



MEETING THE NEED

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CAITLIN SLY



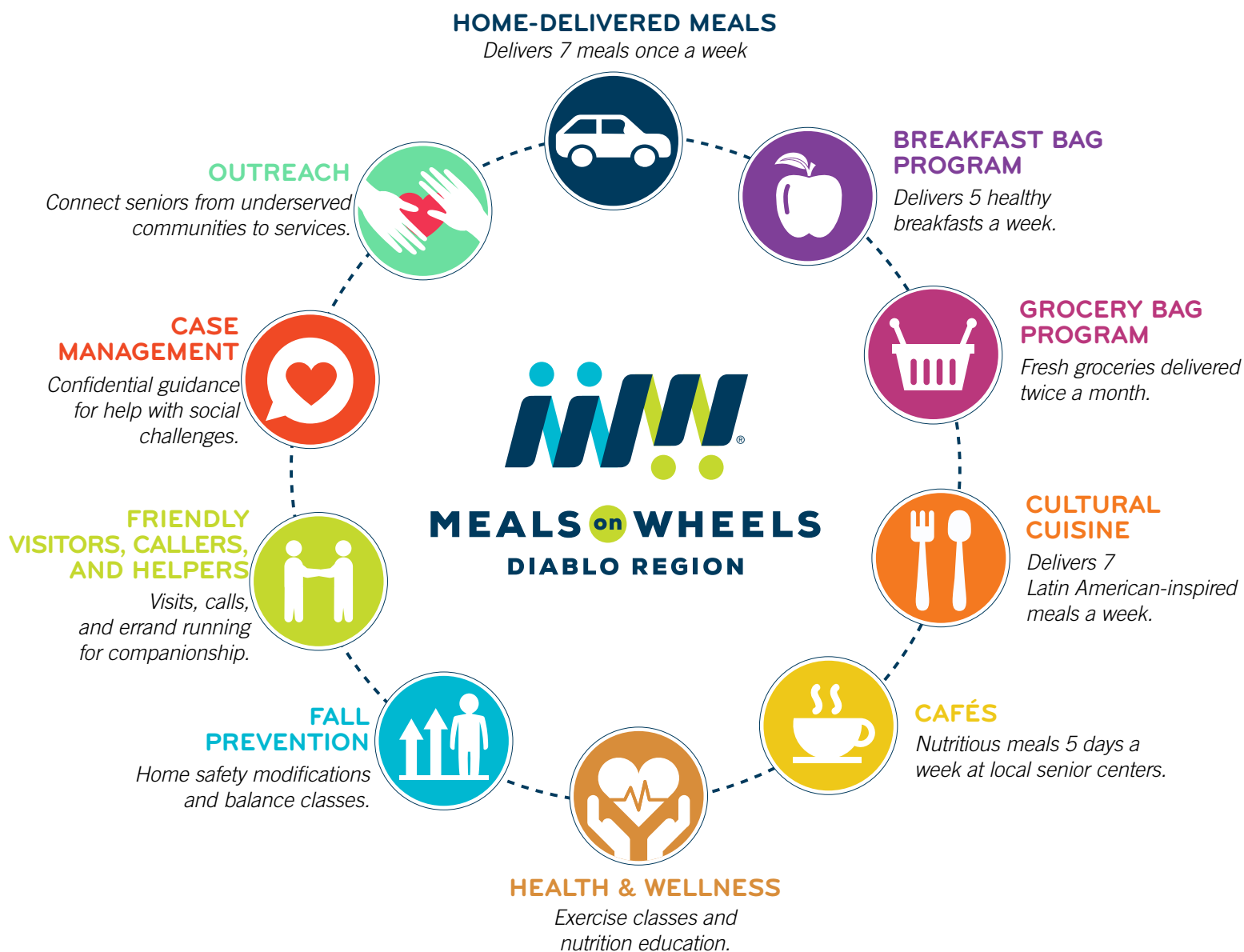
Last fiscal year was a time of growth and challenges for our organization. On a Saturday night in September 2022, there was a fire in our building in Walnut Creek. Thankfully no one was in the building and firefighters responded quickly, so nobody was hurt. Sunday morning our leadership team met in the MOW Diablo Region parking lot to implement a recovery plan. On Monday morning, even though our entire staff was displaced, seniors received their delivered meals and services, without any interruption. We faced a similar challenge during the pandemic, and we were proud that none of our older neighbors missed a meal or service during those trying and uncertain times.

This past fiscal year, we successfully kept up with the growing need for delivered meals and services, despite operating from temporary office space. MOW Diablo Region delivered over 700,000 meals, a 100% increase since the pandemic, and 100,000 more meals than the previous year. Additionally, we expanded the Breakfast Bag Program and started a new program called the Cultural Cuisine Program. Both programs allow MOW Diablo Region to provide more food (and culturally appropriate food) to more people, keeping our elders nourished.

The number of older adults who are food insecure continues to rise and this lack of food can result in hospitalizations, diet-related diseases, and an increase in anxiety and depression. We also saw a dramatic increase in the demand for our supportive services as this vulnerable population grows and becomes frailer. To keep up with the growing social needs, we expanded our successful East County Outreach Program Countywide. This ensures that many seniors who have fragile support systems will be able to connect to much needed community resources.

We know that the need for our delivered meals and supportive services will continue to grow. Despite the challenges and increased demands we experienced this past year, Meals on Wheels Diablo Region never wavered in our commitment to keep our older neighbors nourished and living at home with dignity.

MORE THAN A MEAL



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Home-Delivered Meals

Our Home Delivered Meals program continues to experience tremendous growth reminding us we need to renew our commitment to preventing senior hunger. This past year, we again reached a new milestone, delivering over 700,000 meals! That is 100,000 more meals than last year and represents a 100% increase since before the pandemic. We understand the demand for home delivered meals will continue to increase because seniors are the fastest growing segment of the population. In fact, 12,000 people turn age 70 every day in the United States and seniors currently make up 24% of the population in Contra Costa County. Unfortunately, as the need grows, the funding has not increased at the same rate. Only 3% of philanthropic dollars fund programs for seniors. However, we are optimistic that with the ongoing generosity of our donors, we will be able to keep up with the growing demand.



"If it wasn't for Meals on Wheels Diablo Region, there'd be lots of people like me who would starve." – Ellison, age 74.

Breakfast Bags

The Breakfast Bag program continues to provide additional healthy food to food insecure seniors who often split their one meal a day so they have enough food for lunch, dinner, and to take with medications at night. This year, 589 older adults received nutritious breakfasts every week. Started in 2020 during the pandemic, this important program has proven to improve the health of the elders we serve. It keeps seniors from being anxious about where their next meal will come from.



"Thanks Meals on Wheels Diablo Region. There are some days I don't know what I would do if this package of food didn't come."
– Eunice, 75

Cultural Cuisine

MOW Diablo Region reached a major goal this year with the introduction of the Cultural Cuisine Program. We serve a diverse community and we understand that one menu does not appeal to everyone's palates. Thanks to funding through the City of Concord, we were able to introduce the Cultural Cuisine Program that allowed Concord seniors to choose Latin-American inspired home delivered meals. From the moment the program was introduced, we heard from clients who wanted a broader variety of foods. Funding for this pilot program allowed us to make our services more culturally relevant to the population we serve.



"It's a blessing. I always had my wife to cook for me and now I have to take care of myself. The food is really good!"
– Gilbert, 68

Outreach

MOW Diablo Region realizes it is extremely important to reach seniors who face barriers in accessing services. Through a partnership with Choice in Aging, Empowered Aging, Contra Costa Legal Services, and with financial support from the John Muir Community Health Fund, MOW Diablo Region began outreach to seniors in East County to help assess individual needs, locate services, fill out applications, and navigate the social service system. This year, we helped 100 seniors in East County receive such services as Medi-Cal benefits, legal services, home delivered meals, fall prevention, and companionship. Because of the program's success, the John Muir Community Health Fund offered MOW Diablo Region a \$20,000 challenge grant to expand the program Countywide. These funds will help many isolated older adults connect to much-needed services, allowing them to live healthy and independent lives!



"Thank you for helping me with transportation and Medi-Cal. I love to play chess and now I can come every day to be with my friends at the senior center and eat a daily meal." – Carlos, age 75

Fall Prevention

Our Fall Prevention program continues to help more seniors each year. As older adults become frailer, the likelihood of falls increases, causing serious accidents, nursing home placement, and even death. The home safety modifications we provide keep elders safe in their homes so they can be independent. This year, 898 home modifications were provided to 273 seniors. Fall prevention presentations and classes were provided to 512 participants promoting good balance and strength – key elements to preventing falls. Fall Prevention is an essential service, yet there are few funding sources that support fall prevention programs and initiatives. That's why we were pleased to receive a Helping Hometown Heroes grant from the Home Depot Foundation, which allowed us to provide services to 17 veterans.



"They did some work on my house three years ago for fall prevention and it assisted me a lot by putting bars in my bathtub and doing some work on the stairs and putting a new rail outside. So that was very helpful and I appreciate it." – Carlos, 78

Health & Wellness

Exercise and social connections are essential to keep older adults healthy. This year, the Health and Wellness Program expanded on its existing three classes — Walk with Ease, Bingocize®, and Young at Heart — adding Line Dancing as a pilot program and offering all classes at 15 locations throughout the County. While it was difficult to provide classes during Covid, after restrictions were lifted, seniors were eager to get physical activity again. This year class participation increased by 300%. The benefits of the program are clear as we see improvements in seniors' strength, ability, and confidence in daily activities.



"The classes have really helped. I'm losing weight. I feel more relaxed. My balance has improved. I can really see a change." – Carl, 72

Your gift means so much to us and to the vulnerable seniors who depend on our delivered meals and services.



2023 AT A GLANCE



5,901

Grocery Bags Delivered



739,248

Meals Delivered



152

Elder Abuse Interventions



5,776

Friendly Visits



3,633

Friendly Calls



496

Friendly Helpers



419

Homes Modified

FINANCIALS

54%
Government

\$5,083,735
Total Operating Revenue

28%
Individuals

13%
Foundations
+ Corporations

5%
Events
& Other

\$5,083,735
Revenue

\$4,919,033
Expenses

\$166,703
Increase in Net Assets

97¢

of every dollar goes
to providing services

OUR MISSION

WE ENHANCE
the lives of older adults by
DELIVERING
HEALTHY MEALS
and providing an array of
SUPPORTIVE
SERVICES
that empower seniors to live
INDEPENDENTLY,
SAFELY, AND
WITH DIGNITY.



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We'd like to thank our foundations and corporations for their generous support!

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MEALS on WHEELS
DIABLO REGION

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DINING, DANCING, AND DELIVERING

MOW Diablo Region hosted over 300 guests at its 2nd Annual Dining to Deliver Gala last June at the Blackhawk Museum in Danville. This event was a fun evening for guests who enjoyed a silent auction, delicious hors d'oeuvres, dinner, the museum's impressive car collection, a fun (and quite competitive) live auction, and dancing to a great band. But most of all, the evening surpassed our goal and helped MOW Diablo Region deliver more nutritious meals and supportive services to meet the growing needs of the older adults we serve.

"We appreciate the generosity of everyone who attended," says Caitlin Sly, Executive Director of MOW Diablo Region. "We also want to thank our corporate and business sponsors who demonstrated their commitment to improving the lives of seniors and helped us surpass our goal. A special shout out to our Emerald Sponsors, John Muir Health and Honor/Home Instead, and to our exclusive Diamond Sponsor, Martinez Refining Company

The 3rd Annual Dining to Deliver Gala will be held this year on June 8th at the Blackhawk Museum in Danville. Please contact events@mowdr.org if you would like to sponsor or be added to the invitation list.

