

## God's Garden of Grace helps Mission of Love Food HUB Feed the Slate Belt

By Michael Ortoski / BVTimes & Lucy Hahn / St. Peter's Lutheran Church  
BANGOR - We at Mission of Love Food HUB (MLFH) have been blessed by the donations over the years from St. Peter's Lutheran Church's 'God's Garden of Grace' mission to help feed the people in need. The photos in this article are just a glimpse of the magnitude of their garden and the amount of time the volunteers have to put in for the bounty harvest. See for yourself when you drive by the church.

MLFH has grown from a food bank to a 'Food HUB' over the last four years serving not just 300 families every Tuesday at their Bangor location, but serving other Slate Belt food banks and three area schools thanks to Northampton County funding.

In April 2012 a 9,000 square foot area was prepared and fenced off to convert yard into garden which was later expanded to ¼ acre. This was created to support the local food banks with fresh produce as part of our outreach program. The garden is supported by an average of 15 volunteers, providing 700-800 hours of volunteer time in addition to approximately 500 hours in preparation and support.

The garden grows a large variety of produce from purchased seeds, plants and plant donations from Filchner's Plant and Produce. Beets, beans, eggplant, cucumbers, broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, onions, tomatoes, and squash are just a few of the vegetables we grow.

The garden delivers fresh produce to local food pantries based on the number of people they service. Bender's Mennonite Church, Hope UCC Food Pantry, Mission of Love Food HUB and Pleasant Valley Ecumenical Network are our primary customers.

From inception through 2025, we have grown approximately 77.8 tons and received approximately 20.6 tons of donations, all of which was delivered to our local food pantries for distribution.

*Continued on page 3*



## 43 Future Physicians Take First Step in Medical Careers

By Sam Kennedy

LEHIGH VALLEY - The Temple/St. Luke's School of Medicine Class of 2030 was honored Friday, Aug. 7, during the 2026 White Coat Ceremony at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Forty-three first-year medical students who will complete all four years of their medical education at Bethlehem-based Temple/St. Luke's received their white coats, a long-standing symbol of their entry into the medical profession and commitment to patient care.

Among this year's class are several students with deep ties to the Lehigh Valley, including Saucon Valley native MacKenzie Johnstone and Northampton native Anthony Aulisio. Both students bring personal experiences that inspired their pursuit of medicine and, ultimately, their decision to train close to home.

Johnstone, who was born with the rare genetic condition Kartagener's Syndrome, received much of her medical care through St. Luke's while growing up. Those experiences helped shape her interest in medicine and fostered an appreciation for the physicians who guided her care.

"I am incredibly excited to begin medical school in the community where I grew up. Training at St. Luke's is especially meaningful because it gives me the opportunity to learn within the same health system that has cared for my family and me for many years," shared Johnstone. "I look forward to learning from outstanding physicians, serving the Lehigh Valley community, and developing the knowledge, skills, and compassion needed to become an excellent physician."

For Aulisio, the journey is equally personal. Born at St. Luke's, he first discovered his passion for medicine while serving as an EMT at a summer camp for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Additional volunteer work in Honduras, where he helped provide health education in a community with limited access to care,

*Continued on page 11*



L-R Anthony Aulisio (Northampton native), MacKenzie Johnstone (Saucon Valley native)



Bruch Family Eye Care  
Ribbon Cutting  
Page 8



Senator Lindsey Graham  
Ceremony  
Page 12



Pa. Has New Tools to Solve  
Violent Crimes  
Page 7