

SHARE COMMUNITY BUILDERS: PAM BARKER



Pam Barker has been participating with the SHARE food program since 1984. Why? "Great food and you can't beat the prices!" states Pam. In addition, Pam likes the sense of community service that is so integral to SHARE. Pam lives in North Philadelphia, not far from the SHARE center in Hunting Park. Providing two hours of community service each month to be eligible for the SHARE food program was not a problem, because Pam had been helping in her community for as long as she can remember. Pam's mother was a nurse at a retirement home, and volunteers were always needed to read to and chat with the seniors. She continued to volunteer through her church and currently coordinates the "cry room," - a special room where parents can take their cranky babies and still see the church service through a glass partition. She also delivers SHARE food packages to some of her elderly home-bound neighbors.

When Pam started with SHARE she was living with her husband and six children. With only one income, the Barkers were struggling to keep food on the table -especially meat and

fresh fruits and vegetables. SHARE became her made food source. Over the years, SHARE has provided top quality, "brand-name" foods like chicken, ground turkey, pork, and fresh produce.

Pam tells everyone she can about how wonderful SHARE is, and encourages everyone

"SHARE has always enabled me to keep my freezer full..."

in the neighborhood to at least give it a try. After their first food package, they are hooked. Currently three of her sisters and three of her daughters participate.

Pam followed in her mother's foot steps and has been working for the past six years as a home health aide, caring for seniors. She lives with 4 grandchildren who are all benefiting from a kitchen stocked with healthy SHARE food. Pam gets the regular SHARE package - \$30 of food for \$15- which contains things Pam cooks regularly like turkey breast, chicken legs, sausage, pork chops, onions, and tomatoes. In fact, when Pam brings the SHARE package home each month, the kids all rush in to see what new foods are inside. Pam likes to prepare colorful arrays of fruits and vegetables that her grandchildren enjoy. Shameera, 9, won't eat cabbage or greens, but she loves broccoli and string beans.

As Pam says, "SHARE has always enabled me to keep my freezer full." This is important to Pam because when she was a girl, many times her family had to go to bed hungry with only oatmeal or toast for dinner. Just as Pam sees herself as a "nurturer," she knows that with SHARE, her family and her community can work together to nurture healthy minds and bodies.