



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Inaugural “MealsGiving” Encourages Cleveland-Based Participants to Pay it Forward So Everyone Eats on November 26**

Cordelia on E. 4<sup>th</sup> St to Serve as “MealsGiving” Headquarters with Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb and Players from the Cleveland Browns & Cleveland Cavaliers

CLEVELAND, OH – Friday, November 15, 2024 - The brainchild of Emmy-award-winning host, comedian, and proud Cleveland native Ricky Smith ([@rickonia](#)), the inaugural [MealsGiving](#) ([#MealsGiving](#), [@MealsGiving](#)) celebration is about making November 26, 2024, and every Tuesday before Thanksgiving, a day when “everyone eats.”

Supported by Smith’s nonprofit, [Random Acts of Kindness Everywhere](#), or RAKE ([@rake\\_now](#)) and [proclaimed as an official holiday](#) by Cleveland Mayor Justin M. Bibb, MealsGiving will use the power of food to foster a sense of community and connection throughout the City of Cleveland and beyond.

*“People helping people is what Cleveland is all about, and MealsGiving encapsulates that mantra. We are so incredibly appreciative of Ricky, RAKE, and all the partners putting on this event,”* said Mayor Bibb. *“We have said time and again that government cannot solve our communities’ problems alone and we hope that Ricky’s team serves as an inspiration for others to step up, especially with the upcoming holiday season.”*

[Cordelia](#), located at 2058 E 4th St, will close for the day to serve as “MealsGiving” headquarters and donate 1,000 meals, including 500 served on-location and 500 for delivery. Special guest volunteers are expected to include Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb, along with players from both the Cleveland Browns and Cleveland Cavaliers, among others. Those interested in registering their restaurant or kitchen can sign up at [mealsgiving.org](#). Owner Andrew Watts said, *“This is true Cleveland spirit and what we are all about at Cordelia; creating space for the entire community to come together to feed people – that is why Chef Vinnie and I along with our whole team jumped in to support.”*

*“No gift is too big or too small,”* said MealsGiving creator Ricky Smith. *“No matter if you share hundreds of meals throughout the year or a single plate on MealsGiving, this cause is about expressing*

*gratitude by serving the unsung, overlooked, and vulnerable in our community through selfless acts of stomach-filling generosity so that everyone eats. Simply put, it's a day to pay it forward with food."*

### **ANYONE ANYWHERE CAN GET INVOLVED**

Individuals, businesses, and organizations located in Greater Cleveland and beyond can support "MealsGiving" by visiting [mealsgiving.org](https://mealsgiving.org) and submitting a [MealsGiving Pledge](#) form describing how they plan to provide hot meals to one or more recipients in their community.

Whether you volunteer to deliver meals this November 26, pledge to buy breakfast for someone in need, send lunch to a frontline worker, or make dinner for a friend or family member, MealsGiving is all about spreading love and kindness, one dish at a time.

### **LOCAL IMPACT**

Local volunteers will deliver hot meals prepared by participating restaurants and kitchens to pre-assigned locations throughout Northeast Ohio, including shelters, churches, and community centers.

Recipients and locations include:

- Military veterans
- Cleveland-area shelters for the unhoused
- Cleveland-area hospitals
- Local frontline workers
- Local first responders
- Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northeast Ohio

### **RESTAURANT SPONSORSHIPS**

Cleveland-area restaurants and kitchens are needed to donate, prepare, and distribute hot meals for "MealsGiving" on November 26.

In addition, restaurants in Northeast Ohio and beyond can support "MealsGiving" by visiting [mealsgiving.org](https://mealsgiving.org) and submitting a [Restaurant Sign Up](#) form featuring their pledge to provide hot meals on November 26, with three unique sponsorship levels to choose from, including:

### **BRONZE-PLATE RESTAURANT SPONSORS**

The *Bronze-Plate* sponsorship is for both Cleveland-area and non-Cleveland-area restaurants that pledge to donate and self-deliver 1-24 hot meals to a recipient or recipients in their local community.

- Pledge to donate and self-deliver 1-24 hot meals
- Self-serve or distribute meals locally
- Get a social shoutout from @Mealsgiving and @RAKE\_now

## **SILVER-PLATE RESTAURANT SPONSORS**

The *Silver-Plate* sponsorship is for Cleveland-area restaurants that pledge to donate 25-99 hot meals to be delivered to local recipients by “MealsGiving” volunteers.

- Pledge to Donate 25-99 hot meals for delivery by MealsGiving volunteers
- Get a Social Shoutout from @Mealsgiving and @RAKE\_now
- Your restaurant logo will be featured as an official sponsor on mealsgiving.org

## **GOLD-PLATE RESTAURANT SPONSORS**

The *Gold-Plate* sponsorship is for Cleveland-area restaurants that pledge to donate 100 or more hot meals to be delivered to local recipients by “MealsGiving” volunteers.

Restaurants that prefer to manage their distribution process will get help creating a custom plan to make, serve, and distribute hot meals to folks in their own communities on November 26.

- Pledge to donate 100+ hot meals for delivery by “MealsGiving” volunteers
- Get a Social Shoutout from @Mealsgiving and @RAKE\_now
- Your restaurant’s logo will be featured as an official sponsor on mealsgiving.org *and* the “MealsGiving” t-shirts worn by volunteers
- Your restaurant will be featured in a video spotlight shared across our social media channels

## **HOW TO LEARN MORE**

To “MealsGiving” creator Ricky Smith, the bigger the impact, the better. “While it may be an ambitious goal, we aim to share 10,000 meals across America on “MealsGiving” to foster a sense of kindness, warmth, and connection throughout Cleveland and beyond,” Smith said.

For more information on how to get involved, contact [Info@rakenow.org](mailto:Info@rakenow.org), 424-BE-KIND-0 (23-5463-0), or visit mealsgiving.org to sign up today.

## **#MEALSGIVING**

Both local and non-local participants are asked to tag @mealsgiving in a photo or video of their experience sharing hot meals on November 26 using the hashtag #mealsgiving.

## **About Ricky Smith**

*Finding creative ways to support those in need has always been a passion for Cleveland native Ricky Smith (@rickonia). As a comedian, Emmy-award-winning host, and creator of [Random Acts of Kindness Everywhere](#) or R.A.K.E., a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to improving the world one kind act at a time, Ricky is out to prove that giving goes a long way toward making the world a better place. From an early age, Ricky possessed a need to excite the world with his off-kilter wit and eagerness to help others in any way he could. From handing out umbrellas on a rainy day to awarding absolute strangers with tickets to upcoming sporting events, Ricky believes in paying it forward by treating others to experiences they will never forget.*

**About RAKE**

The purpose of [Random Acts of Kindness Everywhere](#), or RAKE ([@rake\\_now](#)), is simple: To support communities in a positive way by enriching lives, encouraging kindness, and promoting the act of "paying it forward." Every example of kindness, no matter how big or small, has the power to make a positive difference for someone in need. From providing food and clothes to people experiencing homelessness to donating books to local schools, R.A.K.E. is all about making an impact one good deed at a time.

**Contact:**

Ricky Smith  
[ricky@rakenow.org](mailto:ricky@rakenow.org)

**Media & Advertising:**

Chris Jungjohann  
[chris@recesscreative.com](mailto:chris@recesscreative.com)  
216-904-2271

**City of Cleveland:**

Tyler Sinclair  
[tsinclair@clevelandohio.gov](mailto:tsinclair@clevelandohio.gov)  
216-571-2887