



## Open Pantry hosted 400+ for Thanksgiving dinner

### Nearly 100 volunteers helped make meal possible

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SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (WWLP) – A Thanksgiving Day tradition in Springfield continued Thursday. Open Pantry Community Services brought happiness to hundreds of homeless, hungry, and lonely people in our area.

Nearly 100 volunteers served a traditional turkey dinner to more than 400 men, women, and children in the cafeteria of the High School of Commerce in Springfield. Many of those people are homeless, and appreciate the spirit behind this holiday gathering.

Eleizer Rosario, who is homeless, told 22News that without the volunteers' help, he wouldn't have a thanksgiving.

“I would really do nothing, nothing at all. It's good what they're doing, help bringing a lot of people together, and the homeless people who don't have families to get together,” Rosario said.

Families also attended the holiday dinner. Ruth Gonzalez brought her two children and their grandmother to share the camaraderie.

“We feel welcome here, they treat us very nice each year,” Gonzalez said.

It has been more than 30 years since the Open Pantry began its tradition of serving holiday meals to those in need. In addition to Thanksgiving Day, hundreds come to the Commerce cafeteria for a joyful gathering on Christmas, and then again on Easter Sunday.