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Seniors gain access to Mobile Market

Turtle Creek and Turtle Woods senior housing developments (part of Harborlight Community Partners) are now working with Beverly Bootstraps to provide residents with access to a free, fresh farmers market, called Mobile Market.

Starting in early July, volunteers from Beverly Bootstraps arrive every other Thursday afternoon to set up tents, tables and colorful displays of healthy fruits and vegetables. Residents who have registered for the program can "shop" for produce that is often too costly to purchase on their own.

"The Mobile Market collaborative effort with Beverly Bootstraps fits into our mission in an ideal way," said Andrew DeFranza, executive director of Harborlight Community Partners.

Harborlight Community Partners is the nonprofit manager of both Turtle Creek and Turtle Woods. "It is imperative to us at Harborlight Community Partners that our residents are supported and well-cared for; this initiative to bring nutritious food right to their doorstep is outstanding," said DeFranza. "We are grateful to Beverly Bootstraps for coordinating this effort and making it happen."

Many seniors live on fixed incomes, have limited access to transportation or health issues that constrain their ability to obtain fresh produce. In some instances, elders may have to choose between purchasing food or purchasing their medication, and are often too proud to ask for help.

In an effort to alleviate these hardships, the Mobile Market goes to them.

"The clients are really appreciative and love the concept of fresh fruit and vegetables coming to their front door," said Mallory Moench, a Beverly Bootstraps intern and volunteer.

One resident even sent a thank you note saying "I was so pleased to receive such wonderful fruit and vegetables from your Mobile Market. Thanks for thinking of us. There is nothing like garden fruits and vegetables." Food insecurity for seniors is a growing problem in the United States.

According to the 2013 Spotlight on Senior Hunger Executive Report from Feeding America and National Foundation to End Senior Hunger, "In 2011, almost one in every 12 seniors above the age of 60 in the United States was food insecure. That represents 4.8 million seniors nationwide, which is more than double the number of food insecure seniors in 2001."

Beverly Hospital, a member of Lahey Health, Beverly Housing Authority and OneWorld Boston, a Cummings Foundation affiliate, generously funded this program.



The Beverly Bootstraps Mobile Market brings food to seniors in the Turtle Creek and Turtle Woods senior housing developments. Pictured are volunteers Mark Paluzzi, Zoe Harris, Patrick Gillis and Mallory Moench. COURTESY PHOTO