

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FESTIVAL OF MEALS – A TASTING GALA  
RAISES MORE THAN \$125k FOR MEALS ON WHEELS OF RI**

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—Meals on Wheels of RI'S 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Festival of Meals – A Tasting Gala, raised more than \$125k for the organization's important work in combating senior hunger and isolation across the state.

“We are proud and honored to have received this incredible level of commitment for our mission,” said Meals on Wheels of RI Executive Director Meghan Grady. “As our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year comes to a close, we are so very thankful to each and every one of our supporters, including our sponsors and guests, who made our gala a smashing success and who are helping us to continue and expand our work.”

The total raised includes more than \$13,000 in donations made during the evening's live auction “Fund-A-Need” drive, during which attendees were able to make a direct contribution to Meals on Wheels of RI.

Supported in part by presenting sponsors Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, and emceed by WPRI's Ted Nesi and Kim Kalunian, the event drew nearly 400 attendees to the Pawtucket Armory Arts Center on Nov. 2.

“Festival of Meals was a huge success in honoring our history and in garnering community support as we plan for a future when our programs will be in even greater demand,” said Board Chair Kevin Millonzi, chef and owner of Millonzi Fine Catering and Millonzi's Kitchen Bar. “We are thrilled so many recognize the importance of Meals on Wheels of RI.”

The evening featured a “Top Dish” culinary competition judged by Providence College Friars Coach Ed Cooley, RI Food Fights' Jim Nellis and Rhody Foody's Lupe Aguilar.

Revival Brewing Tasty Room's Duck Taco took home the top prize, judged on presentation and serving method, creativity, and flavor and taste.

Attendees selected Capital Grille's Kona Steak and Chapel Grille's Greek Quinoa Bowl as the People's Choice Award winners for carnivore and vegetarian, respectively.

Festival of Meals also included a VIP reception hosted by Millonzi Fine Catering, live and silent auctions

“As so many people came together to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and open their hearts in support of our mission of meeting the nutritional and other special needs of homebound seniors to help them age independently, they also had a really good time!,” Grady said.

**About Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island**

Since 1969, Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island has focused on meeting the nutritional and other special needs of the elderly in order to help them maintain their independent lifestyles. Meals on Wheels of RI directly addresses the issues of nutrition, health and safety in our senior population, impacting thousands across the state every year with our Home-Delivered Meal Program, the only nonprofit meal delivery program of its kind in Rhode Island; the Capital City Café Program and Senior Restaurant Program, which offer community-based dining for more mobile seniors; an Emergency Meal Program; the Senior Wish Program, providing necessities for seniors in need; and the Pet Food Program.

Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island, a 501 (c) (3) organization, is not an affiliate of a national organization and relies on donations from individuals, corporate funding and sponsorship and foundation grants. All funding received directly provides services for RI residents.

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