

St. Louis Bar raises \$50K for hungry families amid record government shutdown

[Kallie Cox](#)/November 18, 2025



Volunteers with Meals on Wheels accept a check for \$25,000 from BAMSL's Attorneys Against Hunger program, alongside Jim Bennett of Dowd Bennett. The firm donated \$50,000 to BAMSL resulting in funds to Meals on Wheels as well as Operation Food Search. (Photo: Kallie Cox)

The Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, with a donation from Dowd Bennett, has given \$50,000 to both [Meals on Wheels](#) and [Operation Food Search](#), to feed hungry families in St. Louis.

The donation was split evenly between the two groups, and [BAMSL's Attorneys Against Hunger](#) committee also held a food drive collecting non-perishable meals, cleaning supplies and personal care items for those struggling in the wake of the Federal government's record shutdown.

On Nov. 17, BAMSL's leadership, representatives from Meals on Wheels and Operation Food Search and Jim Bennett, a partner with Dowd Bennett, gathered to present a "big check" to each organization.

Bennett said his firm decided to make the donation after seeing how hard the community was hit with a pause in [SNAP benefits](#) amid the shutdown.

"As a firm we're committed to, the (Attorneys) Against Hunger program has been important to us from the very beginning, and so we decided to step up this year because of the extra need," Bennett said.

Carol Davidson, the chair of BAMSL's Attorneys Against Hunger committee, said she witnessed the long line of cars coming through a food distribution event just last week, and recognizes that often the food runs out before the cars do.

"I can't imagine, I think sometimes the SNAP benefits don't even stretch the entire month. And so, you get towards the end of the month and it's already difficult, and then when they're cut off, that's really challenging," Davidson said. "So, yeah, the need is great, always, but especially now, with the uncertainty and the delay for."

While the shutdown exasperated the uncertainty, the need for food support in St. Louis is ever-present, Davidson said. BAMSL President Untress Quinn said supporting the community is what attorneys are meant to do.

"This is part of what we do as a legal community. We're lawyers, but we're also human," Quinn said. "This is humanity, right? And we want to be a huge part of the community and help those who are less fortunate and just be a beacon of light."

Mike Foley, director of development with Operation Food Search, said the donation will empower the organization to feed thousands this month.

"We partner with 170 food pantries throughout Missouri and Illinois, serving 25 counties, 14 in Missouri, 11 in Illinois," Foley said. "And so, we're going to be able to take this food and these donations and support about 200,000 people through these donations over the next month."

Foley added that the program saw a 50 percent increase in those needing food during the month of November when SNAP benefits were impacted.

Jane Nix, the president of Meals on Wheels for greater St. Louis, said the donation will subsidize hot and nutritious meals for those in need, which is especially important as the community continues to deal from the impacts of this year's tornado in North County. The North County area is being heavily subsidized by the program because of the damage it wreaked on low-income families and individuals.

Tags: [government shutdown](#), [SNAP benefits](#), [St. Louis Bar Association](#), [food insecurity](#), [Dowd Bennett](#), [Meals on Wheels](#), [BAMSL](#), [Attorneys Against Hunger](#), [Operation Food Search](#), [Administrative Law](#)