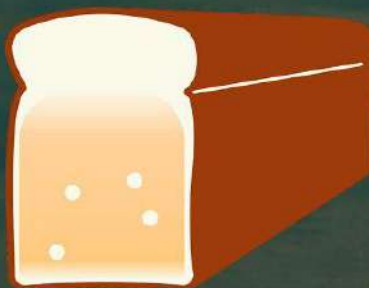


CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF SERVICE

OLEAN  
FOOD  
PANTRY



FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN 2024-25

BECOME AN IMPACT INVESTOR  
IN THE FIGHT AGAINST FOOD INSECURITY

📍 8 LEO MOSS DRIVE, OLEAN, NY 14760

📞 (716) 372-4989

✉️ OLEANFOODPANTRY@YAHOO.COM

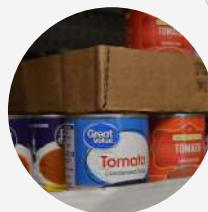
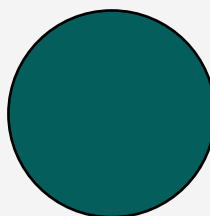
🌐 OLEANFOODPANTRY.ORG

# Support Local Hunger Heroes:

## \$1 MILLION FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Close your eyes. Envision a small-town neighborhood where parents have whispered conversations, unsure how to answer their kids' innocent question, "What's for dinner tonight?" Thousands of people know they won't have enough money to cover groceries AND monthly bills. Job prospects leave little hope for a plentiful future. Many don't know where to turn for their next meal.

That place is here. Food insecurity here doesn't hide in dark corners of neighborhoods "on the other side of the tracks," but rather in plain sight. For so many of our community members, the creaking of pantry doors reveals more than a shortage of groceries. Empty cupboards reveal a profound societal issue that shadows all walks of life.



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# Dear Friends and Supporters,

A few days before this writing, the Olean Food Pantry saw the most visitors in a single day since its founding 70 years ago. We served an eye-popping 155 families that day. We're familiar with seeing lines of cars and people stretched around our parking lot here behind Bethany Lutheran Church. But the turnout on this frigid, late-January day was something to behold.

The experience was bittersweet. On one hand, what heart wouldn't be lifted by serving so many? On the other, it's hardly worth celebrating the heart-crushing reality that so many in our communities struggle with hunger.

I've been on the Board of Directors for four years. Effective March 11, 2024, I've assumed the role of Board President. We're all volunteers at the Olean Food Pantry. Each of us share the joyful experience of giving back to people in need. Those of us who've been around some time have witnessed **MORE and MORE** people coming through these doors – from several dozen families on distribution days just a few short years ago to well over 100 families today.

Our vision is a future when no one here goes to bed hungry. If numbers are any indication, that future is far off – and dictated by more variables than one local food pantry could possibly handle. In the meantime, we have plenty of work to do: providing nutritious food, educating clients on healthy choices, building relationships with community partners, and raising money and awareness to serve more people in need.

We need your help. Will you become a hunger ally? In this case for support, we explain why you should become an impact investor in the Olean Food Pantry's \$1 Million Fundraising Campaign.

Yours in service,



*David Potter*

**David Potter**

President

Olean Food Pantry Board of Directors

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# Olean Food Pantry


## Mission & History

As a volunteer organization, the Olean Food Pantry provides food security by offering choices of healthy, nutritious food. In cooperation with the community, we empower individuals through education, resources and knowledge to promote opportunities to become self-sufficient.

A community where no one goes to bed hungry, and every individual has access to nutritious food, fostering a healthier and more resilient society. We recognize hunger is a worldwide issue, with causes and consequences distinct to local populations. We must tackle these issues one community at a time – with resources by friends and neighbors FOR friends and neighbors.

## OUR VISION

## Olean Food Pantry History



Olean Food Pantry began in 1954 when a small women's group from Bethany Lutheran Church started providing food to people referred to them by Social Services. In the 70's and 80's, these needs were handled on an on-call basis.

In 1989, Bethany Food Pantry was reorganized under the Greater Olean Association of Churches, an ecumenical board was formed and the first OFP director was named. For the first time, volunteers had the pantry open for regular hours. As the needs of the community grew, so did the pantry which moved to several different locations including Central Baptist Church, Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, and 1010 Wayne Street in the Empire Zone.

In August 2004, the Olean Food Pantry became Olean Food Pantry, Inc. and is now a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization independent of GOAC. Through the generosity of the community and Bethany Lutheran Church, the Olean Food Pantry, Inc. now resides at 8 Leo Moss Drive in a new building dedicated Sept. 15, 2007.



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# *HOW FAR YOUR CASH DONATION GOES*

## **Buy 66% More Food**

- \$10 donation – \$16.60
- \$100 donation – \$166
- \$1,000 donation – \$1,660
- \$10,000 donation – \$16,600

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# **We Need Impact Investors to Amplify Our Impact**

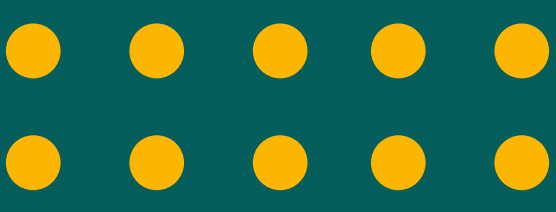
**Join the excitement as the  
Olean Food Pantry  
launches a**

**\$1 MILLION  
FUNDRAISING  
CAMPAIGN**

**to securely stock our shelves  
for the NEXT DECADE!**



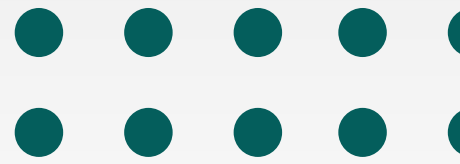
Financial donations  
allow us to purchase  
66% more food than  
donations of  
non-perishable food  
items alone.



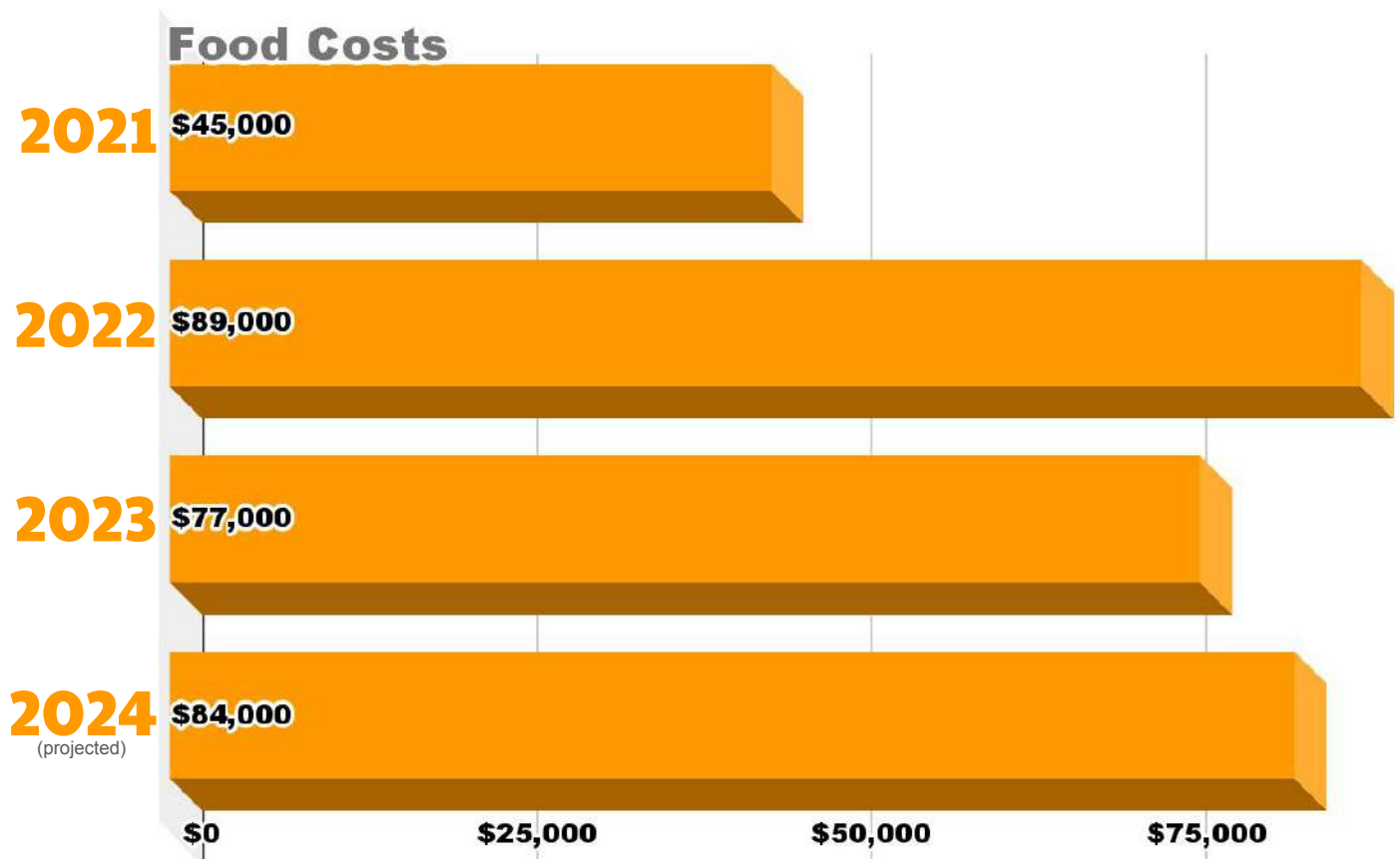
How did we arrive at “a cool million”? How  
can you become an impact investor in the  
war on hunger? The only chance of  
success is a community-by-community  
approach. Come on a journey with us as  
we celebrate 70 years of community  
service and look toward a plentiful future.

**DONATE TODAY: [OLEANFOODPANTRY.ORG/DONATE](https://oleanfoodpantry.org/donate)**

# The Path to a Decade of Sustainability



Sustainability requires strategy. It also requires a large influx of generous donations to make Olean Food Pantry's efforts to eradicate hunger locally. For 2024, we are budgeting a 10% increase in out-of-pocket food costs – an \$84,000 allocation.



While raising nearly \$85,000 in cash donations is a worthwhile goal, we aren't just looking to cover costs this year. We aim to build sustainability FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS!

Try as we might to end hunger here – and everywhere – the issue is much larger than any one organization can fix. Even our existing collaborations to not only provide food, but also educate and empower fall short of addressing large-scale societal issues. In the meantime, building the financial firepower to provide food without worry for the next decade will allow the Olean Food Pantry and our partners to focus on big-picture solutions.

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# A Picture of Food Insecurity in Western New York

Welcome to Olean, NY. Food insecurity has exploded here and in other surrounding communities served by the Olean Food Pantry – which has seen **a 95.4% increase in clients since 2020**. For perspective, that means community need by volume has ALMOST DOUBLED in that time. *(We suspect the true figure to be much higher.)*

Our once-thriving factory town clings to its historic past as the economic hub for surrounding towns in Cattaraugus, Allegany and Chautauqua counties, about an hour south of Buffalo, NY. Olean experienced its heyday three-quarters of a century ago. The hum of innovation and a bustling population 25,000 strong once defined this area. In the last 30 years, that robust populace has been halved. Economic hardship has worsened for those who remain in the northernmost tip of impoverished Appalachia.

Our area echoes with the fading prosperity of yesteryear, but those left struggling here can't feed families with happy memories.



## Hunger: The Quiet Crisis

Since 1954, Olean Food Pantry has been a resource for our friends, family and neighbors who struggle with hunger every day. Hunger doesn't discriminate. Admittedly, food insecurity is a side effect of poverty, but even those with a nice home may be one job layoff from an empty refrigerator.

At the Olean Food Pantry – celebrating 70 years of service this year – our entirely volunteer staff witnesses the narrative of struggle and resilience daily, underscoring the critical role we play in shattering misconceptions, ending stigma and providing support when life takes an unexpected turn.

This is the quiet crisis we confront with unwavering dedication each day. It's a struggle that stretches far beyond our modest town limits, reflecting a national crisis where millions of Americans face the haunting reality of hunger. Local food pantries are beacons of hope, illuminating a vision where no one goes to bed hungry. **Ours is a narrative that demands attention, compassion and collective action.**



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**OLEAN FOOD PANTRY**

# **BY THE NUMBERS**

**39,111**  
**PEOPLE SERVED**

**Jan 2022-Sept 2023**

**1,862**  
**SERVED PER MONTH**

**17.4%**

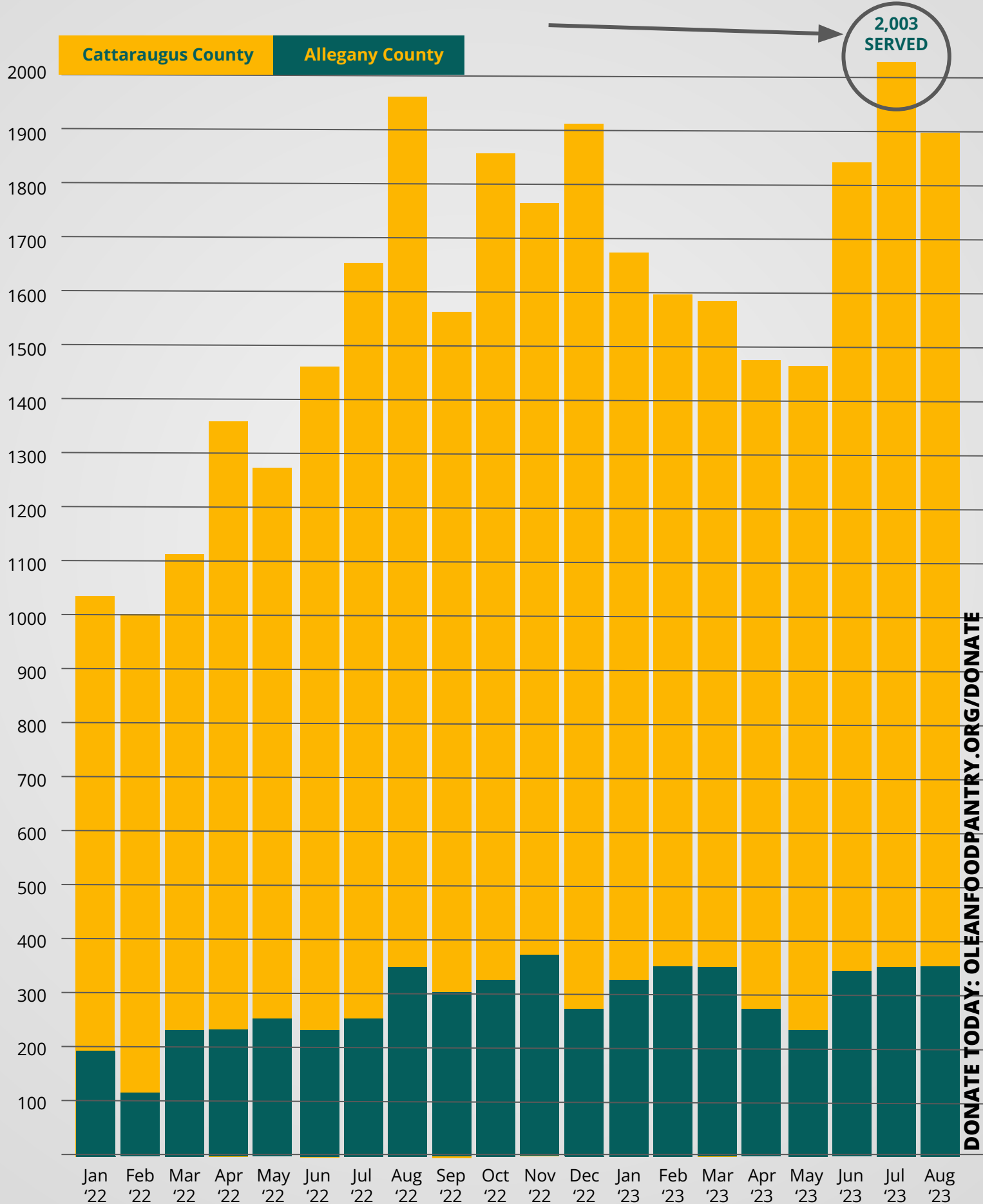
**POVERTY RATE**

**NYS counties served**

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# Food Pantry Clients Served

(by month)





# HUNGER

## A Widespread Issue with Local Realities

Food insecurity is a pervasive issue affecting over 44 million Americans. The Olean Food Pantry addresses this critical problem, recognizing that hunger transcends stereotypes. Solving it is paramount to building a compassionate and thriving society.

### **Addressing Food Insecurity Community by Community.**

The good people we serve experience distinct realities daily. Poverty is real everywhere – a shared experience for millions from rural Western New York to urban Los Angeles. But the faces of hunger are diverse and specific to home communities.

Hunger requires direct action. It's not as black and white as poor vs. rich or haves vs. have nots.

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# FACES of HUNGER

We won't use client likenesses without permission.  
Our demographics reveal several hunger archetypes in our communities.

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## The Resilient Mother

With a family of four depending on her unwavering strength, she lives in quiet desperation at home. Her children don't know she cries herself to sleep at night, especially after she's tallied the monthly bills. Motherhood – a symbol of love and tenacity – faces the unrelenting challenge of mouths to feed.

Her days are a delicate balance of stretching a meager budget to cover essential needs. She thanks God for reduced-price lunches at school. Each trip to the grocery store is a calculated endeavor, where choices are limited and compromises are inevitable. While she keenly feels the pangs of hunger, her kids are all who matter.

## The Job Seeker

A local professional defies the stereotypical image associated with hunger. Living in a charming house and driving a sleek car, he embodies the veneer of success. But the facade unravels with the harsh reality that he, like many in our community, is not immune to economic downturns.

Having recently lost his job at the local school district, comfort is replaced by the looming shadows of financial uncertainty. His savings, once a stable safety net, are rapidly dwindling, exposing a vulnerability that transcends socioeconomic expectations. He's sold his more valuable "toys." He can't pay his student loans. His eyes are ever fixed on a job offer that always seems one click away. The refrigerator is bare, and it's tough looking for work on an empty stomach.



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## The Solo Grandparent

This elderly individual is a custodian to the city's history. He remembers brighter days – a movie reel that replays in his head with growing children, grandchildren and a wife since departed. They planned retirement well, but pensions and savings went only so far. He walks alone through his Golden Years on a fixed income.

With every dollar meticulously budgeted, the choice becomes agonizingly clear: medicine or a proper meal or paying the heating bill or buying groceries. His aging hands have weathered life's storms, but now clutch a dilemma that shouldn't burden those who've already given so much.

## The Recovering Addict

A once-broken soul is mending the frayed edges of a tumultuous past. They battle not only the demons of addiction, but also the harsh reality of food insecurity. A history with the justice system leaves them struggling to find work. The jobs they do find are mostly low-paying and don't last long. Relapses are common in the pursuit of redemption.

Amid the challenges of rebuilding their life from the wreckage of substance abuse, hunger often feels like the least of their concerns. But they must eat, even on the days when withdrawal makes leaving bed unbearable. Every day on the path to recovery, the gnawing emptiness in their stomach is a metaphor for the uphill battle filling the void with hope and healing.



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# We're **MORE** than a **Food Pantry**



## **Community Garden**

Olean Food Pantry's mission to combat food insecurity includes a verdant haven – our community garden. It produced and distributed 1,099 pounds of fresh vegetables, fruits, herbs and spices in 2023.

Nestled under the open sky and also thriving within our indoor greenhouse, these garden spaces symbolize our commitment to providing not just sustenance, but also the freshest and healthiest options to our community nearly year-round. We also promote community garden spaces for families to grow their own food.

Olean Food Pantry's current programs, from providing essential food items to nutrition education, form a comprehensive approach to combat food insecurity. Our methodologies also empower individuals to make healthier choices.

Of our annual operating budget, 84% is devoted to food distribution and programs directly impacting families living with hunger.

## **Food Distribution**

From January 2022 through September 2023, Olean Food Pantry served 39,111 people between Western New York and northwestern Pennsylvania. That's a monthly average of 1,862 individuals. We serve over 1,000 food-insecure households each month.

Olean Food Pantry distributes 6 days of food equaling 18 meals per person to low income families once a month. As of December 2023, we had served 23,465 people with nutritious food – comprising non-perishable canned goods, protein, fresh produce, grains and dairy products.



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## Mobile Food Pantry

The battle against hunger demands innovative solutions. The last Thursday each month, we proudly deploy our Mobile Food Pantry – a great service that transcends the boundaries of traditional food distribution. It represents our commitment to meet individuals where they are, breaking down transportation barriers to accessing nutritious food.

Powered by the Food Bank of Western New York, this initiative – formerly known as the Food Express Truck – is a beacon of hope for our community.

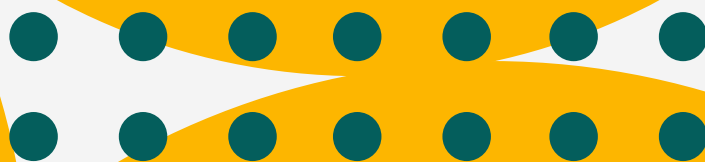


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## Shoppers Choice Method

Our Shoppers Choice model empowers community members with a transformative shopping experience that promotes dignity, choice and nutritional well-being. Traditional food distribution models – pre-packaged food for each client without their input – often don't cater to unique dietary needs.

Our volunteer “shoppers” help clients make healthy food choices while also providing nutritious recipes.



## Diaper Depot

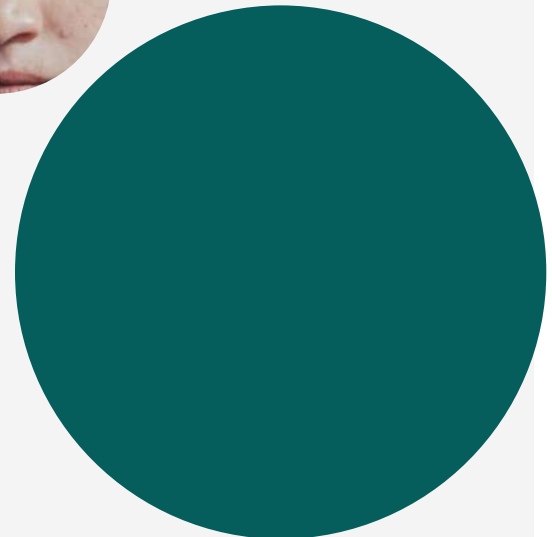
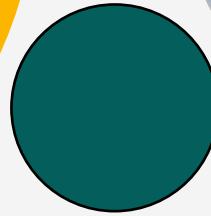
Challenges faced by families aren't limited to food insecurity alone. The Olean Food Pantry has expanded its outreach through the establishment of the Diaper Depot, a lifeline for low-income parents/guardians striving to provide a healthy and safe environment for their children. In addition to diapers, we provide formula, wipes, baby food and clothing.

Beyond catering to the needs of the littlest members of our community, the Diaper Depot is a comprehensive resource hub for various household essentials. From cleaning products and hygiene items to pet food, we recognize the importance of maintaining a clean and productive living environment to achieving self-sufficiency.

# FIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY AS ONLY WE KNOW HOW

The Olean Food Pantry's impact is evident in our ability to meet the surging demand for assistance. **As community need has nearly doubled in recent years, we have stepped up to meet that need.** Building the capacity to provide more food to more individuals is the goal that everybody can see. But behind the scenes, ramping up our programs to serve more people has required:

- Growing community partnerships to improve food access & distribution processes.
- Strategic investments in professional communications, marketing & community outreach.
- Diversifying revenue streams via grant writing & donor cultivation.



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# A Localized Approach to the Hunger Struggle

Hunger looks different in each community. Serving the unique needs of our neighbors requires an intimate understanding of their struggles. **Our clients aren't just faces in the crowd. We KNOW the people we serve. They're members of our community – friends, neighbors and even family.**

The Olean Food Pantry is keenly attuned to the challenges faced by vulnerable populations, including the elderly, justice-involved individuals, black and brown populations, and those lacking access to education, among other socioeconomic disparities.

We step into this void, offering not just nourishment but also dignity, resources and education toward self-sufficiency. Through personalized, compassionate outreach, we bridge the gap between scarcity and sustenance. No one is left to face the silent struggle of hunger alone.



## Client Testimonials

"The Olean Food Pantry means a lot to me. Since my food stamps were knocked down to \$23 a month and having low income, it means so much to me to thrive. God bless all of the workers and the companies that donate food."

**-Anonymous**

""Olean Food Pantry honestly means so many things for our family. Importantly, it provides over half of my family's meals each week. Being a stay at home mom, coming here helps me so much with providing for my family. Coming here gives me the safe, loving, and caring vibe. The ladies and gentlemen are a wonderful help with all my babies and give them all sorts of nice things. It's so hard to put into words just how much this place means to my family, from the food, diapers, garbage tickets, kid things, the social help, even the simple birthday gifts, we love it all. Thank you!"

**-Shyana**

"The pantry means we are able to feed our family. Even with food stamps, we don't have enough each month for our growing child. Without it we wouldn't manage. Everyone is kind and caring. We are treated with respect and never judged."

**-Anonymous**

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# REVENUE AND EXPENSES

Our annual operating budget is driven by community support, grants and donations. We aim for transparency and accountability, ensuring every dollar contributes to our mission of ending local food insecurity.

OLEAN FOOD PANTRY

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# Bringing Skills & Passion to the Table

Putting food on the tables of thousands of clients each year means we must bring the right skills and passion to the table. Olean Food Pantry has built a team of dozens of volunteers who not only give selflessly, but also contribute unique skills to navigate the multifaceted challenges of addressing food insecurity.



## Front-Line Hunger Heroes

Our pantry volunteer staff is equipped with a diverse skill set that includes store management, personal nutrition and delivery logistics, among other specialties. Their firsthand knowledge and hands-on experience are instrumental in tailoring our programs for a more personalized and effective approach to combating hunger.

## Leadership with a Caring Hand

Our Board of Directors bring invaluable expertise to the table, with a focus on financial coordination and fiscal responsibility, marketing and community outreach, as well as grant writing and donor relations. This collective proficiency ensures the strategic and efficient management of resources, amplifying our impact in the community.



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# Nourishing Hope: A Collaborative Approach

## FeedMore wny

Our strategic partnership with FeedMore WNY, a 501(c)(3) food bank, is a testament to our commitment to efficiency and accessibility. FeedMore WNY serves as the Olean Food Pantry's primary source, ensuring a steady supply of diverse food items at preferred rates. By leveraging the resources and support provided by FeedMore WNY, we can amplify our reach while ensuring not only quantity, but also quality.

FeedMore WNY emerged from a healthy merger of the Food Bank of WNY and Meals on Wheels for Western New York. Today, it continues the longstanding mission of offering dignity, hope and a brighter future by providing nutritious food, friendship and skills training to its Western New York neighbors in need.

## Farming Community



Canticle Farm, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit ministry, provides community members with fresh, healthy, locally grown food using sustainable farming methods without synthetic or chemical applications. As a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm, it provides shares of the week's freshly harvested bounty.

Surplus shares that are not distributed on site are automatically donated to local hunger organizations – including Olean Food Pantry. Canticle Farm believes in protecting and honoring the sacredness of God's creation while connecting all peoples in the practice of Earth-friendly, sustainable and spiritually guided habits.

Each week, local farmers provide surplus items for free or at preferred rates to ensure our pantry shelves are perpetually stocked with fresh, locally sourced protein, produce and dairy.

Our partnerships not only support the livelihoods of those tilling the land, but also bring the wholesome goodness of farm-fresh ingredients to the tables of individuals and families in need.

Olean Food Pantry's partnerships with local farmers not only nourish bodies, but also foster community resilience.

By sourcing fresh protein, produce and dairy directly from local farms, we contribute to the economic vitality of our region.

As a pleasant side effect, we also reduce the carbon footprint associated with long-distance transportation.

Community partnerships are key to our success. We work hand-in-hand with local nonprofits, farmers, grocers, businesses and schools, forming a network that amplifies our impact on the community.

## Local Grocers

Many local grocers generously support Olean Food Pantry's efforts to combat local food insecurity. These community partners – including Ried's Food Barn, Aldi, Tops and Walmart – regularly provide surplus food items that might otherwise go to waste.

By collaborating with local grocery stores, we have established a seamless system to rescue unsold but perfectly viable food items, often approaching their best-by dates. These items, still fresh and wholesome, are provided for free or at preferred rates to supplement our pantry stock. The commitment of these local grocers to reducing food waste aligns with our goal to address hunger at its roots.

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# THE BIG PICTURE

To achieve the long-term sustainability of our food distribution programs, the Olean Food Pantry requires a **\$1 MILLION FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN** via tax-deductible donations and grants by Summer 2025.

## How We Arrived at a Million



We are budgeting a 10% increase for 2024's out of pocket food costs (\$84,000). Assuming a 3% inflation rate per year, we estimate \$965,000 total food costs for 10 years.

## How You Can Help

Be an architect of transformative change in the battle against food insecurity. As a **MAJOR GIFT DONOR** in the Olean Food Pantry, you have the unique opportunity to be a catalyst for revitalization and empowerment. **Our \$1 million fundraising campaign is not just a financial goal; it's a lifeline for a community that hungers for stability and hope.**

Hunger can't be solved through broad strokes. It demands a granular, community-by-community approach. Your substantial investment in our fundraising campaign will serve as a cornerstone, creating a domino effect that propels change beyond monetary value.

## How We'll Get There

Your tax-deductible major gift will not only contribute directly to our campaign, but will also inspire a wave of support through smaller donations. It also enhances our credibility in seeking grant funding. Olean Food Pantry is committed to seeking grant funds matching, dollar for dollar, each major gift received through this fundraising campaign.

This ripple effect is the key to creating a diversified revenue stream that ensures the sustainability and longevity of our mission.

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**Corporate  
Donations  
\$50,000**

**Individual  
Donations  
\$50,000**

**Major Gifts  
\$450,000**

**Grant Funds  
\$450,000**

# THE BREAKDOWN

DONATE TODAY: [OLEANFOODPANTRY.ORG/DONATE](https://oleanfoodpantry.org/donate)



# What You Can Expect in Return

Acknowledgement in  
our Annual Report

AT LEAST

**\$100**

Acknowledgement on our  
social media & website

AT LEAST

**\$250**

FREE Olean Food Pantry  
fleece pullover

AT LEAST

**\$500**

If you've gotten this far, you're intrigued. With 1 in 8 U.S. households living with food insecurity, you undoubtedly know at least one person experiencing the silent struggle. They could be a friend, relative or neighbor down the street – or perhaps you too have experienced hunger.

Your *tax-deductible* donation toward fighting hunger community by community will not go unnoticed.

**\$1,000**  
OR MORE

A personalized  
plaque of thanks

**\$50,000**  
OR MORE

Named a Hunger Hero Campaign  
Champion, a personalized plaque,  
acknowledgement in the local media  
& an Olean Food Pantry room  
named in your honor.

**\$10,000**  
OR MORE

A personalized plaque &  
acknowledgement in the  
local media

Charity is a selfless act. Those of us who give rarely wish to bask in the limelight. We're happy to allow donors to remain anonymous. Whatever your wishes, please accept these small tokens of gratitude as thanks for generosity impacting a hunger issue greater than all of us.

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# THE WAR ON HUNGER

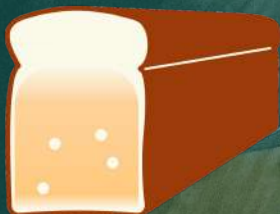
*Will You Answer the Call?*

You're personally invited to participate in a \$1 MILLION fundraising campaign and diversifying revenue streams through major gifts, grants and individual/corporate donations. This approach ensures sustainability and resilience in the face of evolving challenges.

In conclusion, the Olean Food Pantry is not just an organization; it's a beacon of hope, resilience, and compassion. With your continued support, we can turn the page on food insecurity, creating a brighter future for all.



**OLEAN  
FOOD  
PANTRY**



8 LEO MOSS DRIVE, OLEAN, NY 14760



(716) 372-4989



OLEANFOODPANTRY@YAHOO.COM



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