
METROWEST HEALTH FOUNDATION

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MetroWest Funding Consortium Brings Fresh Foods to Local Pantries and Shelters

The Foundation for MetroWest; MetroWest Health Foundation; Middlesex Savings Charitable Foundation; and the Sudbury Foundation are pleased to announce a three-year continuation grant of \$362,500 to Lovin' Spoonfuls to continue their work to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to MetroWest area food pantries and shelters. The same funding collaborative provided seed money for the expansion of Lovin' Spoonfuls into MetroWest in 2016. The funds will support operating costs including maintenance of a refrigerated truck and the salary for a driver dedicated to MetroWest.

Ashley Stanley, Founder/Executive Director of Lovin' Spoonfuls said, "We are grateful to the MetroWest Health Foundation, Foundation for MetroWest, Sudbury Foundation and the Middlesex Savings Bank Charitable Foundation for their leadership and vision for this program. Our work in this region continues to serve the most vulnerable and often unseen populations, with a focus on using food as a driver for better health. We are proud to partner with over 30 companies and organizations across 10 towns. There's more work to be done, and we are committed to providing fresh, healthy food to those who need it most."

Lovin' Spoonfuls picks up wholesome, perishable food from grocery stores, farms and farmers' markets and wholesale distributors that would otherwise go to waste and delivers it to nonprofit organizations that serve hungry people. They distribute over 40,000 pounds of fresh food each month to 23 nonprofits in the MetroWest region. The service is free to nonprofits. The impact has been tremendous. Not only is the food not wasted, which costs money in disposal and has negative environmental impacts, but it helps provide nutritious options for those using food pantries and living in shelters.

Kelsey Hampton, the Director of Food Pantry and Volunteer Services for the Natick Services Council, said, "Lovin' Spoonfuls has been an amazing organization to work with and has allowed the Natick Service Council to improve our functions that meet our clients' needs. We have been able to offer "farmers markets" to a specific population of clients who are 65 or older once a month as part of a "Healthy Eating, Healthy Aging" group."

The funders see the partnership with Lovin' Spoonfuls as a way to build capacity for agencies to offer more nutritious foods without increasing costs. Martin Cohen, President and CEO of the MetroWest Health Foundation, said, "An investment in Lovin' Spoonfuls is an investment in improving the health of many in our region. Many food pantries and meal programs cannot afford to purchase enough fresh produce to meet demand or face logistical challenges when picking up donations on their own. Lovin' Spoonfuls offers a sustainable way to increase their supply of fresh foods. This is one step in creating greater nutritional equity for all those living in MetroWest."

Lovin' Spoonfuls will continue to build relationships with vendors, nonprofits and donors in the MetroWest community. For more information or to get involved go to <https://lovinspoonfulsinc.org/>.