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Local meals program in Chelsea celebrates its one millionth meal delivered during the pandemic

Governor Baker commemorates significant milestone

CHELSEA, MA -- The Shah Family Foundation, in partnership with Stock Pot Malden and the YMCA of Greater Boston, today commemorated the millionth meal served to the Chelsea community through the Local Lunchbox program. Local Lunchbox is a program to maximize federal food funding by cooking healthy, locally-produced meals in the community, by the community, and for the community.

“The extreme circumstances of the Covid-19 crisis served for all of us as the mother of invention,” said Jill Shah, President of the Shah Family Foundation. “As unemployment skyrocketed and schools closed, we faced both unprecedented levels of food insecurity and increased federal funding to address it. Through Local Lunchbox, we leveraged that funding to create a new food distribution model – one that puts the money back into the local economy by using locally-produced foods to cook culturally-relevant meals and create dozens of local jobs. It’s inspiring to see how this program has taken off over the past year as we mark our millionth meal, and we’re looking forward to expanding this model across Massachusetts.”

To commemorate the millionth meal, Governor Charlie Baker and First Lady Lauren Baker today toured the meal prep site at Stock Pot Malden and spoke with several of the workers employed through this program.

“Our administration is grateful to the Shah Family Foundation for its commitment to providing children and their families with healthy, reliable and locally sourced meals,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “During this challenging year, programs like Local Lunchbox have been invaluable tools in addressing food insecurity and instability for families throughout the Commonwealth, and we are glad to celebrate its millionth meal prepared.”

As the Local Lunchbox program reaches this milestone, today the Shah Family Foundation also unveiled a new resource – LocalLunchbox.org – for other communities interested in participating in the program. Already, the program has expanded to Fall River, Lowell, New Bedford, and Wareham.

More information about the Local Lunchbox program can be found at LocalLunchbox.org.

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