Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center

Since 1922

November 20, 2026

A very busy Thursday

As my team and I worked on this week's newsletter on Thursday, we remarked on what an incredibly busy day it was at the MLK. Here's a list of what was happening simultaneously at 11:00 a.m. yesterday:

- The ***Rhode Island Afterschool Network*** was holding a professional development apprenticeship session for education staff from the MLK and other organizations.
- Our kitchen team was busy cleaning up after Breakfast and preparing lunch to be served at 11:30.
- Produce 2 the People was in full swing on the front porch.
- Preschoolers were learning and playing in the Kids Wonder Lab.
- The Community Programs team was receiving toy donations for Santa's Workshop.
- The Development team was capturing photos, writing content ... and raising money.
- Our Finance and Operations team was keeping all the systems running.
- The Hunger Services team was receiving food drives and deliveries while simultaneously holding Thanksgiving distribution in the Community Room with hundreds of families choosing a turkey and all the ingredients to prepare the holiday feast.
- Food 2 Friends groceries for homebound seniors were being bagged by volunteers who were everywhere it seemed – in the kitchen, in the pantry, in the lobby, in the community room.

I wish I could bottle the energy of the Center and email it to you!

Everything we do happens because of our amazing community of supporters.

Thank you for all you do to make the MLK such a special place,



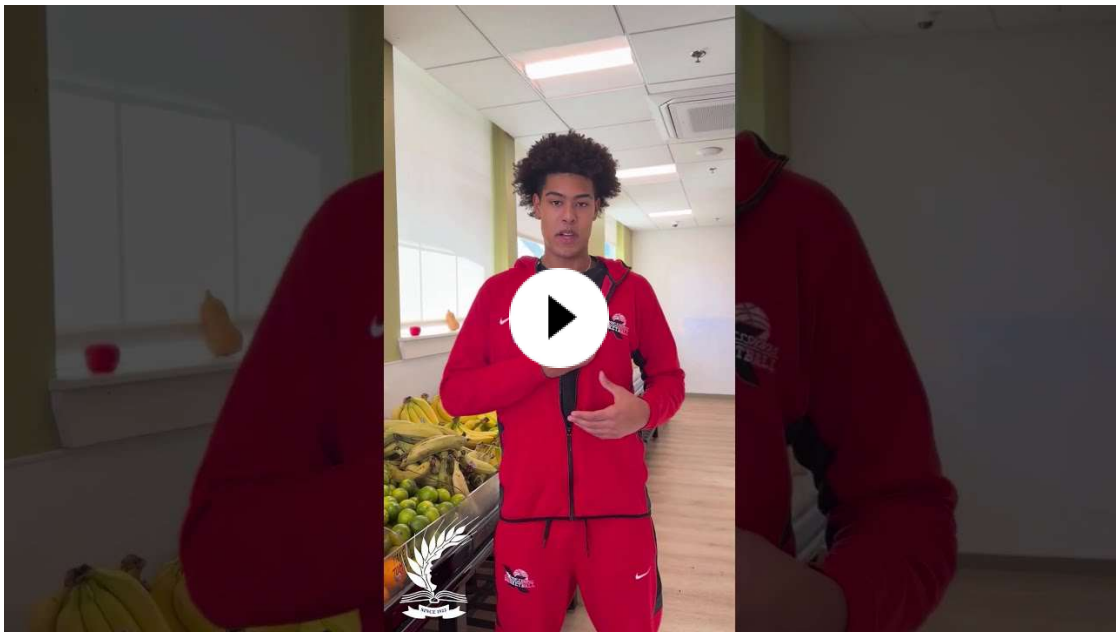
A special gift from Chance Finlayson

Chance Finlayson is a sophomore at ***St. George's School*** with an exciting basketball career ahead of him. With NCAA Division I offers already on the table, he wants to use his platform to support the community he calls home.

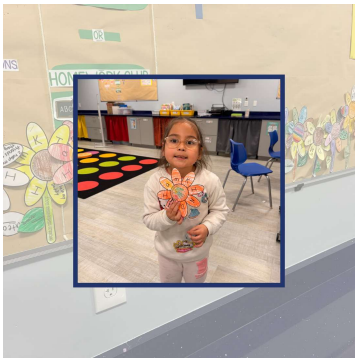
Chance made a donation to the MLK in support of our Thanksgiving meal program, helping to ensure his friends and neighbors in Newport County have turkeys on their dinner tables. He volunteered at Thanksgiving distribution this week, being present and active with those his donation supports.

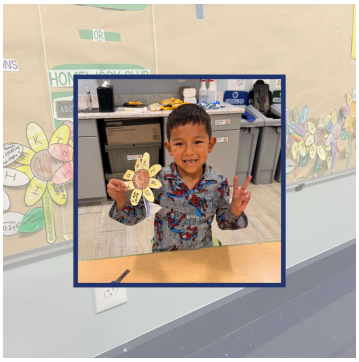
He brought a group of Thompson Middle School students with him, serving as a role model for his younger friends and encouraging them to support their community in Newport County as well. (They are pictured below with Chance at the bottom of this newsletter!)

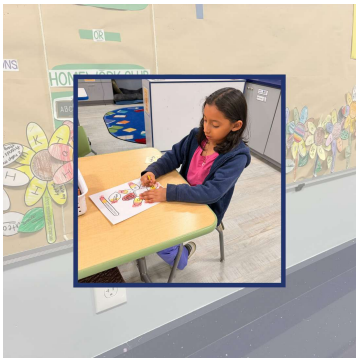
We are so proud of Chance and grateful to have dedicated young friends like him to represent Newport County. Check out the video below to see why he's passionate about giving back. We can't wait to see where his career takes him next!



After School students celebrate World Kindness Day









"I am safe," "I share with my friends," and *"I give hugs to people I love"* are just a few of the traits our After School students took pride in during their ***World Kindness Day*** activity.

Last week, our After School students marked the day by creating a kindness garden of flowers they designed stating the kind things they do each day. Every act of kindness has a ripple effect, don't you agree?

A moment that will make you smile



Shout-out to our new friend AJ, who drives for ***UPS***. He delivered a donation of three heavy boxes of ***Bombas*** socks. Instead of leaving them at our receiving dock, he asked us where the boxes needed to go and took them across the Center, up the elevator, and to the other side of the building to store them.

AJ told us, *"Some people think this job is just delivering packages. I think I am providing a service for our customers."* UPS, we hope you know what a gem you have in AJ!

We have a short week next week!

The Center will be closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 26, and Friday, November 27.

We hope everyone enjoys the holiday with their families, and we will see you for regularly scheduled programming on Monday, November 30.





Fun fact about our friends from ***Russell Morin Catering and Events***:

The family-owned company is one of the longest-established hospitality businesses in the country.

With 115 years of history, the Morin family has been managing the organization for four generations.

We are grateful to be a part of their rich legacy of community commitment.





Thanks to them, our homebound friends enrolled in Food 2 Friends will enjoy delicious holiday meals for both Thanksgiving and Christmas.

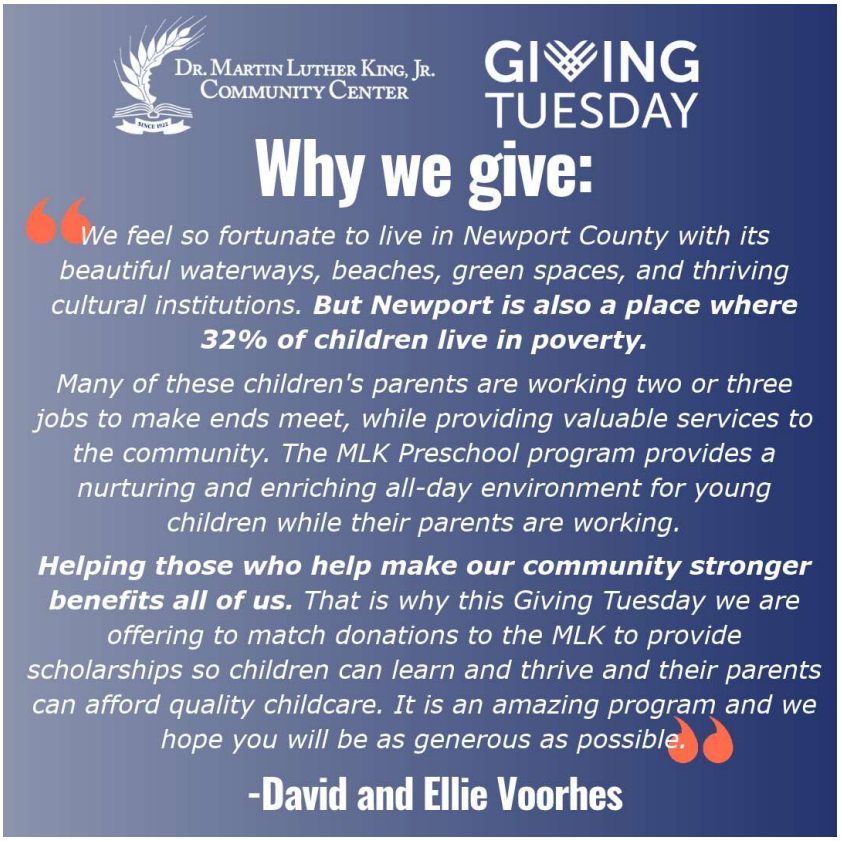
This week, the team from Russell Morin prepared and delivered frozen meals of turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and carrots, all ready to heat.

Everyone deserves a delicious dinner during the holidays!

Save the date to double your impact for MLK Preschool

Tuesday, December 1 is ***GivingTuesday*** and this year your gift will support our community's littlest learners and their working parents with our ***Preschool program***. Thanks to our MLK Super Friends, David and Ellie Voorhes, **your impact will be doubled with a dollar-for-dollar match**

(up to $20,000). David and Ellie told us a little bit about what inspired them to support our Preschool program. Read below and join them in supporting MLK Preschool on GivingTuesday.



CharterCare helps ensure fresh produce for Newport County

Fresh fruits and vegetables are a crucial part of a healthy diet. Our Produce to the People program provides free, fresh produce in six locations throughout Newport County every week, thanks to the generous support of funders like ***CharterCare Foundation***. Last year, we distributed 30% more fresh produce. Thank you for helping us make healthy and nutritious food accessible for people in Newport County.



Thanksgiving comes early at the MLK, Thanks to McGrath's Clambakes and Catering

Thanksgiving is coming early to Newport County with a special holiday lunch.

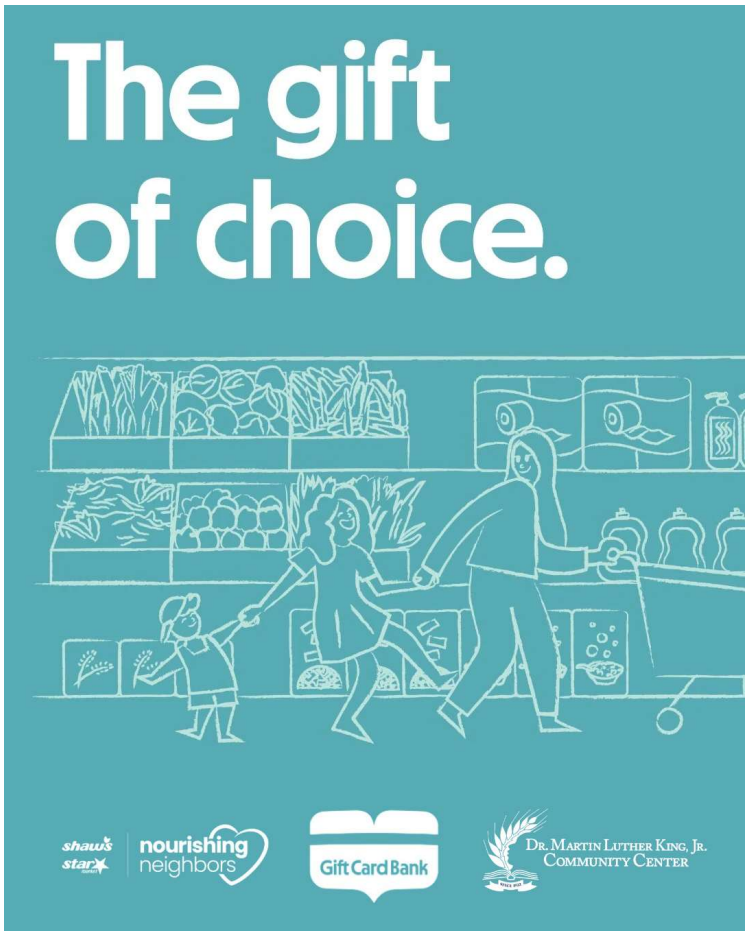
Join us Tuesday, November 24, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for a traditional Thanksgiving meal donated, prepared, and served by our amazing friends from ***McGrath's Clambakes & Catering***.

Our mouths are already watering. We can't wait to see you there!





The Gift of Choice



We are grateful to receive a grant from the Shaw's and Star Market Foundation and Gift Card Bank to benefit our Holiday Meal Help program.

The holidays are a time of family traditions, but everyone is different.

Gift cards give the families we serve the dignity and flexibility of choice, empowering them to shop for the holiday meals they look forward to each year.

If this sounds like an initiative you want to be a part of, you can donate at the register at our local ***Shaw's Supermarket in Middletown*** to support Newport County families during the holidays.

Together, we make a difference.

Beep! Beep! Here Comes the Mobile Food Pantry!



The Mobile Food Pantry is coming your way! Here are next week's Mobile Food Pantry Locations:

Tuesday 11/24/2026:

- West House, 417 Forest Ave. Middletown RI 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
  - Residents Only
- Lucy's Hearth, 19 Valley Rd. Middletown RI 1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
  - *Residents Only*

All are welcome. You do not need to reside in the neighborhood to use the Mobile Food Pantry, ***unless otherwise advised****. Please remember to bring your reusable bags.*

Download Our Monthly Calendars

Download November Community Programs Calendar in English

Descargar Calendario de Programas Communitarios de Noviembre en Español

Download November Hunger Relief Calendar in English

Descargar Calendario de Combatir Del Hambre de Noviembre en Español

Our Contact Information
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