A Year in Review:

Six Maine Hunger Dialogue Mini-Grant Summaries
Making a Difference

Southern Maine Community College:

During the 2012 school year, Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) officials and Honors Society Phi Theta Kappa members circulated a survey to the student body and found that one in six students go without nutritional food for themselves and their families. In response, the Captain’s Cupboard food pantry opened its doors in November 2013 and serves approximately 20-30 clients by distributing a few hundred pounds of food per week. Last year, Captain’s Cupboard applied for and was awarded a $500 mini-grant to purchase a refrigerator and freezer in order to offer fresher perishable foods. Plans are in the works to establish a sister cupboard on SMCC’s Brunswick campus to serve Brunswick clients locally.

University of Maine Augusta, Bangor Campus:

The vision of students and staff from the Bangor Campus of UMA was to open a campus-based food pantry. To aid in this potential project, student campus visionaries invited Good Shepherd Food Bank (GSFB) this past spring to participate in a community food project called Rock the Truck. On April 7, UMA students and their staff advisor distributed 953 pounds of food to 130 households located within half an hour’s drive to campus. Rock the Truck was such a success GSFB asked to return this fall with double the food to distribute.

University of Maine, Orono:

September 2014 saw the state’s first-ever edible park break ground at Manna Ministries in Bangor. Once home to a community farm, the land will once again be used to provide native fruits, herbs and nuts to local citizens. Students from UMaine helped initiate the Bangor Edible Park and the mini-grant was used to help develop their website http://bangorediblepark.squarespace.com/ as a capacity building measure.
**University of New England:**

In February 2015, students from the University of New England (UNE) established a national chapter of the Food Recovery Program (FRP). Student volunteers recovered over 1500 pounds of food from three UNE dining halls during the first semester of operation and then donated the food to the Biddeford food pantry, Bon Appetite. Together, with the help of the UNE AmeriCorps VISTA member, students also expanded a six-plot community garden. Faculty, staff and students planted flowers and vegetables for members of the university community. A portion of the garden was also used to grow fresh vegetables and then donated to Bon Appetite using the FRP.

**University of Southern Maine - Lewiston-Auburn College:**

The USM LAC Resource Hub was established several years ago and then revitalized this past year with funds provided by the Hunger Dialogue. The resource hub provides meals, clothes and personal hygiene items for students as needed. The hub is located against the back wall of the student lounge.

**Mount Ararat High School:**

Since 2007, Mount Ararat high school students from the National Honors Society and Interact Club join together in their yearly food drive “Cram the Van.” Members of the community are asked to help the two clubs fill both a van and a bus with nonperishable food items and then donate proceeds to the Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program. Mount Ararat high School students who attended the 2014 Hunger Dialogue applied for a mini-grant to sponsor a bake sale called “Let’s get ready to crumble.” Proceeds from the bake sale supported “Cram the Van.” In addition to raising funds for the Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program, students participated in a pack-out event with Bates College students at a local church, packing more than 10,000 mac and cheese meals for local food banks.