



DINNERS  
— WITH —  
L O V E

Dear Prospective Board Member,

Thank you for considering a role as a board member for Dinners With Love (DWL), a growing network of hospice agencies, restaurants, and volunteers who bring food and comfort to hospice patients and their families.

Our organization started in Brandon, Vermont, and has grown to include many counties in Vermont, including Addison, Bennington, Chittenden, Essex, Grand Isle, Orleans, and Rutland. Our vision is to have our program operating in as many hospice agencies throughout the United States as possible.

As a part-time executive director, I rely on the Board of Directors to play valuable roles for the organization. Board members are advisors, ambassadors, and advocates. As advisors, they bring their knowledge, experience, and skills to the table to help inform the work of the Executive Director. As ambassadors, our board members represent Dinners With Love to stakeholders. And as advocates, they help Dinners With Love to identify and secure the financial resources and partnerships necessary to advance our mission.

I have included here additional information about Dinners With Love: stories of impact, board roles and responsibilities, our annual meeting agenda, as well as the development activities we engage in to support and advance our mission. For more information, please visit us at [dinnerwithlove.org](http://dinnerwithlove.org).

We have delivered more than 14,000 meals in the last decade. That's hundreds of people and their caregivers that were able to enjoy delicious food and the support of their community during a difficult time.

If you are as moved as I am by the impact we've had and think you would like to help us grow our organization as a board member, please contact me to arrange a meeting. I am happy to answer your questions and provide you with all the information you need to make a decision that is right for you.

With gratitude,  
**Sarah M. Audet**  
Executive Director

# Stories of Impact

## **Glynis Jordan, Daughter of Hospice Patient**

“I remember this as vividly as if it were yesterday. I tried to call my mom as often as possible between my visits to see her in her last months. The miles between us were very difficult - she was at home in Brandon, I was in North Carolina. The evening after she had received her first Dinners With Love, the joy that came through the phone was palpable! Throughout her illness she had routinely pushed away help, yet somehow the Dinners With Love program had been able to enter her life. Perhaps she had intuitively understood the positive and lasting affect it would have on both of us, or perhaps it was the idea of delicious food. It was both! The meals provided normalcy of good food, which she was no longer able to make, thus she always ate with relish. Dad did too! But almost as importantly it also brought love and care into her home by the anticipation of each delivery. Every time I would call her after that first delivery, the love I heard was truly joyful to hear. Mom passed in 2005, and Dinners With Love is still fresh in my mind. So much so, whenever I can spare a few dollars I send it their way. They are truly angels in an otherwise dark world of a loved one passing.”

## **Francie Coloutti, Recipient/Daughter of Hospice Patient**

“I’ve been a full-time caregiver for five years for my mom. To know this wonderful service is available is so comforting and heartwarming. Unless you’ve been a caregiver, you really can’t imagine how stressful it is. To realize that one night a week, a restaurant will cook a meal and a volunteer will deliver it to families of Hospice, well—it just overwhelms me.”

## **Tami, Volunteer Delivery Driver**

“I enjoy delivering meals for Dinners With Love because I feel like I get to bring a little joy with each meal delivered. I know that the client and caregiver are going through a difficult time, and being able to bring them a little relief is a wonderful feeling.”

## **Nathan Johnson, Owner of Lil’ Britain Fish & Chip Shop**

“The thing that really has me hooked on Dinners With Love is knowing someone at this stage of life said, ‘You know, I would really like a meal from Lil’ Britain tonight.’ Every time you place an order, I am humbled and honored some chose Lil’ Britain. It is a privilege to cook for your patients.”

## **Molly Bull, MSW, BAYADA Hospice**

“Even if a patient can only take ‘just a bite’ of food, it makes all the difference.”

## **Frank Finnerty, Board Member, Volunteer Delivery Driver**

“The patients tell me how much they appreciate Dinners with Love, how it brightens their day. If it weren’t for these meals, some of them would eat the same thing every day. The patients are grateful for everything. They enjoy seeing people.”

# Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities

## **Mission**

Dinners With Love partners hospice agencies with local restaurants to care for hospice patients and their families by providing free, delivered meals.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to have successful Dinners With Love programs operating in as many hospice agencies in the United States as possible.

## **Expectations of the Board as a Whole**

The Board of Directors has a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure that the organization does the best work possible in pursuit of its goals. The board believes in the purpose, mission, and vision of the organization, and acts responsibly and prudently as its steward.

While the Dinners With Love Executive Director leads the day-to-day operations, the Board-Executive Director relationship is a partnership. The appropriate involvement of the board is both critical and expected.

To this end, specific board member responsibilities include:

## **Leadership, governance, and oversight**

- Following the organization's bylaws, policies, and board resolutions;
- Serving as a trusted advisor to the Executive Director as s/he implements the organization's strategic plan;
- Reviewing outcomes and metrics created by the organization for evaluating its impact, and regularly measuring its performance and effectiveness using those metrics;
- Approving the organization's annual budget, audit reports, and material business decisions;
- Being informed of, and meeting all, legal and fiduciary responsibilities;
- Contributing to an annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director;
- Assisting the Executive Director and Board Chair in identifying and recruiting other board members;
- And ensuring the organization's commitment to a diverse board that reflects the communities it serves.

## **Development and fundraising**

- Representing Dinners With Love to stakeholders, and serving as active advocates and ambassadors for the organization;
- Engaging in identifying and securing the financial resources and partnerships necessary for the organization to advance its mission;
- Leveraging connections, networks, and resources to develop collective action to fully achieve the organization's mission;
- And making an annual financial contribution in an amount that is personally meaningful.

## **Attendance and engagement**

- Attending at least 75% of board meetings, committee meetings, and special events;
- Reading meeting materials in advance and actively contributing to discussions;

- And serving actively on at least one standing committee.

**Integrity**

- Signing an annual conflict-of-interest disclosure and updating it during the year if necessary, as well as disclosing potential conflicts before meetings and actual conflicts during meetings;
- And maintaining confidentiality about all internal matters of the organization.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received and read, and understand, the roles and responsibilities described above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
President, Board of Directors      Date

# Annual Board Meeting Agenda

The annual board meeting agenda ensures that we discuss the right things at the right times. Our meetings include topics beyond what is described here, but we know these will come up each year.

<b>January</b>	Year in Review: Successes, Challenges, Lessons Learned
	Presentation of Annual Goals for Board and Staff
	Key Success Metrics for the Year
<b>February</b>	Annual Fundraising Event: Update from Planning Committee/Board Member Roles During Event
<b>March</b>	Annual Fundraising Event: Update from Planning Committee/Prospects/Preparing for Post-Event Follow-up with Attendees
<b>April</b>	Debrief of Annual Fundraising Event
<b>May</b>	Program Presentation
<b>June</b>	Mid-Year Budget vs Actual
<b>July</b>	Board Performance Review
	Review Composition Matrix and Goals for Recruitment
<b>August</b>	Big Focus on Fundraising with Year-End Ahead
	New Board Member Recruitment Update
<b>September</b>	New Board Member Recruitment Update
<b>October</b>	Annual Meeting
	Officer and New Member Elections
	Goals for the Upcoming Year
	Tee Up Key Elements of Next Year's Budget for Discussion
<b>November</b>	Budget Presentation Along with Annual Goals for the Organization that Tie to the Budget
	Fundraising Plan for Next Year
	Executive Director Performance Review vis a vis Annual Goals, Budget, and Fundraising Plan
	Staff & Board Celebration (After Annual Retreat)
<b>December</b>	December Fundraising Push
	Update on ED Performance Review

# Dinners With Love

## 2019-2020 Menu of Opportunities

This is an **all-you-can-eat** menu!  
Please choose as many items as you like,  
**but at least one from each category.**

### AMUSE BOUCHE

The house specialty. Everyone gets this one!

- Make an annual gift to Dinners With Love** in an amount that is meaningful to you. It should be one of your top three charitable priorities for the year.

### APPETIZERS

- Attend and mingle** with donors at Comfort Food for a Cause
- Provide names** of donor prospects and help strategize on how to approach them
- Send personal invitations** to Comfort Food for a Cause
- Write personal notes** on fundraising appeals and mailings
- Make thank-you calls** to donors

### ENTREES

- Help recruit** new members of the Board of Directors
- Assist the Executive Director** with researching and writing grant proposals
- Make mid-year or year-end phone calls** to current donors
- Send personal letters** to lapsed donors
- Accompany the Executive Director** on a visit to a donor or a corporate partner
- Host** a Dinners With Love house party

### DESSERTS

- Collect** other organizations' annual reports, donor lists and programs
- Acquire silent auction/raffle items** for Comfort Food for a Cause
- Write** handwritten thank-you notes to donors