

Subaru Shares the Love with \$2,500 grant

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MENTOR - The Lake County Council on Aging has been awarded a \$2,500 grant from the Meals on Wheels Association of America (MOWAA) thanks to Subaru of America. These dollars will help subsidize meal costs and go directly to help feed homebound seniors in Lake County.

During the 2013 "Share the Love" holiday campaign, Subaru donated \$250 to five different national charities for each new car purchased or leased. The Meals on Wheels Association of America was one of these charities and in turn awarded this "Share the

Love" grant to local Meals on Wheels programs. The Lake County Council on Aging was regionally selected.

"I am humbled by your decision to choose us as the beneficiary of this year's grant. The number of seniors aging in place, accessing nutritional services through the Council on Aging and allowing them to stay in their homes is on the rise. Senior hunger is a fact in Lake County," said Joe Tomsick, CEO of the Lake County Council on Aging.

Between 2012 and 2013, the agency reported an increase of 20 percent in the number of homebound se-

niors participating in the Meals on Wheels program. Federal funding for the program however has actually decreased by 40 percent since 2011.

"This grant will help offset shortages our agency now faces due to cuts in federal, state and local funding. We thank our partners for considering the needs of serving Lake County seniors," Tomsick said.

Designed to foster partnerships between local Meals on Wheels programs and Subaru dealerships, the Council on Aging collaborated with Adventure Subaru of Painesville to help

secure the grant award. The program also included a "Stuff the Trunk" challenge to collect canned goods and raise funds, and employees had the opportunity to deliver meals to homebound seniors.

In 2013, the Council on Aging provided more than 153,000 home-delivered meals to participants striving to remain independent in their homes throughout Lake County. Annually, more than 500 volunteers play a role in the delivery process and provide a daily well-check on the seniors, reporting any health and environmental changes or crises they may observe.