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Celebrating Women's History Month at God's Love

By [Karen Pearl, President & CEO](#)

March is Women's History Month. We at God's Love are grateful to all the women we have been honored to work with, learn from and grow with; each one having made a profound impact on our life-affirming work. Across departments, in leadership positions, as donors, and in every volunteer shift, women have helped make God's Love the place that it is, ensuring that our clients living with illness can count on us when they need us most. This month we'll introduce you to our leaders in our 35-year history, as well as some special women who have made enormous contributions along the way.

Ganga Stone and Jane Best

Watch Ganga Stone in our video from 1991

In 1985, Ganga Stone brought a meal to an AIDS patient, Richard Sale, who was too ill to cook for himself. She realized that something as basic as delivering a meal could bring dignity and recognition to a desperate situation. The severity of Richard's situation demanded something more than simply delivering food. It required preparing nutritionally-tailored meals that would support an individual's specific medical treatment. On her way again, with a new meal in hand, she was stopped by a minister in the neighborhood who recognized her. He asked what she was doing, she told him, and he replied: "you're not just delivering food... you're delivering God's Love." And Ganga said, "That's the name." With Jane Best, God's Love We Deliver was founded.

Kathy Spahn

Watch Kathy Spahn celebrate our 1 millionth meal

In May of 1994, Kathy Spahn was named the second Executive Director of God's Love We Deliver. During her six years at the helm, God's Love continued to grow and achieve new heights. In 1995, we delivered our one millionth meal and moved into our new home in SoHo. In 1997, we delivered our two millionth meal and our volunteer program grew and thrived. And, by the end of Kathy's tenure, we were cooking and delivering meals to more than 1,000 clients daily for the first time. We are grateful for Kathy's leadership and dedication.

Nancy Mahon

Watch Nancy speak on World AIDS Day during our 20th Anniversary in 2005

Nancy Mahon joined God's Love in 1995 as a member of the Board of Directors. Then, in April 2000, she was named the third Executive Director in the history of the organization. During Nancy's tenure, God' Love made a number of critical program improvements that stand to this day, including expanding the mission to include all life-altering illnesses, beginning delivery of frozen meals and the launch of our Healthcare Partners initiative. In 2004, Nancy oversaw the move of our kitchen to Long Island City while we renovated our SoHo kitchen. This renovation grew capacity by 66% and laid the infrastructure for our future growth. Other significant milestones include the expansion of services to two AIDS service organizations in New Jersey and the celebration of our 30th Anniversary. In 2007, Nancy left God's Love but didn't really go far, as she became the head of one of our most important funders, the M□A□C VivaGlam Fund.

Karen Pearl

Karen Pearl has been President & CEO of God's Love We Deliver since 2006. God's Love addresses food insecurity and illness by providing medically tailored meals and medical nutrition therapy to people living with severe illness in the NYC metro area. During her tenure, the services at God's Love have more than tripled, with 2.5 million meals cooked and home-delivered each year, with the support of 17,000 volunteers annually. God's Love operates with an annual budget of \$25 million, of which 65% is raised through private philanthropy.

Karen is the Chair of the Food Is Medicine Coalition, a national association of nonprofit, medically tailored food and nutrition services providers advocating for the integration of these services into healthcare for the critically and/or chronically ill.

Under Karen's leadership, God's Love was the winner of a New York Times Nonprofit Excellence award in 2010, and a winner of the New York State Department of Health Social Determinants of Health Innovation Award in 2018. During COVID-19, God's Love was recognized as an Essential Services Provider, never missing a delivery.

In 2018, Karen received a City/State Women's Leadership Award, and in 2019, was named one of Crain's Notable Women in Health Care.

Joan Rivers

Watch our tribute to Joan Rivers

The late, great Joan Rivers was a beloved friend of God's Love for over 25 years, demonstrating deep commitment, compassion and generosity. For years, she supported the Race to Deliver, bringing her energy, voice and laughter to Central Park on those early November mornings to support our runners, teams and friends. Joan volunteered every Thanksgiving, bringing her daughter Melissa and her grandson Cooper with her. Each year, she delivered holiday meals to our clients, surprising them with jokes, bringing warmth and care and brightening the holiday for so many. In 2009, she won over \$500,000 for God's Love in the NBC reality competition, *Celebrity Apprentice*. In honor and commemoration of our dear friend, we named the bakery in our building The Joan Rivers Bakery. Joan brought love, compassion and humor to every delivery she made and every event she supported. Joan's impact on God's Love will be felt always by our clients, volunteers, staff and supporters. As we celebrate 35 years, we celebrate our many years with Joan, who will be forever in our hearts.

Blaine Trump

Watch Blaine Trump speak with Chuck Scarborough on NY Nightly News in celebration of our 10 millionth meal

The incomparable Blaine Trump has been a devoted friend and supporter to God's Love for more than 30 years. Blaine was there with our founder Ganga Stone in the early days, at the forefront of the AIDS pandemic, meeting the challenge head on. As one of our earliest Board members, and the only person ever appointed to a lifetime Board seat, Blaine has helped guide the organization through years of change and growth. From a church basement on the Upper West Side, to the Youth Hostel, to our home in SoHo, with stints in Queens and Brooklyn in between, Blaine has seen it all and done it all. She's hosted countless dinners and cocktail parties to benefit God's Love and introduced us to more supporters than can be counted. Her steadfast dedication to our mission, volunteers, staff, supporters, and especially our clients, has been remarkable and has helped make God's Love the wonderful place that it is today.

Sylvia Vogelmann

Watch Sylvia in a 1994 interview about her volunteerism

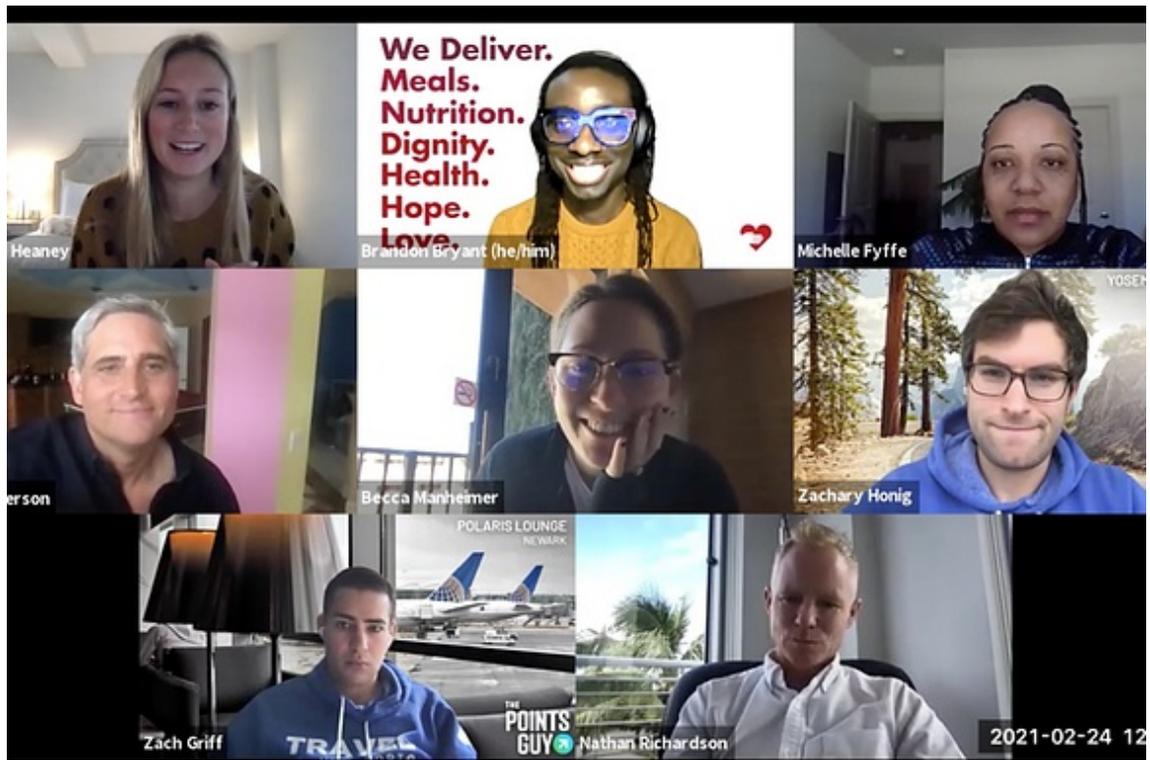
Sylvia Vogelmann is the ultimate God's Love We Deliver volunteer. She began working in our kitchen on the Tuesday morning crew in 1992. In 1995, Sylvia joined the Board of Directors and served for 15 amazing years, eventually as Board Co-chair. She currently serves God's Love as a member of the Board of Trustees. Sylvia is a tireless ambassador for our mission. She is a true champion for all God's Love staff, volunteers, and clients. While Sylvia has seen many changes at God's Love over the years, one thing remains the same: her undying commitment to seeing that our clients are served, without pretense, without charge, without fail.

Hear Sylvia reflect on her decades with God's Love in her audio interview [here](#).

Thank you

Thank you to all the women who have made God's Love the place that it has grown to be in our 35 years. Thank you for your gifts of time, talent, and treasure, for your care and for every contribution. We would not be where we are without all of you.

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Recently, I was invited by Clint Henderson, God's Love volunteer and Senior News Editor at The Points Guy (TPG), to present during one of their monthly sessions called TPG: Charity Chats, an opportunity for TPG employees to l...



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