

the dish



Born and raised in West Warwick, Mr. James Dorsey, 69, proudly calls Rhode Island his lifelong home. Throughout his career as a supervisor in the textile industry, he lived in different states, absorbing diverse experiences, but eventually found solace in returning to the comforting familiarity of Rhode Island.

Sharing his home with his feline companion, Blackjack, fondly called Jack, Mr. Dorsey's days are brightened not only by the warm company of his beloved pet but also by the compassionate and upbeat visits of Meals on Wheels of RI volunteers.

Among them is Diane, whose weekly deliveries bring not just a meal but also joy to Mr. Dorsey's doorstep. Describing him as humble and resilient, Diane admires Mr. Dorsey's positivity despite the challenges he faces daily.

"He's so cheerful and he makes me smile every time he opens the door," says Diane.

Complications from diabetes have altered Mr. Dorsey's life significantly, resulting in the loss of both his legs below the knee. For him, venturing beyond his home is a challenge and requires the help of others, thankfully he found some much needed help from Meals on Wheels of RI. He has been a Home-Delivered Meal Program client for a little over a year.

The meals, tailored to accommodate his dietary needs as he manages diabetes, are not just sustenance but an effective way to manage his health.

"I like the meals and think they are great for people like me who are managing diabetes and other chronic health problems," he said.



INSIDE:

FOOD IS MEDICINE - PAGE 3

INNOVATIONS - PAGE 4

BUILDING IMPACT - PAGE 5



Dear Friends,

Since our 1969 founding, Meals on Wheels of RI has been a pioneer in reducing the risks of food insecurity and social isolation for thousands of Rhode Island residents across the state.

In 2024, we are broadening our focus and doing more than we ever have to give our clients equitable access to healthy lifestyles by providing them the nutrition they need and prefer in the ways that most easily reach them.

Every accomplishment our organization can point to is only possible because you are our partner in building a bigger and stronger organization.

This newsletter is a look into how your support continues to fuel our progress.

Operating under our strategic plan, we are in motion and building impact by growing capacity for the future, prioritizing sustainability, and implementing innovative projects. This strategy is allowing us to reach more Rhode Islanders who can benefit from our programs and to develop new and extended offerings.

Our hope is that you will be inspired to stay connected on our journey toward a Rhode Island where, together, we are able to do even more to ensure those we serve live well-nourished lives with independence and dignity.

Without you, none of our work would be possible and we thank you tremendously for your trust.

In gratitude,



A blue ink signature of Meghan Grady.

Meghan Grady
Executive Director



A blue ink signature of Christina Pitney.

Christina Pitney
Board President

FROM COVER

Grateful for the support he receives from being a Home-Delivered Meal Program client, Mr. Dorsey cherishes the interactions with his dedicated volunteers, including Diane, Mel, and Joe, who brighten his weekdays with their friendship and care. To him, they are not just deliverers of meals but beacons of kindness, reminders that he is not alone in his journey.

As Mr. Dorsey navigates life's challenges with resilience and grace, his story serves as a testament to the power of food is medicine, of community, and the transformative impact of human connection, one meal delivery at a time.



2024 by the Numbers*

Home-Delivered Clients Served

 **2,600**

Café Clients Served

 **475**

Total Meals Served

 **208,451**

Volunteer Miles Driven

 **115,665**

Community Health Worker Sessions

 **100**

Grocery Deliveries

 **830**

Pregnant Women Served

 **27** Pregnant Women and their families

 **5,200** meals

No-Cost Market Customers

 **170**

Pets Served

 **30**

*Clients served and meals delivered are as of June 30, 2024.

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Food is Medicine

Food is Medicine (FIM) refers to utilizing nutrition-based services and health interventions to address and mitigate the lasting effects of chronic disease.

In 2015, nearly 60 percent of all Rhode Island residents had at least one chronic disease; 25% had two or more.

The need to increase available FIM interventions is indisputable. According to Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, in 2015, nearly 60 percent of all Rhode Island residents had at least one chronic disease; 25% had two or more. This can cost the state as much as \$9,100 per resident in medical and productivity costs per year. Also, 3,300 lives could be saved in our state through more accessible FIM services.

During development of our strategic plan, Meals on Wheel identified FIM as an area of opportunity for our organization to have an even greater statewide impact by leading the charge to a Rhode Island where all residents can live healthy and productive lives without chronic disease.

In many ways, we've been a FIM focused organization since our founding more than 55 years ago. Our programs and service delivery model help our clients to treat and manage their chronic diseases by helping them attain equitable access to nutrition and other health services.

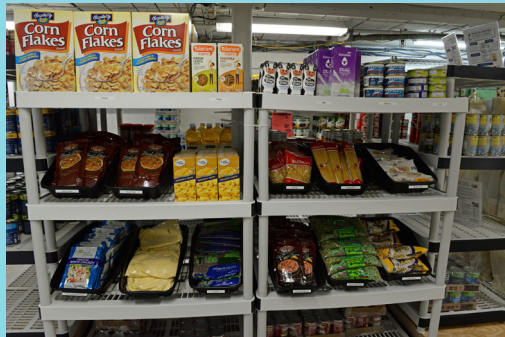
Now, with our FIM strategy in place, we've made great strides in advancing this work. For example, over the last two years we've increased our medically tailored meal menus and we've been serving new populations to help them prevent nutrition-related illness.

Our aspiration is to be the statewide leader in FIM. In the short term, we're building capacity so we can develop expanded offerings and widespread support for our FIM interventions including our MOWRI Market, grocery delivery, and extending Community Health Works services to clients.

There's a lot of work to get there, but we know that, with your support, we will succeed in securing needed resources to deliver more FIM interventions to Rhode Islanders who need them to live healthy lives.



Innovations



No-Cost Market and Mobile Food Pantry

We deliver over 1,500 meals daily to at-risk populations statewide. Amid rising food costs and an aging population, we sought innovative solutions to address food insecurity. In 2023, MOWRI became a member of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, reinstating an on-site food pantry. This move is crucial as 72% of pantry users are families with children or senior adults, according to the RI Food Bank's 2023 report. Understanding accessibility challenges, we integrate monthly bags of non-perishable food deliveries along with prepared meals for high-need clients through our Mobile Market initiative. For Rhode Island residents able to travel, MOWRI's No-Cost Market at 70 Bath St., Providence, offers essential items every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This market stocks non-perishables, frozen meats, fresh produce, pet supplies, and more, catering to diverse community needs, including Asian, Kosher, and Latin ingredients. MOWRI remains committed to serving its community with pride and dedication.

Community Health Workers

In support of our "More Than A Meal" model, we have six community health workers on our team, and they are playing a pivotal role in extending care beyond meal delivery, safety assurance, and socialization. These dedicated professionals provide personalized support, health education, and resources to those we serve, addressing their unique needs and promoting overall well-being. By engaging directly with clients, community health workers help enhance access to healthcare services, improve health outcomes, and foster a sense of connection and empowerment within the community. Their compassionate efforts contribute to the holistic approach our organization aims to achieve in supporting the health and independence of those they serve.



Cultural Responsiveness

We have strategic partnerships with Progreso Latino, Center for Southeast Asians, Jewish Collaborative Services, Pride in Aging, and Office of Veterans Services in order to meet the needs of the diverse populations we serve. Our partners provide implementation support, guidance, and training that helps us to build trust in these specific communities. Our strategy includes culturally responsive foods, appropriate language, relevant speakers, and more. Food is Medicine only works when the food served is representative of the individual's culture and our strategic partnerships are key to achieving positive outcomes.

Building Impact

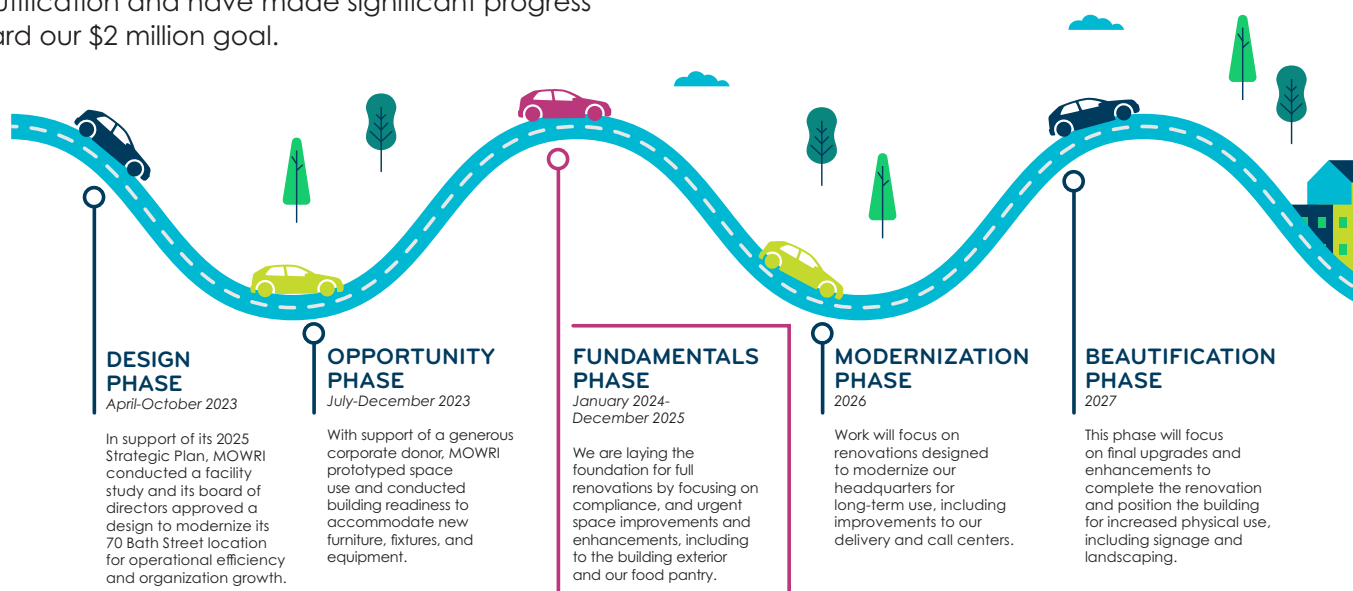
A \$2 million renovation of our Providence headquarters

As a part of our strategic plan, MOWRI is focusing on investing in our infrastructure for operational efficiencies. In July 2023, we initiated a feasibility study for our Providence headquarters. As a result, we have opted to renovate the building, creating operational, creating operational efficiency and additional spaces to better serve our clients and our community.

In late 2023, we established a capital campaign to raise the funds necessary to realize designs that prioritize fundamentals, modernizations, and beautification and have made significant progress toward our \$2 million goal.

In total, the renovation has 5 stages, with the first two, design and opportunity (building readiness) completed.

We are immensely grateful to all those who have contributed to the success of Building Impact thus far. We are excited to welcome future investors and supporters to join us in this transformative journey, as we continue to build a stronger foundation for Meals on Wheels of RI and the communities we serve.



Honoring Loved Ones: Supporting Meals on Wheels of RI

MOWRI Donors Lisa and Todd are a compassionate couple dedicated to making a difference in the lives of underserved populations. With a heart for both children and the elderly, they prioritize their donations to charities that champion these causes.

For Lisa and Todd, philanthropy is not just about financial support—it's about honoring cherished memories. They remember Ana Grace, Lisa's beloved aunt, who felt lucky to have a family that spent time with her. Reflecting on her spirit, they are determined to ensure others experience the same companionship and care. That is why their contributions to Meals on Wheels of RI are more than just donations—they are tributes to Ana Grace and all those who deserve dignity, companionship, and nourishment.

Their commitment to giving back is further exemplified by their participation in the Bank of America Matching Gift program, maximizing the impact of their contributions. Each donation serves as a testament to their enduring love for family and friends, transforming grief into positive change.

As they continue to support Meals on Wheels of RI, Lisa and Todd carry forward Ana Grace's legacy of compassion, ensuring that no one feels alone or forgotten. Their generosity not only sustains vital services but also honors the memory of those they hold dear.



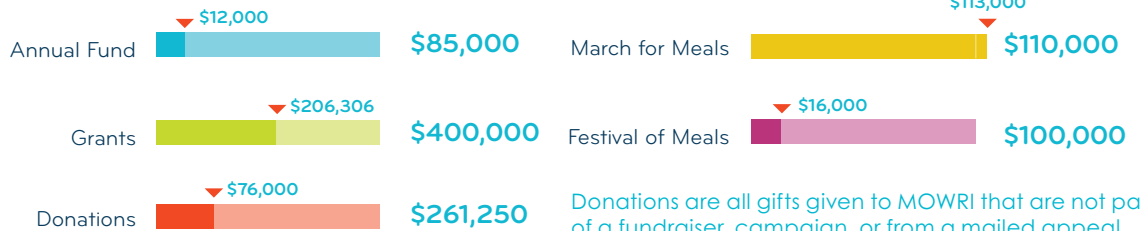
MOWRI 2024 Fundraising In Action

as of 6/30/2024

\$956,250 Goal



**Raised
\$423,036**



Donations are all gifts given to MOWRI that are not part of a fundraiser, campaign, or from a mailed appeal letter. Sources include major donors, community groups, businesses, memorial donations, and matching gifts.

**march
for meals**
#MoreThanAMeal

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Your donation matters

As an independent nonprofit organization, every donation we receive remains in Rhode Island, directly benefiting your local community. Regardless of the amount you contribute to Meals on Wheels of RI, your generosity holds immense significance.



**\$10
Supporter**

Provides one home-delivered meal, wellness check, and socialization for an older adult in Rhode Island.



**\$50
Nourishing Neighbor**

Provides one week of home-delivered meals, safety-checks, and meaningful socialization.



**\$100
Community Caretaker**

Ensures two weeks of consistent, healthy home-delivered meals and valuable socialization.



**\$200
Delivery Hero**

Enables a full month of nutritious meals, life-saving wellness checks, and engaging social interactions for an older adult in Rhode Island.

Stay Connected



Schedule a Tour



Become a Volunteer



Make a Donation

Save the Date



Festival of Meals

Saturday,
November 2, 2024

Crowne Plaza Hotel,
Warwick

For event details visit www.rimeals.org

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