



My name is Jenny Portela and I am currently a junior at Red Bank Catholic High School and a 2018 graduate of Saint James School. I am reaching out to the Saint James community on behalf of a local, grass roots organization called Compañeros de Comida. My good friend, Charlotte Stant, a senior at RFH, started this grassroots organization, and I am currently training to take over as president once Charlotte goes to college next year.

How it all began....

In the height of the Covid-19 pandemic Charlotte gathered together a group of friends from local high schools and held a food drive for families in the greater Red Bank area who were unable to attend local food banks due to illness or transportation issues. This food drive in April would grow into Compañeros de Comida which now serves over 90 families and helped 50 achieve food security. Compañeros de Comida is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation run entirely by student volunteers. Each Saturday this small group of students come together to sort and distribute a week's worth of food.

Compañeros de Comida allows families in need to receive food directly without ever leaving their home. During the holiday season the organization also successfully ran its first annual toy drive that provided Christmas presents for over 200 local children. Below there are pictures of volunteers sorting and delivering food and working a carwash from which all profits went directly to purchasing food for Compañeros de Comida families. You can learn more about Compañeros de Comida and ways to help by visiting their website at <https://www.companerosdecomida.org>. You can also follow their progress on instagram or facebook [@companerosdecomida](https://www.instagram.com/companerosdecomida).

