



thecommunitykitchen.org

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Working Every Day to Build Food Security in the Monadnock Region

>>> REFLECTIONS OF 2023

When Father Greg Boyle spoke at the Keene Public Library on Martin Luther King Jr Day last month, he invited us to “go to the margins” of our community, not to change the people we find there, “but to be changed.”

The Community Kitchen is a place of gathering that brings people together across differences, especially that of social class. Life is a journey guided largely by the company we keep; who we are is deeply shaped by the people we spend time with. Of course, our openness to others when we encounter their presence and their point of view is what allows us to be moved by these connections.

It takes uncommon humility to encounter people who appear different from us with openness. When we encounter others in their vulnerable moments, are we there with an attitude of listening? Are we checking judgment at the door and bringing unconditional care and curiosity to the conversation? Are we ready to allow the beliefs that have helped us make sense of the world to be overturned?

Reflecting on Father Greg’s visit, the staff and Board at The Community Kitchen are asking ourselves these questions, and exploring how we may lean into building transformational relationships out of the encounters that take place in our space. Barb, our Development Director, likes to talk about all of the connections made around our kitchen tables in our homes: we share stories and values; debate priorities and hash out shared problems; do homework and learn together; make plans, and prepare budgets. Our dear volunteer, Carol, suggested that The Community Kitchen is “the Community’s kitchen.”



In 2023, we celebrated our 40th anniversary as an organization, undertook some challenging organizational planning work, welcomed four new staff members and five new Board members, undertook important trainings such as Trauma Informed Service Provision, and reopened our dining room to our weekly dinner and Sunday lunch guests. To extend our metaphor, we have been setting our community table. Looking forward to 2024 and beyond, we welcome our community to gather around this table. As a community, we face many challenges together. Let’s gather around the table. Let’s get to know one another, understand one another, and become invested in our common good. All are welcome.

-Sarah Harpster, Executive Director

Gratefully supported by
Monadnock



NEW FACES

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HELP US WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS!

>>> NEW STAFF



Jodi Newell
Volunteer & Guest Services Coordinator

Jodi comes from 8 years of experience working and volunteering as an issue organizer for the overdose and homelessness/housing crises. Throughout her life, she grew up in a family dedicated to service within the community. She looks forward to continuing the journey of service with TCK.



Anthony Marshall
Hot Meals Manager

A true Chef by trade and food enthusiast, Anthony centers his days on providing nutritious meals and promoting food sustainability to the local community. He invites you to stop by the Kitchen Monday through Friday evenings for a closer look into the Hot Meals Department and see what he's cooking up!



Phil Rondeau
Pantry Assistant

Phil works in our Pantry Program. He focuses on organizing Volunteer projects, ensuring food donations are safely stored, completing food product inventory, and handing out Pantry groceries to our area families. He supports our Staff and team in any way he can and helps guests feel welcome as they come into the pantry.



Barb Weisman
Director of Development & Communications

Barb collaborates with our Executive Director to set the strategic directions for fundraising, donor relationships, events and oversees communication efforts, including marketing, branding, newsletters, and press releases. She is looking forward to meeting you and thanking you for your ongoing support of The Community Kitchen.

>>> BOARD MEMBERS

2023 brought some considerable changes to the Board of Directors for The Community Kitchen

The Community Kitchen Board (or as we call it, The Kitchen Cabinet) has a 3-year term and we were sad to see long-time members Jason Wilder, Cheryl Kahn, and Peter Rooney cycle off the Board. We thank them for their incredible service!



We are excited to have new members join

Chair - Gina Burke

Treasurer - Amanda Young

Board Members - Erin Dallas-Patch, Ashok Bahl, Rye Capron, Jackie Furlone, and Kevin O'Brien

Standing Members - Marc Toyloy and John Danahy

If you have a goal of increasing your volunteerism or community impact in 2024, join The Kitchen Cabinet and make a difference!



Kathy Austin

At The Community Kitchen, we are extremely fortunate to have amazing volunteers who dedicate their time to helping us serve the community. Some volunteers help with kitchen prep or dinner service, others with pantry sorting & distribution, some join us for special events & some help out in different ways as needed. Kathy Austin is one of those all around, "wherever you need me, I'll be there" types.

In addition to consistently maintaining a weekly pantry shift, Kathy has made herself available to support us in our community outreach, most recently joining a group of Keene State College students to serve hot cocoa at the Snow and Ice Festival. Not only do we love having Kathy representing The Community Kitchen to the public, we love having her help train and welcome new volunteers. She is friendly, kind and helpful to everyone she meets. Thank you for all you do, Kathy!

>>> A RECIPE FROM CHEF ANTHONY

Chicken Stir Fry

- 2 tablespoons sesame oil (canola oil can be a substitute if allergic to sesame)
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 cup broccoli
- 1 medium garlic clove minced.
- 1 red bell pepper sliced
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 green bell pepper sliced
- ¾ cup onions sliced
- 6 mushrooms sliced
- 3 tablespoons vegetable broth
- 3 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 1 pound chicken cut into chunks and seared



1. In a large skillet add oil and chicken and veggies and begin to fry until veggies soften
2. Add ginger, garlic, and soy sauce and stir fry adding vegetable broth and water
3. Cook for four to five minutes and serve over rice



THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF OUR COMMUNITY AND
THE MONADNOCKFOOD COOP!
THE 2023 ROUND ITUP CAMPAIGN
IN DECEMBER 2023 BROUGHT IN \$6,102!!



#GIVING TUESDAY

A huge thanks to the generous donors who provided the matching gifts for our Giving Tuesday 2023 campaign and the community's incredible generosity for rising to the challenge! We met our goal of \$30,000!

THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN PROGRAMS

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»»» PANTRY PROGRAM

Wednesdays and Thursdays

Take-home supplemental food boxes are available once a week on either day:

Wednesdays drive-thru 12:30pm-5:30pm

Thursdays walk-thru from 11:30am-4:00pm.

The boxes contain staples such as breads, shelf-stable groceries, protein, fresh vegetables and dairy when possible.

Verification of name and address is required.

We accept donations of food Monday – Friday 9 AM to 5 PM

THE COMMUNITY
KITCHEN DISTRIBUTED
27,554 BOXES IN 2023
THROUGH THE PANTRY
PROGRAM. THAT'S
247,986 MEALS!



»»» HOT MEALS

Week nights and Sundays

Our Hot Meals program is dedicated to providing nourishment for everyone who walks through our doors, without any questions or qualifications. Whether you need a warm meal, a cozy place to unwind, or simply some companionship, we encourage you to join us. Our in-house dining strives to deliver a well-balanced, nutritious experience. A typical meal includes a main dish (featuring meat, poultry, or fish), a starch, a choice of two vegetables, garden and fruit salads, assorted sides, desserts, and beverages. Additionally, we make an effort to include a vegetarian option for those with dietary preferences.

Our commitment extends beyond the menu; we foster a warm and caring environment that is free from discrimination, thanks to the dedicated efforts of our community volunteers. Join us in the community at the table.

**Hot meals are served 5 evenings a week with a Sunday lunch;
Monday - Friday, 5-6:20 PM and Sunday, 11 AM-12 PM.**

THE COMMUNITY
KITCHEN PREPARED
AND SERVED OVER
33,000 HOT MEALS
IN 2023



»»» MOBILE FOOD PANTRY PROGRAM

We have slowly been extending our reach as we broaden the scope of our mission to include addressing the root causes of hunger.

Piloted over the summer of 2022, our Mobile Food Pantry visited towns across our 976 square mile region and brought food to neighbors who lack the money and transportation to access food. The results of this initial pilot included 5 locations serving a total of 191 constituents in the region. The pilot was well received and we are moving forward with program development and funding.

We are currently establishing needs for the most efficient way to launch the program with a dedicated vehicle among other expenses. The Mobile Food Pantry is the result of our collaboration to develop a food access plan for the region with the Monadnock Farm and Community Coalition who discovered that a lack of transportation is a leading cause of food insecurity and a barrier to accessing food through The Community Kitchen.



UPCOMING EVENTS

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WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US!

32ND ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Join us on June 3rd for our largest fundraiser of the year!

The day begins with registration at 9:00 am. The real fun gets rolling at 10:30 am with a \$1 million and a \$100,000 shootout followed by a shotgun-style start at 11:00 am. After 18 rounds of golf, there will be a delicious dinner, raffle, and silent auction.

Proceeds from the tournament allow us to continue our mission to provide nutritious meals and groceries; to educate and empower our guests, community, and partners; and to be a leading advocate to strengthen food security in the Monadnock Region.

Tournament sponsors are needed. Sponsorship opportunities are a great way to promote your business. Golf space is limited, so reserve your spot early!

Visit our website www.thecommunitykitchen.org to register.



EMPTY BOWLS

The Community Kitchen is bringing back an Empty Bowls fundraiser!

This year we are excited to be showcasing the Empty Bowls fundraiser as a part of The Taste of Keene happening the first weekend in June. Positioning the event in tandem with The Taste of Keene will allow for greater visibility and participation and hopefully more funds to help provide food resources for our community.

How can you help? We are looking for donations of bowls from our local artisans and community. Bowls of all shapes, mediums, and sizes are welcome! During the event, we will be showcasing three levels of bowls, handmade bowls from the youth in our area, artisan-donated bowls, and higher-end bowls for auction.

We hope you will all join us at this exciting event during The Taste of Keene on June 1 to purchase your bowl and grab some of Chef Anthony's great creations to go with it!

LOCAL HARVEST DINNER

The Local Harvest Dinner has fast become a favorite fundraiser with dinner guests and staff alike. This event will feature locally harvested foods prepared by our own Chef Anthony.

Want to be a part of the planning committee to help us put together an amazing event that celebrates the hard work of The Community Kitchen and raises the funds needed to keep it moving forward?

Reach out to Barb Weisman at bweisman@thecommunitykitchen.org to learn more and get involved in making this a bash to remember!



>>> 21 DAY EQUITY CHALLENGE

The Community Kitchen will be participating in Food Solutions New England's 10th Annual 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge from April 1-April 21, 2024.

Each year, thousands of individuals and hundreds of officially participating organizations join in a shared journey of learning and charting a course of action to dismantle racism in our food system and our world.

The FSNE 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge is simple! You commit to deepening your understanding of, and willingness to confront, racism for twenty-one consecutive days in April of each year and the Racial Equity Challenge will:

- Raise your awareness, change your understanding, and shift the way you behave.
- Go beyond individual or interpersonal racism by helping to demystify structural and institutional racism and white supremacist patterns that are sometimes invisible to people.
- Inspire you to act, on your own or with others in your organization, business, or group, to dismantle these systems, to make changes in your work and the world that can build true equity and justice for all.



Every morning of the Challenge, you'll receive an email "prompt" with a short reading, video, or audio file. You are encouraged to take about ten to fifteen minutes each day with the material in the prompt, though we will provide extra resources in case you want to dig further into the day's topic. You have the option to log into our online forums (links will be provided) if you'd like to discuss the prompts in a supported and moderated environment.

We also encourage you to share your experience on social media using the hashtag #FSNEEquityChallenge or have conversations with friends, coworkers, or other community members who may also be doing the Challenge.

**Want to learn more and join us in this important work?
Visit www.Foodsolutionsne.org to learn more and register
for the 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge!**

»»» 2024'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Challenge/or/solving Hunger in New Hampshire: SB499, The Hunger Free NH Act



Our food and nutrition support system is designed to work like a power grid that can move healthy food to communities and households – the problem is that the grid is well-powered in some areas and patchy or even non-existent in others. At the same time, recent economic trends, including rising costs of goods, housing, and child care, are straining household budgets. For many, it is increasingly difficult to meet basic needs. This is happening nationally, and New Hampshire is no different.

What is different in New Hampshire is that we have very little state revenue to support the public structures we rely on. This bill is designed to strengthen connections to the system where there is the greatest need/where there are weak points. Ending hunger can be achieved by ensuring that everyone eligible for federal nutrition programs (e.g. SNAP, School and Summer meals) is connected to those resources. These programs represent our nation's commitment to supporting the health and well-being of any of us who might find ourselves in need of nutrition support. To that end, we have created a comprehensive bill to remove barriers, streamline program administration, and increase participation in these critical nutrition support programs.

The Solutions:

- Increase participation in the Federal Nutrition Programs (FNPs) that exist for all of us when we need them. These programs are lifelines.
- Remove the administrative barriers to accessing FNPs that contribute to under-participation among eligible people.
- Pass the Hunger Free NH Act!

What does the Hunger Free NH Act do?

- Reduce Food Insecurity
- Support Children
- Support Schools
- Support Public Health
- Leverage Federal Dollars
- Support NH's Local Economies / Return on Investment

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