



The Open Door
Julie LaFontaine, President and CEO
28 Emerson Ave.,
Gloucester, MA 01930

Media Contact: Kelsey Richards
Email: kelsey.richards@foodpantry.org
Phone: 978-283-6776 x 226

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The Open Door Thanksgiving Food Drive Collects 12,194 Pounds of Food



Ella Costa, 17, of Gloucester volunteers at The Open Door Thanksgiving Food Drive at Market Basket in Gloucester. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)

GLOUCESTER— Thousands of shoppers donated hand-picked, shelf-stable goods at The Open Door Thanksgiving Food Drive on Saturday, collectively giving 12,194 pounds of food.

“Our community always shines when given an opportunity to help its neighbors, and that was certainly true this weekend,” President and CEO Julie LaFontaine said. “With local need increasing, feeding local people is a big job, but together, we can get it done. Every little bit makes a difference for a family or senior struggling during the holidays.”

Six local grocery stores served as collection sites for Saturday’s Thanksgiving Food Drive, including Market Basket at 101 Gloucester Crossing Road, Gloucester MA; Stop & Shop at 6 Thatcher Road, Gloucester MA; Shaw’s at 127 Eastern Avenue, Gloucester MA; Shaw’s at 146 High Street, Ipswich MA; Crosby’s Marketplace at 3 Summer Street, Manchester-by-the-Sea MA; and Market Basket at 231 Newburyport Turnpike, Rowley MA.

Additional donations will continue to arrive at The Open Door over the next few weeks from businesses, churches, schools, and other groups who held individual food drives to benefit The Open Door as well.

For the first time, Second Glance also held a clothing drive in conjunction with the food drive. No appointments were necessary on Saturday only at the store, where donations and sales raise revenue to support hunger-relief programs of The Open Door.

Already in 2023, The Open Door has seen more than a 28% increase in visits to its food pantries over 2022. The nonprofit’s kitchen also prepares approximately 3,000 meals each week.

Volunteers Distribute Hundreds of Turkeys

An army of volunteers and staff distributed Thanksgiving Baskets on Saturday to a steady stream of people at The Open Door’s 28 Emerson Avenue facility. Each basket included a turkey and all the fixings, at no cost, for local people to make their Thanksgiving meals at home and carry on their family traditions this year. Gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan Holiday Basket options were also available.

“Our operations team working with volunteers provides the magic that turns community donations into a festive meal basket for Thanksgiving,” said Director of Operations Jen Perry.

Hundreds more Holiday Baskets will continue to be distributed Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday through The Open Door, by appointment. Holiday Baskets are still available and anyone who needs a little extra help can sign-up to pick theirs up at FOODPANTRY.org. People can also sign-up now for a Holiday Basket for the December holidays.

The Open Door is prepared to provide 1,400 Holiday Baskets by close of business on Wednesday, Nov.22.

Members of the community who wish to make a monetary donation to help feed local people through the holidays and beyond can do so at FOODPANTRY.org/donate.

In addition to The Open Door's robust Holiday Basket program, providing local people with a turkey and all the trimmings to make special meals at home, the nonprofit also opens its kitchen each year to the American Legion on Thanksgiving Day. The American Legion will prepare and distribute meals to-go on Thanksgiving Day for anyone who would like a prepared meal for the holiday.

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 non profit 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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Gloucester Mayor Greg Verga, right, and his wife Kellie Verga help distribute Holiday Baskets on Emerson Avenue on Saturday, Nov. 18. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



From left: The Open Door President and CEO Julie LaFontaine, Gloucester Mayor Greg Verga, and Kellie Verga. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Bella Goulart, 17, of Gloucester volunteers at Market Basket in Gloucester at Saturday's Thanksgiving Food Drive. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Anika Taylor, of Manchester-by-the-Sea, volunteers to distribute turkeys on Emerson Avenue through The Open Door Holiday Basket program. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Hundreds of local people picked up Holiday Baskets at no cost on Saturday, kicking off The Open Door Holiday Basket program, which provides everything needed to make a special meal at home for the holidays. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Hundreds of turkeys were distributed on Saturday at The Open Door. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)