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Get to Know the Capital Area Food Bank

The Capital Area Food Bank opened its doors on January 15, 1980, on the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The CAFB is the hub for food sourcing, food distribution and nutrition education in the Washington metro area serving those struggling with hunger. Through direct service and a network of 700 nonprofit partners, the CAFB distributes 33 million pounds of food annually, including 15 million pounds of fresh produce.

A member of Feeding America, the national network of food banks, the Capital Area Food Bank serves Washington, D.C.; Montgomery and Prince George's counties in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William counties in Virginia and The City of Alexandria. As an independent 501 (c) (3) organization, the Capital Area Food Bank was profiled in *Washingtonian* magazine as one of the 20 Best Charities in the region.

Advocacy and Nutrition Education

The mission of the CAFB is not only to distribute food, but also to educate, empower and enlighten the community on issues of hunger and nutrition. The CAFB operates over a dozen advocacy and educational initiatives that provide children, families and seniors with the informational tools and resources to live a healthier lifestyle and become knowledgeable about government regulated assistance options.

Volunteers Make the Difference

Each year the food bank relies on more than 15,000 volunteers to ensure that much needed food reaches the community. The Capital Area Food Bank serves over 478,100 people each year and without the help and dedication of volunteers, the operation could not survive. Volunteer hours save over \$1.8 million in staffing costs for the food bank. Individuals and local organizations are encouraged to make commitments to serve at the CAFB once a month.

The Northern Virginia Branch

In keeping with its mission, the CAFB opened a warehouse in Lorton, VA in December 1998 to better meet the needs of the surrounding Northern Virginia communities. The NOVA branch serves 230 nonprofit feeding programs and agencies in Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William counties and The City of Alexandria. The NOVA Branch, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Agriculture, also provides food for more than 3,000 families on a quarterly basis, through the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

How the CAFB Acquires Food

More than 400 manufacturers, retailers, distributors, grocers, growers, processors, Feeding America and food drives all provide critical food resources to the Capital Area Food Bank. Giant Food and Safeway grocery stores are the largest local food donors.

The CAFB is Fiscally Responsible

For every dollar donated to the food bank, 92 cents goes directly toward feeding those who suffer from hunger. CAFB is able to provide three meals for every dollar donated.

The Differences Among a Food Bank, a Food Pantry and a Soup Kitchen

A food bank solicits, collects, sorts, stores and distributes large quantities of food to nonprofit food programs. A food pantry provides food directly to those in need. A soup kitchen prepares hot, nutritious meals for those at risk of hunger.

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