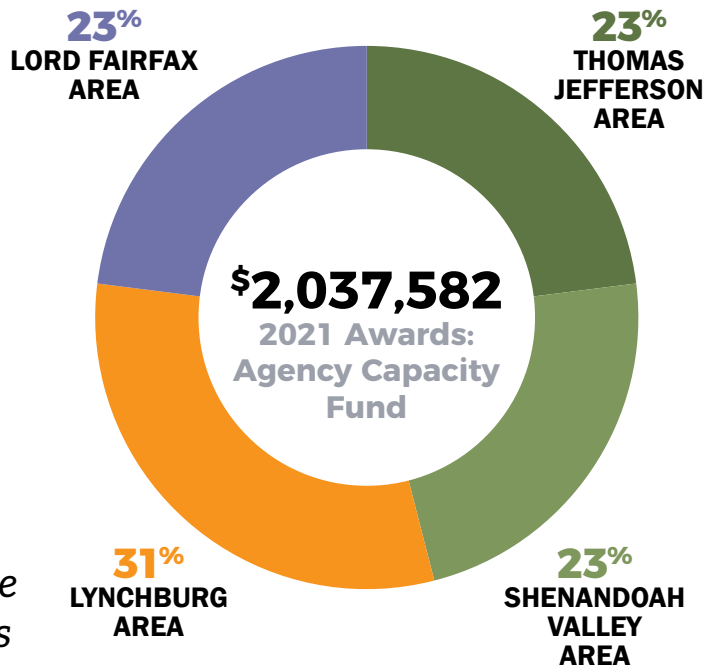


Pandemic Lesson: Too Critical to Fail

Donations help fortify the food-distribution network through more than \$2 million in grants from the Food Bank to our community partners



Food banking may never be the same again.

After more than a year of crisis operations, the Food Bank and our partners are settling into a new normal. We've learned a lot during the pandemic. Distribution partners have always been important to us, but this experience has illuminated how vital it is to have a resilient and flexible network.

That's why Food Bank leadership, including the Board of Directors, chose to dramatically expand the reach of the **Agency Capacity Fund** in 2021 and invest in partnerships in bigger and bolder ways.

An investment like this is only possible thanks to the generosity of Food Bank donors who have supported our mission throughout the pandemic.

A tradition of impact

The Agency Capacity Fund launched in 2016 to support our primary partners: the local, community-based food pantries; soup kitchens; and shelters that form the

nutritional safety net our neighbors can turn to in times of need. These are our primary distribution partners. Another group of collaborators operate sites for the Food Bank's programs, including the Mobile Food Pantry, Family BackPack, and Reach (for seniors and people with disabilities), to name a few.

In a typical year, the Food Bank uses 100% of gifts designated by donors to the Agency Capacity Fund to purchase equipment and supplies for partners.

Over the last four years, we have provided more than \$674,000 worth of coolers and freezers; shelves, carts, and generators; and laptops and tablets.

Bold action

This year, all 203 partner food pantries, as well as 180 program-site partners, were invited to apply for support from the Agency Capacity Fund. In addition to small grants for equipment, we also offered them the opportunity to

2021 Awards by Type



*Includes two trucks gifted from the Food Bank fleet

Examples of Impactful Awards and Investments Across the Region

Located in Sterling, **DULLES SOUTH FOOD PANTRY** received funding for a major renovation to exponentially increase their cold-storage space (which will enable them to distribute more perishable foods) and some smaller equipment items to facilitate the intake of client information.



The **CRAIGSVILLE AREA FOOD PANTRY** (Augusta County) was one of the first organizations to join our network in the early 1980s. Their 2021 award will help replace their roof so they can keep the pantry's doors open.



34
SHENANDOAH VALLEY-AREA PARTNERS

36
LORD FAIRFAX-AREA PARTNERS

29
THOMAS JEFFERSON-AREA PARTNERS

41
LYNCHBURG-AREA PARTNERS

In Charlottesville, we're investing in a project led by the **PIEDMONT HOUSING ALLIANCE** to build a food pantry as part of a community center at Friendship Court.

In downtown Lynchburg, where the impact of COVID-19 doubled the need for **OUR DAILY BREAD**'s services, extensive interior renovations we'll help fund will equip them to accommodate the increased demand. Our Daily Bread served more than 115,000 meals in 2020.

apply for large, capital grants for the first time. Investments of this size help fund items like trucks and vans, contribute to pantry innovations and improvements, and even offer rent support to organizations moving to larger spaces.

In all, the Food Bank will spend more than \$2 million on 120 Agency Capacity Fund awards this year.

The difference made, in human terms

Our goal in distributing these grants is to help our partner organizations flourish and grow, and they're also meant to ensure a dignified, respectful environment for the neighbors who walk through their doors.

After all, the demand experienced at all locations during the pandemic has been telling. Collectively, the partners receiving awards this year typically serve, on average, 64,000 people per month. Between March 2020 and February 2021, they were providing food to approximately 79,000 people per month, an increase of 24%.

These grants are intended to enable partners to do things like...

- move more produce and more food
- ensure that a greater variety and quantity of foods can be offered
- create more welcoming spaces that preserve the dignity of our neighbors
- launch mobile distributions to serve individuals who are homebound and can't make it to pantries

We are grateful to the following donors whose designated gifts made so many of these awards possible*:

- Anonymous
- Bama Works Fund
- Food Lion Feeds
- Genan Foundation
- Greater Lynchburg Community Foundation
- Lewis G. Schaeneman Jr. Foundation
- Manning Family Foundation
- Paul and Martha Rees Fund

*Additional funding for Agency Capacity Fund awards comes from unrestricted gifts made to the Food Bank in the past year.

