



# 2024 Annual Report





## Message from our Leaders

2024 marked a milestone year for Meals on Wheels America as we celebrated our 50th anniversary. We honored the organization's five decades of national leadership and achievement in empowering community-based Meals on Wheels providers around the country. Through strategic programming, partnerships and influence, we've helped strengthen a passionate network dedicated to delivering nutrition and social connection to seniors in greatest need. Over the years, these providers have grown in their dedication and compassion, expanding their reach and deepening their impact in the lives of seniors and communities across the country.

But 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 either the demand or the rise in food, fuel and operating costs, leaving too many seniors waiting months or even years for help. In fact, 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. We can't afford to wait any longer.

That's why, looking ahead to the next 50 years, Meals on Wheels America launched a bigger, bolder plan to End the Wait™.

We unveiled our new path forward, ensuring Meals on Wheels continues to be a vital cornerstone in every community. This new plan centers the needs of our network and the seniors they serve. 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 build local 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.

All together, these strategies are our approach to changing how this country works together to champion senior health and well-being.

The success of Meals on Wheels is, and always has been, rooted in a partnership of public and private resources that support our aging neighbors in nearly every community across the country — whether rural, urban or suburban. In 2024, this collaboration continued as everyone stepped up to do their part. We couldn't have done any of this without you, and as we look to the road ahead, we know we can't do what comes next without your heart, your voice and your unwavering support.

Together, we can End the Wait.



*Ellie Hollander*

**Ellie Hollander**  
President and CEO,  
Meals on Wheels America



*LuAnn Oatman*

**LuAnn Oatman**  
Board Chair,  
Meals on Wheels America

## Together, We Are:

**5,000**  
community-  
based providers

**Hundreds of**  
thousands of  
**volunteers**  
nationwide

**Operating in**  
nearly **every**  
**community**

Collectively  
**serving more**  
**than 2 million**  
seniors annually



### Helping Seniors Like Joel

Joel Roy of Aroostook County in Maine is a dedicated teacher whose health challenges forced him to retire at 60. At 65 years old, he's homebound, has given up driving and struggles to walk around the block. His family wants him to go into assisted living, but he values his independence and the comfort of the place he's called home for five years.

"I'm only 65. I still got a lot of life to go," Joel says. "Meals on Wheels [made it easier] for me to eat healthier."

When Joel initially inquired about Meals on Wheels, Aroostook Agency on Aging had to put him on a waitlist due to lack of funding and resources, where he waited two years. Imagine what would have been possible if Joel had gotten their meals sooner rather than waiting to receive potentially life-saving support.

Joel's story amplifies the urgent and undeniable need for timely support for those still waiting.

## Strengthening the Network with Scalable, Locally Led Solutions

Meals on Wheels America distributed more than **\$6.3 million** to **477** Meals on Wheels providers in 2024, including:

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



To reach all older adults who need Meals on Wheels, we armed the network with tools, training and other educational resources that can help them remain resilient, grow and thrive.

### Virtual Volunteer Symposium

Convened nearly 500 attendees to share practical strategies to help celebrate the impact of volunteers, to attract even more and to build stronger connections with peers.

### Driving Impact Summit

Convened 300+ attendees virtually for to impart the knowledge, resources and connections needed to navigate the changing landscape of emerging environmental and client needs.



### Launched Medically Tailored Meal Learnings

Created 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, celebrating our 50th anniversary while looking ahead to the future of the network.

Knowing the importance of good nutrition for healthy aging, we continued our efforts to build bridges between health care and community-based organizations like Meals on Wheels through:

#### Tools and resources designed to prepare local providers for health care contracts

- + Hosted a webinar to guide member outreach and potential partnership discussions with their local hospitals and health systems.

#### Continuing to execute with excellence on our existing national contracts

- + Provided **17,470 meals** to a total of 1,051 patients undergoing cancer treatments and their families 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 Meals on Wheels providers in 2024 through a study with the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI).







## On the Frontline When Disaster Strikes

In 2024, Florida's west coast endured a series of violent storms. When natural disasters strike, homebound seniors are among the most vulnerable. This is a population that often cannot evacuate or seek help for themselves due to mobility challenges. That's why providers like Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee County are often regarded as first responders,

as they can quickly identify where vulnerable seniors live and how to reach them with the immediate assistance they need.

Meals on Wheels PLUS is in homes and communities daily. They are the boots on the ground aware of individuals' unique needs, and they are on the phone conducting safety checks to ensure homebound seniors have an evacuation plan — especially seniors like Johnny Roberts, who required a special needs shelter with power outlets for his CPAP machine.

"Our community is so resilient and willing to help people," said Frank Perry of Meals on Wheels PLUS. "That empowers us to do what we do ... It's not 'can we do it,' but 'how can we do it?'"

That's why we launched the Meals on Wheels Emergency Response and Recovery Fund in 2024 to support the Meals on Wheels network in times of crisis, allowing local providers to stay focused on what is most crucial — meeting the critical needs of seniors in their communities.



## 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 17<sup>th</sup> year, resulting in more than \$1 million distributed to 307 participating local providers.

**DoorDash** led exciting initiatives to help our network expand meal delivery, including funding to support free delivery pilots for 30+ Meals on Wheels providers.

**Barilla** rolled out a co-branded End the Wait food truck in Chicago to raise needed funds and awareness.

**Food Lion Feeds** reached cumulative giving of \$1 million to Meals on Wheels America and helped more than a dozen Meals on Wheels providers build their infrastructure to serve more seniors in need.

**Caesars Foundation** powered grants to help 18 Meals on Wheels providers expand nutrition and social connection programming, working in partnership with 517 volunteers who contributed more than 8,500 hours of service.

**The Home Depot Foundation**, with their generous support for the Helping Homebound Heroes grant program, continued to enable 20 Meals on Wheels providers to deliver necessary home repairs and safety modifications that help veteran seniors live safely in their own homes longer. This was the ninth year of this unique partnership, serving over 3,700 veteran seniors since its inception in 2015.

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



## 13 Million Pet Meals

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. Nearly 100% of Meals on Wheels

clients say their pets make them less lonely and happier. David, a senior served by Meals on Wheels of Cheyenne in Wyoming, is among them.

David's dog, Rebel, plays a key role in David's life by managing his anxiety and depression symptoms. The pup provides much-needed companionship, too.

"I talk to him all day like a human because I got no family," David said. "I live alone with my dog."

But providing for Rebel hasn't always been easy. Living on a fixed income, David was "barely making it." There were many months when

he could only pay half his electric bill — just enough to keep the lights on — and still buy food for Rebel.

Seniors shouldn't have to make these impossible choices. That's why we partnered with PetSmart Charities to help providers in communities across the country deliver 13 million meals to pets since 2020, Rebel included, keeping seniors and their loving, furry companions together.

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 MORE (Member Offers, Rewards & Expertise), a reimagined discount program for local Meals on Wheels providers. Through new revenue streams, exclusive discounts and valuable insights, MORE partners helped more than 411 providers save \$5.1 million. At a time when operational costs are skyrocketing, the MORE program helps providers serve more seniors by reducing expenses.

### 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.

In total, **\$25.5 million** in purchases from **MORE** partners **saved providers \$5.1 million** – dollars they can instead put toward serving seniors.

## 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.



**The Older Americans Act (OAA) is the foundational source of federal funding** for senior nutrition programs across the country, enabling the delivery of 251 million meals to more than 2 million older adults annually.



- + **Endorsed 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.”
- + Kept Meals on Wheels providers informed about **updates from Capitol Hill** and how their operations may be affected through timely emails and webinars and engaged providers in advocacy through turnkey resources.
- + **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.

Meals on Wheels America President and CEO Ellie Hollander teamed up with National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs Executive Director Bob Blancato to pen an op-ed in The Hill urging Congress to increase funding for senior nutrition programs.



It is rare to have the opportunity to invest in programs that have withstood the test of time and continue to deliver on their initial promise. That’s why we make this appeal on behalf of the millions of older adults who rely on Meals on Wheels as a lifeline to prevent hunger and malnutrition. It’s time for senior hunger to take a holiday.”

## THE HILL

News | Policy | Business | Health | Opinion | Events | Jobs | Join/Log In | Video | Ne

### OPINION > CONGRESS BLOG

## Senior hunger takes no holiday — Congress must invest more in Older Americans Act Nutrition Program

BY ELLIE HOLLANDER AND BOB BLANCATO, OPINION CONTRIBUTORS - 01/20/24 6:00 PM ET

Most of us just wrapped up another holiday season, enjoying friends, family, festivities and time off. Yet, there was little to celebrate for too many older adults, as hunger takes no breaks. And unless Congress acts early in 2024, this hardship will continue.

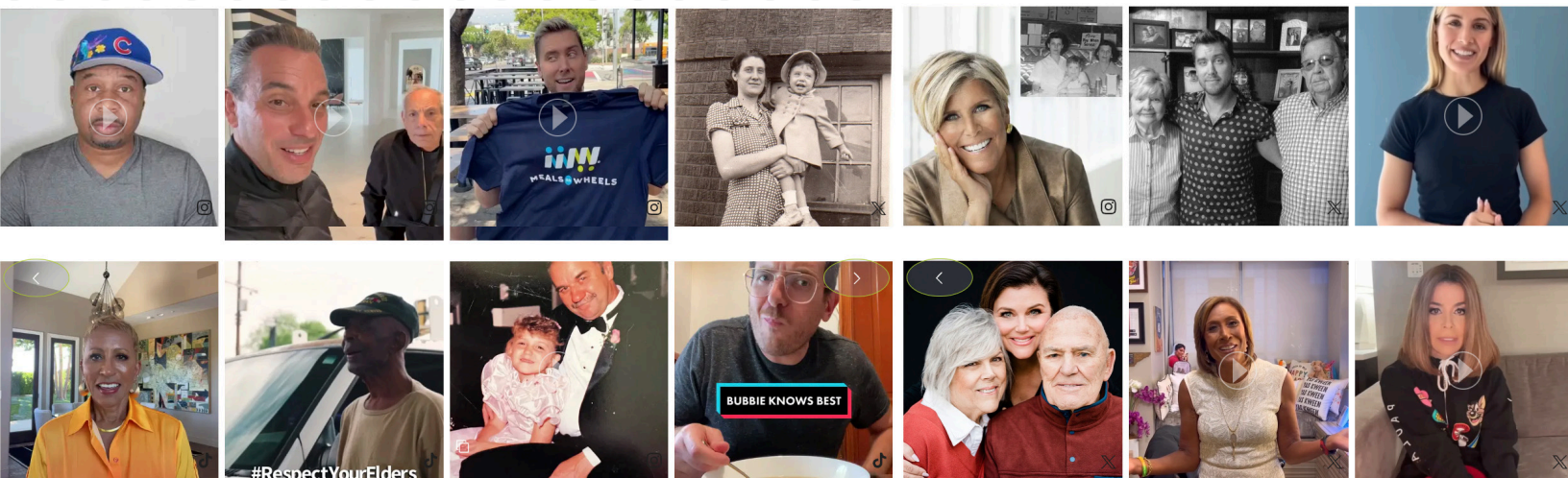
As it stands now, 12 million older adults worry about having enough food, and one in three Meals on Wheels programs has a waitlist with seniors



## 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 member needs, drive funding to the network and **better serve local providers**.
- + **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 research 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.





## WE RALLIED SUPPORT FOR OUR CAUSE around the country by raising awareness and inspiring action:

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



### Meet a Volunteer: Joe Young

Even in retirement, Joe hasn't stopped moving. As a volunteer with United Way Meals on Wheels in Birmingham, Joe delivers nutritious meals to homebound seniors.

Joe, who learned about his local Meals on Wheels provider in 2014, recounts several occasions when he had to aid clients. He once called the paramedics for a senior who'd fallen and again for another client who said she couldn't breathe — remaining by each client's side until help arrived.

Joe is grateful for the opportunity to give back and witness the complex lives of individuals who benefit from Meals on Wheels. "Always try to help as many people as you possibly can," he says. "If I can say something to make them smile, I feel good about it."

Joe's enduring kindness tells clients in a powerful but subtle way: You matter, your happiness matters and I see you.



## We ALSO CELEBRATED ROLE MODELS AND PARTNERS who inspire our network:

- + **Presented the seventh annual Sister Alice Marie Quinn Award** honoring influential leaders from across the Meals on Wheels network to J. Greg Pittman, chief executive officer, Meals on Wheels Texoma, for being a leader committed to combatting senior isolation and hunger with compassion, love and respect.
- + **Honored Jo Ann Jenkins, CEO, AARP, with second annual Extra Mile Award** for being a champion who has gone above and beyond to ensure the well-being, independence and dignity of older adults.
- + **Recognized The Home Depot Foundation with the third annual Driving Force Award** for being an exceptional Meals on Wheels America partner for nine years, committed to impacting the lives of senior veterans in need.

## And we were also fortunate to receive MEANINGFUL RECOGNITION:



The **Meals on Wheels brand** was honored as one of **Fast Company's Brands That Matter**. The list honors brands that excel in making emotional connections, communicating purpose and maintaining cultural relevance.



We were honored as a winner of **The Human Animal Bond Research Institute's annual Human Animal Bond Innovation Awards**, which recognize companies and organizations with innovative products and programs designed to advance the human-animal bond and create a more pet-friendly society.



For the third year in a row, we received **Kudos' 2024 Best Culture Award** in the Culture Innovator category, acknowledging our national commitment to creating a great workplace culture through efforts to improve the employee experience.



We were also recognized as a **Pet-Centric Employer by Pet Benefit Solutions**. The certification highlights the pet-forward benefits we offer, such as pet insurance and pet bereavement leave, as well as our partnership with PetSmart Charities.





## Looking Ahead

While we are proud of our accomplishments in 2024, we know the work is far from over. At Meals on Wheels America, we are unwavering in our commitment to advocate for and champion the needs of older adults. We will continue to strengthen communities nationwide, empowering local

Meals on Wheels providers to deliver not just nutritious meals but vital moments of connection to those who need them most.

**Together, we can make a lasting difference, and we invite you to join us in our mission to End the Wait and ensure every senior who needs Meals on Wheels gets it.**



**END** *the* **WAIT**™

**mw** MEALS  
ON WHEELS  
AMERICA

## Financials:

### Revenues

Grants and contributions	\$21,006,001
In-kind contributions	\$1,707,108
Government grants	\$5,524
Contracts and royalties	\$1,061,920
Conference	\$812,845
Membership dues	\$513,083
Other income	\$163,089

**Total revenue** **\$25,269,570**

### Expenses

Program services	\$17,490,149
Management and general	\$4,328,526
Development	\$6,630,726

**Total expense** **\$28,449,401**

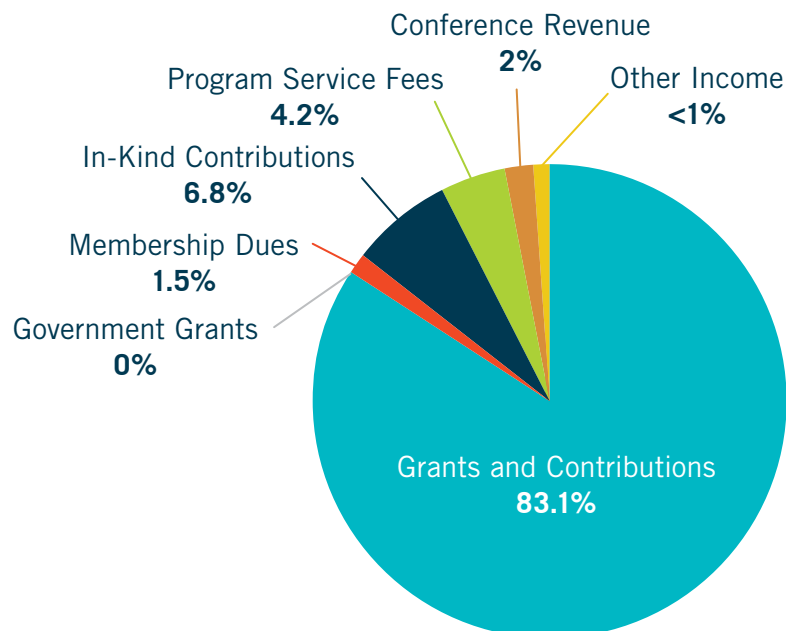
Change in net assets from operations (\$3,179,831)

Investment income \$1,989,360

Change in net assets **(\$1,190,471)**

*Net assets, beginning of year* \$37,472,509

*Net assets, end of year* \$36,282,038





## Board:

### Officers:

#### LuAnn Oatman

**CHAIR** (as of Aug. 2024)

**VICE CHAIR** (until Aug. 2024)

President and CEO

Berks Encore

Reading, PA

#### Kevin Donnellan

**VICE CHAIR** (as of Aug. 2024)

**DIRECTOR** (until Aug. 2024)

Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff

AARP

Washington, DC

#### John Marick

**SECRETARY/TREASURER**

Co-founder and President, JTMF Foundation

Former Co-founder and CEO, Consumer Cellular

Portland, OR

#### Patti Lyons

**IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR** (as of Aug. 2024)

**CHAIR** (until Aug. 2024)

President

Senior Citizens, Inc.

Savannah, GA

### Directors:

#### Stephanie Archer-Smith

Executive Director

Meals on Wheels Central Maryland

Baltimore, MD

#### Lisa Davis

Senior Managing Director

Teneo

Washington, DC

#### Holly Hagler

President and CEO

Meals on Wheels Orange County

Anaheim, CA

#### Marvin Irby

Former Chief Administrative Officer &

Senior Advisor to the President & CEO

National Restaurant Association

Washington, DC

#### Derrick Banks Mashore

Senior Vice President for Advisory

and Transaction Services

CBRE

Washington, DC

#### Jennifer Steele

CEO

Meals on Wheels San Francisco

San Francisco, CA

#### Lisa Wideman

President & CEO

Meals on Wheels Western Michigan

Grandville, MI

#### Doug Wright

President and CEO

Senior Solutions / Meals on Wheels

Upstate South Carolina

Anderson, SC

#### Natalie Adler (until Aug. 2024)

Senior Advisor & Director of

Marketing and Outreach

Fors Marsh Group

Washington, DC

#### Sandy Noe (until Aug. 2024)

Executive Director

Meals on Wheels of Northwest Indiana

Merrillville, IN

#### Raquel "Rocky" Egusquiza (until March 2024)

Executive Director

Latin Grammy Cultural Foundation

Miami, FL

## Leadership:

### **Ellie Hollander**

President and CEO

### **Kristine Templin**

Chief Development and Marketing Officer

### **Kenneth C. Euwema**

Chief Financial and Operations Officer

### **Josh Protas**

Chief Advocacy and Policy Officer

### **Ipyana Spencer**

Chief Health Officer

### **Lynn Gresham**

Chief Human Resource Officer

### **Robert T. Herbolsheimer**

Chief Legal and Compliance Officer

### **Todd Turner**

Chief Membership Officer (until Oct. 2024)

### **Jenny Young**

Chief of Staff

Vice President, Communications

Interim Chief Membership Officer (as of Oct. 2024)

### **Deirdre McGinley-Gieser**

Chief Strategy and Impact Officer

### **Jennifer Allen**

Vice President, Marketing

### **L. Carter Florence**

Vice President, Programs

### **Kelly Trimyer**

Vice President, Strategic Partnerships