

NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT

Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland: DELIVERING MEALS AND CREATING CONNECTIONS

(6 FEET APART!)

By Julia Tich, Director of Communications,
Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland

Starting in 1960 with ten home-delivered meal clients in Baltimore, Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland (MOWCM) has been providing nutritious meals, personal contact and related services to homebound individuals across the region. In the early days, MOWCM established deep community connections, including expansion beyond Baltimore City and into seven surrounding counties, including Baltimore County. In the 1990s and 2000s, MOWCM designed and implemented innovative More than a meal™ programs, including the Grocery Assistance Program (GAP), targeted Case Management, and Client Wellness Calls in addition to home-delivered meals. These holistic programs, which are still offered today, provide informed and competent services that promote safety, community support and social connection.

When the Coronavirus hit Maryland, the Client Services Department at MOWCM began receiving new client referrals in record numbers. In a matter of weeks, the number of active clients more than doubled. At its peak, weekly meal production tripled to over 75,000. In order to meet this need, the MOWCM team quickly pivoted from daily hot and cold deliveries to weekly frozen meal boxes containing nutritious meals as well as milk, juice, fruit and bread. New delivery protocols and reduced in-person contact provided safety to clients and volunteers. Mary H., a home-delivered meal and GAP client, says, "I am so impressed with the quality of the meals and delivery boxes. I am always recommending the service to others who need nutritional assistance."

From the start, volunteers have been vital to the growth of MOWCM, creating lasting bonds with the clients they serve. The increased demand for meals prompted by COVID-19 triggered a parallel need for additional volunteers in a variety of capacities.



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MOWCM
Executive Director
Stephanie Archer-Smith
hard at work in the
packing room



Dave and Darlene get ready to deliver meals over the holidays.



Mary H., a MOWCM client, loves receiving her weekly meal box and grocery deliveries.

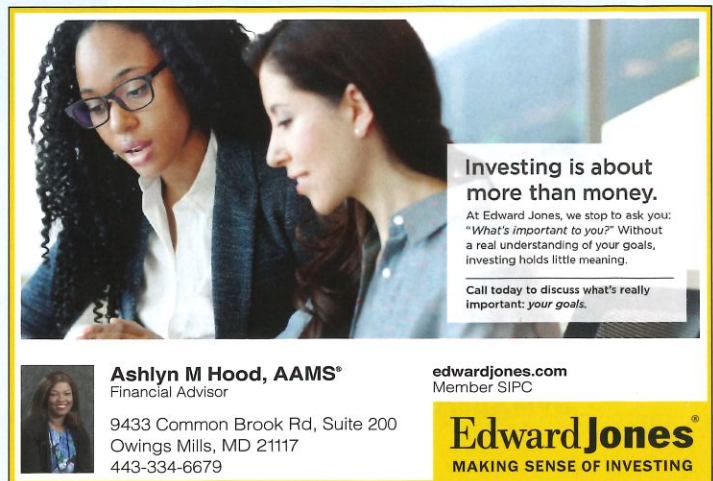


Every day, the halls of 515 South Haven Street (our main office) are filled with the excitement of volunteers packing meal boxes. At the same time, volunteers are actively engaged in delivering meals or making wellness calls to ensure clients' physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

Volunteering for MOWCM is rewarding and beneficial to clients and volunteers alike. Darlene and Dave T., a delivery couple that enjoys volunteering together comments, "We get as much out of this as the clients. This is our socialization too!"

If you or a loved one are in need of nutritional services, please visit MealsOnWheelsMD.org/Client-Application or call 410-558-0827 to apply for Grocery Assistance or Home-Delivered Meals.

Volunteers are always needed! Visit MealsOnWheelsMD.org/Volunteer to learn about current openings.



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