



**2025 ANNUAL REPORT
FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE WEBSTER COMMUNITY CHEST**

The Webster Community Chest (WCC) improves lives and helps build better futures in the greater Webster community by providing services and resources for neighbors experiencing emergencies or food insecurity. That is our Mission Statement—one result of the work of our Strategic Planning Committee. Those of us who oversee your Community Chest measure our success by the number of Webster residents that we assist in their time of need, by our ability to respond to emergencies, and by our impact on the Community. By all measures, this has been our most successful year ever. These successes, detailed in the following, are entirely due to Webster residents, churches and schools, organizations, and businesses who provided us with the resources needed to accomplish these. Our volunteers who gave generously of their time were indispensable.

We do everything we can to ensure that our donors get the greatest possible value for their gifts. Our administration is entirely volunteer, we have no facilities, and overhead expenses are incurred only when unavoidable, so almost all our funds go directly into meeting the needs of residents.

This past year a record 834 families and individuals contacted us for assistance. Our professional part-time Benefits Counselors, Tracy Dennis and Kris Lombardo, are partners with over 100 other local agencies. They successfully match our clients' needs to these other resources most of the time, saving our donors' money for needs that cannot be met any other way. It is no surprise that many of these calls were for food assistance. For food emergencies, they channel the callers into our Meal Center programs. Calls for food ran higher than 2024 and then shot up by over 140% in the fourth quarter.



Supporting food-insecure families was our greatest area of growth. The Federal shutdown in the fall, regrettably eliminated the SNAP program (“food stamps”). It began running out this past October and had altogether ceased by November, putting many families into disarray.

Our Meal Center operation quickly expanded to meet demand. Importantly, no one in need was turned away. In 2024, we provided meal kits to 679 families, with larger families receiving multiple bags. This totaled over 11,000 individual meals. In 2025, we provided 1,019 families with over 20,000 ready-to-prepare individual meals. The distributions are usually made on the last Thursday of each month but we conducted two distributions in November. We thank the Immanuel Lutheran Church in the village for providing the space to operate this. We deliver meal kits to families who cannot get to our distribution and in 2025 we made 288 deliveries. In August, we began adding fresh produce to our distribution. We also made food deliveries for the Webster Hope food cupboard to the homebound.



This is not all that we did during this food crisis. We greatly increased our special holiday meals in partnership with Webster Hope at Thanksgiving and served about 250 families. We added more food to the December distribution to 136 families for the holidays and had a special distribution including children’s gifts for families not receiving help elsewhere. We also had a spring holiday meal distribution with Webster Hope and Gathering Place Webster at the United Church of Christ in

April for 162 families. Our volunteer-run Phillips Village little pantry distributed over \$8,000 worth of food. We ran outreach programs at several senior housing sites delivering bags of food. Several times we made emergency food deliveries or provided for families to do their own shopping. We thank the many schools and organizations that conducted food drives to help with all of this.

Of course, many of the calls to our help line are for problems not involving food. Most of these are resolved with the help of other agencies that have the resources for these problems. When there is no immediate recourse or other help in a crisis or emergency, we provide direct aid. Our funds—your donations—were used to assist forty-four families, including preventing twenty-nine Webster families with limited resources from losing their homes and assets. For other families, we provided utility aid



payments to prevent shutoff, helped with auto repairs, and assisted in other situations. Most clients are single parents, disabled, or elderly. If you know of someone who might need assistance, please have them reach out to us by phone at (585) 671-2060 or by e-mail to webcommchest@gmail.com. Any resident who is in need may contact us.

Among our new ventures was providing hygiene bags once a quarter to families during our meal kits distribution. These include laundry and dishwashing detergent and personal care items including soap and body wash, shampoo and conditioner, toilet paper, toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant, etc. This was funded by a grant for this purpose from Cornell Cooperative extension. In conjunction with the Meal Center, our Benefits Counselors and volunteers ran a Coat Closet to provide coats, hats, mittens, and more to needy families, oftentimes refugees who arrived here with almost nothing. Then, we opened our new Home Hub which provided donated, gently used or new household goods at no cost for dozens of families that had little. We received many



compliments on the items available and the beautiful look of the room. Our new Women's Empowerment program began in February to provide support for any women who felt that they could benefit. Every other week, we offer a "Women's Self Defense" course taught by qualified instructor Master Jason Lee. In weeks between classes, we host CAFES nights with crafting and bonding.

We subsidize Meals on Wheels for older and disabled residents who are on the waiting list and would otherwise not receive meals. In all other local communities, these folks would not get meals until government approval of their applications is given, which can take months. Only in Webster do they get wellness visits and meals right away thanks to your donations. We subsidized over 300 of these meals in 2025, serving the average client for nine weeks while on the waiting list.



Your donations sent thirteen low-income children to a week at summer camp at our four providers. We also continued to aid low-income families that have children with disabilities. In partnership with a local foundation, we have made it affordable for our

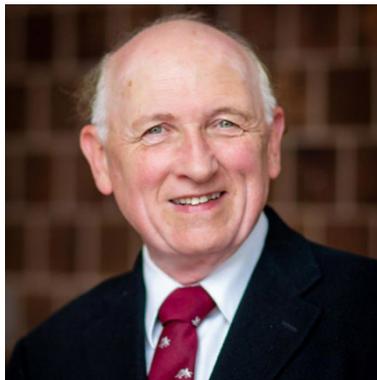


clients to put their children in developmental therapy programs with Heritage Christian Stables. We provide scholarship money to the Special Education Parent and Teacher Association (SEPTA).

Our annual Shirley Miller Award is given to local graduating high school seniors to recognize exemplary efforts as young volunteers and to encourage community service in their schoolmates. We awarded nine unrestricted scholarships to Webster residents this year at two high schools: Thomas HS— Kristina Fisher (top award winner), Helene Gorthy, Jessica van Wichen, Joseph Baller, Jada Kendrick, and Brenden Kuhlback; Schroeder HS— Madalyn Brown (top award winner), Akshaya Dasaraju, and Morgan Carbone.

Some of our funds are used to help other non-profit groups in Webster under our Aid to Organizations program. This has been a core program of the Chest since its founding. We provided a grant to One Soldier at a Time to support our local Veterans and moms and wives of deployed family members, one to Webster Arboretum Association to help rebuild their bridge, one to Spry Middle School for their annual veteran's lunch, and one to Webster Comfort Care Home to help with construction on a front porch for the home's clients. Our "Underwear Project" in all the WCSD schools takes on an expense that used to be out-of-pocket for nurses and teachers by keeping a stock of clothes at each school to use when young students have had accidents that soiled their clothes.

It is the people of our community who make this such a wonderful place to live! I would like to recognize the members of our Board of Directors and our officers who have all volunteered their time and skills to oversee the operations of the Chest. Anyone who is looking to serve our community as a volunteer should consider joining this dedicated group. Other residents have been generous in donating their time to assist in the delivery of services and to help raise funds. If you want to help, learn more, or donate, go to webcommchest.org.



Michael Grenier
President, Webster Community Chest