Our mission is to provide services and support to meet the basic needs of neighbors who have fallen on hard times.

"LISTEN has done many good things for me. They helped me with heating my home and food. They really made a difference."

- Donna

50 Years of LISTEN

60 Hanover St Lebanon NH 03766 | (603) 448-4553 | www.listencs.org
Dear Friends,

LISTEN just celebrated its 50th anniversary of serving the Upper Valley. So much about LISTEN has changed since we were founded (among other things, we have three stores now, and computers!). Our founders 50 years ago might not have predicted exactly the crises we’d all be facing today. We’re just emerging from a pandemic, but now we’re facing the rising cost of food, housing, gasoline, electricity, fuel. But some things haven’t changed.

Our founding mission was to help people in the Upper Valley with their basic needs such as food, housing, and heating. And we’re still doing that today – preventing evictions, serving hot meals, getting fresh produce and groceries out the door, and helping get fuel delivered. We have more individuals and families than ever turning to LISTEN for help making ends meet.

The other thing that hasn’t changed is how much we in the Upper Valley care about our neighbors. From the very beginning, LISTEN was all about the community coming together to help one another. It’s your giving and caring that makes our work possible.

That’s why I am deeply grateful to you for your continued support and generosity. Together, as neighbors, we are making the Upper Valley a better place for everyone.

Sincerely,
Kyle Fisher
Executive Director
Food Pantry

Over the last year, we have seen food insecurity rise dramatically. Food prices have been climbing higher and higher each month, which means more people than ever have been turning to our food programs to feed their families. This was another record-breaking year – visits to our food pantry have increased by 47% from last year.

We are working hard on making sure we can meet the rising demand for our services. Last summer, we renovated the interior of the food pantry, which allowed us to put in more freezers and refrigerators so we can stock more fresh produce, dairy, and meat. We also reopened our community dinners for indoor dining, and have increased our staffing to ensure we have full coverage of this program.

7,177 VISITS TO OUR FOOD PANTRY
47% INCREASE IN FOOD PANTRY VISITS
2,952 UNIQUE CLIENTS

Where do we get our food from?
(Total: 253,261 pounds of food)

- NH Food Bank 40%
- Willing Hands 17%
- USDA Commodities 15%
- Private Donors 28%

“Using the LISTEN food pantry meant that I could pay my mortgage and save my home.”
- Charlotte, age 75, Lebanon, NH
Throughout the pandemic, we had been serving only to-go meals out of our dining hall. In July 2021, we were finally able to reopen for indoor dining, and also welcomed back our volunteer teams. However, as we have seen the cost of meals grow, we have seen more guests at our dining hall. Prior to the pandemic, we were serving 80-100 meals a night. By June 2022, we were serving an average of 110 meals per night, and that number keeps growing.

Many people have told us that it is the rising cost of food that drives them to come to our dining hall, which means that the cost of our food preparation is also rising even as we are preparing more meals. Our Community Dinners staff have been getting creative with the menu and with sourcing our ingredients, so we can both feed everyone who comes to our dining hall and continue to serve healthy, nutritious meals.

We couldn’t do it without our volunteers – a huge thank you to everyone who prepared meals with us in FY22!

- Baha’i and Friends
- Church of Etna and Hanover Center
- Coach Essex’s Team
- Co-Op Food Store
- Findley Family
- Hanover Church of Christ
- Hanover Friends
- Hanover Youth in Action
- Hypertherm
- Jennie Ward Team
- KUA
- Lebanon Methodist Church
- Lebanon Rotary Club
- Lebanon Youth in Action
- Meriden Congregational Church
- Norwich Lions
- Our Savior Lutheran Church
- Revels North
- Sacred Heart Church
- St Francis Church
- St Denis Church
- St Paul’s Episcopal Church
- St Thomas Episcopal Church
- TPI Staffing
- Upper Valley Aquatic Center
- Upper Valley Jewish Community
- VINS
- West Lebanon Congregational Church
- ... and all of our individual volunteers!

110
MEALS A NIGHT

26,290
MEALS SERVED IN FY 22

25%
OF DINNER GUESTS ARE HOMELESS AND UNSHELTERED
We are truly facing a housing crisis in the Upper Valley, as the cost of rent and utilities keeps rising and more people are finding it harder to make ends meet. At LISTEN, we have done a lot of work in the past year to connect people with federal COVID relief dollars. In particular, Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) can provide up to 18 months of rental and utilities support. This program has been invaluable for preventing evictions and getting people into emergency shelter.

The application can be very time-intensive and difficult, especially if you don’t have easy access to the Internet or phones. That’s where our service coordinators have stepped up – they are helping people navigate these applications and get connected to ERAP funding. We have supported over 250 families with eviction prevention through ERAP, with a collective of 3,407 hours (that’s 141 full days!).

LISTEN teamed up with NH Legal Assistance this past year to protect policies that support our Upper Valley neighbors, such as the low-income weatherization program.

Weatherization is critical for lowering energy costs on a long-term basis for families, which helps put them on more stable financial footing.

We are very thankful to our NH legislators who helped pass the law ensuring weatherization’s continued funding!

Service Coordinator, Sophia Gawel
Thrift Store Vouchers

Our thrift stores generate revenue to help our community with housing, heating, food, and much more — but we also give away a lot of clothing, household goods, and furniture to our clients directly. There are many reasons why people come to us for vouchers, including:

- Summer or winter clothing
- Children outgrowing their clothes
- Furnishing a new apartment
- Replacing damaged goods after a house fire or other natural disaster
- Clothing and supplies for people experiencing homelessness

Thrift Store Vouchers

We gave away $113,495 in free clothing and household goods.

Holiday Baskets

333 children, 54 seniors

Summer Camps

163 camperships for local children

School Supplies

for 134 local children

Family Programs

- Summer camps are wonderful, enriching opportunities for children, as well as important sources of respite for parents. At LISTEN, we provide need-based summer camp scholarships for children ages 6-14 for one week of camp.

- Through the generosity of our donors, LISTEN provides warm clothing and grocery gift cards to kids and seniors during the holiday season.

"This past year has been a struggle. I am so grateful for the generous donors to the Holiday Basket program. With your gifts, my kids were able to get new winter jackets. I cannot thank you enough!"

Camp Moosilauke

Family Services Coordinator,
Bise Wood

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How are our Programs Funded?

- Heating & Electric Helpers 19%
- Housing Assistance 12%
- Food Pantry 17%
- Community Dinners 25%
- Summer Camps 6%
- Holiday Baskets 7%
- Other 14%

Donations 71%

Thrift Store Revenue 29%

Special Thank You to our FY22 Grantmakers

- Agnes Lindsay Trust
- Bar Harbor Bank & Trust
- Bishop’s Charitable Assistance Fund
- Byrne Foundation
- City of Lebanon
- Cogswell Benevolent Trust
- Couch Family Foundation
- Dead River Company
- Eversource
- Hypertherm HOPE Foundation
- Kitchel-McLaughlin Family Fund
- Ledyard National Bank
- Mascoma Bank
- New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
- New Hampshire Electric Co-op
- Norwich Lions Club
- Norwich Women’s Club
- People’s United Bank Foundation
- Price Chopper
- The Lane and Elizabeth C. Dwinell Trust
- Union Mutual

Unrestricted gifts from individuals, and other affiliated groups, like private businesses, churches, civic and social groups continue to be one of LISTENs most important sources of funding.
Dear Friends,

I first came to know LISTEN through volunteering with my family at the LISTEN Community Dinners. From my very first time in the dining hall, I immediately saw how LISTEN welcomed people from all walks of life. It was more than just a place to get a hot meal, rather it is a place for everyone to be part of a community.

LISTEN truly lives up to “neighbors helping neighbors”, whether that’s through donations or through the gift of time. Our employees and volunteers do everything from packing up fresh groceries, to serving meals at the dining hall, to sorting clothes that go on to generate profits to help our neighbors stay warm and housed. We would not be able to meet our mission without them.

On behalf of the LISTEN Board of Directors, I’d like to thank all of our employees, volunteers, donors and customers who help to make the Upper Valley a better place.

Best Regards,
Jay Benson
Board Chair

Meet our Board of Directors

Jay Benson, Chair
Norwich, VT

Ken Wells, Vice Chair
West Lebanon, NH

April Harkness, Secretary
Hartland, VT

Dick Green, Treasurer
Hanover, NH

Lynne Goodwin
Lebanon, NH

Steve Monteverdi
Wilmot, NH

Volunteers

From the help we receive to the fun times we have, we wouldn’t be the same organization that we are without them.

771 TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

10,128 HOURS ACROSS OUR THRIFT STORE, FOOD PANTRY, DINING HALL, AND MORE

“LISTEN provides many services to community members in need and does it well. Sometimes the needs in the community feel overwhelming, and volunteering helps me feel I’m doing something and making a contribution to improving lives. As a bonus, working with staff and other volunteers is a pleasant experience.” - Volunteer