



**A FRESH APPROACH
TO ENDING LOCAL HUNGER**

Fresh News

THE EAGAN PANTRY | THE MOBILE PANTRY | THE MOBILE LUNCH BOX | GARDEN TO TABLE | POP-UP PRODUCE STANDS |

MAY 2019

Ten years ago we formalized what began in a Mt. Calvary Church closet – an organization focused on filling the need for food support in Eagan. With the help of countless volunteers, community groups, faith communities, and generous souls who shared the belief that everyone deserves access to fresh and healthy food, we have redefined what it means to be a “food shelf” and grown well beyond our Eagan roots.

Over the last decade, you have helped us lead the fight to make sure people think of hunger in terms of dignity and health, and not just calories. You have helped us build a better model to fight suburban hunger - making fresh and healthy food more accessible to thousands of our neighbors in Dakota County through a collection of innovative programs.

We are celebrating our 10th year, but know our work isn't done. We're working harder than ever to fight local hunger by seeking out new areas of need. Nowhere is the need more evident than in the households of low-income families with school-aged children.

With the expansion of our Mobile Lunch Box, the addition of our ninth Garden to Table site, and more Pop-Up Produce stands, this summer will be our most ambitious undertaking yet.

Your choice to invest in our clients and our mission has made all of this possible. I hope the stories inside will give you a tangible sense of the impact you make across our community each day, and how you are helping ensure we are prepared for our next 10 years.



With Gratitude,

Jason Viana, Executive Director



www.theopendoorpantry.org

**3910 Rahn Road
Eagan, MN 55122**



A Friendship Helps Find & Fill a Need

Newest Mobile Pantry Site Delivers Fresh Food Directly to Lakeville Seniors

Three blocks may not sound very far, unless you rely on a walker to get around or can no longer drive yourself.

For the last several years, 97-year-old Edna* and her friend Jane* made the three-block trek from their Senior Living facility to a nearby church parking lot to shop The Mobile Pantry bus during its monthly stop.

They were not alone. Turns out, several residents from the low-income complex were working together to make the trip - some by carpool, others by walking. It was tough sledding, especially during the winter, but it was the closest access many had to fresh and healthy food. An injury to Jane this year revealed an even greater need.



Volunteers greet Winsor seniors with a smile and helping hand

right into Edna and Jane's building. Fresh produce, milk, eggs, meat, and an assortment of other nourishing items were now easily accessible for all the buildings residents.

"This was great! I just went shopping!" exclaimed a client as she headed back to her apartment with her small rolling cart filled with fresh fruits and vegetables, meat and milk.

"This is wonderful, just wonderful," shared Jane, one of the women whose friendship with Tom was the inspiration for this new mobile distribution site. "Now I'm going right to my apartment! Isn't that wonderful?"

Jane and the other clients agree. "When I think of all the hard work this took, we're just so grateful."

The Mobile Pantry already has a waiting list for Senior Living Facilities requesting our support, and with the number of seniors in Dakota County expected to increase by more than 50% in the next 12 years, our team knows situations like Jane and Edna's are not unique. With your continued support, our team will continue to expand our efforts to make nutritious foods easily accessible for seniors across Dakota County.

**Client names have been changed to protect their privacy.*

Volunteer Tom is a familiar face to many clients of The Open Door. Tom became fast friends with Edna and Jane during their monthly visits.

When Jane injured her arm and could no longer drive the pair, Tom kindly

brought food directly to the building to help during her recovery. In the coming weeks, The Open Door learned how many of the complex's residents could benefit from the food, but couldn't make it the three blocks.

Soon, the phones were buzzing with requests from residents in need of help. Our team quickly adjusted the schedule and added a monthly Mobile Pantry stop that brought a generous selection of fresh and healthy foods



"This is wonderful, just wonderful!"
- *TOD client*

EAGAN PANTRY CUTS COSTS THANKS TO GENEROUS DONORS

Our generous community is making a measurable impact on our ability to offer fresh and healthy food to our clients. **In March, the Eagan pantry spent nearly 40% less on food purchases**, compared to the previous March, yet still offered the same fresh and healthy choices to just as many clients. That cost savings is a direct result of our successful Super Bagging event and March Campaign food drives. By providing donors with a specific list of our Top 5 most needed items, we can spend less and make our food budget go even further.



Become a Grow Hope monthly supporter of The Open Door! Your support provides a steady and predictable source of revenue during times when donations decline but the need for food support continues. Sign up online at www.theopendoorpantry.org or by contacting Sarah O'Brien at 651-888-0630 or sarah@theopendoorpantry.org.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!



YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

VOLUNTEER HOURS DONATED **25,226**

at The Open Door in 2018



that's equivalent to



12 FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year

FINANCIAL IMPACT **\$622,830**

based on the Independent Sector's estimated national value of volunteer time of \$24.69 per hour



YOU DID THIS! **6,000+** clients served each month
1,176,448 pounds of food distributed in 2018; 65% was perishable



VOLUNTEERS ARE THE OPEN DOOR!

Thank you for all that you do in support of our mission: a fresh approach to ending local hunger through access to healthy food

GROUPS NEEDED

As The Open Door prepares for our most ambitious summer yet, we need your help!

We need volunteer groups who would like to adopt a Mobile Lunch Box site, work at a Pop-up Produce stand or volunteer at one of our Garden to Table sites. These are great volunteer opportunities for your work team, church, student group, or organization.

www.theopendoorpantry.org/SummerVolunteers

LUNCH BOX AIMS AT SUMMER MEALS GAP

New sites and new partners to increase summer meals for kids by 25%

First-ring suburbs have become ground zero in the fight against childhood hunger. A new study shows our greatest opportunity to impact childhood hunger in our community is by closing the summer meal gap for our students.

A 2018 analysis by Second Harvest Heartland shows that our community leads the state in number of missed meals by children during the summer months. These findings bring even greater importance to the continued expansion of our Mobile Lunch Box program which provides healthy bagged lunches and take-home snacks for kids who lose access to free/reduced meal programs during the summer break.

Thanks to a new partnership with ISD 196 and the City of Eagan's "Rec on the Go" program, the Mobile Lunch Box is expanding service in Eagan and launching in its first Apple Valley neighborhood. The program is set to serve more than 2,300 meals this summer, and plans are already underway to expand again in 2020. The team is also actively seeking investments for a new vehicle (\$25,000) and overall program costs (\$25,000). Learn more at:

www.theopendoorpantry.org/the-mobile-lunch-box

2019 Mobile Lunch Box Partners:



GARDEN TO TABLE GROWING WITH NEW GARDEN, MORE PLOTS

This spring TOD clients and volunteers with the Eagan Rotary worked side by side to build our newest garden in a low-income Eagan neighborhood.

Eagan Rotary sponsored the construction of this ninth Garden to Table location and members were not afraid to get their hands dirty in the process. This new garden will provide enough fresh produce for 20-40 families throughout the growing season.

Partnership has been key to growing our Garden to Table program this season. TOD is also placing our clients at a new garden being built by the Eagan YMCA. In addition, we're working with the City of Burnsville, with plots reserved for TOD clients at the city's Wolk Park Community Gardens.



Learn to make your own Asian pickles and Kombucha. Taste soup recipes made with the harvest. Sign up for G2T classes at www.theopendoorpantry.org

TAKE A CLASS

THE OPEN DOOR CELEBRATES TURNING TEN IN 2019



In 2019, The Open Door celebrates a decade of serving the Dakota County community with fresh and healthy food. In 2009, the Eagan Resource Center, which would become The Open Door, was formed as a 501(c)(3) non profit.

To take a look back at 10 years of innovation – and learn more about what’s next for The Open Door, visit:

www.theopendoorpantry.org/TheNext10

TWO NEW VOICES JOIN BOARD



The Open Door welcomes two new members to our Board of Directors:

Tina Arend (left) of Eagan is Vice President of Financial Planning & Analysis at Thomson

Reuters and longtime member of St. John Neumann Church, which she represents on the Board. Arend will serve as Board Secretary. **Mary Worley** (right) of Minneapolis is a Development Director, First Generation Initiative and Lasallian Formation at Saint Mary’s University. Worley has also joined The Open Door’s Development Committee.

HELP US REACH OUR SUMMER GOAL!

This summer, we ask for your generosity to help us raise \$50,000 so we can continue making healthy food a reality for everyone in our community.

Hold a food & fund drive, volunteer or consider making a financial gift to support our innovative programs.

www.theopendoorpantry.org

COLLABORATING TO CREATE CAPACITY

Food shelf in Burnsville closes for 8 weeks



When a partner food shelf in southern Burnsville temporarily shut down unexpectedly due to damage from winter storms, it left hundreds of families without essential food support.

Knowing the lack of capacity in the local emergency food system for additional support, The Open Door’s Mobile Pantry teamed up with 360 Communities and ISD 191 Community Education to organize three Pop-Up Produce stands for families impacted by the unexpected closure.

The first of three Pop-Up Produce stands was held at Diamondhead Education Center in late April, providing more than 8,000 pounds of fresh and healthy food to more than 150 families – at no cost to them.

Nearly 700 people, more than half of whom were children, went home with their fill of tomatoes, potatoes, apples, oranges, onions, lettuce, eggs, bread and other essentials.

Thank You!

Our annual sponsors support The Open Door throughout the year through food drives, volunteering and financial support.

Annual Partners of The Open Door

