

# the dish



At 87, Patricia Capuano lives independently in her apartment and thanks to Meals on Wheels of RI, she plans to keep it that way. Bright, warm, and deeply appreciative, Patricia says the support she receives through the Home-Delivered Meal Program has been a lifeline. Over the past year, it's not only brought her much needed nutrition but also peace of mind for her family, who live out of state.

A lifelong Rhode Island resident, Patricia grew up in West Warwick, just down the street from St. Anthony's Church. She fondly remembers visiting the convent, where the nuns taught her and her sister how to knit. Patricia worked in admissions at Kent County Hospital and, together with her late husband Melvin, raised four children.

But just over a year ago, Patricia faced a difficult period: six emergency room visits and two hospitalizations in just six months. Concerned about her health and recovery, Patricia, with support from daughter Joanne, turned to Meals on Wheels of RI.

Today, Patricia receives meals from our Cardiac Menu, part of our growing Food Is Medicine initiative, which provides medically tailored meals designed to support individuals with chronic heart conditions.

Each daily delivery brings more than nourishment. Patricia receives a moment of connection, a wellness check, and the vital support that allows her to continue aging in place—safely and with dignity.

"The lasagna is my favorite, it's so good," Patricia shared. "And the meals are so easy to prepare, which makes my days easier."

Beyond the food, Patricia says she truly enjoys the visits from the volunteers. "They're always kind and friendly. I look forward to seeing them as much as the meal."

Her Monday volunteer, Deb Chute, says Patricia's warmth and smile are always a highlight on her route. —————>



# Dear Friends,

As we reach the midpoint of 2025, we find ourselves both reflecting on how far we have come and feeling energized by what lies ahead.

Earlier this year, we shared our deep pride in the scale of our impact, having served more than 3,700 Rhode Islanders in 2024 with nutritious meals, wellness checks, and community connection. That work continues every day, but the road has not been without challenges.

In recent months, shifts in the federal funding landscape have underscored the need for preparedness and flexibility, particularly for programs serving older adults. Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island has remained resilient, making strategic decisions to protect services, advance equity, and ensure every Rhode Islander can age with dignity.

Thanks to your support, we have not only preserved our essential services and key initiatives, but we've also expanded our reach in meaningful ways. We know that sustaining this work, especially in uncertain times, takes more than funding. It takes vision, creativity, and most importantly, partnership. Your support is what makes these efforts possible.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on deepening our impact, expanding access, and staying prepared for whatever may come next. The older adults and families we serve are counting on us, and with your continued partnership, we will be ready to meet the need.

Thank you for standing with us.

In gratitude,



Meghan Grady  
*Executive Director*

A blue ink handwritten signature of Meghan Grady.



A blue ink handwritten signature of Christina Pitney.

Christina Pitney  
*Board President*

## FROM COVER

"From the moment her dog starts welcoming me, Ms. Capuano is always cheerful and upbeat - always giving me a little information about her day, what she's doing or just her thoughts on the weather. It is truly a joy to help ensure that Rhode Island elders, like Patricia, can maintain their independence."

Patricia is one of more than 3,000 older adults served by our program each year, a number that continues to grow.

### **You make stories like hers possible.**

Your generous support of our Annual Fund helps provide not just nutritious meals, but also life-saving wellness checks, opportunities for socialization, and the ability for older adults across Rhode Island to age safely at home. As demand grows, so does the need for your partnership.

Make your gift today using the enclosed envelope or by visiting [rimeals.org/give](https://rimeals.org/give).





# 2025 by the Numbers\*

Home-Delivered Clients Served



3,061

Total Home-Delivered Meals Served



226,945

Café Clients Served



527

Mobile Pantry Bags Delivered



300

No-Cost Market Customers



450

Volunteer Miles Driven



135,725

\*Clients served and meals delivered are as of June 30, 2025.

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# MOWRI Deepens Its Food Is Medicine Commitment

Though Food Is Medicine (FIM)—the concept that nutritional interventions can be utilized to prevent, treat, and manage chronic health conditions—is gaining traction across the country, Rhode Island is only one of a handful of states with active legislation aimed at integrating FIM programs as state-covered healthcare benefits.

In spring 2025, both chambers of the Rhode Island General Assembly introduced a bill that would direct the state Office of Health and Human Services to cover nutritional assistance and medically tailored meals as a FIM pilot program.

As part of our March for Meals campaign and in alignment with our mission to provide nutrition, support, and connection that helps older adults maintain their health and independence, MOWRI hosted its inaugural Advocacy Networking Breakfast—bringing together lawmakers, sponsors, volunteers, and advocates for a powerful morning of conversation and connection around this very initiative.

We were honored to welcome Rhode Island State Senator Victoria Gu (District 38) for an insightful discussion about Senate Bill 333, legislation she is leading to support the FIM pilot project. We were also proud to have Senate Majority Whip David P. Tikoian (District 22), a co-sponsor of the bill, in attendance. The companion legislation, House Bill 5775, is being led by Representative Justine Caldwell (District 30), further demonstrating strong support for this important initiative across both chambers.

Since 1969, MOWRI's work has been focused on helping our clients to realize improved nutrition, health, and socialization through FIM programs that are aimed at improving equitable access to fully healthy lives for those at risk of food insecurity and those managing chronic illness.

Over the last several years, we've extended FIM work to include additional culturally appropriate and medically tailored meal menus as well as supplemental grocery delivery, to incorporate community health worker services in our work, and to reach additional Rhode Islanders who could benefit from our delivery model, including school children and those living with HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses.

MOWRI will continue to champion Food Is Medicine through strong advocacy and collaboration, working to ensure nutrition is recognized as essential to health and well-being for all Rhode Islanders.





# MOWRI in Action

## Senior Farmers Market

Happening now! The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program—from the R.I. Dept. of Environmental Management—gives Rhode Island older adults access to fresh, locally-produced fruits and vegetables at farmers markets and stands throughout the summer and early fall. Seniors can pick up a no-cost voucher, pre-loaded with \$50, that they can then use to purchase local produce, herbs and honey through November. MOWRI is a proud partner in this program giving older adults increased access to healthy foods. We will offer distribution of farmers market cards at our café programs in Central Falls, Providence, Warwick, and Woonsocket.

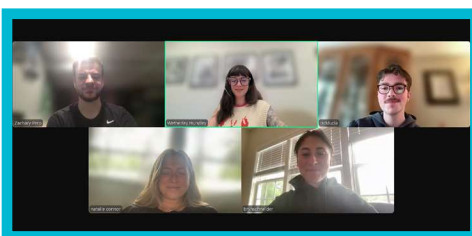


## RIC Awards Grady Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters

Rhode Island College awarded Executive Director Meghan Grady an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters at its undergraduate commencement this spring, a distinguished honor that celebrates Meghan's dedication to public service and fostering our state's next generation of leaders. MOWRI is also partnering with RIC, alongside AIDS Care Ocean State, on a pilot project to reach Rhode Islanders living with HIV/AIDs through our Home-Delivered Meal Program.

## MOWRI Launches Monthly Café for West African Community

Expanding our congregate dining program for older adult communities, we proudly introduced a monthly café for Rhode Island's older adult West African community in partnership with Higher Ground. This monthly socialized dining opportunity offers participants delicious food, relevant speaking programs, and inspirational conversations to keep them connected in community.



## URI Summer Course Partnership

URI selected Meals on Wheels of RI as one of their featured organizations in a summer course with a focus on community service. Our student group was tasked to create a case study connecting URI students with our Home-Delivered volunteer program; implementing a path to engage students in giving back to their collegiate communities.

## MOWRI Strengthens Programs Through Technology

Nicole Greaves, Healthcare Programs Coordinator, and Mya Kemp, Home-Delivered Meal Program Coordinator, represented us at FORWARD 2025, presented by CaseWorthy and ServTracker. Through engaging sessions, collaborative labs, and valuable networking, they demonstrated leadership in advancing our use of technology to enhance program delivery. We're inspired by the innovation shared and look forward to the impact it will have in the year ahead.



## Celebrating Our Volunteers During National Volunteer Month

In April, we were proud to host our annual Volunteer Recognition Celebration in alignment with National Volunteer Month, honoring the incredible impact of our volunteers.

More than 70 volunteers joined us at the W.B. Mason showroom in Cranston, a centrally located and beautifully decorated space that made for a fun and welcoming setting. The afternoon featured lunch from Savory Fare, a photo booth, and interactive stations that encouraged connection and community. Executive Director Meghan Grady shared heartfelt remarks about the essential role our volunteers play in serving older adults across Rhode Island.

In 2024, our volunteers drove over 308,000 miles to deliver meals, wellness checks, and moments of connection to more than 3,000 home-delivered meal program clients. Their commitment is a vital part of our ability to carry out this mission.

This celebration was just one small way to show our deep appreciation for the time, compassion, and commitment our volunteers give year-round. Their impact is immeasurable, and we are already looking forward to honoring them again next year.

If you're a Volunteer and would like to help shape future events, we invite you to join our Volunteer Advisory Council. Contact us at: [whundley@rimeals.org](mailto:whundley@rimeals.org)



## MOWRI Unveils "Building Impact" Capital Campaign to Support \$2 million Headquarters Renovation

Recent visitors to MOWRI's headquarters on Bath Street in Providence may have noticed a few changes we've made to the building that houses our administrative hub, major meal dispatch site, volunteer training center, congregate dining programs and, of course, our no-cost market.

Since late 2023, we've been renovating our headquarters to offer our clients, team, and stakeholders an updated building that fully reflects our organization's dedication to our community and ensures we can continue to meet the changing needs of Rhode Island's food insecure.

The total cost of this multi-year renovation is \$2 million.

"Building Impact" is our organization's first-ever capital campaign. We're raising the funds necessary to realize building designs that prioritize addressing fundamentals, modernizations, and beautification. In total, the renovation has five stages with the first two complete.

**To date, we have raised 52% of the renovation cost.**

### Project highlights include:

- Fully accessible restrooms on all building floors
- Modernized call center, offices, conference room, and meal dispatch areas
- Expanded no-cost market storage and space
- Converted exterior doors to be ADA accessible

For more information and project updates, visit [www.rimeals.org/building-impact](http://www.rimeals.org/building-impact).

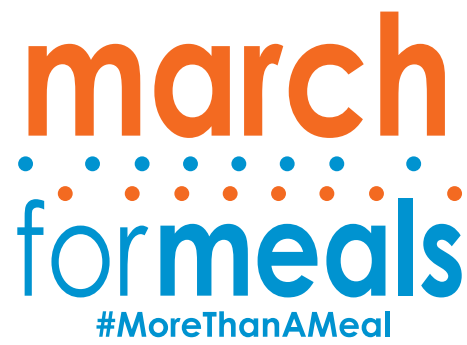




## March for Meals: A Season of Impact and Advocacy

March for Meals 2025 kicked off with energy and purpose as Governor Daniel J. McKee joined us at the Coventry Resource and Senior Center to launch our month-long celebration of support for homebound older adults. With special thanks to the Providence College Friars and our incredible presenting sponsors—Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island and Webster Bank—we set the tone for a powerful campaign.

We're thrilled to share that we've exceeded our \$110,000 goal, raising \$113,000 through the generosity of donors, businesses, and community partners. Highlights included impactful meal deliveries with elected officials and our inaugural Advocacy Networking Breakfast, where leaders came together to champion food is medicine.



## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



## Your Gift Makes a Local Impact

Every dollar stays right here in Rhode Island — supporting the health, safety, and independence of our older neighbors.

\$1,067,000



**\$10**

Provides one home-delivered meal, a wellness check, and a friendly visit.

**\$50**

Covers a week of meals, safety checks, and social connection.

**\$100**

Ensures two weeks of healthy meals and meaningful engagement.

**\$200**

Supports a full month of nutritious meals and life-saving check-ins.

# Stay Connected



Schedule a Tour



Become a Volunteer



Make a Donation

## Save the Date



# Festival of Meals

11:30am  
Wednesday,  
October 29, 2025

Crowne Plaza Hotel,  
Warwick

For event details visit [www.rimeals.org](http://www.rimeals.org)

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