



Blue Ridge Area
FOOD BANK



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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20 Area Schools Partner with Blue Ridge Area Food Bank for Annual School Food Drive

Students across the area help collect food to help restock the Food Bank shelves.

VERONA, Va. (March 05, 2024) – Starting on Wednesday, March 6, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, and 20 local schools, will kick off the annual School Food Drive in the greater Charlottesville area. In its 13th year, the drive will run from March 6-22.

The Food Bank has seen a dramatic increase in guest visits this year, and this annual drive will boost food supplies now and throughout the spring when donations traditionally run lower. The food collected helps provide meals for local families. Each month, the Food Bank and its 84 partners throughout the area (including soup kitchens, shelters, nonprofits, and partner pantries) serve more than 22,000 individuals and families experiencing hunger.

Albemarle High School students Emily Warren and Lily Stendig, along with Sofia Smith from Tandem Friends School, are leading this year's efforts in the schools. They want to build on the success of last year's drive, which collected more than 10,000 pounds of food.

"The School Food Drive is really the community coming together and helping each other out," Warren said. "It really shows the impact that you can have as a young person in the community. And I think that's really special and important."

Participating schools for the 2024 drive include:

- Agnor Hurt Elementary School
- Albemarle High School
- Baker Butler Elementary School
- Brownsville Elementary School
- Crozet Elementary School
- Greenbrier Elementary School
- Greer Elementary School
- Henley Middle School
- Monticello High School
- Murray Elementary School
- Peabody School
- Renaissance School
- Scottsville Elementary School
- Staunton Montessori School
- Stone Robinson Elementary School
- Stony Point Elementary School
- Tandem Friends School
- The Covenant School: Upper School
- The International School of Charlottesville
- Waldorf School

“With rising inflation and the rising cost of food, we’re seeing a lot more need; at the same time, we’re seeing a decrease in the number of food drives and donations,” said Livia Marrs, volunteer and food drive manager at the Food Bank. “It’s incredible that these young people are stepping up to advocate for the Food Bank and bring in so much food that will go right back into the community.”

Since the annual School Food Drive began in 2011, the participating schools and organizations have collected 95,378 pounds of food, or the equivalent of 79,482 meals, for neighbors.

Large orange Food Bank collection barrels are located throughout each of the participating schools. To learn more about how to support the 2024 School Food Drive, go to: <https://www.brafb.org/event/school-food-drive/>.

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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 127,500 people per month across 25 counties and eight cities through distribution centers in Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Winchester, and Verona. We’re serving record numbers of Virginians through our network of more than 400 community partners, which includes food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, schools, libraries, healthcare clinics, community centers, and more. 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 partner food bank of Feeding America®, a national association with a network of more than 200 food banks, 21 statewide food bank associations, and over 60,000 partner agencies, food pantries and meal programs. Last year, this charitable food assistance network helped provide 5.2 billion meals to tens of millions of people facing food insecurity. For more information, visit www.brafb.org.