Friends Emergency Housing Program

2017 Volunteer Award

The Concord Food CO-OP has supported the Friends Emergency Housing Program for over 10 years. They have hosted and facilitated events that have raised money on our behalf, and also raised community awareness and increased support for the program.

As a part of the Concord CO-OP, Greg Lessard (prior to being a trustee of our agency) reached out to shelter staff in order to strength the partnership between the two and increase the benefits to the program. The Co-op delivers fresh fruits and vegetables to the families at EH on a regular basis. Multiple clients have stated, that without what the Co-op brings to the shelter, their family would have very limited, affordable access to fresh produce and the other healthy foods the Co-op is known for.

As nutrition, budgeting, and affordable meal planning are a large part of what we promote to our shelter clients, the support from the Co-op makes this attainable for our families. We have also received multiple meals for the families to enjoy, for which they are very appreciative. At Christmas, all the kids enjoyed one of their favorite meals of “Sticky Chicken” and Mac and Cheese. For dessert, while listening intently to “the Polar Express” being read to them around the tree, they were able to enjoy a yummy selection of cookies and milk.

The shelter has been able to promote the work we do and the people we serve by being invited to participate in multiple events with the co-op. We have had tables set up on Main Street at community events and at Co-op member events in the Lakes Region. Historically, we have also been the recipient of monetary donations through the Co-op’s Community Partner Program.

This past winter, the Friends Program stepped forward to spearhead and run the cold weather shelter here in Concord, in order to provide a safe place for the city’s most vulnerable to stay during the harsh winter months. This was a large, complicated task and had many working parts. With the support of the Co-op, Greg volunteered to be one of these major working parts. Greg worked to help recruit, inform and schedule volunteers for the shelter season. As the shelter was volunteer driven, we could not have made it work, let alone as successfully as we did, without the Co-op and Greg’s Support.

At this time we would like to honor and appreciate Greg Lessard and General Manager Chris Gilber, on behalf of the Concord Co-op, for their dedication and support of the Friends Emergency Housing Program.