



2024

Membership Impact Report



MEALS on WHEELS
AMERICA

2024 WAS A MILESTONE YEAR FOR MEALS ON WHEELS AMERICA.

Fifty years prior, in 1974, the first national meeting of senior nutrition programs took place in D.C., making it clear the need for a national membership association that would galvanize the network and advocate for the collective needs of programs and the seniors they serve. We celebrated our 50th anniversary at the 2024 Meals on Wheels Annual Conference in Baltimore, where over 700 local leaders, industry experts and national partners gathered.

For five decades, we have leveraged our national programming, partnerships and influence to support our passionate and dedicated membership of community-based Meals on Wheels providers around the country. We've seen members enhance and expand their capacity to deliver nutrition and social connection to individuals in greatest need.

This anniversary was also a reminder that for far too long, the pressing needs of seniors have been underfunded and ignored. In our country, nearly 13 million seniors are facing hunger and 56% feel lonely. Despite tireless efforts, we know local Meals on Wheels providers are struggling to address this need. Government funding and private donations have not kept pace with the demand, leaving seniors waiting months or even years for help.

1 in 3 local providers has a waitlist with an average wait time of four months. The issue will only get worse if action isn't taken, and we can't afford to wait any longer.

That's why, during our national convening in Baltimore, Meals on Wheels America launched a bigger, bolder plan to End the Wait™. In partnership and close collaboration with each of our members, we will eliminate waitlists and ensure every senior who needs Meals on Wheels gets it.

Here is how we will achieve our bold goal:

- + By scaling national programming to drive locally led solutions and help you build your capacity.
- + By growing partnerships to scale services for communities with greatest need.
- + By leveraging our influence to raise awareness and drive change across systems, practices and policies.

Together, we can ensure every senior who needs Meals on Wheels gets it.

Together, we can End the Wait.

Read on to learn how we worked together to End the Wait in 2024 ▶

Together, We Are ...

1,018
members strong

Operating in
nearly every
community

Collectively
serving more than
2 million seniors
annually

We retained 98% of members and welcomed 42 new organizations!

Strengthening the Network with Scalable, Locally Led Solutions

- ✓ More than \$4.2 million in grants
- ✓ More than \$1 million through Subaru of America's 2023-2024 Share the Love Event
- ✓ Over \$720,000 through gift distributions and pilot program funding
- ✓ \$234,000 in hurricane relief through our Emergency Response and Recovery Fund

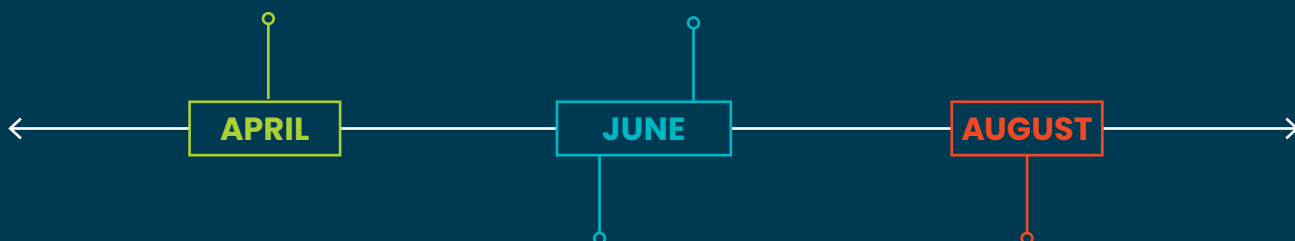
We created new learning content and convened the network throughout the year to focus on how we can expand capacity to reach all older adults in need.

Virtual Volunteer Symposium

Convened nearly 500 attendees for 8 sessions full of practical strategies to help find amazing volunteers, build stronger connections with peers and celebrate the impact of volunteers.

Driving Impact Summit

Convened 300+ attendees for 16 sessions focused on the knowledge, resources and connections needed to navigate the changing landscape of emerging environmental and client needs.



Launched Medically Tailored Meal Toolkit

Already joined by 202 members, the toolkit contains step-by-step instructions, educational videos from members and more to motivate, guide and inform the development, design and delivery of medically tailored meals.

Meals on Wheels Annual Conference & Expo

Convened 700+ attendees for 35 learning sessions, 12 networking sessions and 5 keynotes to celebrate the 50th anniversary and look ahead to the future of the network.

We continued our efforts to further integrate Meals on Wheels into health care through:

- + Tools and resources designed to prepare members for health care contracts
 - › Hosted a webinar to guide member outreach and potential partnership discussions with their local hospitals and health systems.
- + Continuing to fulfill on national contracts
 - › Provided 17,470 meals to a total of 1,051 patients undergoing cancer

treatments and their families in collaboration with members in five states through our decade-long partnership with Eisai Pharmaceuticals' Magnolia Meals at Home® patient support program.

- + 607 older adults were taken off waitlists and enrolled in services at 10 member programs in 2024 through a study with the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI).



Forging and Expanding Partnerships to Scale Services for Communities in Greatest Need

We are stronger when we work together. This year, our partnerships flourished:

- + **Subaru of America** continued its support of Meals on Wheels through its Share the Love Event for the 17th year, resulting in more than \$1 million distributed to 307 participating members.
- + **The Home Depot Foundation**, with their generous support for the Helping Homebound Heroes grant program, continued to enable 20 members to deliver necessary home repairs and safety modifications that help veteran seniors live safely in their own homes longer.
- + **Caesars Foundation** powered grants to help 18 members expand nutrition and social connection programming.

- + **Food Lion Feeds** reached a cumulative giving of \$1 million to Meals on Wheels America and helped more than a dozen members build their infrastructure to serve more seniors in need.
- + **DoorDash** led exciting initiatives to help our network expand meal delivery, including funding to support free delivery pilots for 30+ members.
- + **Barilla** rolled out a co-branded End the Wait food truck in Chicago to raise needed funds and awareness and attract volunteers.

These collaborations enable us to reach more seniors and amplify our impact, driving lasting change across communities nationwide.

This year was extra special as we celebrated a heartwarming achievement: the delivery of our **13 millionth pet meal** through our partnership with PetSmart Charities. This milestone further underscores our commitment to reducing isolation and loneliness by ensuring that seniors have the companionship and support they deserve.



In 2024, we launched the reimagined member discount program as MORE (Member Offers, Rewards & Expertise). Through new revenue streams, exclusive discounts and valuable insights, MORE partners helped members save \$5.1 million.

The program welcomed **four** new partners:

- + **DoorDash:** Helping local providers fill delivery driver gaps to ensure seniors receive their meals on time.
- + **Amazon Business:** With Business Prime, local providers can cut costs with discounts on over 4,000 office and business supplies.
- + **MKT Fleet:** Meals on Wheels providers need “wheels,” and MKT Fleet offers special pricing and access to hard-to-find vehicles like refrigerated vans to deliver meals across long distances.

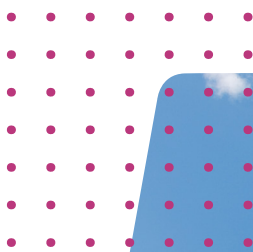
- + **Age Safe America:** Helping providers get certified in fall prevention, home safety and aging-in-place home modifications to ensure seniors stay safe and secure at home.

We also expanded impact with longstanding partners like **CARS**, which allows people to donate the sale of their vehicles and real estate to Meals on Wheels providers.

Harnessing Our Influence To Raise Awareness and Drive Change Across Systems, Practices and Policies

We led relentless advocacy efforts to help local Meals on Wheels providers in meeting the urgent needs of their communities. We built support on Capitol Hill and within the administration and fought to protect funding and policies that strengthen senior nutrition programs, the volunteers who make them happen and the seniors they serve.

- + **Fought repeated budget debates and proposals** to drastically cut funding in the House of Representatives, including during annual appropriations negotiations and government shutdown threats surrounding fiscal year 2024 and 2025 appropriations.
- + **Endorsed multiple pieces of legislation to support Meals on Wheels** providers, including the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2024, the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act of 2023 and the Medically Tailored Home-Delivered Meals Demonstration Pilot Act.
- + On March 7, 2024, Meals on Wheels America president and CEO Ellie Hollander **testified in front of the Senate** Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee at the first OAA Reauthorization hearing, “The Older Americans Act: Supporting Efforts to Meet the Needs of Seniors.”
- + **Recognized Older Americans Month** in May by hosting a congressional briefing and panel discussion on the Hill about Older Americans Act reauthorization, including remarks from Senator Bob Casey, Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Aging.
- + **Kept members informed** about updates from Capitol Hill and how their operations may be affected through timely emails and webinars, and engaged members in advocacy through turnkey resources.



We conducted and published a variety of research to measure and elevate the impact of the Meals on Wheels network:

- + **Released the 2022-2023 Member Benchmarks and Insights report** and conducted the 2024 Member Benchmarking Survey to demonstrate the value and need for supporting Meals on Wheels, help us to advocate for your needs, drive funding to the network and **better serve our members.**
- + **Published Evaluating Social Connection Programs: Friendly Calling and Visiting Quantitative Pilot Study**, a new report demonstrating the efficacy of Meals on Wheels friendly calling and visiting programs in **significantly reducing disconnectedness.**
- + Concluded our Wellsky partnership, which found that **meal delivery services reduce senior hospitalizations by up to 93%** within 90 days post-discharge.
- + **Presented our research at the Gerontological Society of America's annual conference** in Seattle and published an article in the Journal of Applied Gerontology.
- + **Developed fact sheets** to communicate the escalating issue of senior hunger and **what the Meals on Wheels network delivers.**



We rallied support for our cause around the country through our campaigns:

- + **#RespectYourElders** campaign featured **23 celebrities**, including Genie Bouchard and Jeff Bridges
- + We collected over **35,000 pledges** from individuals who are committed to making sure that no senior has to wait for the nutrition and moments of connection they deserve.
- + We matched nearly **20,000 potential volunteers** with their local Meals on Wheels provider.
- + **61,000 messages** were sent to Congress asking them to fund and protect programs like Meals on Wheels.
- + **#SaveLunch** and Summer Recess Rush generated over **12,000 petitions** to Members of Congress
- + We secured more than **991 million media impressions** throughout the year.

And were recognized for stewarding the Meals on Wheels brand as one of the **Fast Company's Brands That Matter**. The list honors brands that resonate with individuals and communities in a profound way, having established relevance and impact on culture.

We honored role models in the field:

- + **J. Greg Pittman, Chief Executive Officer, Meals on Wheels Texoma**, was presented with The Sister Alice Marie Quinn Award for being an influential Meals on Wheels leader committed to

combatting senior isolation and hunger with compassion, love and respect.

- + **Jo Ann Jenkins, CEO, AARP**, was presented with The Extra Mile Award for being a champion who has gone above and beyond to ensure the well-being, independence and dignity of older adults.

- + **The Home Depot Foundation** was presented with The Driving Force Award for being an exceptional Meals on Wheels America partner committed to impacting the lives of homebound seniors.

We are grateful for our members, the role they play in the greater Meals on Wheels movement and the work being done in each community to ensure no senior is forgotten.

Together, we will further our efforts to End the Wait in 2025 and beyond.

