

OPEN TABLE

FRESH FOOD. HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

Spring 2018 Newsletter

We Bought a Truck!

Open Table is the proud owner of a new food truck, one with refrigeration that lets us transport more food farther, and a hydraulic lift that will save the backs of our volunteers. It's the next step in our mission to provide healthy food to those in need.

Previously, we borrowed a U-Haul to drive to the Greater Boston Food Bank to pick up food for the pantry. But with no refrigeration, we had to limit the items we transported.

Custom building a truck with refrigeration means more items can come with us. More proteins, more dairy – more of what our guests are asking for. It also means we can pick up food donations from places further away.

The hydraulic lift makes it easier to load and unload the food, allowing us to handle greater quantities while minimizing what our volunteers have to carry.

The funding for this comes courtesy of State Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representative Kate Hogan, both of whom have volunteered and sponsored dinners at our location in Maynard. They secured an earmark for \$75,000 in state funding in the FY18 budget for Open Table to purchase a refrigerated truck. Sen. Eldridge and Rep. Hogan have

advocated for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP) line item to provide fresh, nutritious food for food pantries across Massachusetts.

And while we are grateful for the grant, the overwhelming bulk of our budget comes from the donations from you, our generous supporters. It's your ongoing involvement that keeps us doing what we do.

The eventual goal is to use the truck to provide mobile pantries, reaching areas we currently can't. And really, that's the crux of

what we're working every day to accomplish: getting food to the people who need it.

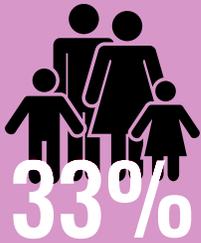
Many thanks...

For the past eight years, we have been able to pick up and deliver food thanks to the generosity of Bob Moran of Moran Leasing. Bob made a U-Haul box truck available at no cost to Open Table, allowing us to focus on the food and not the transportation. The new truck comes with an upgraded hydraulic lift at no additional charge, thanks to Chris Lapiana of Liberty Chevrolet. We are indebted to both Moran Leasing and Liberty Chevrolet for being good neighbors.

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How your donations helped this year:



More families attending Open Table weekly



Meals served weekly



Households received groceries monthly



Pounds of produce distributed monthly



Honoring Deena Whitfield

After six years on the board of Open Table, the last three as chair, Deena Whitfield is stepping down. It's no exaggeration to say that Open Table wouldn't be where it is today – literally – without Deena's vision and determination.

It was Deena who led the charge to find, and finance, the purchase of our new home at 33 Main Street in Maynard. She organized the search, identified possible locations, wrote the prospectus and approached banks, determined to find a permanent home for Open Table. She then spearheaded the Capital Campaign alongside chair Connie Johnson, raising funds from generous donors to fill in the gaps and flesh out her vision.

Thanks to Deena's belief in what could be, Open Table has grown into a stronger organization, able to provide better food and community services to more people in our area and beyond. She has brought us further toward our goal of solving food insecurity, in a relatively short period of time, and for all that we thank her.

Other board members going off...

In addition to Deena, three other board members are stepping down: Betsy Soule, who has brought her legal expertise to Open Table; Sylvia Cullington, who as treasurer keeps all the finances in check; and Jessica Kirkwood, who has organized the Turkey Trot fundraiser and handled our staff searches.

Thanks to all of them for their hard work and dedication!

Cummings Foundation Grant

Open Table is the proud recipient of a \$100,000 grant from Cummings Foundation's "\$100k for 100" program, which primarily funds nonprofits in Middlesex, Essex and Suffolk counties. Chosen from 597 applicants during a competitive review process, Open Table will use the money to hire permanent staff to help maintain and improve services at our new home. Huge thanks to Cummings Foundation for supporting our vision of growing into a more mature organization!



Open Table's mission is to provide healthy food, friendship and support to those in need while respecting their privacy and dignity.

Bringing Community Together

Imagine living in a place where you want to connect with people, but they can't understand you. That's the situation for a number of our guests, who immigrate here from other countries and may struggle with English. Yes, they need help with groceries, but they also yearn for community. Open Table strives to provide both.

That's why, when a woman came in recently who speaks only Russian, we looked for

someone who could speak her language. And we found that person in our own backyard.

Concord resident Lydia Gregoret's first language is Ukrainian but she also knows Russian. She joined our guest for a dinner in Maynard, where she was able to explain to her how to sign up for the pantry as well as answer any questions she had about Open Table.

But most importantly, she gave this woman someone to talk with as they shared a meal.

Sending Out an SOS!

Open Table has kicked off a new program: Save Our Salvage (SOS). Cook teams use food donated to Open Table from the community or acquired at low or no cost from the Greater Boston Food Bank to create meals and snacks for guests to take home from our pantry market.

The first project featured a Roast Chicken and Sweet Potatoes meal, cooked and packaged by OT volunteers, and included in the pantry for seniors to take. Next, Concord Carlisle High School instructor Mike Parato brought students in as the first Team Granola, making and stocking 16 oz. containers of granola for guests to take home.

Why these choices? Both are healthy. The chicken is oven roasted with herbs and seasoning and provides a serving of lean protein with a nutrient-rich vegetable side of sweet potatoes. The granola has whole grain oats, nuts, flax seeds and dried fruit with just a touch of sweetness. It's a perfect snack or topping for cereal, yogurt or fruit.

We welcome cooks who are resourceful. If you or your organization are interested in preparing one, please contact us at info@opentable.org.



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