



The Open Door
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Back Together Again: Hundreds Attend The Open Door Empty Bowl Fundraiser



Ahlena Bellerille, age 6, of Gloucester gets her face painted at Empty Bowl Marketplace.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)

GLOUCESTER— A beloved Cape Ann community event returned Thursday at Cruiseport Gloucester, bringing more than 950 old friends together to raise funds for summer hunger-relief programs at The Open Door.

The Open Door's Empty Bowl Marketplace reimagined the nonprofit's flagship Empty Bowl fundraiser as an indoor street-fair themed event, where attendees chose a hand-painted bowl to take home, took soup to-go, got their faces painted, listened to music, got their picture taken at a "photo booth," and more.

The bowl goes home as a reminder: somewhere, someone's bowl is empty.

"Since the first Empty Bowl on Cape Ann was held in 2001, the premise of the event 'somewhere, someone's bowl is empty,' has struck a resounding chord in hearts across the community. This year's market-style evening embodied so many of the things that make Cape Ann a great place to live, melding community together with art, food and a good cause," President and CEO Julie LaFontaine said. "We live in a community where goodwill abounds, and we're so grateful to everyone who helps make the magic of an event like the Empty Bowl Marketplace happen."

Empty Bowl Marketplace, and the ongoing online auction held in tandem with the event, raise funds each year for programs of The Open Door that keep local children fed over summer break including Summer Meals for Kids, Mobile Market, and Food Pantry programs.

"It's great to see the community come out to support The Open Door," said Valerie Johnson, of Manchester-by-the-Sea, who attended Empty Bowl Marketplace on Thursday. Johnson and her husband Fred have volunteered at The Open Door for five years. "We are so lucky, when there are so many people that need help."

In 2022, The Open Door helped stabilize the lives and health of **8,486 people** from **4,872 households** through the distribution of **1.78 million pounds** of food.

The nonprofit's Summer Meals Kids program distributed 16,000 meals to local children over summer break last year, and its Mobile Market distributed 135,000 pounds of food.

Those unable to attend the event can still place a bid and view the online auction at biddingowl.com/theopendoor. The auction will remain live through Sunday, May 14.

To learn about additional giving opportunities at The Open Door, visit FOODPANTRY.org/ways-to-give/donate.

About The Open Door

The mission of The Open Door is to alleviate the impact of hunger in our community. We use practical strategies to connect people to good food, to advocate on behalf of those in need, and to engage others in the work of building food security.

Founded in 1978, The Open Door is a 501 (c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit and community food resource center for low-income residents of Gloucester, Rockport, Manchester, Essex, Ipswich, Hamilton, Boxford, Rowley, Topsfield, and Wenham. In 2022, The Open Door helped stabilize the lives and health of 8,486 people from 4,872 households through the distribution of 1.78 million pounds of food.

For more information, visit FOODPANTRY.org.

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From left: The Open Door Board Co-Chair Chris Barker, President and CEO Julie LaFontaine, and Food Pantry Coordinator and ESL Advocate Carolina Sosa.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Marty Morgan, left, and Nina Goodick volunteer at Empty Bowl Marketplace. Morgan and Goodick oversee the artists' bowls for the online auction each year, and help procure bowls for the event as well.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Cruiseport Gloucester transformed into an indoor street fair for Empty Bowl Marketplace on Thursday.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



From left: Mobile Market Coordinator Frank Margiotta, Food Service Manager Dan Trimble, Registered Dietitian Robin Sone, and volunteer Chris Neugebauer.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Gloucester Mayor Greg Verga poses with the bowl he painted for the Online Auction.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Giovanni Venuti, age 7, of Gloucester gets his face painted at Empty Bowl Marketplace.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Attendees at Empty Bowl Marketplace chose a bowl to take home as a reminder that somewhere, someone's bowl is empty.

(Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)