

food as **medicine**

IMPACT REPORT 2023



our vision

Our vision is a community where everyone who is seriously ill has the nourishment they need to manage their illness.

Food & Friends is built on a simple premise: *anyone can get sick and everyone can help.*

- We believe that everyone managing a serious illness should have the nourishment they need to improve their health and enhance their quality of life, so we prepare and provide specialized meals that are designed to meet the medical and dietary needs of each of our clients.
- We believe in nourishing both the body and the mind, so our meals are delivered by caring community members who also help end the sense of social isolation that can result from a serious illness, particularly for the homebound.
- We believe that no one is immune from illness, regardless of demographics or economic status.

We believe in the power of compassion and the importance of neighbors helping neighbors, so we create opportunities for impactful and fulfilling volunteer service that helps our sick neighbors in need and builds a healthier community for all.

our mission

To improve the lives and health of people with HIV/AIDS, cancer and other serious illnesses that limit their ability to provide nourishment for themselves by:

- preparing and delivering specialized meals and groceries that are designed to meet the medical and dietary needs of each of our clients;
- providing nutritional counseling and wellness education that enhances our clients' quality of life; and
- creating a strong sense of community for both our clients and volunteers that reduces the social isolation that often comes with serious illnesses and provides meaningful opportunities for neighbors to help neighbors in need.



2
0
2
3

table of contents

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE	3
PROGRAM SUCCESS	4
RETURN OF CHEF'S BEST AND LOGO LAUNCH	6
CLIENT STORIES.....	8
RAISING THE BAR WHILE MEETING IT	10
2023 GIVING IMPACT	12
PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT	14
BOARD OF DIRECTORS & LEADERSHIP TEAM.....	16
FINANCIALS	17



leadership message

Dear Friends,

We are excited to share the profound impact your dedication and generosity have had on the lives of those confronting life-challenging illnesses in our annual Food & Friends impact report.



In a year where the national spotlight on the healing power of **“food as medicine”** has intensified, your support has enabled us to continue to provide the highest-quality services while adeptly meeting the evolving needs of our neighbors living with illnesses like cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, heart failure, and many more.

We are witnessing a notable shift in how government, community-based organizations, and for-profit entities consider nutrition as an integral part of healthcare. The focus has intensified on the positive impact of medically tailored meals on health outcomes and system-wide healthcare cost savings. Food & Friends remains a standard-bearer of excellence in the evolving Food Is Medicine landscape.



The proof of the need for Food & Friends is in the numbers. Thanks to your support, we delivered over 1.9 million medically tailored meals, reaching 5,476 clients last year—the largest number of clients served in our proud 36-year history. These figures are not just statistics but tangible proof of the significant difference your generosity has made in the lives of those we serve across the D.C. region.

Our community of volunteers, lifted by your support, has grown by an inspiring 34% in the past year, totaling 4,000 individuals who devoted over 66,773 hours of their time to support our mission. Our volunteers and staff meet clients where they are in life and health, providing friendship that is as transformative as the food itself. Reflecting on these milestones, it is remarkable how far we have come together.

In 1988, 20 Food & Friends volunteers delivered 15 meals a day to people living with HIV/AIDS. Today, we home-deliver approximately 6,000 meals a day for people living with a diverse array of life-challenging illnesses.

As we move into the future, your outstanding commitment positions Food & Friends to expand our capacity to serve our neighbors and continue to improve health outcomes throughout the entire D.C. region. Thank you for your unwavering belief in our mission and your ongoing support.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Carrie Stoltzfus, MPH
Executive Director

Bill Thorne
Board President

program **success**

A Testament to Our Community's Impact

Thanks to your steadfast support, Food & Friends reached a new milestone in 2023—serving a record-breaking 5,476 unduplicated clients, including dependents and caregivers. Your belief in our mission has driven success toward our strategic goal of reaching more individuals and families facing life-challenging illnesses.



2023 also marked notable progress in our volunteer program. Strong outreach to community and corporate groups sparked an inspiring 34% growth in our community of volunteers, totaling 4,000 dedicated individuals. This renewed surge in volunteerism ensures that our programs not only thrive but continue to grow.

With your unwavering support, Food & Friends achieved a record-breaking impact by delivering over 1.9 million meals. This new high is a testament to our program effectiveness and our mission's growing reach. A small-scale expansion of our expediting area helped us accommodate higher volume production and packing of medically tailored meals.

Our continued quest for innovation in our nutrition education program led to a substantial 20% increase in the number of nutrition services utilized by neighbors. 1,158 clients benefited from comprehensive nutrition assessments and counseling sessions.

Your support helped us innovate by reaching clients through new channels such as SMS (text) messaging, new Spanish-language offerings, and virtual programming tailored to specific illnesses. Through one-on-one nutrition counseling and education, we are empowering neighbors to make lasting health improvements, while strengthening overall community health.

These achievements only shed light on some of the powerful impact our supporters make possible. As we delve deeper into the stories and individuals behind these numbers, we invite you to see the direct impact of your support, inspiring a vision for a healthier, more nourished future that we can achieve together.



2023

return of **Chef's Best** and logo launch

Chef's Best Dinner & Auction Celebrates 30th Anniversary Success

In August of 2023, Food & Friends celebrated a significant milestone with the triumphant return of its signature event, the Chef's Best Dinner & Auction, commemorating its 30th anniversary. Chaired by James Beard finalist chef Erik Bruner-Yang of Maketto, this extraordinary evening highlighted the culinary prowess of nearly 30 renowned chefs and mixologists from the Washington, D.C. region.



We were honored to receive a special message from First Lady Jill Biden, acknowledging the profound impact of our services on the community. The renowned chefs who participated delivered an unforgettable gastronomic experience.

NBC News4 anchor Eun Yang emceed the event, adding to the evening's excitement. Funds raised during the event are making a substantial impact, enabling Food & Friends to prepare and deliver medically tailored meals and groceries. Additionally, the proceeds will support nutrition counseling for 5,300 neighbors facing life-challenging illnesses.

The 30th Anniversary Chef's Best Dinner & Auction delighted guests, who had been eagerly anticipating the return of our signature annual event which was on hiatus during the pandemic. 2023 was a year of rebuilding, and the positive response from the community was overwhelming. Chef's Best returns on June 13, 2024, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

"Congratulations on 30 years of Chef's Best Dinners, and thank you for everything you do to deliver health and hope!"

— First Lady Jill Biden



A refreshed logo was unveiled in 2023

In 2023, Food & Friends unveiled a refreshed logo after 35 remarkable years with the original logo. This brand evolution, guided by the Food & Friends Board of Directors, and created by Evelyn Powers of Design Powers, sought to pay homage to our history while aligning with our current mission.

The selected design, revealed in June, highlights a revamped bag symbolizing the heart of our mission—nutritious food. A rainbow motif reflects our roots in the LGBT community and the vibrant colors of the healing ingredients we deliver.

The hand and heart icons embody our core values—compassion, community, and dignity. This visual transition represented not only a fresh look but our commitment to adaptability in a digital age.

We proudly launched our new emblem with support from local artist Nia Keturah Calhoun, who created a logo wall and custom mural, and local animators Creative Junk Food, who created a bespoke animated video to socialize the modern design change with our community.

client stories

To these two neighbors, and thousands more, your support means so much.

Mary Ellen Freesland and Margaret Patterson are two of many clients who shared their stories and helped us amplify the message that food is medicine.

Mary Ellen Freesland, a retired health-care professional and fine artist from Alexandria, VA, faced an unexpected challenge in February 2023 when diagnosed with Stage 3 esophageal cancer. Having survived breast cancer a decade earlier, Mary Ellen's journey took a severe turn, marked by pain, isolation, and emotional distress. Recognizing her need for proper nutrition during treatment, her care team at Virginia Cancer Specialists referred her to Food & Friends for medically tailored meals.

The home-delivered meals became a lifeline for Mary Ellen, providing nutritional support when she could not go out or cook. Beyond sustenance, the compassionate connections with Food & Friends' staff and volunteers alleviated her isolation, offering a sense of belonging during a challenging time. Mary Ellen's optimism and determination, coupled with the comprehensive support received, led to a remarkable turnaround, with a PET scan showing "near-complete regression."

Since her cancer went into remission, Mary Ellen has regained a sense of normalcy, expressing gratitude for Food & Friends' impactful role in her journey. Her story underscores the vital intersection of nutritional and emotional support in the fight against cancer, highlighting the holistic care provided by Food & Friends thanks to the support of our community. Mary Ellen began her service with Food & Friends on May 5, 2023, concluding on September 26, 2023, with heartfelt appreciation for the expert care received.



“Beyond sustenance, the compassionate connections with Food & Friends’ staff and volunteers alleviated her isolation..”



Margaret Patterson, a retired Air Force master sergeant, faced a significant health challenge when diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, which left her legally blind. Her journey with Food & Friends began when her neurologist, at the DC VA Medical Center, Dr. Heidi Maloni, referred her to the program for a medically tailored diet. To Margaret’s delight, the meals not only supported her health but also rekindled flavors from her childhood in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

“The oregano, and thyme, and fennel. It is like just reconnecting with flavors I had not eaten for many years,” Margaret shares. The home-delivered, flavorful meals became a lifeline for Margaret, especially since she had relinquished her driver’s license, relying on consistent deliveries that also freed up time for her home health aide. A veteran and advocate for Food & Friends, Margaret lives in Prince George’s County, Maryland, and has become a champion for the program, sharing her positive experience to help Food & Friends extend support to others in need.

raising the bar while meeting it

In 2023, we witnessed a profound shift in the way that government, community-based organizations, and for-profit companies talk about food as medicine, catalyzed by strategies created during the impactful White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health the previous year.



This new attention on nutrition in health care further illuminated the truth we have long championed—the acknowledgment that food is medicine. The landscape of our work has also become more dynamic, with for-profit entities seeking to carve out a niche in the provision of medically tailored meals.

As the momentum of the food is medicine movement gains pace, Food & Friends stands firm at the leading edge as we have for over 30 years. Much like our historic expansion decades ago from serving persons living with HIV/AIDS to including various life-challenging illnesses such as cancer, diabetes, and heart failure, we continue to raise the bar. As our nation moves towards a deeper integration of food is medicine within healthcare, Food & Friends is preparing to scale further.

To do this, we are preparing to meet the future needs of our community by actively exploring an expansion of our space. To prepare to enhance our capacity to serve the community, we need to continue to enhance our readiness as the food is medicine landscape evolves.

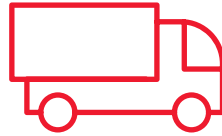


2023

2023 giving impact



5,500
clients were served in FY23



1.9M
meals were home-delivered

4,000
volunteers

at Food & Friends



66,773

number of **volunteer hours**
(34% increase compared to FY22)

8% of the neighbors receiving meals are living with **HIV/AIDS**

21% of the neighbors receiving meals are living with **cancer**

14% of the neighbors receiving meals are living with **renal disease**

18% of the neighbors receiving meals are living with **diabetes**

39% of the neighbors receiving meals are living with **other illnesses***



44% of deliveries are to **Washington, D.C.** households

42% of deliveries are to **Maryland** households

14% of deliveries are to **Virginia** households



315

health care agencies and social services organizations referred people with serious illnesses to Food & Friends in 2023



1,158

clients participating in **nutrition assessments and counseling sessions** in 2023 (20% increase compared to FY22)

90%
of clients reported **health improvement**

81%
of clients reported that they **achieved or maintained a healthy weight**

83%
of clients reported **improved quality of life**

73%
of clients reported **improved mental health and decreased stress**



*heart failure, cystic fibrosis, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, individuals on hospice



“There’s so much you can do with the menu, so you never have the same thing. I get on some of the webinars and it’s a wealth of information. I’m just really astounded that the program does as much as it does.”

— Michael Fautleroy



Birthday Wishes and Sympathy Baskets

In FY23, **1,515 clients** received birthday cakes, and **66 client families** received sympathy baskets, adding a personal touch to our deliveries.



Thanksgiving Dinners

Our Thanksgiving initiative touched the lives of **4,440 clients**, providing not just meals but a slice of normalcy and dignity during the holiday season.



Holiday Gift Drive

Our holiday gift drive brought joy to **162 children** enrolled in our services in December 2023.

partnership spotlight

Robert I. Schattner Foundation

Food & Friends expresses sincere gratitude to the Robert I. Schattner Foundation for their remarkable two-year grant in expanding our Renal Program. From 2021–2023, their investment enabled the preparation, packaging, and home delivery of 25,000 medically tailored meals, providing vital sustenance to individuals confronting stage 5 renal disease and their families.



The impact of this collaboration resulted in a remarkable 62% increase in individuals served through our Renal Program and an 87% surge in home-delivered, medically tailored meals during the grant period. Overall, 1,220 individuals received 458,012 freshly prepared medically tailored meals in the past two years through our Renal Program. We could not have done this without the Robert I. Schattner Foundation's steadfast support.

The Foundation's visionary commitment directly addressed the challenges faced by individuals with renal disease, offering not only nourishment but also social and emotional support via home deliveries from volunteers and staff. Beyond statistics, this support alleviated the financial and emotional burdens associated with managing stage 5 renal disease.

Food & Friends extends our heartfelt acknowledgment to the Robert I. Schattner Foundation for their investment in community health. Their leadership has been instrumental in extending food as medicine to those in need, fostering hope, and improving the well-being of individuals battling stage 5 renal disease and their families.

George Washington University Hospital

Since 2021, Food & Friends has partnered with George Washington University Hospital on a Care Transition Pilot Program to provide home-delivered, medically tailored meals and nutrition support to patients with high-risk cardiovascular disease being discharged from the hospital. Within 48 hours of their hospital discharge, patients are enrolled in Food & Friends' program to receive medically tailored meals and are connected with one of our registered dietitians.

Dr. Richard Katz, Director of George Washington Heart and Vascular Institute, facilitated the launch of the partnership and explained, "It is beneficial that Food & Friends has professional chefs working with registered dietitians to develop meals that are targeted to specific cardiac diseases. The addition of patients interacting with registered dietitians, not just in the hospital, but post discharge when they are home needing to know how to focus their nutrition choices and engaging family or their other supporters contribute to long-term health benefits."

Food & Friends is deeply grateful for our partnership with George Washington University Hospital and the opportunity to further address the unique challenges faced by neighbors living with high-risk cardiovascular disease. With their collaboration, we have provided medically tailored meals and nutrition support for 60 individuals for three months each, with the goal of reducing rehospitalizations and improving their health outcomes.



2023

board of directors & leadership team

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Carrie Stoltzfus, MPH, *Executive Director*
George Bednar, CPA, *Deputy Executive Director, Finance & Administration*
Lucas Ginn, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, *Director of Human Resources*
Carolyn Schmidt, CFRE, *Chief Development Officer*
Leslye Wooley, JD, MSW, *Chief Program Officer*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bill Thorne, *President*
Jennifer Trock, *Vice President*
Gillian Athey, *Secretary*
Joan Lynch, *Treasurer*
Jill A. Baldwin, *Chair, Programs Committee*
Mike Bento, *Chair, Communications Committee*
Fernando Garcia, *Chair, Nominating Committee*
Rick Stamberger, *Chair, Campaign Steering Committee*
Dr. John F. (Skip) Williams, *Chair, IT Committee*

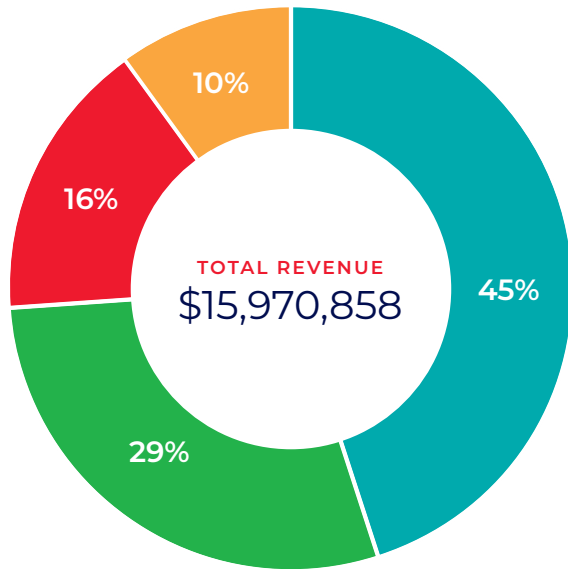
FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

David Astrove, Friedlander Mislter PLLC
Gillian Athey, DermAssociates
Jill A. Baldwin, Community Volunteer
Robert Baldwin, Hogan Lovells LLP
Mike Bento, ENGAGE Strategies
Jacqueline Bowens, District of Columbia Hospital Association
Dr. Bryan Buckley, National Committee for Quality Assurance
Joy Candelieri, EagleBank
Jennifer Cutler, DCI Group
Wayne Fong, DRT Strategies
Fernando Garcia, Real Living at Home
Peter Glassman, DVM, Friendship Hospital for Animals (retired)
Jessica Lerner, Pink Media
Joan Lynch, Marriott International
Ruth Boyer O'Dea, TTR Sotheby's International Realty
Adam Peterman, T-Mobile
John Scofield, S-3 Group
Jeff Shockey, RTX
Valeta Smith, Aco
Bill Thorne, National Retail Federation
Jennifer Trock, Baker McKenzie
Dr. John F. (Skip) Williams, *Dean Emeritus, George Washington University*



**Board list as of December 2023*

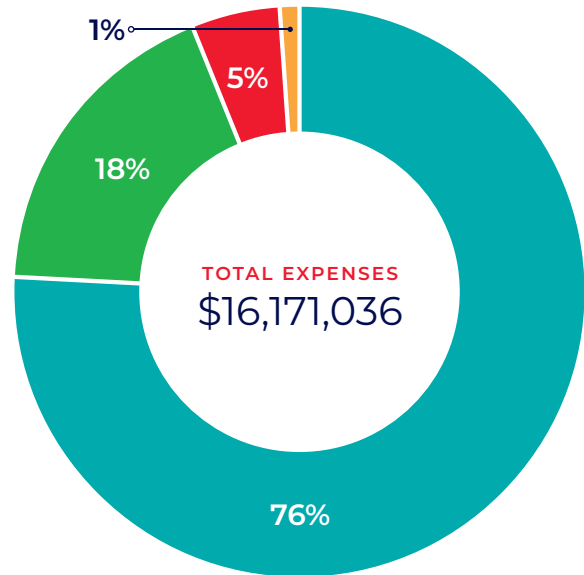
financials



FY23 REVENUE

- PHILANTHROPY OPERATIONS (INDIVIDUALS, CORPORATIONS & FOUNDATIONS)
- PUBLIC FUNDING (FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL)
- PARTNERSHIPS (MEDICAID & MEDICARE)
- PHILANTHROPY—BUILDING EXPANSION

Investment income and In-Kind revenue are not reflected in this chart.



FY23 EXPENSES

- PROGRAM (CLIENT SERVICES, NUTRITION SERVICES, VOLUNTEER SERVICES, KITCHEN OPERATIONS, DELIVERY)
- FUNDRAISING—OPERATIONS
- G&A
- FUNDRAISING—BUILDING EXPANSION



Food & Friends meets Platinum Transparency through Candid (formerly GuideStar) and is recognized as a 3-star charity by Charity Navigator. These ratings reflect the organization's demonstration of strong financial health and commitment to accountability, transparency and strong stewardship of philanthropic, public and partnership funding.

Please visit www.foodandfriends.org/about-us/annual-reports-financials or contact Carolyn Schmidt, Chief Development Officer, at cschmidt@foodandfriends.org for a copy of the Food & Friends FY23 audit.



**FOOD &
FRIENDS**

219 Riggs Road, NE • Washington, D.C. 20011

P 202-269-2277 • **F** 202-635-4261
info@foodandfriends.org • foodandfriends.org

United Way #8429 • CFC #52114
Tax ID #52-1648941