicates, according to Charity Navigator, that a nonprofit “exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause.” Board member Salim Manzar reacted to the news that TASK has received the highest possible score: “This well-earned recognition reflects on the passion, seriousness and quality of TASK management to implement best practices and the policies, procedures and controls directed by the board. This is what goes into establishing and maintaining a quality organization, as confirmed by the 4-star rating and 100 score.”

The recognition is especially important now, giving TASK the visibility it needs while in the midst of its “Building into the Future” capital campaign. With the help of an anonymous donor who has offered a $450,000 challenge matching grant, it is raising the money it needs to complete a $1.3 million expansion to its facility on Escher Street in Trenton that will break ground this fall. It is 35 percent toward its fundraising goal.

The 3,300-square-foot wing will alleviate the pressure for space caused by TASK’s growing programs. The addition to TASK’s facility will increase dining room seating and space for food storage and preparation, and accommodate the soup kitchen’s growing programs, such as adult education, the arts SHARE Program, case management, and the computer lab. It will add space for patrons to meet with service providers in private, for volunteers to keep personal effects and dress for food service, and for personal care product and holiday giveaways.

TASK is grateful for the strong support from its large corps of volunteers and loyal donors it enjoys. Approximately 4,000 volunteers serve meals and tutor adult students. Individual donors contribute nearly half of the funds TASK needs to serve its patrons, with foundations, corporations, religious organizations and other groups and government entities providing the other half. One of the strengths of TASK is that 86.8 percent of its funding is spent on the programs and services it delivers. The CharityNavigator.org website provides complete details.

The Trenton Area Soup Kitchen is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization based in Trenton. Its mission is to feed the hungry and offer programs to encourage self-sufficiency and increase the quality of life of its patrons. TASK served its first 40,000 meals in 1982. Today, 35 years later, TASK provides more than 300,000 meals a year to people in need who live in and around Trenton. TASK has added 14 partner satellite locations that feed people who live too far to walk to TASK and enrolled more than 900 students who don’t have enough to eat on the weekends in Send Hunger Packing, a program that partners with Mercer Street Friends and 24 area schools, with more partners expected to join the program soon.

TASK also offers an array of free programs to encourage self-sufficiency, including adult education.