

N O R T H A M P T O N  
*Senior Services*



67 Conz Street  
Northampton, MA 01060  
Director: Marie Westburg  
Assistant Director: Janet Yurko

October 7th, 2021

Hello City Council Members,

I respectfully request that \$3600 from the Gift Fund be allocated for a Financial Aid Fund at the Senior Center. This fund will help us to ensure that participants who currently are unable to attend fee based programs have the option to do so. Qualifying criteria will mirror income guidelines for SNAP (165% of the poverty income guidelines) for Tier A discounts and the 250% poverty guidelines for Tier B discounts. Having two tiers for qualifying will allow older adults who are struggling financially, but just miss the line for many programs they still need, to access programs and services that will have a significant and positive impact on their quality of life.

Applicants who qualify will be able to use this funding for health and wellness programs such as a fitness center membership, fitness classes, foot clinics, reiki, discounted lunch in Mary's Bistro, a Senior Farm Share, and other similar programs.

Financial aid awards will be distributed through credit towards program fees and will not be carried over month to month or year to year. Applicants will be required to reapply annually. Applicants will be asked on the application if they would like to be screened, and assisted in applying for other community, state and federal income based programs, but this will not be required. Our hope is that we will connect low income patrons with more services while also making our current programs and services more accessible.

With the \$3600 we will begin by offering 20 people with up to \$15 a month to use towards designated programs. A total maximum of \$180 per year, per applicant.

Thank you for your consideration and support in our efforts to serve the seniors of Northampton!

Sincerely,

Marie Westburg