

Summer 2026

40 VIRGINIA PENINSULA Foodbank

Est. 1986

Years of Nourishing Our Community

1986-2026
BUILDING A HEALTHY
COMMUNITY FOR ALL

July 2025 - June 2026 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 BOB

Dear Friends,

It is an honor to write you this letter as we commemorate the 40th anniversary of service at Virginia Peninsula Foodbank. Since 1986, the Foodbank has been a community staple on the Peninsula for our neighbors experiencing food insecurity, and our four decades of impact has only been possible with the generous and compassionate support of our donors, partner agencies, and volunteers. Many community leaders, staff members, and Peninsula partners before us have paved the way for us to grow and strengthen our work. This year is also a year of significant milestones in our Foodbank's story. Every milestone has a similar theme – you, our valued community, are integral to our success. It is a pleasure to look back at our history while we also gaze forward at the opportunities ahead.

What you will see in these pages represents all types of people, from all walks of life, from diverse faiths and backgrounds, all coming together to support our mission to nourish and provide hope in the form of healthy meals to those who are experiencing challenges. It takes courage to ask for help, and it takes everyone to build food assistance programs that align with the needs of our community. Thank you to every person and organization who has worked side by side with us to offer the time, talent, and resources that continually empower our neighbors to receive access to healthy, nourishing, and culturally important food. Looking ahead, we stand ready and committed to continuing our legacy of service – a legacy of impact that is the result of countless caring hearts. We remain grateful for your support.

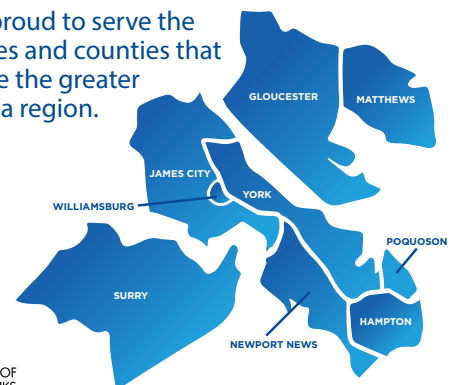
Sincerely,

Bob Latvis
President and CEO



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

We are proud to serve the nine cities and counties that comprise the greater Peninsula region.



40 Years of Service

What started as a small warehouse has grown into a community hub that provides vital food access, education, and support for neighbors across the Peninsula. You are a key part of our history and where we will go next.



1986

FOODBANK OPENS

Virginia Peninsula Foodbank opens its doors at 9912 Hosier St. in Newport News.



1994

FIRST TASTEFULLY YOURS

Local restaurants participate in first food tasting fundraiser to benefit the Foodbank.



1999

KIDS CAFE PROGRAM STARTS

Over 1/3 of the people the Foodbank serves are children. Kids Cafe is one of the Foodbank's childhood nutrition programs that provides 500 hot, nutritionally balanced snacks and suppers daily to after-school programs across the Peninsula.



2011

1ST GRADUATING CLASS FROM THE FOODBANK'S CULINARY TRAINING PROGRAM.

The Virginia Peninsula Foodbank is one of only 30 foodbanks in the U.S. with a nationally-certified Culinary Training Program.



2023

200 MILLION MEALS DISTRIBUTED

More than 200 million healthy meals distributed across the Peninsula since opening in 1986.

1988

FIRST EXPANSION

Expands storage to serve 20,000 people a year.



1997

FIRST MAYFLOWER MARATHON

This November will mark the 30th Annual Mayflower Marathon in partnership with 106.9 FM. Our neighbors come together every year the weekend before Thanksgiving to collect food and funds for families experiencing food insecurity during the holiday season.



2011

NEW BUILDING OPENS

The Foodbank opens its doors at 2401 Aluminum Ave. in Hampton to serve more neighbors through increased cold storage and a new industrial kitchen.



2020

COVID-19

As the pandemic disrupted daily life on the Peninsula, the Foodbank quickly adapted its operations to keep the community safe while continuing to provide access to nourishing food.



2025

COMMUNITY PANTRY OPENS

Designed with the understanding that food security and health are connected, the Community Pantry at Sentara Community Care Center provides both a shopping experience for neighbors and nutrition education.



*Here's to the past 40 years.
Thank you for being part of our story.*

Building a Healthy Community for All

How the Foodbank Helps Create Paths to Food Security

In August of 2024, Mrs. Hemby suffered a mini stroke on her way to work. After doctors found an aneurysm in her brain, she was put on short-term disability, and six months later transferred to long-term disability. The shift in her income sent her finances, as she put it, “into a downward spiral.” She was referred to the Foodbank’s Community Pantry, where she picked up nutrition education pamphlets for hypertension, diabetes, and cholesterol. With access to resources needed to manage her health, Mrs. Hemby took it from there.

“I started to follow the directions in the hypertension pamphlet, and the Foodbank actually allowed me to follow it because I was able to get fresh ginger, lemons and limes—the foods I needed that I could not afford because of the inflation of food prices and my decrease in my pay. I not only lost weight and lowered my blood pressure naturally, I got my life back and out of depression,” she told us. “I wanted the foodbank to know your program is not only changing lives but also saving lives.”



The Community Pantry opened in early 2025 at the Sentara Community Care Center, connecting food security to positive health outcomes and focusing on offering fresh, nourishing food that supports a healthy diet. This important partnership is one of

the many ways the Foodbank has adapted over the years to meet the changing needs of the community. “We’ve moved from transactional to transformative,” explains Nicole Todd, Chief Programs Officer.

Since the Foodbank opened forty years ago, we’ve learned that hunger and food insecurity don’t exist in isolation. It takes more than cans to support a neighbor experiencing food insecurity. Health, housing, transportation, education, and employment all affect a person’s ability to access the food needed to live a healthy, thriving life. Centering our neighbors’ needs and building out from there is at the heart of our programs.

That evolution can be seen in the Foodbank’s Mobile Food Pantry program. Martha Inge, former Mobile Food Pantry Coordinator and current Receptionist for the Foodbank, recalls when mobile pantries relied on excess bakery items from grocery stores, including sheet cakes and breads. Over several years, she worked with the Foodbank Operations team to start ordering produce and acquiring other nutrient-dense items to distribute instead. Fresh produce is now 40% of all the food that the Foodbank distributes.

“

I not only lost weight and lowered my blood pressure naturally, I got my life back and out of depression,”

-Mrs. Hemby



40 YEARS IN NUMBERS

Four decades of building a stronger,
healthier Peninsula



230,474,760
MEALS PROVIDED
to children, families, seniors,
veterans, and other neighbors
experiencing food insecurity.



5 MILLION+
VOLUNTEER HOURS
spent packing boxes, bagging
produce, delivering meals to schools
and seniors, sorting donations, and
lending a helping hand to support the
Foodbank's mission in countless ways.



300+
GRADUATES
of the Foodbank's Culinary
Training Program, which
prepares adults of all ages with
the skills and knowledge needed
to excel in the workforce.



120
PARTNER AGENCIES
working alongside the
Foodbank every week to
strengthen food security across
the Peninsula.



11+
PROGRAMS
created to remove barriers and
improve access to fresh, nutritious
food, including the Community Food
Pantry, Food Lockers available 24/7 at
Sentara, DoorDash delivery program,
and School Produce Markets.



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COMMUNITY
coming together to help each
other build a brighter,
healthier Peninsula.

*Thank you to every volunteer, partner, donor, and neighbor
who has made the last 40 years possible.*



"We tried to find things that make people's lives better," said Martha. "We uplift people through food."



In 2011, after moving into a brand-new building with an industrial kitchen, the Foodbank launched its first workforce development initiative, the Culinary Training Program. Jacquelyn Linder, Director of Nutrition Programs, shaped the program into a free, rigorous 12-week course that does much more than teach participants how to cook. They are learning work ethic and life skills to build a path to self-sufficiency.

"Much of it is about a person's dreams," she says. "We give them the skills, the tools, and then let them make up their mind what to do with it."

While the students are learning how to work with others in a kitchen, they are also preparing up to 500 snacks and suppers a day for the Foodbank's Kids Cafe program. Graduates of the Culinary Training Program have gone on to open their own businesses, start food trucks, and cook in restaurant kitchens.

"Foodbanks have done an excellent job in making food assistance practical," says Jacquelyn. "We're intentional about what our neighbors' needs are and building programs around that."

As our programs evolve, the mission remains the same. At the opening of the Foodbank in 1986, keynote speaker former State Sen. Robert C. Scott remarked about hunger on the Peninsula, "There is a need not seen since the Great Depression." We've come a long way since then.

"To address food insecurity, your local foodbank has to be at the table," Nicole reminds us. With your support, the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank always will be.



Since 1994, Tastefully Yours has brought together local restaurants, businesses, volunteers, and community members to support the Foodbank's mission. From *A Night in Paris* to *Mardi Gras* to this year's 30th anniversary *Wizard of Oz: There's No Place Like Home* celebration, the event has become a cherished Peninsula tradition. Thanks to loyal sponsors like Newport News Shipbuilding, restaurants like Rajput that have participated every year, and the enthusiasm of our community, Tastefully Yours has raised funds to provide millions of meals for local families.

"THEY TOLD US WE ONLY HAD TWO OR THREE YEARS, AND THEN IT'LL RUN ITS COURSE. INSTEAD IT JUST KEPT GROWING," SAID ANDY COHEN, ONE OF THE EVENT'S FOUNDERS.



PAT FREEMAN & ANDY COHEN
ORIGINAL TASTEFULLY YOURS COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Celebrating 30 Years of Tastefully Yours!

A LEGACY OF SERVICE

So All May Eat

SAME offers a safe, interfaith space where the community can gather and connect over a shared meal.



When you walk through the doors of Hampton Baptist Church on a Monday afternoon, you're immediately greeted by friendly faces and the comforting smell of a home-cooked meal. Longtime neighbors of downtown Hampton likely already know So All May Eat (SAME), which operates out of Hampton Baptist. Volunteers have been serving lunch to the community every Monday during the school year since the 1960s.

The program has grown substantially since its origins. What began as a weekly meal has become a community haven where more than 120 neighbors can access a clothing closet, food pantry, hygiene products, pastoral counseling, and transportation assistance. On the second Tuesday of each month, SAME operates a mobile food pantry, distributing 50 pounds of groceries to every registered family. For those without transportation, volunteers deliver food directly to their homes.

"It's grown from the needs of our neighbors and the community, as opposed to something we thought we should do," said Amy Witcover-Sandford, SAME Coordinator since 2007. "We couldn't do this without the Foodbank."

The Virginia Peninsula Foodbank partners with 120 agencies across the Peninsula. Through these partnerships, agencies can pick up food to meet the needs of their neighbors experiencing food insecurity. Hampton Baptist was the second organization to register as a partner agency with the Foodbank. That relationship has strengthened both programs over the years.

"They are a phenomenal partner and a model agency," said Paula Kerr, Agency Services Coordinator for the Foodbank. "They now train newer partner agencies."

Amy has been invested in hunger relief since she started working at a soup kitchen in New York City, where she learned lessons that eventually led her to SAME. "I met people there just like me," she said. "It broke down any stereotypes I had."

SAME's food pantry offers neighbors a selection of, shelf-stable items, fresh produce, and frozen meats. In the clothing closet, neighbors can select shirts, pants, coats, shoes, and special items for job requirements or important events.

As the Foodbank marks 40 years of service, Amy is looking to the next 40 with a vision for even deeper community care. She hopes together we can help our neighbors navigate administrative, transportation, language, and other barriers that prevent them from accessing assistance programs.

"I hope we come to those facing food insecurity and walk with them. Go with them to get their birth certificate to register for SNAP. I hope there is community at all levels."



VOLUNTEERS: THE FACE OF THE FOODBANK

Last year alone, volunteers contributed over 34,000 hours of service. From middle school students to retirees and everyone in between, we couldn't do what we do without you.



GAIL

Mobile Pantry Volunteer

"We never have a pantry where people are not always thanking us, and I say, 'No, thank YOU.'"

Gail Burney volunteers at many of the mobile pantry and senior apartment distribution sites each month, helping ensure families and seniors have access to the food they need. As a former school cafeteria manager, she knows how food insecurity impacts people of all ages and is passionate about continuing to serve in the community. At every distribution, she is always ready to greet neighbors with a warm smile.

FIND US HERE:



VANNESSA

Community Pantry Volunteer

"Being a senior citizen and labeled as disabled, I didn't want that to hold me back. Everyone has something they can give or share. You don't know how just you being there volunteering your time, talking to somebody, can change their day."

Vannessa Flemming was one of the first volunteers to sign up when the Community Pantry opened in January 2025. Since then, she has been there every Tuesday and Thursday, eager to assist neighbors as they shop and provide a listening ear. She compares the experience to a food pharmacy.

THE VOICE BEHIND THE MAYFLOWER MARATHON IN MEMORY OF MIKE ARLO

Our community was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of long-time friend, beloved rock DJ, and champion of the Foodbank, Mike Arlo.

Arlo was front and center for the very first 106.9 The Fox & FM99 Mayflower Marathon food drive in 1997, fostering community spirit year after year across the Peninsula. His joyful demeanor inspired people to come out every holiday season and give their time and resources to help our neighbors experiencing food insecurity. The tradition will celebrate its 30th year November 20th-22nd.

Arlo's impact on the community is immeasurable. He provided the soundtrack to so many of our memories and helped fill holiday tables for thousands of families. Last year alone, the Mayflower Marathon raised enough food and funds to provide over one million meals across Hampton Roads.

We will miss hearing his memorable voice, listening to his great stories, sharing a coffee and donut with him, and seeing his signature thumbs up. His kindness and magnetic spirit will be felt by so many of us this November and for many years to come.

