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**CAAR Raises \$12,500, Helping Fund Five Mobile Food Pantry Sites**

**Charlottesville, Virginia** – The Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS® (CAAR) has announced its membership has raised \$12,500 during the month of March for the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry (MFP) program. REALTORS® and affiliates of CAAR raised \$7,500, which was then matched by a \$5,000 donation from Virginia Estates.



The MFP program was created to reach some of the Food Bank's most vulnerable clients—those living in more rural areas with no access to commercial food providers and/or food assistance services. There are 11 MFP sites, where the Food Bank brings a truck full of fresh produce and shelf-stable proteins to be distributed to families in need. Eight of the MFPs are in the Charlottesville area, serving an average of 175 families per distribution.

"Since March, we began seeing an increase in pantry and Mobile Food Pantry visits (21% were first-time visitors, triple the number of first-time visitors last year)," said Millie Winstead, Director of Development for the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. "The Mobile Food Pantry, meeting need by bringing food to where people live, has become an even more important outreach strategy than we could have imagined. CAAR's gift goes beyond filling our neighbors' pantries and tables, they are bringing hope to these communities."

"Food is a basic need for all of us. Food is also a way to embrace a culture, to come together as family. Food can be comfort and food can be a celebration. And the worry to provide it when you don't have money coming in is the reality for so many of our neighbors," said CAAR 2021 President Quinton Beckham. "We wanted to alleviate the worry for families as we move through the pandemic, just as we were able to do last year. And maybe too, embrace a family, celebrate a culture of being one community and take this one weight off the shoulders of those in need."



CAAR raised over \$30,000 for the Food Bank, the equivalent of roughly 120,000 meals, in 2020.

An intimate check ceremony, as well as a CAAR volunteer day, will take place at the Fluvanna Mobile Food Pantry site at Effort Baptist Church (7820 Thomas Jefferson Parkway, Palmyra VA 22963) at 9:15 a.m. on

Thursday, April 29th. Media who would like to attend should contact Ali DiGuardo (contact information above) to ensure safety protocols are followed.

**About CAAR:**

The Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS® serves more than 1,300 real estate professionals and affiliate members throughout the City of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson. Widely recognized as the leading voice for real estate in Central Virginia since 1925, CAAR members bring professionalism and high ethical standards to every business transaction. The Association advocates for the protection of private property rights and provides tools and technology for members to achieve expertise in serving the needs of customers and clients. The CAAR membership is committed to enriching the region's neighborhoods by engaging in a variety of educational programs as well as community service events each year.

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