

Summer 2021

VIRGINIA PENINSULA
Foodbank

Food
first

Inspiring Hope, Feeding Families



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Inside Our New School Market Initiative

2020 - 2021 Board of Directors

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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 & TERRY



Dear Friends,

As we slowly emerge from one of the most challenging periods in the history of our region, our nation, and our world, Virginia Peninsula Foodbank is confidently prepared to focus on the future needs of the community. While these past months were immensely difficult, the lessons learned and the long-term investments we have made will help us to be more resilient, innovative, and adaptable into the future. As a result of our existing programs as well as the new programs about which you will read in this newsletter, we hope to see a future in which hunger is no longer a reality for our neighbors, and proper nutrition becomes the norm.

Our goal is to radically improve access to our services through programs that are equitable and dignified. We will be bringing more nutritious produce and protein to neighborhoods and families through our refrigerated trailers and our School Produce Markets. We are continuing to lift up our partner agencies with added resources and culturally-relevant foods that our neighbors in need would choose for themselves under different circumstances.

As stewards of your gifts of time, food, and funds, we acknowledge that we are not in this work alone. We will never forget how you made a difference during the hardest of times. Thank you for your part in helping us move closer to our vision of a hunger-free and properly nourished community.

Warmest regards,

Karen L. Joyner
Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Terry Morris
Board President

"The food I receive is absolutely precious to me. I don't know what I would do at the end of the month if you all did not come here. I work part-time, but I have a tough time meeting all my needs. I like how you all deliver the food to my apartment to keep everybody safe. Thank you for making a difference in my life each month." --A resident at one of our food distribution sites at a low-income senior citizen apartment complex

In the Market for Fresh Produce



We were excited to launch a new program this spring to get first-quality, in-season produce out into the community.

School Markets have started at three schools in our area, filled with fresh fruits and vegetables that promote good nutrition and healthy eating. During one afternoon each month, the School Market opens at Surry Elementary in Dendron, Discovery STEM Elementary in Newport News, and Cary Elementary in Hampton. The purpose is to provide nutritional support to 50 families at each of the school sites monthly. This program will launch again in the fall for the new school year.



At each distribution, the School Market will feature a fresh fruit or vegetable that is being harvested. Participating families will also receive cooking demonstrations of the harvested food and recipes.

During the opening month of May, the featured fruit was strawberries. In addition, each family received apples, a package of baby carrots, several heads of broccoli crowns, a package of grape tomatoes, onions, oranges, and green butterhead lettuce. Market produce will vary from month to month, but it will always be fresh, nutritious, and right from the School Market stand! "To have fresh fruits and vegetables available to our students and families was such a blessing," said Ann Marie Nelin, Surry Elementary School Principal. "The students enjoyed 'shopping' with their parents to pick out their favorites, which was overwhelmingly the fresh strawberries! The families were truly grateful for this opportunity, and we look forward to your return."



A MAP TO EQUITY

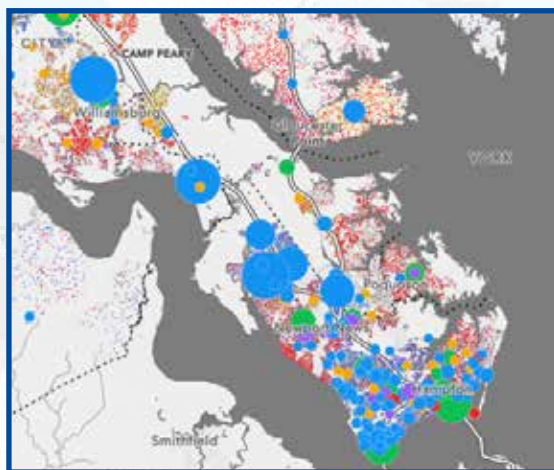
Prior to the pandemic, the Foodbank received repeated calls from specific communities in need of help. We were certain that we were already serving these communities. It turned out we needed to do more advertising so residents knew where to go, raising the question of whether there were “gaps” in access across our local service area. Thanks to a Feeding America grant, we were able to partner with Dr. Johnny Finn from CNU on a GIS Mapping Project. Dr. Finn and his team mapped all of our partner agencies, mobile food pantries, senior sites and child feeding sites.

One outcome of this project identified gap areas where there were few mobile pantries or partner agencies with capacity to meet community needs. We specifically noticed that we need more service opportunities in the southeastern portion of Newport News and in the Lackey region of upper York County. In addition, several of our smaller partner agencies lack refrigeration and freezer storage space to provide high quality perishable food items. To address this, the Foodbank purchased four refrigerated trailers that will be used to provide fresh produce and frozen products to communities that normally rely on their local pantries for canned and dry products only. We will have the ability to load the trailers and drop them off at a designated location for use during a food distribution. When the distribution is over, the Foodbank will pick up and clean the trailers so they are ready for use again.

The mapping project also showed racial disparities among those in need. We saw our neighbors in need residing in areas of greater financial affluence with few minorities receiving greater quantities

of higher quality food, as compared to those residing in low income, high minority communities. The introduction of refrigerated trailers will also help ensure a more equitable distribution of food.

In addition, the Foodbank requested feedback from partner agencies and our neighbors in need. The survey revealed a need for more culturally-relevant food. To meet this need, the Foodbank began purchasing culturally-relevant food for the different ethnic groups we serve on the Peninsula, including African-American, Asian, and Hispanic populations. We also selected a variety of quick-fix and pop-top products that don’t require access to a full kitchen and minimal cooking or heating for our homeless population.



During the early days of the pandemic, the Foodbank saw an increase in collaborative efforts among our partner agencies. Notably, one of our larger agencies with huge storage capacity began to pick up and store food for both their pantry and several surrounding partner agencies. The Foodbank decided to replicate this model among our smaller partner agencies through the sharing of resources such as use of parking lots, volunteers, reporting, and storage. The pandemic has disproportionately

impacted smaller agencies that rely on seniors to run their pantries and community donations to remain in operation. We believe collaboration between the smaller agencies will combine resources to increase capacity for greater service. All of these initiatives are efforts to promote equality, diversity and inclusion via the food assistance services we make available throughout the Peninsula. We rely on our 145 partner agencies to expand our reach well beyond what we could achieve alone.

TYROD TAYLOR FOUNDATION: HOMETOWN HERO

Hampton native, Virginia Tech alumnus, and current NFL quarterback for the Houston Texans, Tyrod Taylor, partnered with Kroger and Virginia Peninsula Foodbank through his Tyrod Taylor Foundation and hosted five food distributions in April, May, and June at Bassett Elementary and Hampton High School, his alma maters. These food distributions are part of Taylor’s ongoing commitment to serving the community in which he was raised and to give back to the people, schools, and neighborhoods that have special meaning to him. The compassion for his community helped 713 households or 2,400 individuals. Partnerships are so important to our work; it makes all of us stronger. Tyrod, Kroger and Virginia Peninsula Foodbank are a winning team for our community.



DELIVERED FROM THE HEART

Karen Watson remembers that every time her family received food assistance, someone had to deliver the food. Today, she delivers food to others.

As a Child Nutrition Driver, Karen delivers meals daily to school and community sites to nourish children in need through the Foodbank's Kids Cafe Program. During the summer, she will bring breakfast and lunch each day to children in community summer programs as part of the Summer Food Service Program. A single parent, Karen says that the Foodbank's child nutrition programs have helped her family in the past, especially towards the ends of many months when resources were low.

"I was always touched that someone was delivering the food I received at an agency, housing management office, or for my kids at school for the Backpack Program," Karen says. "It does my heart good to give back, and I am grateful and thankful for the opportunity. Imagine children wondering if they will get their next meal! It means a lot being of service to children in need."

Also a 2015 graduate of the Foodbank's rigorous Culinary Training Program, Karen loved the fast-paced environment and the fact that she earned a ServSafe Managers Certification to advance her career. She has worked in fast food restaurant management, at Hampton University's large-scale kitchen serving students and guests, and even started a catering business using a church kitchen behind her home. She advises current and future students in the program to "control yourself and put your energy into what

you are doing. You will get flustered, but take your time, stay focused, and things will flow." She also notes that the program is an exact replica of the professional kitchen work environment that graduates will eventually join.

Possessing a love for cooking since childhood, Karen admits that her own mother "did what she had to do," marveling at how she would transform the canned goods she received from charitable organizations during difficult periods into "something scrumptious" for Karen and her three sisters. "She made the food hers," Karen states proudly, "and when she had extra, she would feed relatives and neighbors."

One of Karen's priorities even before becoming employed at the Foodbank has been to let other parents know of food assistance resources that can help feed their families. She emphasizes to them that they should not let their personal pride stand in the way of getting help and that they will not lose SNAP benefits or other sources of support because they used the Foodbank's agencies, pantries, or school programs.

"Children can't focus on education when they are hungry," Karen says. "They don't have what their body needs. Every day I get to give something to them that will help them feel better and learn better. I know what it's like to be hungry. If somebody's child is hungry, and I can help them, then I know I've done something right."



PLANNED GIVING

Leaving a Legacy of Nourishment and Hope

When you hear about people facing hunger and having to make the difficult choice between paying a utility bill or purchasing nutritious food, you want to make a difference in their lives immediately. But what about tomorrow and the next day and into the future? You can make a lasting impact on the fight against hunger by leaving your legacy to Virginia Peninsula Foodbank in the form of a Planned Giving gift in your will. By doing so, you are helping to strengthen and ensure the future of the Foodbank, allowing us to continue fighting hunger in our community for years to come.

Supporting the Foodbank through your estate plans may provide financial and tax benefits for you. Your support directly strengthens the 200 feeding programs administered by the Foodbank, which provides over 10 million meals annually.

THREE MAIN WAYS TO GIVE TO VIRGINIA PENINSULA FOODBANK

- **A DIRECT GIFT OR PLEDGE** from you to Virginia Peninsula Foodbank provides support today or over a period of time to our hunger relief initiatives.
- **A GIFT THROUGH YOUR ESTATE PLAN** can be made through your will or revocable trust or a beneficiary designation of assets, such as a retirement plan or life insurance policy.
- **A LIFE-INCOME GIFT** provides you and/or others with regular payments to meet your current or retirement financial needs while also supporting Virginia Peninsula Foodbank's efforts to alleviate hunger.

"Money was very tight when I was a child. However, I don't remember being hungry. I can't imagine such a condition. As I needed to consider my financial legacy, Virginia Peninsula Foodbank is now one of the beneficiaries of my will. I'm unlikely to regret that designation. I hope that, because of my decision, recipients of my legacy will one day say, 'I don't remember being hungry.'" said Sandra L. Clements

Planning today ensures that your assets are put to their best philanthropic use and distributed in a way that reflects your most cherished values. Your support will help ensure that all people receive the care and respect that they deserve. By creating a legacy for the hungry you will play a critical role in Virginia Peninsula Foodbank's vital work in the years to come.

When considering a planned gift, we recommend that you consult your attorney or financial planner.

DOUBLE YOUR GIFT WITH EMPLOYER MATCH

Many companies offer employees a matching gift opportunity to double or sometime triple the impact, making your gift provide more meals to families in need. When you make an on-line donation, you can see if your employer will match your donation by using the "Search Company Name" block on the donation page. Some companies may also match your donation if you volunteer and if you have retired. If your company does match, please follow the prompts to complete the matching gift process. If your company doesn't match, this might be an opportunity to suggest to your employer. Some of our local matching companies include Lowe's, Home Depot, Verizon, Dominion Energy, GEICO, Bank of America, Textron, United Services Automobile Assoc, SKF USA, State Farm, CIGNA, Unilever, AT&T, UnitedHealth Group, Walmart Stores and SAM's Club.



LISA'S STORY



Last year at Thanksgiving, Lisa scrolled through social media and saw a post about helping people who needed food in an entirely different state. Still wanting to help, she decided to look locally for opportunities to help those in need and stumbled upon Virginia Peninsula Foodbank.

Since then, Lisa has been an active volunteer. Retired from the military, she missed making a difference in people's lives. She enjoys helping others through hardships, returning the favor from when she needed a helping hand early on in her life. She says, "Volunteering is so important to me because it feels good. It feels like I am really making a difference."

Lisa loves to volunteer at all type of events and activities. The senior citizens' apartment complexes hold a special place in her heart because she knows that some senior citizens do not

receive many visitors. She wants to be there for them beyond simply handing out food, often holding small conversations or helping them read prescription labels. She states, "It is all about making them feel better and making them laugh, even if just for five minutes."

Volunteering with seniors is highly precious to Lisa, and she enjoys seeing the process of food assistance from start to finish. From packing food bags, to delivering them to people in need, she pays attention to where the help comes from, where it goes, and whom she is helping.

Lisa treasures the relationships gained with other volunteers, knowing they all share a value for helping people. She says, "Volunteering with the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank is rewarding from all angles."



FEEDING AMERICA CEO VISIT



We were honored to host Feeding America CEO Claire Babineaux-Fontenot at our Foodbank for a tour and discussion of our work to alleviate food insecurity across the greater Peninsula. We were also joined by several members of our Board of Directors and U.S. Congressman Bobby Scott to welcome Claire at her first stop in the Hampton Roads region. Our Foodbank is a proud member of the Feeding America network, a collaboration of 200 food banks throughout the United States. Feeding America provides us with best practices, operational support, food and fund partnerships, advocacy efforts, and numerous opportunities to work together with other food banks to draw on our collective experiences in order to support our communities with food assistance programs.

Pulling Together

We never accomplish our mission alone. Our community comes together to conduct fundraisers and food drives that make our hunger relief work possible.



Carrot Tree Kitchens Read to Feed



Casey Auto supports Jersey Mike's Month of Giving



Hauser's Jewelers Be Happy Be Fit Campaign



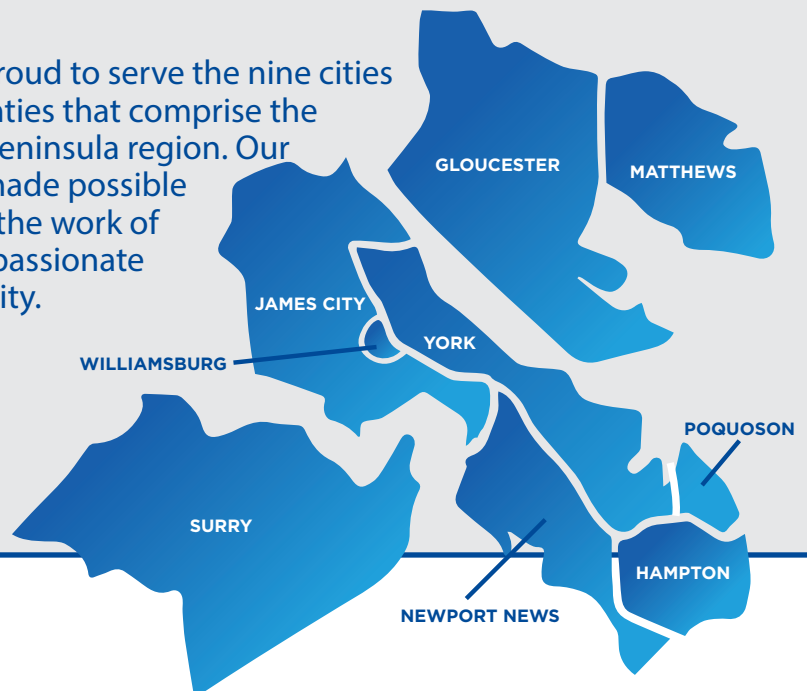
CAVA's Grand Openings



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We are proud to serve the nine cities and counties that comprise the greater Peninsula region. Our work is made possible through the work of our compassionate community.



VAPenFoodbank



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