

West Windsor Student Completes Eagle Scout Project, Expanding Little Free Food Pantry Access Across the Community



WEST WINDSOR, N.J. — Arnav Anand, a rising senior at West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South and a member of Scouting America Troop 40, has completed his Eagle Scout project, expanding access to free, non-perishable food for residents experiencing food insecurity through the installation of two Little Free Food Pantries.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest achievement in Scouting America and requires candidates to plan, lead, and complete a significant community service project.

The project included a new Little Free Food Pantry at the West Windsor Senior Center and a replacement pantry at the West Windsor Arts Center. The effort was completed in partnership with Send Hunger Packing West Windsor-Plainsboro (SHuP WW-P), which supports local food pantry initiatives and other efforts to address

food insecurity throughout the community.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on June 13, 2026, to celebrate the official dedication of the two Little Free Food Pantries. The event was attended by Mayor Hemant Marathe, Council President Sonia Gawas, Council Vice President Andrea Mandel, Councilmembers Daniel Weiss, Linda Geevers, and Joe Charles, SHuP WW-P representative Melissa Hager, West Windsor Arts Center Executive Director Aylin Green, Troop 40 leaders and Scouts, and volunteers from SHuP WW-P and Gratitude & Abundance.



“I chose this project because I know that food insecurity affects many people—not only across our country, but also here in our own community,” said Arnav Anand. “This project means a great deal to me because it gave me the opportunity to create something that will continue helping others long after today. My hope is that these pantries will serve families in need for years to come while inspiring others to give back to our community.”

Together, these additions expand residents' access to free, non-perishable food 24 hours a day at two highly accessible community locations.

The new Senior Center pantry joins the newly rebuilt pantry at the West Windsor Arts Center and the existing pantry at Dutch Neck Presbyterian Church, expanding the township's community food network to three locations.

The Little Free Food Pantries are located at:

- **West Windsor Senior Center**
271 Clarksville Road, West Windsor, NJ
- **West Windsor Arts Center**
952 Alexander Road, West Windsor, NJ
- **Dutch Neck Presbyterian Church**
154 South Mill Road, West Windsor, NJ



Each pantry operates on the simple principle of "**Take what you need. Leave what you can.**" Residents are encouraged to donate unexpired, non-perishable food items such as canned goods, pasta, rice, cereal, peanut butter, shelf-stable milk, and other everyday staples.

Arnav coordinated the project with SHuP WW-P, the West Windsor Arts Center, the Township, and troop and community volunteers. The project was supported by fellow Scouts, friends and family members, community volunteers, and local residents who donated materials, time, and expertise.

Melissa Hager, lead coordinator for SHuP WW-P, said the project demonstrates the impact of community partnerships in addressing food insecurity.

“Little Free Pantries work best when the whole community knows about them and helps keep them stocked,” said Melissa Hager of SHuP WW-P. “Arnav’s project gives residents another meaningful way to support their neighbors, and we are grateful for his leadership, hard work, and commitment to addressing food insecurity.”

"This project would not have been possible without the guidance and support of so many people," Arnav said. "I am especially thankful to SHuP WW-P, the West Windsor Arts Center, our Township engineer Mr. Taylor, my Scout leaders Mr. Sai and Mr. Durie and fellow Scouts, our mayor and council members, my family and friends, and everyone who donated or volunteered."

"Arnav, congratulations on a very meaningful Eagle project. The two Free pantries he installed provide much needed resources to West Windsor residents. Their impact will be felt for many years to come," said Mayor Hemant Marathe.

"I've been involved in the Little Free Pantry since we put the first one at the Arts Council, and I am thrilled to see the two new pantries that Arnav has built and installed with the help of West Windsor Township. They will provide a source of food, no questions asked, for local people in their time of need. It also means we will have to increase our efforts to get food donations, so I ask everyone to please be generous with dropping off food in the pantries and during our food collections," said Council Vice-President Andrea Mandel.

"This is exactly the kind of youth-led service project that makes West Windsor stronger," said Councilman Dan Weiss. "Arnav identified a real community need, brought people together, and created something that will continue helping residents well beyond the completion of his Eagle Scout project."

Community members are encouraged to support the pantries by donating non-perishable food items or helping spread awareness so that more residents can benefit from this shared community resource.

About Send Hunger Packing West Windsor-Plainsboro (SHuP WW-P)

SHuP WW-P is a volunteer-led nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing food insecurity by supporting local food pantries, backpack meal programs, and other hunger relief initiatives throughout the West Windsor-Plainsboro community. For more information, visit www.shupwwp.org

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