

Adjusting To The Unknown page 3

Voices Of Hope page 5

Laura's Story page 6

2019 - 2020 Board of Directors

PRESIDENT

Jim Mears, CPA

BayPort Credit Union

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Joycelyn Spight Roache

Old Point National Bank

PRESIDENT-ELECT **Dr. Terry Morris**NASA Langley Research Center

VICE-PRESIDENT, ADMINISTRATION **Elizabeth Mulherin**Community Volunteer

VICE-PRESIDENT, DEVELOPMENT

Sylvia Weinstein Craft

Oyster Pointer

SECRETARY/TREASURER
Kenneth Krakaur
Sentara Healthcare, Retired

MEMBER-AT-LARGE **Erik Mills** W.M. Jordan Company

MEMBERS
Tiffany Boyle

Newport News Commissioner of the Revenue

Jayne DiVincenzo Lions Bridge Financial

Andrew Elder Kroger

Dr. Shawn Flanagan Newport News Shipbuilding

Gary Hunter Hampton University

Faye Hardy-Lucas Hampton University

Michael Jacobs Ferguson

Jonathan Toms Smithfield Foods

Jeffrey VerhoefPIVOT Physical Therapy

MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank is to distribute food effectively through collaborative efforts that minimize hunger, promote nutrition and encourage self-reliance through education.



A NOTE FROM KAREN

Dear Friends,

Those of you of a certain age will understand when I say, "What a long, strange trip it's been" from the beginning of March through the writing of this letter. No one could have imagined the impact this pandemic would have on our country and our community. This health crisis created a perfect storm of increased demand, declines in donations of food, and disruptions to the charitable food assistance system's operating model.

Despite these challenges, Virginia Peninsula Foodbank sprang into action -- initiating mass drive-thru, low-contact mobile food pantries; placing orders for purchased food to mitigate the effect of fewer food donations, which were down by 30%; and packing thousands of boxes of food each week, often without volunteers due to personal safety concerns. In April and May, we saw an 88% increase in individuals asking for food assistance, including a 57% increase in the number of children we served. Most of these individuals were new to the Foodbank and our partner agencies. Thankfully, we saw less intensity during the month of May and consistently served 400 households at our frequent drive-thru distributions without having to turn many away.

Throughout all this time, our community has stepped up to provide the resources needed to continue to serve the community, as these circumstances are expected to last anywhere from six to 18 months. Whether the support came in the form of monetary donations, volunteering, or holding food drives when several of our large annual events were cancelled, we felt the warmth of the community. Our media partners WAVY 10, WTKR 3, WVEC 13, Cox Communications, Oyster Pointer, and the Daily Press all highlighted the increased need through frequent Zoom or on-location interviews, virtual food drives, telethons, or grants. We couldn't be more grateful to this group.

Thank you for supporting our vision of a hunger-free and properly nourished community.

Gratefully,

Karen L. Joyner

Karen L. Joyner Chief Executive Officer





LIFE CAN CHANGE IN AN INSTANT

When we produced our Winter 2020 newsletter, we described our role in disaster relief following a weather emergency. A little over a month later, we found ourselves confronting a new and unprecedented challenge: the coronavirus pandemic.

As individuals, families, children, seniors, and veterans experienced disruptions to their lives and incomes in the form of job layoffs, businesses closing, unexpected illness, and children missing school meals, many people who were previously secure financially found themselves needing food assistance.

Food bankers, volunteers and our more than 140 partner agencies have been on the front lines ensuring our neighbors have the food they need during these difficult times. Our partner agencies, when safely able, continued to distribute food at high levels of service, and our volunteers followed enhanced hygiene protocol. With the closure of schools, we began to provide our BackPack Program portable bags of weekend food and Kids Cafe Program prepared meals at local "Grab and Go" meal sites across our community. Finally, we created large-scale community distributions occurring several times each week at stadium and church parking lots, Hampton University, and Busch Gardens, serving up to 400+ households per event.

During this time, we saw many new faces of hunger, with more than 50% of participants in our community pantries being first-time food assistance recipients. Our partner agencies and standard mobile pantries often experienced a 30 to 65% attendance increase – some agencies, even more. With grocery

stores having less food to donate due to higher customer demand, we were tasked with purchasing more food to address a greater need. We are striving to navigate this new challenge, adapting every day.

However, we did not do it alone. We never do it alone.

Individual donors, corporations, and foundations came forward in a significant way to provide the financial resources required to expand our programs. Organizations conducted drive-thru and virtual food drives to provide us with food items to replenish our rapidly diminishing inventory. Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia and H.E.L.P. (Hampton Ecumenical Lodgings and Provisions) have continually picked up and delivered food to homebound individuals, and many of our partner agencies hosted more distributions than usual. Our work is only possible with these partnerships.

Going forward, the need for food assistance will likely stay high even as our economy attempts to reopen. Some jobs may not return, businesses may take a while to recoup revenue losses, the summer brings more time out of school without lunch for children, and deferred expenses will come due for many families. With our community, we will continue to provide help to all who seek support.

Life can change in an instant. However, our Foodbank Family stays constant. We are here for our neighbors in need—because you are here for us. We thank you.



OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE:



Over 20 mass drive-thru food in individuals served

88% increase 57% more children; 16% more seniors; 93% more adults served

April-May



VOICES OF HOPE

"These pantries make me feel optimistic because I hate to think of my kids missing meals. Without these pantries, I don't know what I would do for food. I want to work again. I was on a good road."

"These meals are important to me and many people. It is helping me feed my family while we are short on money. Right now, this food is the only meals we are getting."

"I am homeschooling two children and trying to keep us on top of things money-wise. My husband was furloughed, and we are going through our savings quickly. Coming to these pantries gives us the chance to pay our other bills and still have dinner."



DONATING TIME DURING DIFFICULT DAYS

Volunteers remain essential to our work. With the unique circumstances presented by COVID-19, our volunteers displayed patience and resiliency, adapting to stricter safety measures and work requirements. One such volunteer, Gail Phelps, said that weathering the storm on the frontlines is always worth it to give the gift of a meal and see people smile during turbulent times. Her compassionate perspective was echoed by numerous individuals and groups who responded to our call for help.

We also salute our friends at Atlantic Lift Systems, who offered an isolated space to pack emergency food boxes. To all of our volunteers, we send our heartfelt appreciation. No matter what challenges our community faces, your work gives



hope to our neighbors. Volunteer opportunities can be found at http://hrfoodbank.org/volunteer/



TYROD TAYLOR GIVES BACK

Los Angeles Chargers Quarterback and Hampton native Tyrod Taylor donated \$25,000 from the Tyrod Taylor Foundation to the Foodbank to purchase a truckload of food to feed local families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you, Tyrod, for being a hometown hero on and off the field!

LAURA'S STORY

As Christmas approached, Laura and her family needed help.

With mounting bills, her husband's work hours cut back, and her own job situation in limbo, Laura struggled to feed her family. Her husband told her that someone he encountered at his job told

him about the Foodbank. Laura discounted it at first.

"You are nervous about what it says about you," Laura says. "I also thought it was only for people who were homeless and had no place to live." Eventually, another agency strongly urged her to consider visiting the Foodbank, and Laura agreed to call.

"I had no idea what to do," Laura admits. "But when I called, I was welcomed. They told me they were here for everyone. They described the ways I could get assistance, and I thought, 'That's it? That's all I have to do?' They made me feel at

ease, and once I knew they helped anyone who was falling on hard times, I felt totally comfortable going."

Eventually, Laura started to flourish again, getting a steady job and even returned to her passion for writing and designing book covers. "It was scary," Laura confesses, "But things pick up again, and it's not as scary. It's just nice to know that the Foodbank is there when you are in a predicament."

Laura's job as an employee at a local grocery store gives her a unique perspective on the COVID-19 pandemic. Often, she says, shelves are "literally bare," and she encourages people to be patient with store workers. "We can't replenish what we don't have, but we are doing the best we can," she states.

"They told me they were here for everyone."

She even finds rays of hope within the stressful times. Seeing a gentleman frequently come through the checkout line with large quantities of food, Laura later discovers that he is a pastor who shops each day for the senior citizens in his neighborhood who must stay home to protect their health. "That made my morning," she says with a smile. "People have good hearts."

As for her own family, Laura is anxious, but optimistic. One of her children persevered especially hard in school and will miss having a

formal high school graduation, and her husband's work hours have been reduced again. Still, she knows, based on her own journey from last Christmas until now, that better days inevitably return after tough times.

Laura says, with confidence, "Whenever there is darkness, there is always light at the end of the tunnel."

CHILD NUTRITION

Executive Chef Tyrone Carter and Chef Instructor Latria Logan of Virginia Peninsula Foodbank's Culinary Training Program prepare "grab and go" breakfast and lunch meals for the children during the COVID-19 threat. The Culinary Training Program was temporarily paused to ensure the safety of the staff and students, but Tyrone and Latria continued to prepare these healthy meals each day for children in need.

Over the last three months, the Foodbank has prepared 6,516 breakfast and lunch meals, and the Food for Kids Backpack Program delivered 14,294 bags of easy-to-prepare food for the weekends. The Culinary Program is resuming training in June and will be continuing meal preparation through the end of August and beyond. These programs turn an ordinary day into a nutritious day for children.



The Peninsula's Premier Food Tasting Event TASTEFULLY YOURS

Due to a genuine concern for community health and safety, social distancing restrictions, and disruptions to restaurant operations, we canceled our 27th Tastefully Yours fundraiser for 2020. However, we intend to return stronger than ever in April 2021 to bring you the Peninsula's premier food-tasting event, and we hope to have you come aboard once again as we cruise to end hunger.

Take a look at our list of wonderfully generous sponsors, and please consider supporting our participating local restaurants as they work to recover from lost revenue. We look forward to seeing you next year!

Avenue Blue
Backyard Bar-B-Que
Bonefish Grill
Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen
Cookie Text
Cyprus Grille at Embassy Suites
Discover Teas
ECPI Culinary Institute of Virginia
Elizabeth Manor Country Club
Fin Seafood
Foodbank's Culinary Program
Guy Fieri's Dive & Taco Joint
Hayashi Sushi & Grill

Kitchen 740 Marriott at City Center
Kroger & Murray's Cheese
Licking Lipps Catering
Mango Mangeaux
Melting Pot Newport News
Monsoon Eclectic Modern Indian
NEST Kitchen & Tap House Restaurant
Nothing Bundt Cakes
Oysters for Life
Park Lane Tavern
Plaza Azteca
Rajput Indian Cuisine
Rodgers' Puddings

Sabrosa Foods
Salsa's Mexican Grill
Sinful Treats
Smoke BBQ Restaurant & Bar
Starbucks
Sweet Dreams Bakery
The Custom Cake Shoppe
The Grey Goose
Tucanos Brazilian Grill
UNO Pizzeria & Grill
Wing Bistro Chicken and Waffles
Vinny's Pizza & Pasta







411111111



Good food. Responsibly.®





















































WEINSTEIN properties®



KEEP IT SIMPLE SUITES



Boardwalk Photo Booth Company
Coliseum Central
Colonial DJs
Exhibits Inc.
Hampton Roads Convention Center

Holiday Ice











Jeff's Flowers Of Course
Oyster Pointer
PepsiCo
PSAV
Republic National Distributing

Riverside Paper Supply

SignMedia Inc Taylored Printing News3 WTKR/WGNT Virginia Golf Carts & Batteries

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

The saying, "It takes a village" has become a reality during this unprecedented time. The amazing support we have witnessed from our community is such a beautiful display of the kindness and caring that exists among us. When social distancing became essential, organizations, businesses, and individuals presented new and creative ways to collect food and funds to care for their hungry neighbors. They conducted drive-thru and virtual food drives, used online retailers, such as Amazon, YouGiveGoods, and Walmart, and created a t-shirt fundraiser through CustomInk.com. Our community stepped up, responded, and demonstrated that by working together we are stronger and better!

A special shout out goes to Ace Hardware, C.A. Barrs, Casey Auto Group, Hampton Citizens' Unity Commission, Langley Federal Credit Union, Katie Gaylord, Kristin Reynolds, Riverside Health System, and the YMCA of the Virginia Peninsulas.



VISIT HRFOODBANK.ORG FOR WAYS TO HELP



2401 Aluminum Avenue Hampton, VA 23661 757-596-7188 hrfoodbank.org















"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."