



The Open Door  
Walk to End Hunger

# Team Captain Toolkit



**Thank you for registering to be a Team Captain for The Open Door and the Walk to End Hunger this Thanksgiving!**



The Open Door is dedicated to ending local hunger through access to healthy food. The Open Door serves more than 5,000 Dakota Country residents each month, and distributes over 1 million pounds of food annually, 60% of which is fresh and/or perishable. By joining The Open Door's Walk to End Hunger team you help provide food to those in need throughout Dakota County this holiday season.

**This Team Captain Toolkit is designed to help you prepare for the Walk to End Hunger. It includes:**

- Ideas to engage your team prior to and day of the Walk to End Hunger.
- Tips on asking others to join your team (or make a contribution if they are unable to join you day of the Walk).
- Things we think you would want to know about the Walk to End Hunger event (e.g., where to park at MOA, activities that morning, how to get a t-shirt, etc.)
- Key facts about hunger and The Open Door for you to share with family, friends, neighbors and coworkers.

**As Team Captain The Open Door asks that you:**

1. Register as Team Captain through the Walk to End Hunger website and select The Open Door as the beneficiary agency (all money that you and your team raise will go directly to The Open Door).  
[www.walktoendhunger.org](http://www.walktoendhunger.org)
2. Ask your team members to also register (Hunger Fighter adult fee is \$25/walker pre-event and \$35 day-of event; Hunger Fighter Jr fee is FREE children under 18 years) and walk with you on Thanksgiving Morning.
3. Find us at the Walk to End Hunger so we can say THANK YOU and get a photo together with your team.
4. Engage your team in hunger relief efforts beyond Thanksgiving morning (see 'Ideas to Engage your Team').
5. Have FUN! Dress up like a turkey, wear matching outfits, participate in all the Fun Zone activities, do what it takes to enjoy your accomplishments as a team.



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### Ideas to Engage your Team:

#### 1. Invite your team members to volunteer with The Open Door.

What better way to get someone involved in fighting hunger than by participating in a volunteer opportunity with The Open Door!

- Find our group volunteer opportunities by going to our website [www.theopendoorpantry.org/get-involved](http://www.theopendoorpantry.org/get-involved) and choose group volunteers. Can't find what you are looking for? Contact Sarah O'Brien at 651-888-0630.
- A typical group volunteering activity includes:
  - 5 min. introduction to staff and organization
  - 10 min. tour and Q & A
  - 2-3 hour volunteer activity
  - 5 min. photo opp and send off
- Volunteering together creates fellowship and lasting memories while doing good work in the community. Volunteering together as a team prior to the Walk to End Hunger will unify your team and make the walk more meaningful Thanksgiving morning. Volunteering at The Open Door before the Walk will allow team members to know who we are and what we do, making their walk more meaningful.

#### 2. Invite your team to host a food and fund drive prior to the Walk to End Hunger.

This is a direct and impactful way to make a difference in your community by collecting food and funds to support those experiencing food insecurity and hunger in Dakota County.

- Organize your team to collect food and fund. Set a timeframe (e.g., one week, one month, etc.) and a goal (e.g., we will collect \$100 and 100 pounds). Narrow your food focus and collect 1-5 items. A theme (peanut butter drive) or a few of our "TOP 5" needed items is easy to remember when grocery shopping. Download our TOP 5, personal hygiene and household products list, or our suggested food list for ideas at [www.theopendoorpantry.org/how-to-give](http://www.theopendoorpantry.org/how-to-give).
- Choose a drop-off date to bring your food and funds to The Open Door. Arrive together and receive a tour of the pantry, a Q & A with staff and a photo opp.
- Celebrate your food and fund drive success at the Walk to End Hunger (Cinnabon and Starbucks are open at the MOA Thanksgiving morning – reward yourself!)

#### 3. Is your team already committed to the hunger relief cause?

Do you already volunteer and host food and fund drives? If so, consider ADVOCACY. Advocacy is important to The Open Door's work in fighting hunger in Dakota County. The Walk to End Hunger was formed as part of the Minnesota Hunger Initiative (formerly the Twin Cities Hunger Initiative), a collaboration of hunger relief organizations that have developed a definitive plan to eliminate hunger in the Twin Cities and across the state of Minnesota.

- Invite your team members to become advocates for strong anti-hunger policies by:
  - Understand your local representative's position on SNAP. Here is a link to your find your representative:  
<https://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/districtfinder>
  - Join the Voice of Hunger Network <http://mnhungerinitiative.org/contact-us/>
  - Participate in Hunger Day on the Hill <http://mnhungerinitiative.org/hunger-day-on-the-hill/>
  - Speaking up and sharing your story to a legislator puts a human face to the issue of hunger. In-person visits with constituents are very influential to legislators and the progress of passing a bill. You don't have to be an expert on the issue to talk to legislators, what's important is sharing your passion for the issue, and why you want to see a change.

### Tips on asking others to join your team or make a contribution:

- The easiest way is to share your Team Page link and ask via email and/or social media. Ask personally and let each individual know that they would be a valued member of your team.
- Ask often. Be sure to send invitations and reminders at least 3-4 times leading up to the Walk to End Hunger. People have a tendency to put things off until the last minute, or to completely forget. It helps to send reminders – and team members can even register day of the event (note: the price does go up from \$25 to \$35 day of).
- Ask EVERYONE. Your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, members of your congregation, your child's sports, music, etc. team or group.



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- Set a monetary or team member number goal and share it. The Open Door's overall goal is to raise \$10,000. This is more than double what we raised last year! This means we need 40 teams of 10 people each to reach it OR 20 teams of 20 people each OR one giant team of 400. Set a realistic goal for yourself as Team Captain so others can help you achieve it.
- Let people know they can make a donation and join your team even if they can't be physically at the Walk to End Hunger Thanksgiving morning.
- Bribe your family and friends with a promise of Cinnabon or Starbucks (both will be open at the MOA Thanksgiving morning!).
- The t-shirt is awesome! Let them know that with a gift of \$100 or more, they get a Walk to End Hunger t-shirt.
- When you ask, let those who care about you know how much you care about The Open Door and what it means to you to have them join your team.
- Let those you ask know how much FUN the Walk to End Hunger is. There are 4 Fun Zones which include activities for all ages. Example activities include: face painting, food packing project, art project, Bodies by Burgoon, Pros of the Rope, Balloon Artistry, a photo booth, Planko, and so much more.
- Invite everyone over to your house for Thanksgiving dinner. Or better yet, let them know they are cooking the turkey if they don't join your team!

### What you might want to know about the Walk to End Hunger:

- It is not a race. In fact, the Walk is a leisurely stroll around the mall at your own pace. You can do as many, or as few, laps as you want.
- All individuals who raise \$100 get a t-shirt. T-shirts are also available for purchase.
- There is a formal program, with a countdown to the start, which takes place on the mainstage in the Rotunda at 7:30 a.m. Senator Klobuchar has been present at the Walk to End Hunger each year. This kickoff is completely optional.
- You will want to park in the East Parking Ramp on P1 or P2. Registration will take place on floors 1 and 2 of the East Broadway entrance, right by Sealife.
- With 3,000 walkers, the MOA gets pretty busy. Choose a meeting point for your team prior to the Walk.
- The Walk is from 7-10 a.m. Feel free to stay for as long or short as you want. Come and go as you please. Please know that activities start wrapping up around 9:40 a.m. so MOA staff can get home for Thanksgiving with their families.

### Key facts about hunger in Dakota County and The Open Door

1. For the first time in US history, there are more people in poverty in the suburbs than in the urban core. (2016 Brookings Study)
2. 40,000 people in Dakota County live below the federal poverty line. For a family of 4 that means living on \$24,300 a year. To afford average rental housing you need to make nearly \$40,000 a year.
3. If you make minimum wage in Dakota County you would need to work 75 Hours per week to afford an average 2 BR Apartment (\$987 per month).
4. Seniors are the fastest growing group of food shelf users (23% increase since 2011).
5. The Open Door's Mobile Pantry brings fresh & healthy food to: Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Rosemount.
6. TOD's Mobile Pantry program successfully expanded to 17 sites in 2017 – up from 12 sites in 2016. In 2017 the Mobile Pantry program served 15,846 individuals (duplicated); of which, 37% were children and 9% were seniors.
7. TOD's Mobile Lunch Box program has nearly tripled the number of meals served over the last three years, rising from nearly 700 in 2015 to more than 2,000 in 2017.
8. In an effort to increase the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables for clients in specific low-income neighborhoods, and for existing clients between monthly visits, TOD launched Pop-Up Produce Stands as a Pilot Program in 2017. Pop-Up Produce was launched in the Cedar Knolls Community (USDA Food Desert), Hidden Valley Elementary School (85% free and reduced lunch) and our Eagan Pantry as an additional opportunity for existing clients. Combined, these sites provided over 8,000 pounds of fresh produce to more than 1,500 individuals.
9. In 2017, 181 garden plots at six community gardens were available to clients through TOD's Garden To Table program which collectively yielded over 20,000 pounds of fresh produce. In 2018 G2T has added an additional community garden in the USDA food desert of the Cedar Knolls community in Apple Valley.
10. The Open Door's mission "a fresh approach to ending local hunger through access to healthy food" creates a vision of healthy, vibrant communities in Dakota County.

