

FULL PLATES

Spring 2022



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Note from our Director

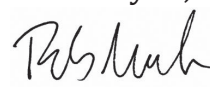
Dear Friend,

This Spring we are honoring the strength and resiliency of our community. I am excited to share with you two stories in this report of how this season is bringing new life to our work. We deeply appreciate your friendship and generosity, which brings comfort to more than 2,000 of our neighbors every month. Through growth and collaboration, we are expanding access to our food and essential services to bring this comfort to more Vermonters.

With the help of supporters like you, Feeding Chittenden will extend food access to reach more people in need here in Chittenden County, as well as in Addison County, Franklin County, and Grand Isle County through the strong partnership with our parent organization, Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity.

This work is more important than ever due to the rapidly increasing cost of food, fuel, and housing. New faces come to Feeding Chittenden every day, and with your help, we will continue to work to ensure everyone has enough to eat.

Thank you,


Rob Meehan, Director



FEEDING
Chittenden



G R O W I N G T O G E T H E R



This Spring, Feeding Chittenden opened its doors once again to serve those in need.

The Community Resource Center (CRC), a program of the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO), is being temporarily housed at Feeding Chittenden in order to provide anyone in need with a safe daytime space, access and connection to computers, phones, and housing resources, hygiene products, clothing, and other essentials. Feeding Chittenden's Hot Meal

Program is preparing and serving two meals a day for the CRC, which is open every weekday, from 8:30am to 2:30pm, alongside the Feeding Chittenden Food Shelf, home delivery programs, Community Kitchen Academy, and Food Access Center.

"During the pandemic, Feeding Chittenden has continued food service onsite with take-out meals," says Rob Meehan, Director of Feeding Chittenden, "now, we are so excited to invite our guests back into our cafeteria."

The Community Resource Center is seeing over 40 people a day, many of them new faces for the CRC thanks to the change in location providing more exposure for the meals and services they offer. "The CRC is a place where people experiencing homelessness can find warm, nutritious food, essential services and, most importantly, a sense of community," says Paul Dragon, Executive Director of CVOEO.

This support is crucial right now, as economically-challenged households are facing rising costs of housing, food, and fuel. Together we can get much needed help to thousands of households across the county. The last two years have shown how much stronger we are when we work and grow together – join us as we fight for a better, brighter tomorrow.



Seeding Chittenden

"Gardens are uplifting, have no stigma attached to them, and offer spaces for people to connect with one another."



A rebirth is happening at Feeding Chittenden. The 228 North Winooski Ave location in Burlington's Old North End is creating new, safe spaces for community members to gather, embrace being together again, and rebuild connections that were diminished through COVID-19. A garden initiative championed and directed by Feeding Chittenden's Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator, Angela deBettencourt, introduces six elevated raised beds, a pollinator garden, and a series of educational garden workshops to the various hunger relief programs housed onsite. In her words,

"Having gardens onsite make it more inviting, more beautiful, and people are more relaxed because they can touch a plant or smell a flower or notice the bees and butterflies, which isn't what people are expecting when they come to get food at the food shelf – it takes the edge off and makes it a nicer place to be."

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The raised beds and pollinator garden are the product of hours of volunteer work and donated materials – these plots will add color and beauty to the landscape, as well as an opportunity to showcase the growth of diverse crops. Angela will host a series of workshops this Spring and Summer as an effort to make gardening more accessible to people, collaborate with other community partners and programs to extend the reach of this work, and distribute more resources on growing and preparing fresh vegetables.

"We are a hunger relief organization, but this programming takes a step away from just providing food and enters into a different space that taps into food sovereignty and empowerment – putting the power back in the hands of the people by growing food, creating access, inspiration, and reminding people that food does come from the earth and here are examples that you can see and smell and touch," says Angela.

Angela can attest to the positive benefit the gardens have had on visitor's experiences at Feeding Chittenden, "These gardens are a spark – they spark something in each person. They spark stories, conversation, reflection on their life and how and when gardening has been a part of it. It's never a stressful situation, it's always a calming, delightful experience speaking to people around the gardens. People visiting us have endured a lot of stress and trauma in their lives, which melts away when they visit the garden beds."

Angela hopes that one day this program grows to reach out into the community with more resources for low-income individuals to have gardens of their own, whether it be container gardening on a porch or an entire back yard. With your support, we will continue to work towards those dreams and continue the growth food, community, and opportunity.

Ways to Give:

DONATE ONLINE OR BY CHECK:

Please make checks payable to "Feeding Chittenden".

You can mail your donation to: Feeding Chittenden, PO Box 1594, Burlington VT 05402

Please contact us if you are interested in donating stock or leaving a legacy gift!

VOLUNTEER:

As a Feeding Chittenden volunteer, you'll experience opportunities to learn and grow through rewarding roles that fight hunger.

To learn more and submit a volunteer application go to: www.feedingchittenden.org

DONATE FOOD:

Please bring your donations to Feeding Chittenden at 228 North Winooski Ave, Burlington, VT 05401, Monday – Friday from 10AM – 3:30PM.

There will be bins by the garage doors at the far end of the parking lot for you to place your donation in!
If you are feeling ill or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, we ask that you please wait to bring us your donation.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO SEE ALL THE
WORK YOUR SUPPORT IS MAKING POSSIBLE!



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Visit feedingchittenden.org to read our blog, news stories, and updates!