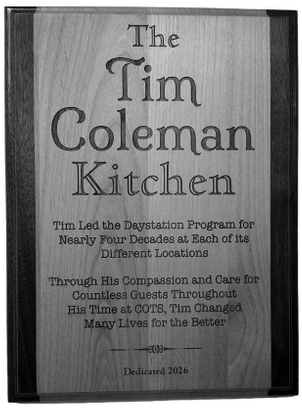
HOMEFRONT

FALL 2026 | **COTS** | cotsonline.org

Everyone deserves a home.

More Than a Meal:
A Renewed Kitchen Honoring a Lasting Legacy

The newly renovated and dedicated Daystation kitchen reflects the power of community, connection, and a shared commitment to ending homelessness.



At COTS, a meal is never just a meal. It can be the beginning of a conversation, a connection to critical services, or the first step toward a stable home.

For thousands of our neighbors experiencing homelessness, the COTS Daystation offers a welcoming, safe place to gather, enjoy a nutritious lunch, take a shower, do laundry, and connect with essential services to help them get on the path to stability. As demand for these services has grown, with daily utilization increasing by 300% in recent years, the Daystation's role in our community has become more important than ever.

Now, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our community, the Daystation has a newly renovated kitchen designed to help meet that growing need.

On October 8, COTS celebrated the reopening of the kitchen at 95 North Avenue, marking an exciting new chapter for a program that serves up to 100 community members each day. Made possible by $150,000 in community support, the renovation improves the ability of our volunteers and staff to prepare and serve meals.

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Serving Up Fresh, Local Vermont Food

Partnering with local producers to bring fresh-from-the-farm food to the Daystation table

Through the Vermont Foodbank's Vermonters Feeding Vermonters grant, COTS is bringing fresh, locally grown and produced food into the Daystation kitchen. This vital partnership helps ensure guests have access to nutritious, high-quality meals at a time when daily attendance has tripled in recent years and food costs remain high. It also provides a market for farmers and keeps our local economy strong.

One valued partner is L'Esperance Dairy Farm in Franklin County, which provides fresh milk for Daystation guests. By connecting Vermont farms with community members experiencing food insecurity, the grant strengthens our local food system while helping COTS meet a growing need.

"This program has been wonderful from our perspective. We have learned a great deal about the COTS mission and the services you provide. It has also given us a way to directly support vulnerable members of the community. Part of our mission is to provide quality food to our community and this has been a direct link to do just that!"

Jennifer L'Esperance, L'Esperance Dairy Farm

With the support of Vermont Foodbank and local farmers like the L'Esperance family, COTS can continue serving meals that nourish our guests while celebrating the generosity and agricultural abundance of our Vermont community.

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COTS

Everyone deserves a home.

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Building on a Historic Housing Opportunity

COTS is reimagining the original Waystation site to create more homes and help our neighbors remain stably housed.

For more than four decades, COTS has worked to ensure that our neighbors experiencing homelessness have more than a safe place to sleep. We believe everyone deserves a place to call home and the resources to make that home a lasting one.

COTS' commitment to that vision began at the original Waystation and Wilson Hotel on Church Street in 1983. Today, we have an exciting opportunity to build on that legacy.

With the Waystation's relocation to a new expanded Pearl Street facility in 2025, COTS will launch a campaign in the new year to transform the former Waystation footprint at 187 Church Street and reconnect it with the Wilson. We will create three additional affordable homes, including two efficiency apartments and one single-room occupancy unit, along with welcoming shared spaces that will strengthen the entire Wilson community.

The planned improvements include a shared kitchen, laundry facilities, and a common room where residents can connect with neighbors and services and build a stronger sense of belonging. The project will also create space for housing retention programming, expanding the support available to help residents maintain their housing and thrive.

The Wilson currently provides 22 SRO apartments and one efficiency apartment, offering deeply affordable, permanent housing to people who often face significant barriers to finding a home. In a community where affordable housing options are scarce and unsheltered homelessness remains a pressing concern, the Wilson serves as a vital bridge from homelessness to stability.



Partners in Progress: Expanding Recovery Support at COTS

As the daily and monthly attendance at the COTS Daystation surged over the past three years, staff and guests alike became aware that many of our guests were struggling with substance use disorder and that self-medication was making it hard to preserve a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. What was also clear was that welcoming guests despite their struggles and offering a pathway forward was the answer to maintaining a safe, substance free, and accessible space.

This emerging set of circumstances was an invitation into deeper care, stronger partnerships, and improved guest experience. COTS reached out to our partners at Turning Point Center of Chittenden County to collaborate on a new way to assist the guests of our daytime and overnight adult shelter programs. While recovery coaches from Turning Point have visited the Daystation regularly in the past, sporadic personnel and fluctuating schedules made it hard for guests to build a rapport with a particular coach.

As the partners conversed, an idea emerged to embed two coaches at the Daystation and Waystation who could provide a full suite of services: individual recovery coaching, consultation with housing navigation staff, recovery meetings, harm reduction trainings, and relapse prevention skill trainings. Together, we could create a recovery-affirming space that would help guests overcome barriers to housing.

"Worrying about maintaining housing, working on what that next step might be, and also being surrounded by substance use, it's hard to focus on the next right thing when everything else is telling you no. You don't have to know where you have to go. You can just come to us and start with us."

—Cam Lauf, Executive Director, Turning Point Center of Chittenden County

Thanks to support from the Opioid Settlement Fund managed by the Office of Economic Opportunity at the state of Vermont and a generous gift from the Pomerleau Family Foundation, COTS and Turning Point have made this shared idea into a reality.

Since our partnership began, our recovery coaches have led 191 recovery meetings at the Daystation and 159 recovery meetings at the Waystation for overnight guests. Guests received 169 individual coaching sessions at the Daystation and 37 at the Waystation. Daystation guests benefited from 21 different recovery skills sessions that can help to reduce harm, prevent relapses, and manage symptoms while pursuing recovery.

COTS' new strategic plan aims to reduce the pressure on our guests through dynamic partnerships. We're proud to say that this partnership with Turning Point Center is a wonderful example of this idea in action. Together, we're improving the experience in adult shelter for guests, staff, and volunteers, in addition to adding critical support for some of our most vulnerable neighbors. We're grateful to the funding partners who have made it possible to test out this idea that has surprised and delighted with its effectiveness.

191 DAYSTATION RECOVERY MEETINGS

151 WAYSTATION RECOVERY MEETINGS

169 DAYSTATION INDIVIDUAL COACHING SESSIONS

37 WAYSTATION INDIVIDUAL COACHING SESSIONS

21 DAYSTATION RECOVERY SKILLS SESSIONS

More Than a Meal *continued from page 1*

Each day, a shared meal creates opportunities for guests to connect with housing navigation, medical and mental health care, recovery support, employment assistance, and other services that can help them move toward stability and permanent housing. For someone facing homelessness, that combination of meeting basic needs with dignity and providing human connection can make a meaningful difference.

The kitchen reopening also honored the legacy of Tim Coleman, who led the Daystation program for nearly 40 years before retiring in 2022. Throughout his career, Tim helped countless people navigate difficult circumstances and find pathways toward housing and a brighter future. Dedicating the kitchen in his honor ensures that his spirit of compassion will continue to welcome guests for years to come.

As COTS Executive Director Jonathan Farrell reflected, Tim believed in welcoming people with compassion while encouraging personal accountability and community-oriented behavior. That philosophy remains at the heart of the Daystation today.

The renovated kitchen will continue to provide community for the thousands of people who come to find safety and stability each year, but also for the volunteers and community partners who share the Daystation each day. Every meal is an opportunity to meet an immediate need and to open the door to something more.

Thank you to our generous donors and community members who helped make this transformation possible. Your generosity has strengthened a place where our neighbors can find a path toward a more stable future.

At the Daystation, we will continue to offer More Than a Meal, because everyone deserves to be welcomed with dignity and supported in finding a path forward.

COTS Walk 2026 Sponsors

Children & Families

City Market Onion River Co-op
Hall Communications Radio Group
NorthCountry Federal Credit Union
Open Approach
Place Creative Company
Star 92.9
WCAX-TV

Affordable Housing

Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream
Baystate Financial
Duncan* Wisniewski Architecture
University of Vermont Medical Center

Housing Retention

Birdseye
McSoley McCoy & Co.
NBT Bank
VGS

Emergency Shelter

95 Triple X
Alison Redlich Photography
BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont
Blue Jewel Light
Casella Waste Systems
Community National Bank
The Dixie Six
Exterus Business Furniture
Goldhammer
Jenni Johnson & The Jazz Junketeers
Lawson's Finest
Northeast Delta Dental
Pacto Medical
Queen City Development Group
Redstone Commercial Group
Sambatucada
Stephen Mease Photography
David Wright

Inkind

Cabot Creamery Co-operative
First Congregational Church of Burlington
Hannaford Brothers Co.
Lake Champlain Chocolates
Leonardo's Pizza
P&P Septic
Queen City Printers
Sisters of Anarchy Ice Cream
St. Michael's College – MOVE Office
Starbucks
Switchback Brewing Co.
Sugarsnap
Vermont Lake Monsters
Vermont Smoke & Cure
Jesse Woody



STEPHEN MEASE PHOTOGRAPHY

CHALLENGE TEAMS

Business

Baystate Financial
Children Unlimited
Gravel & Shea PC
Marvell Technology
Redstone Commercial Group

School

Burlington High School National Honors Society
Ohavi Zedek Synagogue Hebrew School
St. Michael's College – MOVE Office

Community

COTS Boardwalkers
Building Buddies
Queer Hairstylists Unite!
Team Henry



Faith

All Saints Episcopal Church
College Street Congregational Church
Essex Catholic Community (Holy Family/St. Lawrence Parish & St. Pius X Parish)
First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
First Unitarian Universalist Society
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Shelburne United Methodist Church
Sisters of Mercy
St. Catherine of Siena
St. James Episcopal Church
St. John Vianney Church
St. Paul's Cathedral
United Church of Underhill

Challenge Walkers

Carol Boardman
Mary Candon
Peggy Curtis
Sharon Damkot
Bob Duncan
Jonathan Farrell
Janel Gamm
Joyce Hagan
Judy Hamel
Lynne Jaunich
Heather Jenkins
Tim Kane
Michael Lipson
Nan Mason
Julia Paradiso
Sharon Robertson
Janice Saulnier
Trish Scharf
Jeannie Slauson
Arlo Smith
Sarah Sprayregen
Marga Sproul
Glenn Sproul
Tom Stretton
David Walsh

COTS Walk

Save the Date: 2026 Phonathon

DECEMBER 3, 2026

The COTS Phonathon is a cherished tradition and a vital source of support for our work. Since the 1980s, it has brought our community together each year in the week after Thanksgiving to help fund our mission.

During the Phonathon, volunteers reach out to COTS donors to ask for their annual gift. This effort plays a key role in funding our programs throughout the year.

This year's Phonathon takes place from Monday, November 30th to Thursday, December 3rd, 2026. There will be an in-person kick-off event on Monday at the COTS offices, and a virtual calling option each night. New this year! We're adding a daytime calling shift on Tuesday. Volunteers are invited to join on any day that works for you.

YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN FOUR WAYS:

1. **Host an offsite calling party** in your workplace, church, school, or neighborhood — we can help you organize it!
2. **Join the virtual COTS Phonathon** as a volunteer to call donors from the comfort of your home.
3. **Phone-A-Friend 10 for 10 Challenge** — reach out to 10 friends and ask for a $10 donation to COTS.
4. **Make a donation** to the Phonathon yourself to support COTS services year-round!



Your support makes a difference. Thank you for helping to make this year's Phonathon a success!

It Takes a Village

Back to School Bonanza

Thanks to the generosity of our presenting sponsor **Northfield Savings Bank** and our other sponsors **Katie's Kids Foundation**, **AstenJohnson**, **Bob's Discount Furniture**, and **Vermont Tent Company**, our Back to School Bonanza was a huge success. Thank you to our 50 volunteers, and our countless supporters for making this event possible. Together, we welcomed 575 family members including 362 students and provided hundreds of students with new backpacks and a wide variety of school supplies, all in a fun and uplifting atmosphere.

Beyond the backpacks and supplies, we also distributed first day of school outfits, offered bounce house fun, served ice cream and blue snow cones, provided free haircuts, hosted family portrait sessions, served tacos, and delivered a variety of other services and experiences for families.

The Scoop Ice Cream, **Emily's Home Cooking**, **Texas Roadhouse**, and **Feeding Champlain Valley** provided a variety of delicious foods. Haircuts by **Susannah Graham**, **Rosemary**, and **Heidi Larocque**. **Vermont Moms** added a little extra sparkle with hair tinsel. **Leonardo's Pizza** kindly donated pizzas for our volunteers. **Stephen Mease** graciously contributed his time and expertise by capturing beautiful photographs.

We also fostered valuable connections with community partners including **Spectrum**, **STEPS**, **FERN Lab**, **Lund**, and **Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity**. **Fletcher Free Library** and **CLiF** gifted books to young readers. The **Champlain Valley Lions** offered vision screenings, providing an excellent and valuable service for families. **UVM Rescue** was on hand offering support throughout the event.



STEPHEN MEASE PHOTOGRAPHY



Donations

Jacqueline and **Jessica Bolster** donated spring baskets for children in shelter with help from **Saint Michael's worshipping community**, **Saint Michael's student athletic teams**, and **Phoenix Books**. This is Jacqueline and Jessica's 32nd year doing it!

Thank you, **Gotta Have Sole Foundation**, for supplying 98 pairs of shoes for children in shelter.

ECHO at the Leahy Center, thank you for adding some fun to life at Family Shelter.

Gadue's Dry Cleaning partners with COTS to supply clean winter coats donated by the community to help keep our guests warm through their **Coats for Kids and Families** program.

The Rock Point School hosted their annual **Ooky Spooky 5K** to help raise money to support COTS.

Burlington Furniture Co. donated 1% of their sales in the month of September to support COTS.

We received hundreds of pairs of **Bombas**, **Darn Tough Vermont**, and **Hanes** socks! These are pivotal for the health of our guests, thank you.

Thank you, **Wild Bill Sargent** and **WOKO**, for on air promotions.

The Shop provided haircuts to our Daystation guests.

Q&A with Rosemary

Romy: Rosemary, we really appreciate you being a part of our COTS community of supporters! What caused you to be interested in being a COTS volunteer and donor?

Rosemary: COTS reached out to my salon team asking if anyone was interested in doing haircuts for your back to school event and it sounded like a fun way to spend a Saturday! Growing up back in Florida, community organizations similar to COTS helped support my family tremendously with school supplies, clothes, and supplementing our pantry with food once the food stamps ran out. Now that I'm older and my circumstances are much more stable, I have the opportunity to give instead of receive!

Romy: It is really awesome to hear about your desire to give. Can you talk about one of your favorite experiences you have had while supporting COTS?

Rosemary: At the last back to school event, I had this little boy in my chair who was about to start his first time in preschool and his mom wanted me to shave his hair nice and short. He sat so well and patiently in my chair and after, he was dancing and checking himself out in the mirror, really hamming it up! His baby sister saw how much fun he was having and wanted a haircut too, but she already had beautiful braids in her hair. We settled on a pretend haircut and then she was feeling just as sharp and happy as her brother! Mom was grateful I took the time to make little sister feel included and we all had so much fun!

Romy: Wow, what a beautiful image and special experience. It sounds like you had such a positive impact on the whole family. Thank you for doing that! You supported us through donating haircuts and then created an awesome Walk team. Other than the story you just told us, is there anything specific that caused an increase in your involvement?

Rosemary: The state of the world these days feels really scary and it's hard to feel like you have any power over a lot of the big things. I wanted to try to zoom in and focus on my local community where I could see more of the impact of my actions. My birthday happens to be around the same time as the COTS Walk fundraiser so I thought it was a good opportunity to utilize a time when people want to celebrate and give something!



STEPHEN MEASE PHOTOGRAPHY

Romy: It can be a powerful feeling to focus on the small change we can make. You really did such an awesome job rallying community members behind you for your COTS Walk team. I know you mentioned utilizing a time when people want to celebrate (genius) do you have any other tips or tricks on how to inspire others to give?

Rosemary: I'm in a really fortunate position with my job where I get to interact rather intimately with a lot of different community members. It was a great icebreaker/talking point with each of my clients in my chair sharing my goal of raising money for a cause I'm excited to support! I think having a strong personal "why" is very compelling to get people to join the team or donate. Utilize the resources you have! I personally don't have thousands of dollars sitting around to donate but I felt financially comfortable enough to say to each of my clients "hey! If you want to tip on top of my services today, donate to my team's effort with the COTS walk!". People responded really well to that and some donated more than they typically would have given in a tip! I also used my birthday coming up as an easy way for friends and family to get me a gift by donating! (I cherish my purple COTS bandana!) Simply sharing on my facebook didn't get very much traction, but making videos talking about it and showing how genuinely excited I was when we reached certain fundraising goals I think got my friends and family more amped up to support!

Romy: That is awesome. What you said about the "why" really resonated with me. On another note, you seem like such a creative person. How do you exercise your creativity?

Rosemary: I love being an artist who can't be locked down to one specific craft. Doing hair with creative cuts and color is biggest and most practiced since it's how I pay my bills, but I also love to make collages, paint, sew embroidery, write poetry and songs, bake and throw parties! Basically, I'll try anything and I'm not afraid to be bad at it!

Romy: It sounds like we can all take a page out of your book about not being afraid of being bad at something. Do you have a favorite fall activity, or something you love to partake in as the seasons change?

Rosemary: All year I love to walk and wander, but especially in the fall when the weather cools down and the autumnal colors come out! Hiking is a term I use loosely for going to a beautiful place and stopping every 5-10 minutes to look at a frog, mushroom, or flower.

Romy: Is there anything else you would like to share with our community?

Rosemary: If you or a loved one are in need of hair services come see me or one of my talented coworkers over at Talmo Hair Co.! Once a month(-ish) we do a free gender affirming haircut day prioritizing kids but including all ages! More info on our instagram @talmohairco (follow me @ rosem.hair.y while you're at it!)



Donations, Drives, & COTS Wish List

A big thank you to those who have donated from our wish list or set up donations drives. Thank you, **Abigail Sperry**; **Allison Kramarczyk**; **Angelica Tringale**; **Anna Izzo**; **Anna Simonelli**; **Anne Latulippe**; **Becca Hopkins**; **Benoure Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning**; **Betty** and **Marvin Libson**; **Burlington High School National Honors Society**; **Burlington Tennis Club Swim Team**; **Cassandra Badeau**; **Champlain Valley Swim League**; **Christ the King School**; **Colchester High School**; **Dianne Martin**; **Duncan** and **Lorri Love**; **Ellen Bortner**; **Emily** and **Greg Abrami**; **Etiquette Clothiers**; **First Unitarian Universalist Society**; **Flynn Center for the Performing Arts**; **Fred** and **Cynthia Foreh**and; **George Voland**; **Gotta Have Sole Foundation**; **Herons Llyn Farm**; **James** and **Maureen McFadden**; **Judy Bond**; **Julie Oh**; **Katharine Kostin**; **Khol's 711**; **Kimberly Gammon**; **Lillian Bostock**; **Lily Bostock**; **Lisa** and **James Lopes**; **Mallory Root**; **Mari Walsh**; **Marleen M. Moore**; **Meghan Bouvier**; **Michaela Finneran**; **Morgan Prinz**; **Muthu Venkatachalam** and **Indu Muthuswamy**; **Paige** and **Peter Ruffner**; **Paige Cascio**; **Pat Donnelly**; **Patricia Bosley**; **Patricia Rubalcaba**; **Peg Eddy**; **Robert McIntosh**; **Ruth** and **Anthony Julianelle**; **Sam Beall**; **Sarah Harissis**; **Sarah Schmidt**; **Silvana Payne**; **Spare Time Entertainment**; **Special Olympics**; **Susan Littlefield**; **SymQuest Group**; **Tamar Davis**; **Twincraft**; **UVM Medical Center**; **Vermont's Original**; **Winooski Waves**; **Zoe Shapiro**.

Thank you to those who supported our Back to School Bonanza: **Andrew** and **Janet Watts**; **AstenJohnson**; **Bonnie** and **W Eric Schmitt**; **Brenda Dawson**; **Celia Cuddy** and **JB Barna**; **Champlain Valley Lions Club**; **Danielle Edwards**; **Darn Tough Vermont**; **Dean** and **Pat King**; **EastRise Credit Union**; **Elizabeth Clayton**; **Emily Eden**; **Erika Couture**; **Erin Altermatt**; **Feeding Champlain Valley**; **First United Methodist Church**; **Halle Sobel** and **Mark Kautzman**; **Hannaford Supermarkets**; **Hannah**; **Heidi Laroque**; **Jane** and **Brown Richardson**; **Jemima Talbot**; **John Denham** and **Virginia O'Brien-Denham**; **Judith Kitchell**; **Karen Franko**; **Karen Lebiecki** and **Richard Parent**; **Kathy Reo**; **Katie's Kids**; **Laurie Valley**; **Leah Burke**; **Leonardo's Pizza**; **Lisa** and **Todd Poole**; **Lynne**; **Margaret Welch**; **Mia** and **Michael Watson**; **Monica Sanchez Webb**; **Rachel Humphrey**;

Thank you for Walking with Us

Founded in 1988, the COTS Walk remains one of our most important community fundraisers. This family-friendly event brings together people of all ages from across the region to walk a 3.6-mile route through downtown Burlington, passing by COTS shelters and housing sites. Along the way, walkers gain insight into the journey someone facing homelessness may take when turning to COTS for help.

This year, more than 500 walkers and 100 volunteers came together to raise over $260,000.

From live music and Ben & Jerry's ice cream at Battery Park to the heartfelt moments experienced along the route, the Walk was a joyful and powerful celebration of our community's united efforts to support neighbors in need.

To all our walkers, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and staff, thank you. You make our mission possible and help ensure everyone in our community has a safe place to call home.

The 2027 COTS Walk will take place on Sunday, May 2nd.

Thank you for supporting our COTS Walk

Jesse Woody; **David Wright** (**Adovah**); **Alison Redlich Photography**; **Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream**; **Blue Jewel Light**; **Cabot Creamery Co-operative**; **Casella Waste Systems**; **First Congregational Church of Burlington**; **Hall Communications Radio Group**; **Hannaford Supermarkets**; **Jenni Johnson & the Jazz Junketeers**; **Lake Champlain Chocolates**; **Lawson's Finest Liquids**; **Leonardo's Pizza**; **P & P Septic**; **Place Creative Company**; **Queen City Printers**; **Saint Michael's College—MOVE Office**; **Sambatucada**; **Sisters of Anarchy Ice Cream**; **Starbucks**; **Stephen Mease Photography**; **Sugarsnap**; **Switchback Brewing Co.**; **The Dixie Six**; **Vermont Lake Monsters**; **Vermont Smoke & Cure**; **WCAX-TV**; **Star 92.9**; **95 Triple X**.



STEPHEN MEASE PHOTOGRAPHY

Rebecca James; **Rebecca MacDonald**; **Rhino Foods**; **Rosemary Naydihor**; **Ruth Casey**; **Saint Michael's College—MOVE Office**; **Siobhan Donegan** and **Vincent Brennan**; **St. James Episcopal Church**; **Stephen Mease Photography**; **Susan Littlefield**; **Susannah Graham**; **Temple Sinai Reform Jewish Congregation**; **Texas Roadhouse**; **The EDGE Sports & Fitness**; **The Scoop**; **Thomas** and **Debra Hartswick**; **Tracey Maurer**; **Trish** and **Paul Scharf**; **UVM Rescue**; **Vermont Tent Company**; **Wendy** and **Todd Daniels**; **William** and **Lisa Northup**; **Yamuna Turco**.

Mirabelles Bakery provided birthday cakes to children in shelter!

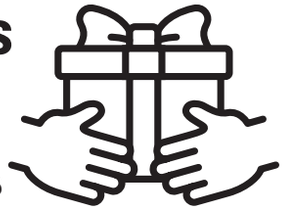
Daystation Lunch

A big thanks to **COSTCO** for donating a gift card each month to help support the COTS Daystation lunch program

Coffee Quality Laboratory, thank you for donating coffee to the Daystation for the entire year!

Acrisure; **All Souls Interfaith Gathering**; **Amy McKinney**; **Andrew Leslie Griffiths**; **Bossy Posse (Michael** and **Cynthia Shanks)**; **Brandon Lawson**; **Cathedral Church of St. Paul**; **COTS Board**; **Crowe LLP**; **Dalya Almogalli**; **First Unitarian Universalist Society**; **Fluency**; **Grandma Roy (Margaret Roy)**; **Holy Family** and **St. Lawrence Parish**; **J. A. Morrissey, Inc.**; **Jersey Mike's**; **Lake Champlain Chocolates**; **Love & Blessings (Vince** and **Tracie Carlos)**; **New King Church**; **Orlando Pacheco**; **Prolytix**; **Richmond Congregational Church**; **Rosenfeld Family (Andrew** and **Deborah Rosenfeld)**; **St. Paul's Cathedral—Burlington**; **Saint Michael's College—MOVE Office**; **Sherpa Foods**; **Still Nameless Bookies (Susan Littlefield)**; **Susan Littlefield**; **The Mountain Mamas**; **Underhill/Jericho Families (Dana** and **Jared LeBlanc)**; **Vermonters Feeding Vermonters (Katharine Tucker)**; **Wilmington Trust N.A.** plus many more individual supporters, provided healthy lunches or food for about 60 people daily. The Daystation serves lunch 365 days a year, thanks to the support of volunteers.

Holiday Giving Guidelines



Thank you for making the holidays brighter for children and families experiencing homelessness!

Deadline for toy donations: Friday, December 4, 2026

Early donations make a big difference! They give us time to stock and organize our holiday shop before families begin shopping. Because we coordinate and schedule visits for parents, the December 4 deadline gives us only about 2.5 weeks for families to shop. Having gifts available early ensures parents have a full selection to choose from throughout the season.

After December 4, we continue to accept Amazon Holiday Wishlist items for our Family Shelter playroom and gift cards for families who arrive at shelter later in the season.

Your generosity helps ease the stress of the holidays for families without stable housing. Thank you for helping make the season special for those we serve!

How Our Holiday Shop Works

Volunteers transform our conference rooms into a store-like space, organizing donated gifts by age and type. Parents choose gifts for their children and wrap them at our wrapping station, giving them the opportunity to select and prepare something special themselves.

What to Give

Gift cards are preferred: Gift cards in $25 increments offer families flexibility, choice, and dignity. Prepaid Visa, Mastercard, and other bank gift cards are ideal because they can be used anywhere. They allow parents to be their own superheroes and purchase exactly what their child may want or need. They're especially helpful for families who arrive at shelter later in the season or cannot visit COTS in person.

Toy guidelines:

- New, unused toys only.
- Individual gifts must be under $50 to ensure equity among children.
- We cannot accept used toys, wrapped gifts, toy weapons (including Nerf guns and swords), or general household items not intended as gifts for children or teens.

Each child receives three gifts: Something they need. Something they want. Something educational.

We serve children of all ages, from infants to teenagers. Gifts for older teens are especially appreciated!

How to Donate

Toy donation deadline: December 4, 2026. We close at 5 p.m.

Shopping online? Explore our Amazon Holiday Wishlist and Homeport Wishlist!

Coordinating a gift drive? Please schedule your drop-off in advance, as many staff members work remotely. We cannot accommodate pickups.
Email romyt@cotsonline.org to schedule your drop-off.

Drop-off location: COTS, 95 North Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401
Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Thank you for helping make the holidays brighter for the families we serve!

Thank YOU!

These generous businesses and organizations provided in-kind and financial support to COTS during our fiscal year 2026 (October 1, 2025—September 30, 2026). In addition to the names here, hundreds of individuals and foundations have made financial and/or in-kind gifts in support of COTS programs and services this past year. The foundations listed below have requested inclusion in our newsletter.

95 Triple X
Acrisure
Adobe
Aeterra
Agilent Technologies
Albert D. Lawton Intermediate School
Alison Redlich Photography
All Souls Interfaith Gathering
Alma Gibbs Donchian Foundation
Amalgamated Charitable Foundation
Amalgamated Culture Works
American Endowment Foundation
American Online Giving Foundation
Ameriprise Financial
Ampersand Properties
Applied Materials Foundation
AstenJohnson
Avodah
Bags 4 My Cause
The Bahá'ís of Burlington
Bank of America Charitable Gift Fund
The Bay Corporation
Baystate Financial
Baystate Financial Charitable Foundation
Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream
Benevity
Benoure Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning
Bernstein Philanthropic Impact Fund
Bia Diagnostics
Bickford USA
Biofield Tuning
Birdseye
Blackbaud Giving Fund
Bloomin' 4 Good
Blue Jewel Light
BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont
BNY Mellon
Bob's Discount Furniture
Bob's Laundry Vending Service
The Boot Pro Ski & Bike Shop
Brian's North End Automotive
Brother Moon and Sister Sun Fund
Burlington Furniture
Burlington High School National Honor Society
Burlington Moose Lodge #1618
Burlington Subaru/Hyundai
Burlington Tennis Club
Burly Bear Productions
Butternut Mountain Farm
Cabot Creamery
Cadence
Campus Compact
Casella Waste Systems
Catamount Financial Advisors of Raymond James
Cathedral Church of St. Paul
Cedar Ledge Builders
Champlain Investment Partners
Champlain Valley Lions Club
Champlain Valley Swim League
Charities Aid Foundation America
Charity Navigator
Charles Schwab
Chester County Community Foundation
The Chicago Community Trust
Christ Church Presbyterian
Christ the King School
City Market Onion River Co-op
City of Burlington Housing Trust Fund
The Clowes Fund
Coffee Quality Laboratory
Colchester High School
Coldwell Banker Hickok & Boardman Realty
Combined Federal Campaign of Northern New England
Commando®
Community Health Centers of Burlington
Community National Bank
Community Shares of Colorado
Congregational Church of South Hero
Copper Leaf Financial
Costco Wholesale #314
Crowe
Cushman Design Group
Cybergrants
DAFgiving360
Darn Tough Vermont
Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
DCF Family Services Division
Deloitte
The Dianne Shullenberger Gallery
Diemer Properties
The Dixie Six
Duncan* Wisniewski Architecture
E*TRADE from Morgan Stanley
EastRise Credit Union
eBay for Charity
ECHO at the Leahy Center
The EDGE Sports & Fitness
Edward Jones Investments
EKS Wealth Management of Raymond James
Elasticsearch
Employees' Community Action Council of General Dynamics
Energy Futures Group
Engineering Ventures
Essex Catholic Community
Essex Center United Methodist Church Women
Essex Junction Grand Buffet
Essex Junction Lions Club
Etiquette Clothiers
Etsy
Evernorth
Exterus Business Furniture
Fanny Allen Corporation
The Farmhouse Group
Feeding Champlain Valley
Fidelity Charitable
Fight Hunger Bag
First Baptist Church
First Congregational Church of Burlington
First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
First Unitarian Universalist Society
First United Methodist Church
Fluency
Flynn Center for the Performing Arts
The Forrest & Frances Lattner Foundation
Foundation Source
The Franklin Templeton Charitable Giving Program
Fraternal Order of Eagles #3210
Freeman French Freeman
G.W. Tatro Construction
Gadue's Dry Cleaning
GE Healthcare
Generac Foundation
General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems
Geri Reilly Real Estate
Germain Lexus of Easton
The Gibney Family Foundation
Girlington Garage
Give Lively Foundation
GiveClear Foundation
Global Atlantic
GlobalFoundries
Goldhammer
Golub Foundation
Gotta Have Sole Foundation
Grace United Methodist Church
Gravel & Shea
Greater Washington Community Foundation
Greek Ladies Philoptochos Society
Green Mountain Chapter DAR
Green Mountain Chorus
Green Mountain Mahler Festival
Green Mountain Montessori School
Green Mountain Power
GS Donor Advised Philanthropy Fund
Hall Communications Radio Group
Hallam-ICS
Hameline Wealth Management of Raymond James
Hammond Iles Wealth Advisors
Hanes for Good
Hannaford Supermarkets
Harbor Village Senior Communities
The Hart Foundation
Healthy Living Market & Cafe
Hearst
Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
Hemenway & Barnes
Herons Llŷn Farm
Holy Family and St. Lawrence Parish
Home and Able
Hoogenboom Wealth Management
HOPE Works

Hotel Vermont
Hoyle Tanner
IBM
IBM Computershare
iGiftFund
J.A. Morrissey
J.P. Morgan Charitable Giving Fund
Jeff Corey Excavating
Jenni Johnson & the Jazz Junketeers
Jersey Mike's Subs
Jewish Community Foundation of Greater MetroWest NJ
John A. Kern Legacy Fund
Johnson & Johnson
Johnson Charitable Gift Fund
Johnson Lambert
Josey Baker Bread
Kate Kennedy PT
Katie's Kids
Kelsey Trust
Keurig Dr Pepper
Khol's
KSV
Lake Champlain Chocolates
Langrock Sperry & Wool
Larkin Realty
Laura Kate Winterbottom Memorial Fund
Lawson's Finest Liquids
Leonardo's Pizza
LGBTQ+ Fund of Vermont
Living Well Center for Integrative Health
Love & Blessings
Lucy Downing Nisbet Charitable Trust
Lund
M&T Bank
The M&T Charitable Foundation
Main Street Landing
Marvell Technology
MassMutual
McClure Legacy Fund
McFarland Johnson
McSoley McCoy & Co.
MGN Family Foundation
Microsoft
Mirabelles Bakery
Miracle Messages
Montstream Studio
Morgan Stanley GIFT
Mother Child World Organization
Mount Mansfield Union High School
The Mountain Mamas
MSK Attorneys
National Life Group
National Life Group Foundation
National Philanthropic Trust
NBT Bank
NDI
Network for Good
New England Floor Covering
New King Church
The New York Community Trust
Nora's Pickles
NorthCountry Federal Credit Union
Northeast Delta Dental
Northern Trust Charitable Giving Program
Northfield Savings Bank
Northwest Vermont REALTOR® Association
NRG Energy
O'Briens Aveda Institute
Oh My Dog VT
Ohavi Zedek Synagogue
Open Approach
Order of the Eastern Star
P&P Septic
Pacto Medical
PagerDuty
PayPal Giving Fund
Pinewood Manor Homeowners Association
Pivot Energy
Place Creative Company
Planned Parenthood
Pomerleau Family Foundation
Prolytix
Propeller Media Works
Queen City Development Group
Queen City Printers
Raymond James Charitable Endowment Fund
RCF Giving Fund
Red Hat
Redstone Commercial Group
Ren
Renaissance Charitable Foundation
Residence at Shelburne Bay
ReSOURCE
Rhino Foods
Richmond Congregational Church
Robert Craig Films
Robert Craig Films Foundation
Rock Point School
Rotary Club of Essex
RTX Corporation
RunVermont
Ruth and Friends
Saint Michael's College
- Athletics
- Edmundite Community
- MOVE
- Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

Salesforce
Sambatucada
San Antonio Area Foundation
SB Signs
The Scoop
SEI Giving Fund
Sensata Technologies
Shalom Shuk Thrift Store
Shelburne Farms
Shelburne United Methodist Church
Sherpa Foods
The Shop
Sisters of Anarchy Ice Cream
Smarty Pants
Spare Time Entertainment
Spark Studios
Special Olympics
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
St. Catherine of Siena Church
St. James Episcopal Church
St. John Vianney Church
St. Pius X Church
Star 92.9
Starbucks
State of Vermont
Stephen Mease Photography
Stone Underground Construction
Sugarsnap
SWAE Skin Dermatology
Sweeney DesignBuild
Switchback Brewing Co.
SymQuest
Synopsys
T Rugg's Tavern
T.S. Peck Insurance
TD Bank
TD Charitable Foundation
Temple Sinai
Temple Sinai Sisterhood
Texas Roadhouse
Thrivent Financial
TIFF Investment Management
Toast.org
Town Fair Tire Foundation
Town of Hinesburg
Town of Jericho
Town of Richmond
Town of Underhill
Town of Westford
Town of Williston
The Trade Desk
Training, Marketing & Technology
Trio Salon & Spa
True Path Wellness
Trust Company of Vermont
The Turning Point Center of Chittenden County
Twincraft
U.S. Charitable Gift Trust
United Church of Colchester
United Way of Northwest Vermont
United Way Suncoast
UnitedHealth Group
The University of Vermont
- Department of Student Life
- UVM Rescue

The University of Vermont Medical Center
- Division of Infectious Diseases
- Larner College of Medicine

Vanguard Charitable
Vermont Agency Foundation
Vermont Catholic Community Foundation
Vermont Comedy Club
Vermont Community Foundation
Vermont Foodbank
Vermont Lake Monsters
Vermont Queer Legal Professionals
Vermont Smoke & Cure
Vermont Soap
Vermont Tent Company
Vermont Timber Works
Vermont Zen Center
Vermont's Original Bag Balm
VGS
VtSHARES
Walmart Spark Good
WCAX-TV
Williston Federated Church
Wilmington Trust N.A.
The Windham Foundation
Winooski Waves
WOKO/WJOY Radio
Women of the Williston Federated Church
Women of UVM
WowToyz
YourCause
Zinnia
Zumiez Foundation

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Order your COTS Holiday Cards Now

This holiday season, consider giving the gift of warmth and shelter through our holiday card sale.

This year's COTS holiday card is a beautiful winter scene on the Winooski River of frozen waterfalls painted in purples and blues by local artist Katharine Montstream with the greeting: "Wishing you warmth, connection, and joy this holiday season."

Our cards also include this message: "A generous donation has been made to COTS in your name. This gift of warmth and shelter will help families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness make it through the harsh winter months."

A volunteer provides additional personalized messages and signatures. COTS will mail cards to you or directly to your list! There is a suggested $15 donation per card.

Please place orders by December 15th to ensure delivery before the holiday.

To order: Contact Gillian at (802) 864-7402, Ext. 210 or gilliant@cotsonline.org.

