

Summer 2023



Helping When the Need is Great



2022 - 2023 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 & JONATHAN



Dear Friends,

Recently, the latest food insecurity statistics were published which showed that the food insecure population across the greater Virginia Peninsula had decreased from 10.2% of the total population to 8.8%. That's great news! However, while we applaud any progress we make in ensuring that each individual has the nutrition they need, this news should have an asterisk behind it. Because of the incredible need that we are currently seeing at our mobile pantries, at partner agencies, and here at the Foodbank, those of us working in the hunger relief space were scratching our heads about this decrease. We realized that during the COVID-19 pandemic, multiple Federal programs were in place to combat the economic effects of the pandemic, including special food programs and additional allocations of SNAP benefits. Families and individuals truly were more food secure under these programs.

Now the Federal programs have ended and the effects are being felt in real time. On top of the termination of these programs, rising prices have intensified the need. We are seeing incredibly high numbers of individuals who are accessing food from us and our partner agencies, resulting in bare shelves in our warehouse. For the 11 months ending on May 31st, more than 101,000 household visits for food assistance were made to our mobile pantries, to the Foodbank, and to our partner agencies. We are in great need of food donations at this time to keep up with the need.

Included in this newsletter are stories of people and programs that work towards bringing down the rate of food insecurity in our community. As you read these stories, you will meet staff, volunteers, culinary students, and partner agencies as well as learn how we use your funds to assist our partner agencies and bring in new, innovative processes to improve our efficiency.

We count it as a privilege every single day to continue reaching hungry people with the nutrition they need and to have you standing with us, especially now, when the demand for food assistance is so great. Whether the need is 10.2% or 8.8%, the number of men, women, and children who are facing hunger is high. Thankfully, every \$1 donated provides 3 meals, which means you have the opportunity to impact many lives through your partnership with us.

Gratefully,

Karen L. Joyner
Chief Executive Officer

Jonathan Toms
Board President

STAMP OUT HUNGER

Thank you to our local carriers, United Healthcare for sponsoring the bags, and the community for donating almost 48,000 pounds of non-perishable food items in support of the 31st NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive held on May 13th. The donations equate to 40,000 meals. Your support means families and seniors in need will have healthy meals.



SERVING UP HOPE

Sharina Perry's yummy chili recipe earned first place at the recent Hampton Roads Winery Chili Cookoff, as voted on by a panel of judges as well as winery guests. Sharina's winning recipe was available at the Virginia Diner Restaurant during this fundraising event to support the Foodbank. Giving has never been so tasty!

If you would like to host a fundraiser at work, school, place of worship or at an event, visit <https://hrfoodbank.org> to access the Ways To Give tool kit that provides great ideas on getting started on a fundraiser and/or setting up an online peer-to-peer fundraiser. Incorporating social media or asking your employer to match your donations always adds a boost to your giving campaign.



INVESTING IN OUR VETERANS



BayPort Credit Union's continued partnership with Virginia Peninsula Foodbank to support the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program will help provide additional healthy food items to homebound veterans. The HUD-VASH Program, run locally by the Hampton VA Medical Center, will deliver monthly food boxes to nearly 500 local homebound veteran households this year alone. BayPort Credit Union's \$10,000 donation will help enhance the monthly food boxes to include meat, milk, dairy, and produce products.

Pictured are representatives from HUD-VASH, BayPort Credit Union, and Virginia Peninsula Foodbank.

CLOSING THE CASE ON HUNGER



This year's participants of the 2023 Statewide Legal Food Frenzy competition are listed below. Everyone is a winner in the fight against hunger.

DolanReid, PLLC
Hampton Commonwealth Attorney's Office
Harty Jewell, PLLC
Huffman and Huffman Brothers-in-Law
Kaufman & Canoles (Regional Winner)
Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia

Newport News City Attorney's Office
Newport News Commonwealth's Attorney's Office
Newport News Public Defender's Office
William and Mary Law School
Sands Anderson Williamsburg



MAKING FOOD EASILY ACCESSIBLE FOR SENIORS

Based on Feeding America's latest Map the Meal Gap 2022, Virginia is home to more than 105,000 seniors with low incomes experiencing food insecurity - or having limited access to enough food to live a healthy lifestyle. The greater Peninsula is no exception to this alarming concern of food insecurity amongst our senior population. Annually, Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, along with our partner agencies, provide food assistance to over 12,000 seniors, which accounts for 25% of those we serve. Basically, 1 in 4 seniors in our service area are reaching out for help on a regular basis. Those who used to give to the Foodbank are now needing the Foodbank.

Seniors face many unique challenges when it comes to accessing healthy food. Unfortunately, many of those challenges involve making difficult choices between food and medicine or paying for the basic essentials. Food often takes the back burner leaving seniors with buying unhealthy food. These difficult decisions could end up having harmful effects on their health and wellbeing. Food insecurity increases the risk of multiple chronic health conditions. Without proper nutrition, seniors are faced with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease, and other serious health conditions.

"I really appreciate the mobile pantry every month. The fruits and vegetables especially help me a lot because I have to be on a special diet for my diabetes. I actually make salads and add vegetables to my sandwiches, and I would never be able to do that unless I got them here."

Our neighbors in need are the center of our mission. We want to get in front of food insecurity before the onset of a chronic illness by providing healthy food items such as fresh vegetables and produce, which are items that many seniors struggle to afford when living on a fixed income.

Judy, a senior who struggles with chronic arthritis, states that "I either don't pay for the medicine and have weeks of pain, or I watch my money go quickly and struggle at the end of the month. I can afford to keep the lights on and take care of basic expenses, but I don't have money for much else. I used to be generous with people. Now, I really have to cut back." When the Foodbank first came to her apartment for the scheduled monthly mobile food pantry, Judy did not attend and get food. "I always feel like others are in more need than me, and I never want to take from them. It is hard for me to take charity anyway."

One of the ways we are feeding seniors is by bringing the food to their community through our Mobile Food Pantry Program. Many seniors live alone, do not have any means of transportation, and are living on just social security alone. Therefore, each month, the Foodbank arrives at low-income senior communities with food packages, protein, produce and dairy products to help supplement their grocery purchases.

"Most American senior citizens have worked for decades. They've earned the right to have financial and food security in their golden years. It's sad that food insecurity exists among seniors. However, I'm happy we can help alleviate and address their challenges," states Nicole Singleton, Director of Agency Services.

With dedicated staff, volunteers and your support, the food packages are delivered to over 1,000 homes each month at 12 senior communities. By supporting Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, you are helping seniors live a healthier and stronger lifestyle.

FOODBANK TO THE RESCUE

Reducing food waste is an important part of reducing food insecurity on the Peninsula. Our Foodbank is committed to working with community partners to reduce waste and redirect resources to families in need. This is the founding aim of the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Program and is especially important when nearly 40% of the food supply in the United States is wasted.

The Neighbor-to-Neighbor Program connects Foodbank partner agencies with local grocery stores for direct store pickups. When stores are unable to sell products based on box damage, best-by dates, or product rebranding, we collect the food that would otherwise be discarded. "Kroger is proud to work with food bank partners to optimize our food waste rescue program and together address food insecurity in our communities. Every day, our associates set aside surplus fresh food for local organizations to pick up, and our food bank partners are critical in redistributing that food to homes that need it most," states James Menees, Kroger Corporate Affairs Manager.



The vast majority of food rescued from grocery stores is still usable and of good quality. We reclaimed close to 4 million pounds of food last year. Our grocery partnerships include: ALDI, BJ's Wholesale Club, Costco, Farm Fresh, Flowers Bakery, Food Lion, Fresh Market, Harris Teeter, Kroger, Lidl, Pepsi Bottling Company, Publix, Sam's Club, Target, Trader Joe's, Walmart, Whole Foods, and our local military commissaries.

In addition to grocery stores, we work with restaurants that have prepared excess food that they are unable to sell, connecting them with partner agencies that will collect the food. Thousands of pounds of food have been saved through the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Program with Manhattan Bagel, Starbucks, Chick-fil-a, Wawa, and KFC.

We remain eager to grow our community partnerships to rescue as much food as possible for those in need.



SAME (So All May Eat) of Hampton Baptist Church is one of Virginia Peninsula Foodbank's valued partner agencies. Seventy-five percent of their food distributions are home deliveries to neighbors without transportation. In an effort to improve the logistics of our partner agencies' food distributions and to distribute healthier food, the Foodbank provides refrigerated trailers that are dropped off at the agency prior to their

distribution events. For SAME, who utilizes the trailers monthly, the Foodbank brings a trailer packed with fresh produce, frozen items, and shelf-stable food. This allows the volunteers to package up all the food bags for their home deliveries. By utilizing these trailers, our neighbors get healthier foods faster, the distribution is more efficient, and volunteers are used more effectively.

CULINARY CERTIFICATION

The Culinary Training Program was established by the Virginia Peninsula Food Bank in September 2011 as a workforce development opportunity for adults experiencing financial hardship to make a positive change in their lives. Virginia Peninsula Food Bank is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The program is approved by the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation.



American Culinary Federation
Education Foundation
Approved Program

CHANGING LIVES

Cassandra Kelly-Conn, a 2017 graduate of our Culinary Training Program, continues to amaze us with her remarkable perseverance and success. She recently graduated from Virginia Peninsula Community College with a degree in Human Services. This fall Cassandra will be attending Old Dominion University majoring in Human Services with a focus in Addiction Treatment and Prevention with a minor in Public Services to become a Community Agency Counselor in order to help those who are confronting the substance abuse issues she once faced and eventually conquered. Cassandra tells us, "I spent years on this very corner convinced I would never be anything. My purpose is to show others that rock bottom has a trap door. You are not your circumstances. For all those who are still struggling: change is possible. And this is only the beginning of things to come in my life. I'm just getting started."



Virginia's Food Banks are Promoting Health by...

- Receiving referrals from health providers to connect patients to food and benefits assistance
- Ranking the nutritional quality of the foods we provide, and sourcing and distributing more healthy and culturally relevant foods
- Including neighbors facing hunger in our decision-making and tailoring our approaches to better meet their unique needs
- Removing barriers to access for neighbors facing hunger by offering delivery options, expanding hours of operation and service models, and deepening relationships with trusted partners
- Leading our network of 1,000 pantry partners to implement more health-focused and neighbor-centered practices, like offering more fresh produce and nutrition education, via the Healthy Pantry Initiative

... so that Virginians facing hunger can reach their full health potential.

A SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

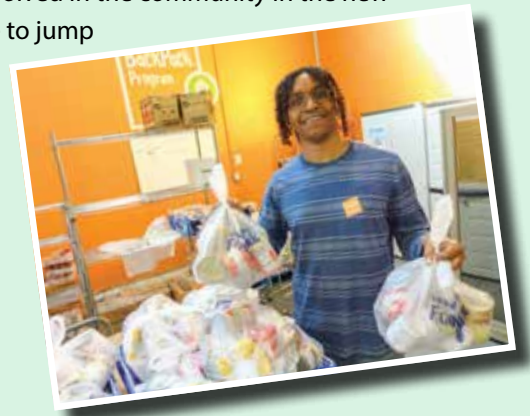
Ruben has been a volunteer with Virginia Peninsula Foodbank since February of 2023. Ruben, who works as a Chemist at US Amines and enjoys video games in his free time, made a commitment to himself to get involved in the community in the new year. "I hadn't done anything last year, but when February hit, I made the initiative to jump into it, and I try to do 3 or 4 events a week," said Ruben. "I've been pretty steady with it since then."

"It's Uplifting and Marvelous"

Known to Foodbank staff and other volunteers for his positive and uplifting spirit, Ruben has volunteered in many different ways. He has volunteered to bag produce, palletize orders, distribute

food at Senior Home and Mobile Pantry Program sites across the Peninsula, and stock shelves on the Partner Agency Shopping Floor. In addition to his volunteer work at the Foodbank, Ruben also volunteers at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, which is one of the Foodbank's partner agencies. "It's about service, more than just for yourself," Ruben said, "It's uplifting and marvelous."

Ruben recommends volunteering to everyone. "It's difficult to volunteer sometimes, but when you have the time, it's the most remarkable thing you can do." We are grateful to Ruben for his commitment to reducing hunger and remaining active in the community. We couldn't do what we do without the help of Ruben and all our volunteers!



SALUTING STAFF YEARS OF SERVICE

25+ YEARS - 10+ YEARS - 5+ YEARS

5 YEARS

Renee Figurelle, Chief Operating Officer
Tracy Hansbrough, Product Sourcing Manager
Latria Logan, Production Chef

10 YEARS

Brian Arndt, Digital Marketing Manager
Karen Joyner, Chief Executive Officer

25 YEARS

Robyn Gowing, Logistics Manager
Antwain Richardson, Inventory Control Specialist



Renee Figurelle, Tracy Hansbrough, Latria Logan, Robyn Gowing,
Antwain Richardson, Karen Joyner, Brian Arndt

Upcoming Events

Every Saturday, April 15 - October 14

Classic Cruisers Car Club Cruise-Ins

Coastal Community Church, Yorktown 4:30pm to 8:00pm

September

Hunger Action Month

November 17th, 18th, 19th

Mayflower Marathon Holiday Food Drive

April 11th, 2024

Tastefully Yours

WAYS TO GIVE

VISIT HRFOODBANK.ORG

Your generous donation helps feed hungry children, seniors, families, and veterans across the Greater Peninsula. Virginia Peninsula Foodbank welcomes all types of gifts, and we are happy to work with you and your financial adviser to maximize the tax benefits and value of your gift to the Foodbank. Every dollar makes a difference.



Gifts of Cash



Super Heroes
Become Monthly
Donors



Gifts of
Marketable
Securities



Gifts from
Donor Advised
Funds, IRA's, etc.



Legacy Gifts
Bequests
Through a
Will or Trust



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AMERICA**

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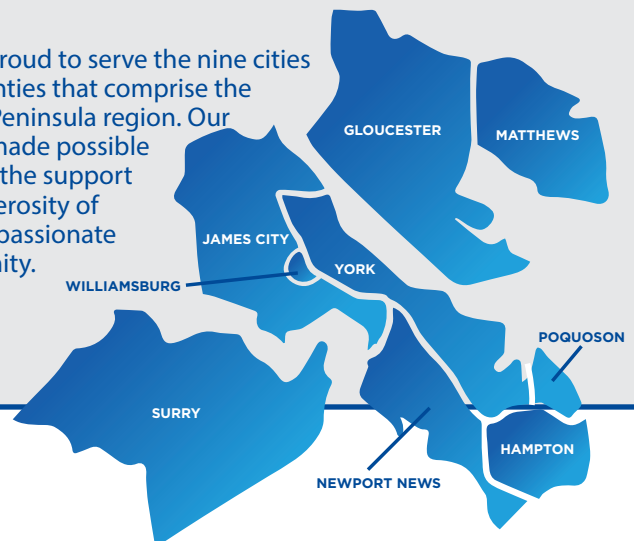
Hampton, VA 23661

757-596-7188

hrfoodbank.org



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



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