Gowrie Group Launches Matching Challenge with $30,000 Donation to Benefit The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries. 2016 Challenge Aims to Raise More than $125,000.

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Every year between Thanksgiving and New Years, Gowrie Group, Connecticut's largest independent insurance agency, reaches out to the community to help raise funds to feed the hungry through the Gowrie Challenge. The campaign, now in its 13th year, found its inspiration years ago when Carter Gowrie, CEO of Gowrie Group, volunteered for The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries (SSKP) alongside his five children when they were teenagers. That desire to give back to the community in a meaningful way has only grown, resulting in Gowrie Group's matching gift campaign that in 12 years has raised over 1 million dollars ($1,000,000) for SSKP.

Since 1989 SSKP has provided food and fellowship to neighbors in need who reside in Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Lyme, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Madison, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, and Westbrook. Last year they served over 8,000 residents, providing enough food for over 1 million meals. In 2016 the need has continued to rise, with the number of meals distributed increasing by 7% so far this year.

In response to this continued need, Gowrie Group is launching their 13th annual matching challenge with a $30,000 donation to The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries. Five local companies - The Safety Zone, LC Doane Company, Tower Labs, Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale, and BrandTech Scientific – are providing an additional $23,000 in matching funds.

Gowrie Group is once again challenging the community of local businesses and friends to help them meet and exceed an ambitious goal - raising $125,000. The 2016 Gowrie Group Challenge runs from November 15th to December 31st.

Carter Gowrie, CEO of Gowrie Group said "We are very proud that over the past 12 years our community of clients, local business and friends have come together to raise more than $1,000,000 to benefit the SSKP through our annual Gowrie Group Challenge. We look forward to continuing to work together to support those in need along our shoreline."

"The Gowrie Challenge is a hope filled campaign; hope filled because each year, so many generous community members come together to care for those in need by donating funds that are matched by

Photo: Gowrie Group presenting the donation/check from the 2015 Gowrie Challenge to The Shoreline Soup Kitchen & Pantries.
Gowrie Group and our Partner sponsors” said Patty Dowling, SSKP Executive Director. “These funds are used by the SSKP to purchase food that is distributed to our guests. Today, so many of our neighbors visit weekly pantries and daily meal sites and feel hope that their families will have enough nutritious food to eat. It is a time of hope, and I thank each and every person who donates, because you are making a difference in the lives of those in need.”

Throughout the year, Gowrie Group and its employees donate time and services to soup kitchens and pantries across New England. Each summer, Gowrie employees prepare and serve a lunch at an SSKP meal site in Old Saybrook, CT. Before the holidays, Gowrie employees host canned food drives at each office location – Westbrook CT, Darien CT, Newport RI, Marshfield MA, Annapolis MD, Boston MA, and Manchester NH – and donate the collected goods to local entities. Employees and their families also volunteer regularly at a variety of food pantries and meal service locations across the region.

A special thank you to our 2016 Gowrie Challenge partner and media sponsors: The Safety Zone, LC Doane Company, Tower Labs, Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale, and BrandTech Scientific. Media Sponsors: Shore Publishing and WLIS/WMRD

Donations can be made online at www.shorelinesoupkitchens.org; click the “Donate” button and select “Gowrie Challenge.”

Donations by mail should be sent to: The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries, Attn: Gowrie Group Challenge, P.O. Box 804, Essex, Connecticut 06426.

Two special events will benefit Gowrie Group’s Shoreline Soup Kitchen Challenge.
- **Black Friday Benefit Concert.** Nov 25th at The Kate in Old Saybrook. Tickets $25, [online](#) or 877-503-1286
- **Dancing to End Hunger.** Dec. 3rd and 4th, a ballet performance of “Ahavah: The Story of Christmas,” at Morgan School in Clinton. Tickets $12-$22, [online](#) or 860-663-2069.

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The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries. Since 1989, providing food and fellowship to those in need in the towns of Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Lyme, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Madison, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, and Westbrook. [www.shorelinesoupkitchens.org](http://www.shorelinesoupkitchens.org)