



**Submitted by:** Allan Reetz, [AReetz@coopfoodstore.com](mailto:AReetz@coopfoodstore.com)

**Company/Organization:** Hanover Co-op Food Stores

**Type of organization:** Business

**Number of Employees:** 360

**Category:** Community

**Challenge or Opportunity:** When one thinks of Dartmouth College, they rightly envision bright students cramming to absorb all that an Ivy League school has to offer. But it is during Dartmouth's six-week winter break that many low-income first-generation students on scholarship face their greatest challenge: With the dining halls closed, and no money to go home, they struggle to afford food over this long break. So they go hungry.

**Approach or Solution:** We built a model to improve food access for these students, and to be replicated with other social service entities and community colleges in the Upper Valley. Dartmouth funded vouchers to lower the cost of groceries, store tours were provided so students could easily find value-priced items, and a cooking class was held on how to stretch one's food dollar. The Co-op enrolled students in its Food for All program.

**Impact:** This program increased food access and provided empowerment to these students. Being able to shop for food based on one's personal needs rather than counting on a hand-out builds dignity. Eating on a tight budget became doable rather than being daunting. Of the 80 students helped, 20 have enrolled in the Hanover Co-op's Food for All program for a 10 percent discount on food year-round. This pilot program worked!

