

harvest

A NEWSLETTER OF THE BLUE RIDGE AREA FOOD BANK

We Partner for Kids' Sake

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Blue Ridge Area
FOOD BANK

A member of
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

Together,

WE'RE SERVING MORE KIDS



Partnerships Expand Our Reach

The Food Bank serves about 7,300 food insecure children in Virginia each month through outreach programs in addition to young people whose families acquire food at partner food pantries. That may seem like a lot, but many more kids need our help. Roughly 42,000 kids within our service area are at risk for hunger, and we aspire to reach them all.

The Food Bank recently formed new partnerships to leverage funds from federal anti-poverty programs

that help community nonprofits fight hunger. These dollars will be used to expand interventions such as the family backpack program, which provides kids with nutritious snacks or staple foods for the weekend.

“If we’re going to tackle the problem of hunger, we can’t do it alone or in isolation,” says Michelle Hesse, director of agency relations and programs. “These collaborations add another layer of resources available to the Food Bank, enabling us to make a dent in alleviating hunger within Virginia.”



These partnerships will:

- Support capital improvements to allow **Kids Club of the Northern Shenandoah Valley** of Winchester to serve nutritious meals and snacks to 100 children and their families.
- Allow **Bright Futures**, which operates backpack programs in 16 Frederick County and Winchester schools, to expand its reach to provide 140,160 nutritious meals to 1,200 children and their families.
- Fund the growth of School Markets operated by **Food for Thought** in Lynchburg to provide 89,219 nutritious meals to 552 children and their families.
- Establish Neighborhood Produce Markets in Lynchburg to provide fresh produce to 900 children and families in need over the summer, and 350 children and families during the school year. The markets reach children at **Parks and Recreation centers, public libraries and school enrichment programs.**

While hungry kids may have access to breakfast and lunch meals when school is in session, they often rely on Food Bank partnerships for nutritious food for weekends and during the summer months. Through these new collaborations, we'll reach more children than we could have on our own.



"These partnerships are a win-win," Hesse says. "Our community partners will be able to get nutritious foods at a lower cost to feed the children, and the Food Bank can expand its reach to serve children and families during the school year."

This is the first time this Food Bank has received an allocation like this. We are grateful for the funds provided through the Virginia General Assembly and the leadership from state lawmakers in standing up for vulnerable children.

This support is part of an award totaling \$3 million to 7 food banks in Virginia, with financing from both governmental and non-governmental sources. For more information, please visit the Department of Health and Human Services website.



Do you believe that no one should have to go hungry? Are you passionate about our work? If so, you may find it meaningful to become a Community Outreach Ambassador.

A new way to take action, the **COMMUNITY OUTREACH AMBASSADOR CORPS** leverages the energy of caring individuals who want to share our story and advocate on behalf of individuals and families who struggle with hunger.

Intrigued? Become the spark that ignites change in your community by helping to ensure that everyone has enough to eat!

Join by contacting **Abena Foreman-Trice** at 540.213.8405 or by email at eforemantrice@brafb.org.





FOR EVERY \$1 YOU DONATE
YOU HELP US
PROVIDE 4 MEALS

Ever Wonder If Your Gifts Are *Making a Difference?*

Compassionate donors fuel the engine to ensure that everyone has enough to eat.

Your heartfelt and faithful support does indeed make a difference in the lives of hundreds of children, seniors, veterans, men and women — each and every day. For those who struggle to put food on the table your gift is a lifeline. And it goes well beyond food.

In addition to good nutrition, you are providing relief from worry and hope that tomorrow will be a brighter day.

The results are powerful when thousands of people combine their philanthropic intentions! The average gift to the Food Bank is \$175.

What's more, 2,030 donors have given without fail – **every year for at least 10 years** – contributing gifts ranging from \$10 to \$10,000. Your loyalty is astounding and inspiring.

Whatever motivates your decision to give, we don't take you for granted. We know that there are many worthy charities, and you have a choice to make. We are grateful that you choose to support our mission.



"It's a blessing — a supplement that pulls you out of whatever you are going through. It makes your day brighter when you wake up and don't have to wonder where your next meal will come from."

— A PANTRY VOLUNTEER AND CLIENT



"The oranges and potatoes are always welcome. It saves us money so we can afford other things."

— SANDRA

"Every time Social Security goes up, Part B Medicare goes up too! I have health problems and have to pay for medicine. Coming to this mobile food pantry distribution helps."

— GEORGE



New Additions to the Food Bank's Leadership



left to right: Jim Perkins, Amy MacFarland, Diego B. Anderson, Ted Byrd

The Food Bank is delighted to welcome four new members to our Board of Directors: **Diego B. Anderson** of Charlottesville; **Ted Byrd** of Harrisonburg; **Amy MacFarland** of Gretna; and **Dr. James (Jim) Perkins** of Waynesboro. Our Board leaders support the advancement of the Food Bank's mission through policy and resource governance. We're proud and grateful they have chosen to help lead our organization.



Leanne Vigliano has joined the Food Bank's management team. She accepted the role of human resources director this past spring. With 20 years of experience in the nonprofit sector under her belt, Leanne brings a warm energy and innovative approach to her job. We're glad to have her with us.

WALKING IN OUR NEIGHBOR'S SHOES

“Eye opening,” is how one of the Food Bank’s partner pantry leaders described *Good Neighbor Training*. These workshops show the complexities of poverty and how people in need respond to their circumstances.

Partner service coordinators Robin Swecker (Shenandoah Valley) and Kristi West (Lynchburg Area) introduced the training series to volunteers and leaders at the Food Bank’s partner pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters.

“We want pantry leaders and volunteers to understand the stressors in our clients’ lives and why they may handle things a little differently,” said Kristi West.

Robin Swecker added, “It’s important for our frontline partners to know how to respond to individuals struggling daily to survive.”

The series included informational and hands-on experiences.

- **Poverty Simulations** put participants in situations often faced by neighbors they serve.
- **Diversity and Inclusion** workshops fostered understanding of cultural differences that affect how neighbors experience hardship.
- **Trauma Informed Care** training provided tools for service workers to handle situations related to mental illness, abuse, and other traumatic conditions.

Another participant valued “learning how to better relate to those in poverty, not to judge others, and believing I can make a difference to others.”

“It’s important for our frontline partners to know how to respond to individuals struggling daily to survive.”





Volunteering Is GOOD BUSINESS

When businesses partner with the Food Bank, they provide employees an opportunity to give back to their own communities. They also demonstrate a heart for helping neighbors who live at a significant disadvantage.

“When employee groups volunteer, they experience a unique kind of connection with their co-workers, teamwork is enhanced, *and* they play an important role in making sure everyone has enough food to eat,” said Jennifer Clark-Robertson, volunteer and food drive manager at the Food Bank.

In addition to volunteering, there are many ways businesses can maintain the strength of the communities in which they operate.

- **Align your mission with ours!** Show your customers that you also care about individuals and families

struggling to get ahead. You can help us secure the tools we use to do our jobs by promoting your business on our delivery trucks and trailers, recipe cards, distribution bags, and more.

- **Your company can sponsor a nutrition program distribution,** helping us reach vulnerable children and seniors. Are you interested in sponsoring a special event? Events offer a way to have fun for a meaningful cause.
- **Become an online Hunger Hero.** The Food Bank can customize an online donation page with your company’s logo and provide helpful tips for promoting your food or fund drive.

To explore volunteer opportunities, contact Jennifer Clark-Robertson at jjclarkrobertson@brafb.org, or call 540.213.8402.



There’s a new way to volunteer in Charlottesville, and it couldn’t have come at a better time. More and more seniors in our service area need food aid. If you’d like to help keep seniors healthy in these hard times, consider packing Senior Food Boxes at our Thomas Jefferson Area Branch. To get started, reach out to Colleen Berger, our new volunteer and food drive coordinator. We’re thrilled she chose to bring her talent and heart to the Food Bank!

For more information,
email Colleen at cberger@brafb.org





We are deeply grateful to the following Hunger Heroes who have helped us provide relief to people in need. We're also thankful to everyone who supported these events and initiatives with their time, food, funds, and talent.



Bank of America Charitable Foundation
136,936 meals

The Give-A-Meal campaign harnessed the power of online banking for good. The foundation contributed \$2 for every \$1 donated by a Bank of America customer.



Food Lion Feeds
Technology, capacity, and food

Food Lion provides good food to neighbors in need and tools to strengthen partner food pantries, and their employees roll-up their sleeves to lend a hand. Their passion for our mission is immeasurable.



Kroger
Pounds and pounds of veggies, fruits and peanut butter

Kroger helped pay for a larger produce cooler, doubling produce distribution in the Lynchburg area. Their recent Spread the Love drive brought in 15,200 pounds of peanut butter for local families who are spread too thin.



Giant Food
240,000 meals

The wellness of children and their families is why Giant supports the Family BackPack programs in two Loudoun County schools and the Summer Kid Packs program in Charlottesville.



Harris Teeter
70,640 meals

Your Neighborhood Food Market cashiers asked customers to "Round Up" their total grocery bill. We're grateful to the generous shoppers who participated.



Whole Foods
41,427 meals

The Feed4More campaign encouraged shoppers to donate at the register for families in need, providing thousands of meals.



Wegmans
41,847 meals

This big-hearted grocer's Check Out Hunger campaign engaged shoppers. In addition, The Pub by Wegmans also participated in Restaurant Week.



Stamp Out Hunger
263,333 meals

Dedicated letter carriers across our service area braved the rain to collect nonperishable food for struggling families. Hardworking postal carriers, volunteers, and food donors make this annual food drive possible. The drive occurs throughout the Food Bank's service area, including Staunton, Waynesboro, Harrisonburg, Charlottesville, Winchester, and Lynchburg.



Martin's
150,134 meals

Martin's grocery stores expanded their Food Bank support by sponsoring our Mobile Food Pantry program in Timberville, and Bath and Highland Counties, and our Neighborhood Produce Market in Harrisonburg. Staff members also support our work through volunteerism. Their devotedness to our cause makes a difference to thousands of people we serve.



Fight Hunger. Spark Change - Walmart and Sam's Club

712,552 meals

Through its annual campaign — Fight Hunger, Spark Change — Walmart makes an enormous difference for hungry families in need.



Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co.

100,000 meals

Their 2019 grant helped the Food Bank nourish tens of thousands of hungry individuals and families.



Legal Food Frenzy

67,242 meals

This year, 32 law firms and legal organizations in the Blue Ridge area raised food and funds for individuals and families in need.



Valley Businesses Give Back

79,131 meals

Year after year, Shenandoah Valley businesses show how much they care about their neighbors in need! This annual food and fund drive, led by area Chambers of Commerce and local businesses, stocks the Food Bank's shelves during the summer months.



State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance

43,600 meals

State Farm stepped up to nourish families in need through peanut butter drives, volunteer hours and a generous gift from agent Patrick Blevins.



Genworth

40,000 meals

Their grant supports the Reach program, providing nutrition for low-income seniors and homebound adults in the Lynchburg area.



Devils Backbone Brewing Company

46,604 meals + valuable insight

Devils Backbone teamed up with Three Notch'd Brewing Company to create a special brew, "Feliz Navidad," to fight hunger. In addition, Devils Backbone generously supports food banking innovation through special technologies used by partner agencies.



DuPont Community Credit Union

22,956 meals + volunteer hours

Shred Days, an annual document-shredding and food-drive event, provides food to families in need throughout the Shenandoah Valley.



Berglund Oak Ridge Toyota

20,000 meals

This dealership nourishes Lynchburg-area children, seniors, and families.



Cville Gives

48,000 meals

A philanthropic network of caring individuals pool their financial resources to support important work, this time, the Summer Kid Packs program in Charlottesville.



Pacific Life Insurance Company

20,000 meals

Pacific Life helped us acquire fresh produce for Lynchburg-area families.



Charlottesville 29 Auction

1,020,964 meals

Simon Davidson is an attorney and food writer whose popular website, The Charlottesville 29, highlights what he views as the most essential restaurants in Charlottesville, through a positive lens. Thanks to the extraordinarily generous partnership of the restaurant community and participating donors, an online auction this summer raised more than \$255,000 for the Food Bank. Davidson said it's his way of giving back to the city he loves.



Great news for those age 70½ or older!

You can donate to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank directly from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

By making your gift with a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) – including all or part of your required minimum distribution – you can reduce your taxable income and potentially your tax burden.

For more information, contact your financial advisor or the company managing your IRA, visit our website at brafb.org/give, or call Karen Ratzlaff, Chief Philanthropy Officer, at 540.213.8404.

For every \$1 you contribute to the Food Bank, you can help us provide 4 meals.

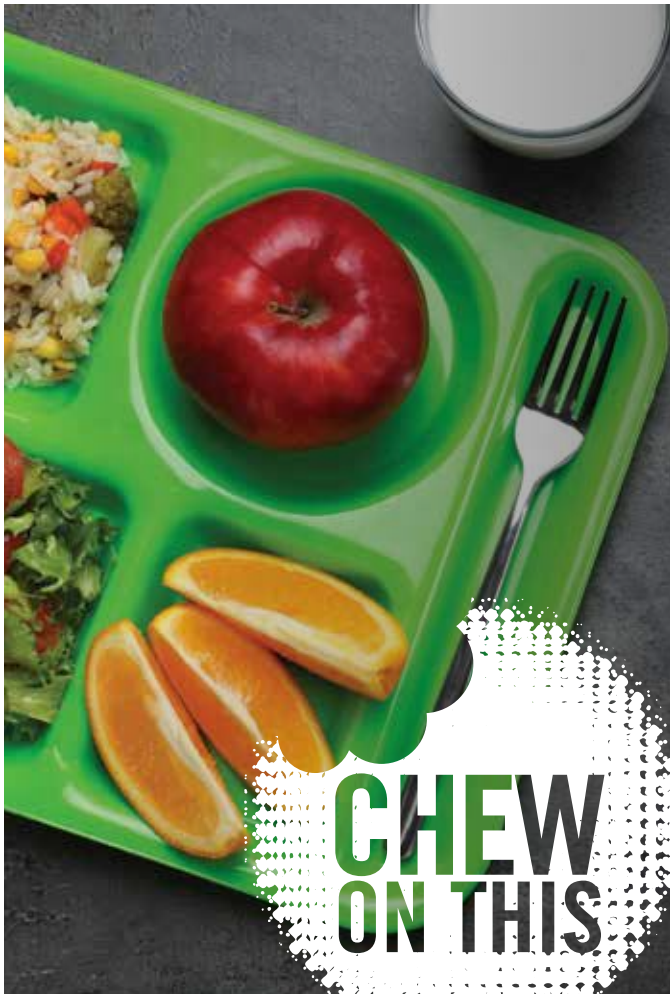


BLUE RIDGE AREA FOOD BANK ADVOCACY ALERTS

Advocacy Alerts notify subscribers about policy issues that impact food-insecure individuals and families in YOUR community. They also share ways YOU can take action.

Stay informed. Raise your voice. Effect change.

Sign up for advocacy alerts at brafb.org/newslettersignup. Visit our advocacy webpage at brafb.org/advocate.



According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, most children’s diets continue to fall short of nutrition recommendations – especially children whose families struggle to put food on the table.

Federal child nutrition programs have a proven track record of helping children thrive. In fact, a federal study rated food served through the National School Lunch Program as more nutritious than food comprising the average child’s diet in the U.S. However, almost ten years without enhancements to these programs mean some children in need miss out.

The proposed improvements to federal nutrition programs through the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act call for expanding reach to children – especially those in rural areas – and improving access to fresh foods in schools.

The positive impact of federal child nutrition programs on children’s growth and overall health is why we support a stronger Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill.

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KAREN RATZLAFF

Chief Philanthropy Officer

col·lab·o·ra·tion

You hear this word a lot in the nonprofit world, mostly because when we collaborate with others, we accomplish far more than we could alone.

Food Banks are especially good at collaboration; it's foundational to our purpose. The nation's first food bank, St. Mary's Food Bank in Phoenix, Arizona, was founded in 1969 to collect food on behalf of hundreds of community food pantries and feeding programs. Over the years, food banks spread across the country and now number 200 in the Feeding America network.

Today, our nation's charitable food assistance system is a tapestry of rich and colorful partnerships in neighborhoods, cities and rural counties across the nation. Together, food banks collaborate with more than 60,000 community partners to serve 40 million people and provide 4.5 billion meals each year.

At the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, we partner with...

- 205 food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters to distribute food, and we work side-by-side with dozens of community groups to feed seniors and children
- The Virginia Cooperative Extension to teach families and children about nutrition
- Area hospitals to get more nutritious food into the hands of people struggling with diet-related diseases
- Faculty at James Madison University to develop software that allows us to source food based on nutrient density
- Food banks across Virginia to source locally grown produce, and with 22 other food banks in the mid-Atlantic region to rescue imported produce at the Philadelphia port

This isn't an exhaustive list. But these examples illustrate how we are leveraging the talent and resources of other organizations to reach as many people in need as we can and to stretch our dollars — dollars you generously give to us — as far as we can.

In many real ways, when you give to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, you're supporting the work of hundreds of other community organizations.

On our behalf and theirs, **thank you!**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael McKee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael McKee
Chief Executive Officer



**Blue Ridge Area
FOOD BANK**

A member of
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

NON-PROFIT ORG
POSTAGE & FEES
PAID
BLUE RIDGE AREA
FOOD BANK

PO Box 937
Verona, VA 24482



OUR MISSION is to provide nourishing food to our neighbors in need through vibrant community partnerships and passionate public support.

BRANCH LOCATIONS

We serve your community through one of our distribution centers, located in:

Shenandoah Valley Area Branch & Headquarters

PO Box 937
96 Laurel Hill Road
Verona, VA 24482-0937
P: 540.248.3663
F: 540.248.6410

Thomas Jefferson Area Branch

1207 Harris Street
Charlottesville, VA 22903-5319
P: 434.296.3663
F: 434.296.9621

Lynchburg Area Branch

501 12th Street, Suite B
Lynchburg, VA 24504-2527
P: 434.845.4099
F: 434.845.6153

Lord Fairfax Area Branch

1802 Roberts Street
Winchester, VA 22604-2342
P: 540.665.0770
F: 540.722.4217

GET INVOLVED

For more event details, visit our Events page at brafb.org, or call 540.248.3663

October 21 - 25 VA Hunger Symposium October 24

Empty Bowl Dinner

Blue Ridge Community College leaders, faculty, and students will offer a series of events promoting hunger awareness in local communities. Collection bins will be available for food donations during the week.



November 2 (Shenandoah Valley and Charlottesville) and November 9 (Winchester)

Scouting for Food

Area Boy Scouts will be sweeping neighborhoods for food donations for our largest fall food drive. Leave your bag of canned food at the doorstep and area scouts will fulfill their duty.



Nov. 16 - Dec. 14 Holiday Food Drive

Media sponsors NBC29, Z95.1, and KD Country, along with our friends at Kroger provide



the chance to nourish neighbors in need during the winter holidays. Leave non-perishable food donations in Food Bank barrels at all Kroger stores in our service area.

December 5, 12, and 13 Shop to Stop Hunger

On your mark, get ready, shop! Local celebrities will run the aisles of Kroger to shop for our neighbors in need. Vote for your favorite local celebrity by leaving a food donation in their assigned barrels.

Thursday, 12/5: Charlottesville Kroger
Thursday, 12/12: Harrisonburg Kroger
Friday, 12/13: Lynchburg Kroger

December 2 Christmas at Augusta Stone

Join us for the 24th annual benefit Christmas concert at Augusta Stone Church in Fort Defiance. Enjoy acoustic and folk holiday tunes performed by talented musicians. Free will offering benefits neighbors in need.

December 3 #GivingTuesday

#GivingTuesday is a global day of giving in which anyone, anywhere can participate.

Following Black

Friday and Cyber Monday, remember to go online and make your Food Bank contribution along with many other caring individuals!



December 5 Ugly Christmas Sweater Party

Get into the holiday spirit and get out your ugliest seasonal sweater for some fun at the Jefferson Theater in Charlottesville. Fantastic local music, door prizes and raffles will entertain while benefitting the Food Bank.

January 5, 2020 Twelfth Night Concert

Savor the sounds of the holiday season one last time with beautiful choir music. Choirs from the Staunton Church of the Brethren and Olivet Presbyterian Church will perform in their 19th post-holiday concert.

January 18-25, 2020 Charlottesville Restaurant Week

Here's your chance to sample new and favorite restaurants offering delicious and savory dishes at attractive prices. Even better, \$1 from every meal will help provide enough food for four others to share a meal too.

