

MAKING SURE STUDENTS OF ALL AGES ARE NOURISHED AND READY TO LEARN

From kindergarten to college, The Open Door Mobile Market program, a free farmers market, is making sure students of all ages are nourished and ready to learn with new sites at North Shore Community College (NSCC) in Danvers, and Winthrop School in Ipswich.

ON CAMPUS

RESPONDING TO A 2016 NSCC Hunger Survey that identified almost 54 percent of students having high or very high levels of food insecurity with 38 percent skipping meals, NSCC reached out to partners The Open Door, Greater Boston Food Bank, and Beverly Bootstraps to provide healthy fruits, vegetables, and protein choices along with nutrition education and outreach. The Open Door and Beverly Bootstraps are alternating providers every other month, and currently 400 student households are registered.

“Mobile Market is strengthening our community and meeting critical nutritional needs to ensure the continued health of our most vulnerable neighbors,” says The Open Door Executive Director Julie LaFontaine. Basic needs, including food

access, have been identified as a social determinant of health, and with students, a factor in learning too.

“WE WERE QUITE shocked and disturbed by these findings,” said NSCC President Patricia Gentile referring to the Hunger Survey that in addition to high food insecurity revealed that 20 percent of students do not have permanent housing. “Students cannot study or achieve academic success if they are hungry.” Since beginning Mobile Market in the fall, “students are now enjoying about 3,500 pounds of fresh produce at each market.”

The 2016 NSCC Hunger Survey identified students from Gloucester, Lynn, Saugus and Salem as the most vulnerable with 62–93 percent of students from

those cities needing nutrition support services.

IN IPSWICH

SINCE THE beginning of the school year, our second expansion Mobile Market site at Winthrop School has been in full gear, along with a new PowerSnack program that provides healthy snacks to children during the school day. Now “kids aren’t worrying about how hungry they feel,” says Principal Sheila McAdams, and teachers “aren’t worrying about filling empty bellies. It leaves a full day of learning.”

Students volunteer setting up their Mobile Market, and painting bowls for



Image courtesy of Bryan Satter / Wicked Local

the Ipswich Lions Empty Bowl Dinner that supports The Open Door. These programs “have filled many needs for our vulnerable families,” she says, and “have also brought the concept of helping others, empathy and service.”

Just last week at Winthrop Mobile Market a participant said, “thank goodness for Mobile Market. I was just choosing between paying my rent, or grocery shopping, but now I have lunch for Friday.”

With Mobile Market at Winthrop School Principal, Sheila McAdams says “everyone can celebrate around food—barriers are removed—so all families can join in.”

Isn’t that what the Holidays are all about?



Top Right: Winthrop Mobile Market.

Above: North Shore Community College Mobile Market



‘TIS THE SEASON! It is a time for giving thanks and giving to others. It is a time for making new memories and honoring old traditions around the table with family and friends. For the more than 7,000 people who come to The Open Door food pantries and programs in Gloucester and Ipswich, it’s no different. Except, without a little help from The Open Door, many wouldn’t have enough good food to eat or to celebrate with their families.

I’m often asked what our greatest challenge is here at The Open Door. It’s always making sure we have enough good nutritious food. Last year we provided a record 1,398,837 pounds of good food to 6,917 people, and we’re seeing more people coming to us all the time.

Our year-end fundraising goal is in sight, but we aren’t quite there yet. In addition to food, we must raise every dollar in our budget to keep our commercial kitchen in top shape, our food pantries clean and well stocked, our refrigerators and freezers in working order, our food rescue fleet on the road, and our staff ready to serve all who come in need.

The Open Door team is deeply grateful for a community that responds with such compassion and generous gifts to keep our shelves stocked with good food.

Can we count on you to help us again?

We are asking for your support so we can help our neighbors on Cape Ann and in our North Shore communities have enough good food at the holidays and all year long. Please consider donating to The Open Door as you plan your year-end giving.

Blessings of the season to you and yours,

Julie LaFontaine, Executive Director

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978-283-6776



OUR MISSION

The mission of The Open Door is to alleviate the impact of hunger in our community. We use practical strategies to connect people to good food, to advocate on behalf of those in need, and to engage others in the work of building food security.

WHAT WE DO

- Food Pantry
- Community Meals
- Summer Meals
- Mobile Market
- Holiday Baskets
- SNAP Assistance
- Nutrition Education & Outreach
- Second Glance Thrift Store
- PowerSnack
- Senior Soup & Salad
- Advocacy
- Community Service
- Garden Project
- Good Food Box
- Cooking Classes
- On Your Mark Job Training
- Food Rescue

Make a difference in the lives of hungry people ALL year long.



Sign up for a monthly
GOOD EGG CLUB
donation online at
www.foodpantry.org/donate

Life Changed Overnight

Elise Sinagra, Director of Marketing at Seacoast Nursing and Rehabilitation (Lahey Health) used The Open Door Food Pantry as a student in her 20s, and later when she suddenly became a single parent.

AS A STRUGGLING STUDENT AT North Shore Community College and Simmons College, she often went hungry.

“On the bad days, when my schedule hadn’t allowed for a food pantry visit, I would buy a big bag of Rolled Gold pretzels and I’d eat a third of the bag for breakfast and a third for lunch and a third for dinner.”

Without any family support, she graduated college in four years, and went to work in marketing. She put her pantry visits behind her. All was going well until 10 years ago, while studying for a Master of Social Work (MSW) at Salem State, she suddenly became a single parent overnight by taking in her two nieces from the South Carolina foster care system.

THE FIRST THING HER NIECES SAID when she picked them up was “Auntie, can we get something to eat? We’re starving.” Elise knew it to be true, as the girls had been knocking on doors around the neighborhood, asking for food.

Even though she was going to school full time, and working,



Above: Fresh produce and dairy at The Open Door Food Pantry.
Below: Elise Sinagra, speaker at 2017 Autumn Breakfast.

and raising her nieces “thanks to the food pantry my nieces were never hungry,” said Elise. “They didn’t even realize they were eating from the pantry. I got frozen meats, eggs, sometimes seafood, fresh vegetables. It was enough. It was exactly what we needed.

Support from The Open Door



helped her raise her nieces, and complete her MSW. As a social worker, Elise has helped vulnerable people with basic needs, helped immigrants with their education, worked on a new family homeless shelter program, and helped seniors with their healthcare options.

“I didn’t give up on my goal, and now, thanks to that MSW, I earn more than a paycheck.”

“THE OPEN DOOR PROVIDES SO much more than food. They provided me dignity. They provide the basis for folks to live lives of meaning. And for that, I will be eternally grateful.”

Our Award Winning Volunteers

Every year at The Open Door Autumn Breakfast, we honor volunteers and community partners that share their time, talent and engagement to nourish our community.

Helen Muise was a faithful volunteer who ruled the kitchen with a wooden spoon and ninety-eight pounds of determination. Recipients of this award must have volunteered more than 40 hours in the last 12 months, and must possess the qualities of service that we so fondly remember of Helen.

Helen Muise Award 2017 Recipients



ALICE AND
DAVID HOAG

Food Pantry,
Senior Soup
and Salad



FRED FREDRICK

Community
Meals



KATIE
MARTIN

Second Glance
Thrift Store

Rotary's motto is "Service Above Self" and we honor the local Rotary Clubs that practice that motto with service to The Open Door.

Whether serving meals, painting a building, collecting diapers, staffing a food drive, or financially supporting, the Rotary Clubs of Cape Ann and Ipswich know how to get a job done.



Outstanding Community Partner Award



Rotary

Gloucester Rotary

Ipswich Rotary

Manchester-Essex Rotary

Rockport Rotary

Feeding People



JENNY, 51, AND HER FAMILY

“On Monday, we literally had just \$7 to last us until Thursday. My mother, who sometimes helps out, was digging in her purse for quarters.”

Jenny is married with two teenage children. When she got sick and lost her job, she cashed in her retirement savings and depleted their funds “before we really understood we were poor.” Now she works two part-time jobs and her husband works full-time. She plans two meatless meals a week, and keeps to a \$400 monthly grocery bill for her family. “It may seem like a lot, but with two teenagers, it’s not enough.” Without help from The Open Door Jenny says, “I don’t know what would happen to my family.”

BRENDA, 69, AND JOHN, 75

When Brenda and John were in their 50s, with secure jobs in a machine shop, they saved money, and bought a home in Gloucester. Ten years ago, the company moved to Mexico. Now retired, and living on social security alone, with a mortgage of \$1,749 a month, they budget, clip coupons, use their SNAP (Food Stamps), and come to the food pantry to make sure John has a diabetes-healthy diet every day. Before coming to The Open Door, Brenda said they had enough to not be hungry, but “not what you need for a healthy diet.” Without The Open Door, they wouldn’t have fresh fruits and vegetables because they “are just too expensive.”

“What we had for years was good. We didn’t worry about having enough to eat.”



On Your Mark Program Sees First Grads

Congratulations to the first graduates of The Open Door’s On Your Mark opportunity youth culinary and retail job training program.



Students Ben Shrimpton, Carissa Luce, and Tyrell Moulton



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in our community with a **ONE-TIME**
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 Other \$ _____

Good Egg Pledge

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community year-round with a
MONTHLY Good Egg donation.

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Donate online at www.foodpantry.org/donate or make check payable to **The Open Door**.

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