

## **Blue Ridge Area Food Bank Seeks Schools To Participate In Annual School Food Drive**

**VERONA, Va. (Feb. 9, 2022)** – From March 7-25, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank and the greater Charlottesville area schools will participate in the annual School Food Drive.

In its 11<sup>th</sup> year, the efforts this year are being led by Albemarle High School students, Kat Ravichandran and Emily Warren. Currently, Ravichandran, Warren, and the Food Bank are calling on local students and educators to sign up their school to participate in the food drive.

“The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank School Food Drive serves as a wonderful opportunity for local students to unite against food insecurity,” said Ravichandran. “With rising food prices and persistent cold temperatures leading to higher electricity costs, the food supplies we collect will be a big help to those across the region.”

In the past, dozens of schools have participated in the annual drive—even competing to collect the most pounds of food. Businesses and organizations have also supported the effort and are invited to again this year. The annual event boosts food supplies at the Food Bank during the spring when donations traditionally run low.

The food collected will provide meals for roughly 23,000 individuals and families experiencing hunger who are served by 38 Food Bank partner pantries—soup kitchens, shelters, and nonprofits—and programs throughout the city of Charlottesville and the seven counties in the Food Bank’s Thomas Jefferson area branch.

“Each year, we’re inspired by the local students who take part in the community-wide effort to alleviate hunger through the School Food Drive,” said Michael McKee, CEO of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. “It’s fitting that the annual drive takes place during National Nutrition Month, and it’s a reminder that many children, 1-in-12 in our service area, are experiencing hunger.”

Since the School Food Drive’s inception, participating schools have collected 73,637 pounds of food, helping provide 61,119 meals for our community members. The impact proves that young people can and do make a difference in their communities.

If your school or business would like to participate in the School Food Drive in March, please contact Colleen Berger at [cberger@brafb.org](mailto:cberger@brafb.org) by Friday, Feb. 25 to learn more.

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### **About the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank**

Founded in 1981 and headquartered in Verona, Virginia, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank is the largest organization alleviating hunger in western and central Virginia. The Food Bank serves an average of nearly 119,000 individuals each month across 25

counties and eight cities through distribution centers in Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Winchester, and Verona. Together with our network of 207 community partners and 187 program sites, we're serving record numbers of Virginians during a prolonged pandemic and its associated economic impacts. We pledge to continue innovating and adapting to secure, store, and distribute more food to more individuals, families, children, and seniors experiencing hunger. 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](http://www.brafb.org).

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