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Urban Appeals to Diners for Shut-Ins

July 06, 2004

By Deanna Zammit

NEW YORK Urban Advertising this month will paper midtown, the Upper West Side and SoHo here with a pro-bono campaign for City Meals on Wheels in an attempt to involve young diners in the program.



The new "comfort food"

CMW, which has been delivering meals to the homebound elderly since 1979, has not done a good job of reaching young, middle-income singles in New York, said shop principal Bernard Urban. The wild posting campaign aims to change that, he said.

"We're trying to reach the younger people still in the city during the summer, the people who don't have the money to go to the Hamptons ... who might make a small donation to the organization or give some of their time," Urban said.

Three ads created since the New York shop took on the job in June picture close-up portraits of elderly persons. In one, copy asks, "Did you ever think the face of hunger could look like your grandfather?" Another states, "Hate waiting 45 minutes for a table? Imagine waiting all weekend for a meal." The third says, "For too many New Yorkers, any food is comfort food."

Ads then ask New Yorkers to "Help City Meals on Wheels make sure that New York's homebound elderly don't go hungry."

Urban said he was inspired by a *New York Times* article that cited potential funding cuts that threaten to significantly reduce the frequency of food deliveries. The campaign is aimed at attracting more volunteers to the program, Urban said.

"It just seemed crazy to me that in a city as food obsessed as New York these people could be in danger of losing not only the meals they rely on, but the human connection that comes with them," said Urban. "Why drop \$200 on dinner? Skip a meal one time and give the \$200 to Meals on Wheels."

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