



MEALS **on** WHEELS

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS

More than a meal. *A connection.*



**TOGETHER,
WE CAN DELIVER
MORE THAN A MEAL.**



IMPACT REPORT 2026

WHO WE ARE

Meals on Wheels Northeastern Illinois is dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of homebound adults throughout Lake and north Cook County communities by **delivering nutritious meals, performing wellness checks, and providing compassionate human connection.**

We envision a community in which no isolated adult goes hungry, unnoticed, or unsupported — a community in which every older adult has access to the nutrition, safety, and dignity they deserve to live independently and with purpose.

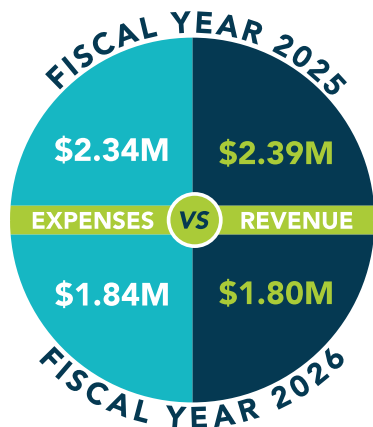


WHERE WE'RE GOING

Now we're setting our sights higher: doubling the number of meals we serve each month so we can nourish more bodies, sustain more independence, and push back even harder against the devastating effects of isolation and hunger. We're building something bold—**and we hope you'll join us.**

A NOTE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR:

"In the past 18 months, MOWNEI has crossed a real desert — leadership shifts, funding pressures, even literal building challenges. Yet we've adapted, strengthened our board, refocused our operations, and built sustainable revenue for the future. Through it all, our oasis has been you: the volunteers, donors, staff, and neighbors whose daily acts of care bring comfort and dignity to those we serve. We are grateful!" - Aaron Wagner, MWNEI Board Chair

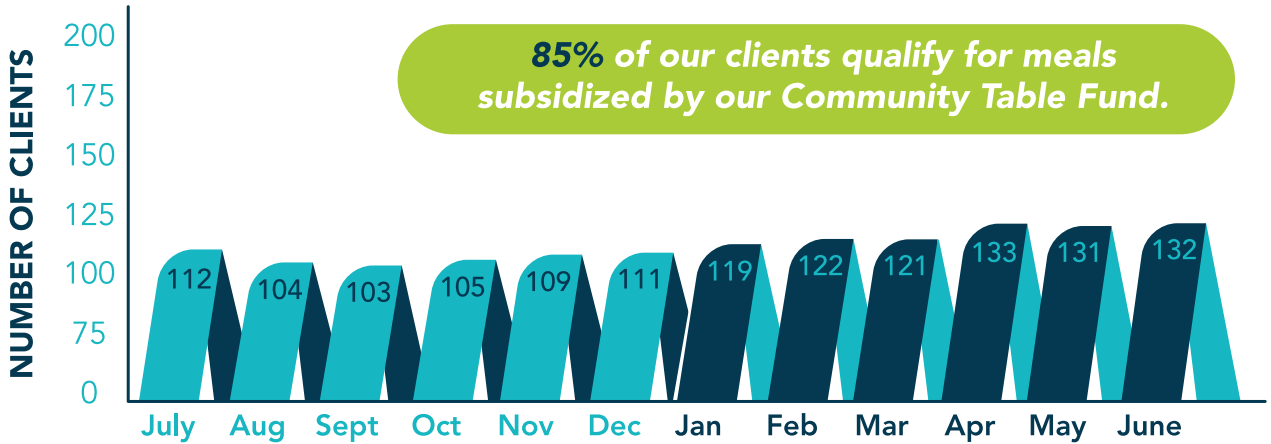


FINANCES

The temporary rise in organizational debt in FY26 was tied to winding down discontinued programs and fulfilling related commitments. Throughout the year, we focused on **stabilizing operations, strengthening financial footing, and rebuilding capacity.** This work has positioned MWNEI for sustainable growth in home-delivered meals and prepared us to scale responsibly to meet increasing demand across northern Cook and Lake Counties.

HOME DELIVERY CLIENTS

In FY26, MWNEI intentionally stepped away from several high-cost programs that no longer aligned with our mission or service area. This shift allowed us to refocus on what makes us distinct: **deep community roots, high-touch service, and a commitment to older adults** in northern Cook and Lake Counties. By concentrating our efforts, we strengthened our ability to deliver consistent, dignified support to the neighbors who rely on us. We are now delivering to 30% more folks than we were last summer, and we continue to grow.



MEALS DELIVERED

From Winthrop Harbor to Barrington, from Evanston to Fox Lake, we aspire to provide meals to every isolated adult with wholesome, nutritious meals prepared in our own kitchen.

Meals in FY2025

139,358

Meals in FY2026

121,495

"Before it was terrible, I tried to plan for his meals while I was working full time and I wasn't sure if I could keep up. It's such a life saver for him and for me too, I can't imagine not having it."

- Honggui Lu and Ling Li



VOLUNTEER WORK

Volunteers are the heart of Meals on Wheels Northeastern Illinois — showing up with compassion, strengthening our communities, and ensuring no one is left behind. Their dedication has powered more than **120,000** meals delivered, thousands of wellness checks, and meaningful moments of connection that help older adults feel nourished, safe, and remembered. Their service is the reason our mission comes alive every day. We are deeply grateful for the time, care, and humanity they bring to every delivery.

FY2025 Volunteer Hours

24,595

FY2026 Volunteer Hours

22,623



"I love volunteering with Meals on Wheels Northeastern Illinois because I get to meet so many new people with such unique stories, and I learn so much from them." - Millie and Deflina from NCL

MEET OUR TEAM



ANNIE BRENNAN
Client Experience
Coordinator



LUCHO FAJARDO
Dishwasher/Maintenance
Coordinator



JESUS MORALES, JR.
Line Cook



ERIN CARTER
Volunteer Coordinator



SAM LANDMAN
Food Service Director



JILL PALMER
Operations Manager



KIM DEVILLA
Finance Operations
Coordinator



WILL MCFARLAND
Director of Development



JESUS ZAVALA, SR.
Line Cook



A handwritten signature in green ink.

A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

"I am thrilled to have joined at a moment when so much possibility is opening up for Meals on Wheels Northeastern Illinois. We're building momentum, strengthening how we show up for our neighbors, and charting a path that feels genuinely hopeful. I'm excited for you to walk alongside us as we shape what comes next."