



## For Immediate Release

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## Mayors Pledge to Help End Senior Hunger by 2020

### Meals On Wheels Leads Area Initiative through Mayors for Meals

Rochester, NY – Visiting Nurse Meals On Wheels (MOW) and the American Red Cross (ARC), Greater Rochester Chapter, will be hosting area mayors and town supervisors at the Mayors For Meals Day Kick-off Breakfast on Wednesday, March 24, from 10 to 11:15 a.m. at the ARC at 50 Prince St.

Mayors/town supervisors are in an excellent position to assist meal delivery programs in addressing a serious problem currently plaguing communities across the United States – senior hunger. This year, representatives have been asked to **Take the Pledge** to help end senior hunger by 2020 “so no senior goes hungry®.” Locally that means committing to attend the Mayors for Meals Kick-off Breakfast, deliver meals to town residents if possible, and pledging further to assist in helping raise awareness of the issue.

The Meals On Wheels Association of America (MOWAA), who created the National “March For Meals” campaign of which Mayors for Meals is a component, sites two reports – *Senior Hunger in the United States: Differences across States and Rural and Urban Areas* and *The Causes, Consequences and Future of Senior Hunger in America* – that updates the findings on the extent and distribution of senior hunger across the nation using data from 2001-2007. As of 2007, there were nearly 6 million seniors facing the threat of hunger. MOWAA has set a goal to match that number – with 6 million people who are willing to stand up and pledge to do what it takes to end senior hunger by 2020. **New York State is ranked 28<sup>th</sup>** in the study.

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MOW has worked for 52 years in the Rochester community to address the nutritional needs of the ill, frail, homebound and elderly. This year marks the fourth year MOW has hosted Mayors for Meals, held annually with the intent to increase public awareness, recruit new volunteers, and increase local fundraising. In March 2009, the Mayors For Meals campaign was a major success, drawing more than 1,550 U.S. and Canadian mayors to deliver meals on “**Mayors For Meals**” Day. MOW is also asking the Greater Rochester community to Take the Pledge; for more go to <http://www.mowaa.org/pledge>

***About Meals On Wheels***

VNS established the Meals On Wheels program, the third oldest in the United States, in 1958 and has since served nearly 10 million meals throughout Monroe County. In collaboration with the American Red Cross, Greater Rochester Chapter, MOW ensures that more than 2,000 individuals receive 350,000 meals per year. The program is ranked among the top 2 per cent of programs in the U.S., accredited by the Meals On Wheels Association of America. Not just a meal delivery service, the program has evolved into a complete nutrition resource for the community, expanding its reach through innovative programs and partnerships with other community service organizations. For more information on receiving meals, please call 585-787-8397; to volunteer, please call 585-787-TEAM (8326) or visit [www.vnsnet.com](http://www.vnsnet.com).

***Editor’s Note:*** *New this year: Join **Joel Seligman**, President of the University of Rochester, and **Peter Carpino**, President of the United Way, in their efforts to raise awareness of senior hunger and to encourage action on the part of the local community.*

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