



CHITOSE SUZUKI

← **TINA GRUENE** (CAS'12) (right) and Kati McKinney (CGS'10, COM'12) make their weekly run for Student Food Rescue.

# We Deliver

CAROL REID DELICATELY extracts bagels from a bag, then moves on to pastry boxes filled with marble bread, coffee cake, and blueberry muffins, arranging them on paper doilies set on cafeteria-style trays.

“Presentation is everything,” she says.

For five years, with the help of BU’s Student Food Rescue (SFR), Reid has coordinated a food pantry every Wednesday afternoon for her neighbors at Castle Square Apartments.

**WEB EXTRA**  
Watch a video about BU’s Student Food Rescue at [bu.edu/bostonia](http://bu.edu/bostonia).

The 500-unit complex in Boston’s South End houses 1,400 residents, a mix of locals and internationals from China, Somalia, Russia, Kenya, and other countries. Many are elderly, and 90 percent qualify for subsidized housing.

Medical problems all but emptied Reid’s bank account 10 years ago, and she could no longer afford rent. An advocate at Women’s Lunch Place, a Boston daytime shelter that serves homeless women and their children, helped her back on her feet and found her a spot at Castle Square. Today Reid says she wouldn’t want to live anywhere else.

Food at Castle Square’s weekly pantry is delivered by SFR, a BU Community Service Center food salvage program, named best in America in 2005 by the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness.

Every week throughout the year, SFR organizes approximately 18 food runs. Each is operated by two to four volunteers, who pick up breads, pastries, canned goods, and beverages from 15 local restaurants, markets, kitchens, and

*Volunteers deliver breads, canned goods, and beverages, saving 100,000 pounds of food per year*

bakeries (including the George Sherman Union kitchen) and deliver the goods to 12 nearby food pantries and shelters. Their efforts save approximately 100,000 pounds of food each year.

“Breads and pastries are unsold items from the night before, food that vendors would have discarded,” says SFR coordinator Julie de Jesus (CAS’11). “Canned goods may have dents or are considered overstock, but none have expired.”

On a Wednesday at 10 a.m., SFR volunteers Tina Gruene (CAS’12) and Kati McKinney (CGS’10, COM’12) meet at the Fuller Building on Commonwealth Avenue and climb into a dented 15-passenger silver

van. While McKinney backs up the behemoth, a vehicle she says is “not intended for Boston’s narrow streets,” Gruene reads directions for each location, a job she’s happy to take on. “I don’t have a U.S. driver’s license,” says Gruene, a foreign exchange student from Germany.

After they load the van with boxes of baked goods from Starbucks and Whole Foods, Gruene and McKinney drive to Castle Square, where Reid greets them warmly.

Residents trickle in and out, leaving with loaves of bread and other items under their arms or stashed in reusable shopping bags.

“We get to help people while seeing different parts of the city and making friends,” says McKinney. “The commitment is only two hours a week, so why wouldn’t anyone want to do it?” **ROBIN BERGHAUS**