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The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank Marks 40 Years of Serving the Region
Announcing a new annual food and fund drive in honor of the anniversary

(VERONA, Va.) June 28, 2021— After 40 years of nourishing individuals and families, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank’s depth of experience—especially during the pandemic—propels us forward. So too do the community members who support our work. To observe four decades of leading the Blue Ridge region in combatting hunger, we’re reigniting the spirit of community and sharing.

Whether it’s donations of time, food, funds, or voice, our neighbors choose to embrace community and champion kindness. For that, we are grateful.

“This 40th year has been like no other but so has the level of community support,” says Michael McKee, CEO of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. “We’re so thankful we live in a caring region in which residents are willing to stand with us and feed hope.”

Hunger impacts an entire community, and it takes an entire community to address hunger. The pandemic is subsiding, but thousands of household budgets remain strained. In our service area, the numbers of unemployment insurance claims have not yet declined below the number of filings before March of 2020. Today, as our communities safely reopen, we’re asking community members to reconnect with our cause in numerous ways.

“Community members can volunteer at a pantry, invite us to speak about the problem of hunger with professional and community organizations, follow the Food Bank’s social media channels, and share about our work with family, friends, and people in their social networks,” McKee adds.

Also affected by the pandemic: large-scale community food drives.

Community food drives offered an important way for the Food Bank to mobilize the public until the pandemic changed everything. To help families stretched thin, we’re holding our first annual **Unity in Community Food and Fund drive August 7 through 14. Financial gifts can be made online that week, matched by a generous donor (up to \$40,000). Food will be collected from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on August 13-14 at Food Bank locations.**

Compassion gave rise to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, and 40 years later, compassion sustains it. Moving forward together, we can contribute to brighter tomorrows ahead.

To cover the Food Bank's anniversary story, contact Abena Foreman-Trice at 540-280-6588 or by email at aforemantrice@brafb.org. For images and content-creation resources, visit our [Newsroom webpage](#).

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About the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank

Founded in 1981 and headquartered in Verona, Va., the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank is proud to mark 40 years of providing nourishing food to our neighbors in need. As the largest organization alleviating hunger in western and central Virginia, the Food Bank serves an average of 122, 406 individuals each month across 25 counties and eight cities through distribution centers in Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Winchester, and Verona. This 40th year is like no other: Together with our network of 203 community partners and 180 program sites, we're serving record numbers of Virginians during a prolonged pandemic and recession. We pledge to continue innovating and adapting to secure, store, and distribute more food to more individuals, families, children, and seniors in need. The Food Bank is a member of Feeding America, a national food bank association that supports 200 food banks across the United States providing 6 billion meals to 42 million people through 60,000 partner pantries. For more information, visit www.brafb.org.