

Winter 2021



Food first

Inspiring Hope, Feeding Families



**35 Years of Nourishing
Our Community 1986-2021**

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,

COVID-19 has presented a complex crisis of increased demand, declines in donations of food and disruptions to our operating model. We have seen elevated need these past 12 months and, for some, the recovery may take years. One in seven of our neighbors across the greater Peninsula may struggle with hunger this year. This includes more than 79,000 individuals, an increase of 20,000 due to the impact of COVID-19.

Generous support has enabled us to be proactive in meeting the economic challenges resulting from the health crisis. We have increased mobile pantry distributions and increased our purchased food budget to meet rising demand. We have made investments in our partner agency network's infrastructure and launched new programs to meet the needs of those most disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. We have the potential to emerge from this crisis stronger and even better positioned to meet the evolving needs of our community.

We know the impact of this crisis will continue at a high level long after the story of the families seeking food assistance has left the public eye. We are incredibly grateful for the outpouring of community support we have seen over the past year. We are aggressively drawing upon these resources to meet today's need and plan for the future. We will continue to call upon your support to meet our increased need while balancing the burden of rising expenses, as we are not close to meeting the needs of our neighbors who have come to our collective front door for hope, support, and nourishment of a meal.

Thank you for always being willing to support those in our community.

Karen L. Joyner

Karen L. Joyner
Chief Executive Officer

Terry Morris

Dr. Terry Morris
Board President

"I was reluctant to come to the food pantry – I am so used to doing things on my own. It didn't feel right to be asking for help. But it is a huge blessing. The food pantry has good, nutritious food, and they make me feel welcome here. It is such a relief to know that I will have something to eat." - Charles, senior



MLK Day of Service

CELEBRATING A LEGACY

Thank you to everyone who participated in our drive-thru food collection in support of the 5th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Food Drive, organized by Newport News Mayor McKinley Price and Sheriff Gabe Morgan, with community partners Delegate Marcia "Cia" Price, Congressman Bobby Scott, Riverside Health System, Virginia Unity Project, and our new hunger hero Newport News Police Chief Steve Drew. At the first food collection in 2017, a total of 13,362 meals were donated. Now five years later, we received enough food to help provide the equivalent of 63,433 meals for families experiencing food insecurity. Each year, it is heartwarming to witness our community coming together to mirror Dr. King's commitment to public service, making an impact, and helping those in need.

Chief Drew said, "I was so thankful and honored to participate in the food drive on Martin Luther King Jr. Day and celebrating what Dr. King stood for and his service to others. I was overwhelmed by the outpouring of citizens and their donations and contributions. It was truly a great event, and I look forward to next year. P.S. I have a few surprises for the event in 2022."

Because of our community friends, it was a record-breaking event. This food will help us stock our shelves for the winter months. We extend our sincere appreciation to Mayor Price and Sheriff Morgan who initiated this event five years ago and have continued with the tradition each year. An extra shout-out goes to our volunteers Assistant Chief Mike Grinstead and his son Michael Grinstead from the city's Fire Department, Jim Landrom, and AARP volunteer Rebecca Johnson. Finally, we thank our caring neighbors for supporting our mission and for making this day special.

"Thank you to those who donated to our 5th Annual Martin

Luther King, Jr. Day of Service," said Newport News Mayor McKinley L. Price, DDS. "I am inspired, moved and humbled by the way our community responded to support our neighbors in need. We are all struggling because of the pandemic, but we are united in our desire for a better, brighter tomorrow."

"Martin Luther King, Jr. said, 'The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.' I can tell you that Newport News residents and our neighbors throughout

Hampton Roads stand together in the good times and bad. Thank you for helping stock the Foodbank's shelves and showing those in need in our community that they are not alone."



COMMEMORATING 10 YEARS IN OUR CURRENT HOME

In 2011, we started a new journey. As the need for healthy food continued to grow, we realized we also needed to grow in our response. With tremendous financial support from our community, we moved from a 10,000-sq. ft. facility to a 52,000-sq.ft. facility in Hampton that was designed specifically to be a food bank. As a result, we gained the capacity to feed more families, add new programs, and store significantly higher amounts of food.



At our current warehouse facility, we have a large-scale commercial kitchen where we operate our Culinary Training Program and prepare hot, nutritious meals daily for the children participating in our Kids Cafe and Summer Food Service Programs. Prior to this move, we also had to accept food deliveries at an outdoor loading concrete block and use a forklift to transport pallets to the warehouse entrance. Presently, we have multiple bays where trucks can pull up directly to the warehouse for unloading, thereby improving efficiency. Volunteer projects formerly took place outside in all weather elements. With more usable space, volunteers can now pack hundreds of food boxes weekly and indoors, keeping them and the food items safe. Extended parking areas enable a smoother flow of partner agency, volunteer, food vendor, and visitor traffic throughout the day. With more storage and refrigeration space, we can purchase and receive greater quantities of food to address food insecurity across our greater Peninsula region. Our distribution levels have increased, hitting a record-setting 12.7 million pounds of food last fiscal year in our current home.

This journey, like all aspects of our work and mission, was only possible with community investment. We thank our neighbors for standing with us and empowering our Foodbank team with the tools and infrastructure to expand our impact.

COVID-19 RESPONSE BY THE NUMBERS:

- **8,678,979** meals provided
- **79,688** visits to our agencies and mobile pantries by Peninsula families
- **60%** of our neighbors receiving assistance for the first time
- **2,975,504** pounds of fruits and vegetables distributed
- **1,200** children served weekly through the Backpack Program
- **12** monthly drive-through mobile pantry sites across the Peninsula
- **120** partner agencies supporting our mission
- **13,775** volunteer hours provided in 10 months
- **2,000** Sentara/CARES Act We Care Boxes distributed
- **950** seniors at **20** program sites offered healthy food deliveries monthly through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program

Hope for the Holidays

Our community once again came together during uncertain times in an incredible way. The 24th Mayflower Marathon Holiday food drive was held on November 20th – 22nd at the Kroger stores in Tabb and Hampton. The generous contributions of food and funds helped provide the equivalent of 405,000 healthy meals to nourish our neighbors throughout the holidays and beyond. Sonja Morrell, marketing director for WAFX and WNOR, states, "We are proud to host the FM99 and 106.9 The Fox Mayflower Marathon Food Drive each year. In 2020, during what was a challenging year for the Foodbank, our community generously donated money and food in record numbers. This is a great example of the giving spirit of Hampton Roads. Our thanks to the volunteers, organizations, client partners, and the thousands of people who made the 24th Annual FM99 and The Fox Mayflower Marathon another huge success."

We believe that partnerships are vital to solving hunger. Thank you to 106.9 the Fox and FM99 for walking with us on this path of hope for 24 years to help our neighbors facing difficult times. A special thank you to Kroger for hosting the event, to Bud's Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning & Electric; Coliseum Central; Special Events Virginia; Hampton Roads Moving and Storage Move for Hunger; PAPCO; Region Rents and Sales; Traffic Plan; Truck Refrigeration; Penske; Dunkin'; and Dodd RV for your strong support and for sharing your resources. Additionally, thank you to Smithfield Foods for surprising us with a tractor full of protein and The Hampton Roads Show for inviting us into the homes of your viewers. We greatly appreciate the more than 300 volunteers who make this event safe, efficient, and enjoyable for everyone involved. Our community's compassion gives comfort and hope to those who need a little help, and we remain tremendously grateful for all the ways you made this weekend and our work successful. We Thank You!



SUSAN'S STORY

Susan's life was moving in the right direction. Suddenly, it was interrupted.

The divorced 48 year-old mother of two teenage sons was on the management track at a local restaurant when restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic shifted operations to only take-out or delivery options in mid-2020. Resulting cutbacks in staffing meant significantly reduced hours.

Already relying on a generous employee discount at the restaurant to bring home dinners to her sons and elderly mother many nights, Susan admits that, "things got very intense when my pay went down, and my hope for a promotion was stopped."

She saw a news story about the Foodbank and called to be matched with a local pantry. "The pantries make me feel optimistic," Susan says. "I hate to think of my boys not

getting meals."

Attending the Foodbank's partner agency pantry at Coastal Community Church in Yorktown, Susan tells us, "Everybody is very nice, and they greeted me like I was important. That meant a lot."

These days, the self-described "protective daughter" still worries about her aging mother's health but feels better overall. Her restaurant is serving more customers, and her supervisor is resuming the management training that will lead Susan to more responsibility and higher wages.

"I don't mind hard work, but for a while, things were out of my control," Susan states. "Without those pantries, I'm not sure what I would have done. I was on a good road, but I'm glad they were there when I got thrown a curveball."

"Everybody is very nice, and they treated me like I was important."

COOKING UP SUCCESS

Jazzma, a recent Culinary Training Program graduate, tells us that some of her most important lessons were not in the kitchen. She admits that she used to challenge authority and insist her way was the only correct path. After completing the rigorous program, she realizes that "there are times you need to listen and consider other ideas."

Our Culinary Training Program not only offers adults the job skills needed for full-time employment but also equips them with the life skills necessary for self-sufficiency. During the program, students receive training from business leaders, the military, banking and finance managers, community volunteers, and Foodbank staff. Topics include budgeting, time management, leadership, conflict resolution, interviewing, and resume writing.

The program includes a leadership curriculum similar to the Army ROTC that stresses good workplace habits. Foodbank Nutrition Programs Director Jacquelyn Linder says, "Having high expectations for the students better prepares them for the working world once they graduate." With assistance from the Foodbank, Jazzma has found employment at a local hotel and hospitality establishment to apply her culinary and life skills.



Jazzma laughs when asked about her favorite life skills seminar. "Definitely anger management!" she exclaims without hesitating. Developing her love of cooking by watching her grandmother, she feels ready to make a serious commitment to her career. "I'm happy I did this. I changed in a good way. I'm definitely a stronger person after this program," Jazzma says before nodding and smiling, "And I'm also a lot more humble."

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Students from local schools have truly shown that we are better together even when we are apart. They came together creatively, hosting drive-through and virtual food drives and coordinating drop-off locations throughout their community to make sure families do not go without healthy meals.

Beth Ellis, senior and third year member with Menchville High School Lead4Change: "I participate in the food drive each year because no one should be deprived of food and nutrition. Helping others is very important to me, and if I am able to help even one person or family in need, then I feel like I am doing my part to improve the world."



"Now more than ever it's important to help our neighbors in order to keep our community strong. Even during these tumultuous times, it is important to remember that we rise by lifting others."
 - LeRon Hargrove
 Transportation Supervisor, Hampton City Schools

Special Mentions

- **Food Lion Feeds Charitable Foundation** for providing us with dedicated employee volunteers, a driver and tractor trailer to assist with holiday food distributions, food donation pickups, and a grant for a sanitation machine to disinfect our facility regularly.
- **First United Methodist Church Newport News Foundation** for awarding us three incredibly generous grants, the most funding awarded in Foundation history, that helped provide 120,000 meals to families and children through COVID-19 response community pantries and Backpack Program.
- **USAA Foundation** for presenting us with COVID-19 relief grant funding to support children across our community with nutritious food over the weekends.

A WARM WELCOME... to the new partner agencies who joined us in 2020.

- Apostolic World Network
- Connect Community
- First Presbyterian Church of Hampton
- Hispanic Resource Center
- House of Dreams
- Liberty Baptist Church

Our partner agencies expand our reach far beyond what we could achieve alone. We appreciate all of you for the work you do each day to help our neighbors in need.

Upcoming Events

We depend on fundraisers throughout the year to fulfill our mission of minimizing hunger in our community. A toolkit can be found on www.hrfoodbank.org to get you started.

April

27th Tastefully Yours - See you in 2022

Amazon Smile – Sign up at SMILE.AMAZON.COM using your Amazon credentials. Select Virginia Peninsula Foodbank as your charity of choice, and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to help fight hunger each time you shop.



May 11, 2021

Give Local 757

RNR Tire Express – Help drive out hunger. For every tire sold at its Hampton location at 3418 W. Mercury Blvd, RNR Tire Express will donate \$1 to our hunger relief efforts. Just one tire can provide four meals. So just think... four tires can provide 16 meals.



Have you
thought
about
**YOUR
LEGACY?**



Please consider joining the community of friends who will be providing charitable food assistance for our neighbors in need across the greater Peninsula well into the future.

If you have already made the decision to include Virginia Peninsula Foodbank in your will, please let us know so we can express our appreciation. If you would prefer to remain anonymous, be assured we will respect your wishes.

For more information about bequests and other future gift options, contact the Foodbank at (757) 596-7188. All inquiries will remain confidential.



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hrfoodbank.org



VAPenFoodbank



hrfoodbank

Register Now
www.legalfoodfrenzy.com

April 1 - April 30, 2021



The Attorney General of Virginia, Young Lawyers Division of The Virginia Bar Association, and Federation of Virginia Food Banks invite the legal community to participate in this state wide fundraising competition.

Open to all law firms, legal departments, law schools/programs, and individual firms.

Close the Case On Hunger