



**A FRESH APPROACH
TO ENDING LOCAL HUNGER**

fresh news

The Pantry of The Open Door | The Mobile Pantry® | The Mobile Lunch Box | Garden To Table® | **MAY 2018**

The strength of our community is remarkable. In the face of significant financial restraints and a tough restructuring entering 2018, our volunteers, staff, and supporters have rallied to help us fill the gaps and find a way to serve even more people. While we are not entirely out of the woods financially, the response from our supporters and partners has been encouraging and affirming. I have no doubt that together, with your help, we will continue to be the innovative leader in providing fresh and healthy food.

The stories you'll read inside highlight the resilience of The Open Door and the determination of our volunteers and staff to continue to find ways to make healthy food more accessible to those in our community who need it most. With summer quickly approaching, we are ready for some of TOD's most innovative programs, including Garden To Table, Mobile Lunch Box, and a second

season of Pop-Up Produce Stands. If you are looking for an opportunity to engage, learn more, or just get your hands dirty, we have multiple opportunities for you to help us assist the people who look to us for support each month.

Thank you for taking the time to read about our work, and thank you for making all of it possible.

With gratitude,

Jason Viana, Executive Director



www.theopendoorpantry.org

nearly **5,000** individuals served each month | **1 million** pounds of food distributed annually | **17** Mobile Pantry sites | **1,800** children served each month





Senator Smith and Congressman Lewis Visit Eagan Pantry, Listen to Clients' Concerns

In late February, The Open Door's Leadership Table welcomed members from Minnesota's Congressional Delegation to the Eagan Pantry for a tour and brief visit. Visitors included Democrat Tina Smith, the junior United States Senator from Minnesota (filling the seat vacated by Al Franken), and Republican Jason Lewis U.S. Representative for Minnesota's 2nd congressional district.

Three members of TOD's client-based Leadership Table—joined by TOD staff and volunteers—led the conversation with their representatives focused on delivering feedback regarding the proposed cuts to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps) put forth in the President's 2019 Fiscal Year Budget and the detrimental impact it would have on their families and the thousands who still struggle to put food on the table each month.

In addition to the visit by Senator Smith and Congressman Lewis, the Leadership Table has made their voices heard at the State Legislature, to the Dakota County Commissioners, and in the Comprehensive Planning sessions for Eagan, Burnsville, Apple Valley and Lakeville. TOD staff have also provided feedback and client support for MN legislative hearings surrounding proposed changes to



At top, Congressman Lewis listens as he sits with TOD staff, volunteers and clients; below, Senator Smith, TOD coolers behind her, engages with TOD staff, volunteers and clients.

Senior Asset Limits at the state level. The Open Door staff and volunteers have also been invited to join the Minnesota Childhood Hunger Caucus at the State Capitol.



Keller Williams Premier Realty South Suburban held a TP the VP event, collecting and donating 190 lbs of toilet paper for The Open Door during MN FoodShare's March Campaign.

THANK YOU! March Campaign Results

Our total numbers for food and funds have been reported to MN FoodShare. Drum roll please...

105,432 lbs of food
\$92,259 dollars raised

EMPTY BOWLS

725+ ATTENDEES

\$30,000+ RAISED



Thank you to the Empty Bowls planning committee, the 100+ volunteers who created and donated the beautiful bowls and art, kept the kitchen running, served soup and bread, provided delicious desserts, and to our generous guests. All your efforts make Empty Bowls the great fundraiser it is!



Tackling Missing Summer Meals for Kids

5th Season of Mobile Lunch Box Kicks off June 12th



Over the past decade, the number of suburban students who rely on free/reduced lunch has increased by 64%.*

Summertime means missed meals for many of the children in our community and the Mobile Lunch Box has been making healthy lunches more accessible for children in our neighborhoods since 2014. Our volunteers and seasonal staff work with partners to take food directly to children and families in 4 low-income neighborhoods in our community to make sure they get the fresh and healthy foods they need to continue to grow and thrive.



After more than doubling the number of meals served last year through improved site selection and strengthened partnerships, the Mobile Lunch Box looks to maintain the momentum with an equally aggressive schedule for 2018. The program will be serving 5 days a week at 4 sites and is always looking for volunteers and additional kid-friendly foods. Please visit our website Mobile Lunch Box page to see sites, a list of items needed, and to learn more about the program. Contact lunchbox@theopendoorpantry.org for more information on volunteer opportunities.

The Mobile Lunch Box program is made possible with partnerships and support from



Monthly Giving Grows HOPE

Become part of 'GROW HOPE', monthly supporters of The Open Door.

- It's an easy way to give
- Your donation provides a steady and predictable source of revenue during times when donations decline and the need for food support continues.



- Not only sustains programs but allows us to plan ahead in expanding our reach through programs like The Mobile Pantry,® The Mobile Lunch Box and our Pop Up Produce Stands.
- Monthly giving allows you to plan your charitable giving.

Benefits to you include:

- Special invitation to exclusive events, unique to donors like you.
- Clear end of year report of your donations.

To give online: go to www.theopendoorpantry.org and click the 'donate now' button

To give by mail: Make your check payable to The Open Door and mail to 3910 Rahn Road, Eagan, MN 55122.

Questions?

Contact Sarah O'Brien at 651-888-0630 or saraho@theopendoorpantry.org



Feeding more people in 2018

Through expanded Mobile Pantry offerings and a revised scheduling system in Eagan, The Open Door has served nearly 20% more clients through this March than those same months in 2017! Mobile Pantry has surpassed 2,000 clients served in one month for the first time in its history!

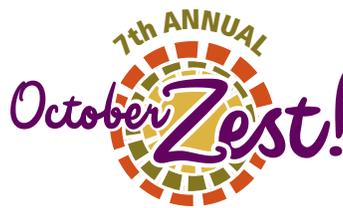
*Source: <https://www.twincities.com/2015/10/16/at-one-suburban-school-a-380-increase-in-poverty-and-theyre-not-alone/>

The Open Door
3910 Rahn Road
Eagan, 55122
651-688-3189

Save the Dates!



**The Lost Spur's
'Drive Out Hunger'
Golf Tournament**
benefitting The Open Door
Sat., Aug 4
\$30 golf, \$30 Dinner
Register NOW by calling
the pro shop at
651-454-2330 ext. 2



**Sunday, Oct 7
Lost Spur Golf and
Event Center**



THANKSGIVING MORNING



Garden To Table to grow more, feed more in 2018

New Apple Valley Garden is first of 3 new sites

While mother nature continued to pummel us with snow well into spring, The Open Door's staff and volunteers were able to use new technology to make the six-year-old program more accessible for clients. For the first time, staff were able to use email addresses from our client database and a new online application to make registration easier than ever. As a result, nearly 75 more clients have signed up for plots through May 1, and we have a waiting list for 5 of our 6 gardens.



Gardens make for a great group volunteer opportunity! For more info on opportunities, contact Alpa at alpag@theopendoorpantry.org or visit www.theopendoorpantry.org

In addition to the outpouring of early registrations, TOD staff has been hard at work laying the foundation for 3 new garden locations for 2018 and 2019 that will make fresh and healthy food even more accessible in areas of greatest need. Community feedback has guided the creation of a new garden in a low-income community in Apple Valley with ground breaking scheduled for late May. Our second new garden stems from our partnership with ISD 191. TOD is working with district staff to establish a joint garden project at Hidden Valley Elementary this summer that will allow for educational components to run parallel to community food access. Our last new site is in the final stages of negotiation and once completed will add 14 new plots in a low-income area of Burnsville.



Faces of The Open Door

"My son Kirk found The Open Door and suggested we volunteer there. My husband Merle, my son Kirk, and I came to volunteer every Wednesday. After my husband died I asked the Operations Manager if I could come every day. For the past three years I come four days a week for five hours a day.

I just love it! I love the people, our clients. We all have been where our clients are at one time or another and I love helping them.

My husband is never forgotten so in his honor I have helped purchase freezers and coolers in his name.

I will never quit! One day they will have to carry me out of here!"

—Donna Sorter, Eagan Pantry Volunteer

Thank you Annual Partners of The Open Door

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

