



“Working to put ourselves out of business since 1985.”

# Somerville Homeless Coalition, Inc.

support \* housing \* community

www.shcinc.org

Fall 2017

## Fresh Ideas and Fresh Food at Project SOUP

**Andrea’s family had a bad month.** An unexpected car repair, an illness, a prescription that insurance didn’t cover, a lost shift at work. She was always careful with the budget, but this month she just couldn’t make the money stretch to pay all her bills and buy enough food for her family. She didn’t know what to do. Someone at her church suggested the food pantry in the old firehouse at 165 Broadway.

Entering through a side door, she found herself in an airy, sunlit room. The walls were lined with wire shelves stocked with boxes, cans and bottles. A row of tables ran down the middle of the room, covered with bright oilcloth and bins of fresh fruits and vegetables. A friendly face greeted her and asked how she could help.

In May, the Project SOUP food pantry moved to a new space renovated by the City of Somerville in East Somerville (Project SOUP also runs a small emergency food pantry in SHC’s Davis Square office). Federal Realty donated new shelving and tables. A walk-in refrigerator, supplemented by a kitchen-sized unit donated by Reviewed.com, allows the pantry to stock fresh produce, dairy, and meat items.



With updated facilities, Project SOUP was able to switch from handing out pre-prepared bags of food to allowing clients to choose the items that best meet their needs. “It’s more sustainable, because clients are able to choose items they know they’ll eat,” says Project SOUP manager

Rachel Weil. New evening hours provide greater accessibility for clients who work 9-5, and limited home delivery is available to people who are homebound.



*Rachel Weil (left) and representatives from Federal Realty*

In addition to helping about 200 households a month with groceries, Project SOUP offers clients assistance with finding agencies that can address other needs. **“We want to provide fresh ideas in addition to fresh food,”** Weil says. A recent workshop sponsored by Sharing Our Strength’s Cooking Matters offered tips on shopping smarter and using the nutritional information on packaged foods to make healthier choices.

**Project SOUP’s shelves are stocked by groups that specialize in food rescue, and through donations of food and money from individuals and community food drives.** Some of the most in-demand items are basic kitchen staples, like cooking oil and breakfast foods. Project SOUP also welcomes donations of personal care items, like diapers and soap, and reusable grocery bags. Volunteers are needed to unload and sort deliveries, assist clients, and make home deliveries. Contact Rachel at [rweil@shcinc.org](mailto:rweil@shcinc.org) if you’d like to volunteer.

Andrea left Project SOUP that day with two bags of groceries, giving her a bit of flexibility as she adjusted her family’s budget during that difficult time. She was grateful not only for the food in her bags, but for the support from her community.

# Partner Spotlight: Fighting Hunger

One in seven Americans struggle with hunger, lacking the money or other resources needed to get enough nutritious food to feed their families. Many groups are working together to fight hunger across the country. **These are some of the organizations that help stock the shelves at Project SOUP:**



Food For Free

Recipient of this year's SHC Community Partner Award, **Food for Free** has worked since 1981 to address food insecurity and to raise awareness about

the terrible cost it has, especially on children. Food for Free focuses on rescuing prepared foods and fresh ingredients from licensed food establishments like supermarkets, restaurants, and college dining halls. In 2016, Food for Free distributed 1.95 million pounds of food.



The **Greater Boston Food Bank** acquires food in bulk through industry partners and financial

donations, repackages it in their state-of-the-art 117,000 square foot facility, and redistributes it to agencies that fight hunger. In 2017, GBFB distributed over 57 million pounds of food.



**Lovin' Spoonfuls**, specializes in rescuing healthy, fresh food that would

otherwise be discarded from grocery stores and wholesale markets. Their fleet of refrigerated trucks deliver this food directly to non-profits that distribute food to people in need.



The **Somerville Mobile Farmers Market** donates leftover

produce to Project SOUP. The Mobile Farmers Market appears at various sites across the city every week and sells fresh locally-grown produce, offering a discount for residents of North Street or Mystic Housing, as well as for those showing a SNAP, WIC, or Senior Farmers' Market Coupon.



Some of the produce offered at Project SOUP is grown right here in Somerville, at **Groundworks Somerville's** South St. Farm, right outside Union Square, and the hydroponic Innovation Farm

at the Edgerly School.



**Boston Area Gleaners** works with local farms like Farmer Dave's, Kimball Fruit Farms, and Parker Farms, to rescue surplus crops. The Gleaners organize volunteers to pick and

package food not appropriate for market.



Pets provide emotional support and companionship to some of our most vulnerable populations. Thanks to the **Somerville Foundation for Animals' Pet Food Bank**, Project SOUP is now stocking

pet food for furry family members.



**Tufts Food Rescue Collaborative** is a partnership between Tufts Dining, staff/faculty, and students. The Collaborative donates about 200 pounds of food per week to Food for Free.

# THANK YOU!

## *Your support is much more than money in the bank*

The generosity and commitment of the many individuals, families, businesses and grantmakers to supporting the Somerville Homeless Coalition is more than money in the bank.

**It is an investment in our community.**

**It is a declaration of how important it is to you** that homeless and hungry people in our community get the help they need.

**It is a statement of confidence and faith** in the effectiveness of the programs and dedicated staff at SHC to provide that help.

Two years ago, when SHC suffered a serious financial setback, you, our supporters, remained

loyal and generous. Your commitment and support, and the hard work of our staff, has paid off. After two years of deficits, we have recovered and are stronger than before, ending this fiscal year on June 30 with a modest surplus.

More importantly, this means that **homeless families and individuals can count on us to be here** -- with a warm bed in a safe shelter, a compassionate case worker to help navigate the course back to their own home, resources and support to help prevent others from becoming homeless, and healthy food to sustain them.

We've said it before, and it's still very true -- we couldn't do this work without you. **Thank you.**

## *Host a Party for SHC*

When most people think of charity events, they think big: road races, golf tournaments, and black-tie events in ballrooms. Think smaller – and make a big difference!!

This spring and summer, families and neighborhoods hosted house parties and block parties to benefit SHC. It's easy and fun. Provide refreshments (or get them donated), a little entertainment or activity (wine tasting or live music or a back-yard movie night -- get creative!) and ask your guests to donate what they would have spent going out.

These events are also an excellent way to introduce your family, friends and neighbors to the work of SHC and build our base of support. Our staff would be happy to attend and answer questions about the need for homeless services or the programs we provide or how people can help.

We're here to help -- call Kathryn or Mark for more information at [617-623-6111](tel:617-623-6111).



*The Irving Street Block Party held a raffle to benefit SHC.*

# Somerville 5K: Running to Help End Homelessness

On your mark, get set, GO!

For 22 years, on the first Saturday of October, hundreds of runners and walkers have taken to the streets, raising funds to help people who are homeless or hungry in our community.

**This year's race, on October 7,** will feature teams from local running clubs, churches and businesses including the Somerville Road Runners, Calvary Church, and Pegasystems.

We greatly appreciate the support of **Ames Business Park** as the Platinum Sponsor for the second year in a row, **Whole Foods Somerville** for pre-race snacks for the runners, Silver Sponsors **Middlesex Federal** for water and **Winter Hill Bank** for granola bars and bananas, and local restaurants like **Redbones, Orleans, The Burren, Oat Shop, When Pigs Fly, and bfresh,** for donating food for the brunch following the race. For a complete list of sponsors, please visit our web site at [www.shcinc.org](http://www.shcinc.org).



## *Upcoming Events to Benefit SHC:*

### **10<sup>th</sup> Annual NAVE Gallery Wrap Around Sale**

November 18 – December 30  
Saturdays and Sundays, 1:00 – 5:00 pm  
Closed Thanksgiving Weekend, Nov. 25-26  
155 Powder House Blvd, Somerville, MA

**Opening Reception**  
Sunday, November 19, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
In conjunction with the opening of  
*Catalyst: craft + social change*

### **Concert at The Burren**

Wednesday, December 6, 7:30 pm  
247 Elm Street, Somerville

### **Christmas Cavalcade**

Wednesday, December 13, 7:30 pm  
ONCE Ballroom, 156 Highland Ave,  
Somerville

*To get notices of upcoming events emailed to you, please sign up for the  
'All Events' email list at [www.shcinc.org](http://www.shcinc.org)*