



## **R.I. Gov. Daniel J. McKee Delivers Meals on Wheels of RI 20-millionth Home-Delivered Meal**

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—R.I. Gov. Daniel J. McKee on Friday delivered Meals on Wheels of RI's 20-millionth home-delivered meal to Central Falls resident Bernadette Cawley, 93, marking an historic milestone in the organization's 53-year history.

"For more than 50 years, seniors across our 39 cities and towns have depended on the Meals on Wheels of RI Home-Delivered Meal Program as a lifeline to keep them healthy, safe, and connected," said **Governor Dan McKee**. "Now more than ever, because of COVID-19 and the isolation the pandemic has caused, we thank our partners at Meals on Wheels of RI for providing seniors like Bernadette with nutritious meals and a sense of community. It's an honor to join them on their historic 20 millionth home-delivered meal, and I look forward to working with them as they continue to deliver smiles and many more meals."

Bernadette, who has been a Meals on Wheels of RI Home-Delivered Meal Program client for three years, is a former City of Central Falls employee. Her late husband, Thomas Cawley, was a Central Falls Police Department sergeant and WWII U.S. Navy Veteran.

When Mr. Cawley passed away, the couple's daughters became concerned about their mother's ability to safely leave the home on her own or prepare her own meal. Since enrolling in the program, Mrs. Cawley has maintained good health and lessened feelings of isolation thanks to her daily visits with her program delivery driver.

"Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island is about much more than delivering the healthy meal that almost 1,500 clients statewide look forward to each weekday," said Executive Director Meghan Grady. "Our programs holistically address food insecurity, safety risks, and social isolation to prevent loss of independence amongst homebound older adults, like Bernadette who, with support, are able to remain living in their own homes."

Founded in 1969, Meals on Wheels of RI's Home-Delivered Meal Program provides clients with a complete and fully prepared meal that meets one-third of their daily dietary requirement delivered to their door five days per week. Along with each meal, clients receive a safety-assuring wellness check and a social visit with a delivery driver.



In 2021, the program served 3,029 homebound Rhode Islanders statewide, delivering to them more than 357,000 home-delivered meals. The organization served 10 percent more clients last year than in 2020.

“As we mark this historic milestone, we also recognize that our work to meet the needs of a growing older adult population is ongoing,” said Board Chairman and General Manager, [Commonwealth Care Alliance](#)<sup>®</sup> Rhode Island, Corey McCarty. “Beginning this year, we are embarking on a new strategic plan, Meals on Wheels of RI 2025: Planning our next 20 Million Meals that will align innovation of our “More-Than-A-Meal” model to support intentional growth and expansion.”

At the delivery, Bernadette was joined by her two daughters and two of her three grandchildren. She has four great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

The Cawleys were married for 69 years before her husband's passing, at age 92, in November 2019.

### **About Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island**

Since 1969, Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island's programs have directly addressed the issues of food insecurity and social isolation as risk factors for loss of independence amongst older adults. Our mission is to meet the nutritional and special needs of older adults and other eligible populations in order to help them maintain their independent lifestyles through 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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*Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island, Inc. “is funded in part by the United States Administration on Aging and state funds through the Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging.”*



**Photo (left to right):** Meals on Wheels of RI Home-Delivered Meal Program driver Jim Stotler, MOWRI Executive Director Meghan Grady, MOWRI Board Chair Corey McCarty, R.I. Lt. Gov. Sabina Matos, Bernadette Cawley, R.I. Gov. Dan McKee.