



Colonial Beach Community Foundation  
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## **As Holidays Approach, Local Food Pantries See Increased Demand**

**Colonial Beach, VA | November 13, 2020.** When COVID-19 hit the area last Spring, the Colonial Beach Community Foundation's (CBCF) directors met to discuss how the Foundation could help the local area. Foundation President Eric Nelson reached out to churches, social service agencies, the Town of Colonial Beach, and non-governmental agencies to find out what residents needed. The recurring theme was food. "With so many people out of work, the pantries are seeing an increase in customers. Our mission is to improve the quality of life in and around Colonial Beach so we want to help the community," said Nelson.

Based on the information gathered, the Foundation approved a \$1,500 donation to the Healthy Harvest Food Bank in Warsaw to aid in food distribution to the outlets supporting the 22443 zipcode. An additional \$3,500 was earmarked to purchase gift cards from Food Lion and Hall's Supermarket and given to food pantries in Colonial Beach. The Foundation then challenged the community to match its \$5,000 pledge and the community came through—donating over \$7,000. Since May, CBCF has purchased and distributed almost \$10,000 in gift cards. The cards are given out at the discretion of the food pantry to supplement families with needs other than the available food items. Gift cards cannot be used to purchase alcohol or tobacco products.

With the holidays approaching and COVID-19 still affecting people medically and economically, the need for food pantry support is still here. Ann Flaim, food pantry coordinator for St. Mary's Episcopal Church, said they are noticing an increase in the amount of people they serve each week. "We are seeing people we haven't seen in a while and several new people. At our recent food pantry we served people nonstop until well after the 12 pm closing time," added Flaim.

Beth Collins, director of the Guadalupe Free Clinic in Colonial Beach, said the gift cards have been a blessing. "I use the cards to shop for foods and make bags specific to the health needs of our clients," said Collins. Marcy Feltner who works with the food pantry at Colonial Beach Baptist Church remarked, "Those who have received the cards are so very appreciative. Some have commented that they use the cards to supplement what they receive from our pantry to purchase fresh milk and produce." Food pantry coordinator at Little Zion Baptist Church Odell Johnson agrees, "The cards have enabled people to purchase perishable foods and personal care items not provided by our pantry."

The CBCF has a few weeks of money left for gift card purchases and is reaching out to the community for help again. COVID-19 restrictions are keeping businesses from holding traditional food drives this time of year so food pantry stock is dwindling. "We surpassed our initial goal and have distributed over \$10,000 in direct support for Colonial Beach residents. Our new goal is to double that," said Nelson.

The community is strongly urged to join the Foundation in its mission by donating. Please go to the fundraiser at: <https://tinyurl.com/CBfoodpantries> or mail your donation to CBCF, PO Box 375, Colonial Beach, VA 22443, marked for food pantry. All donations are tax deductible. For information, visit [www.cbcommunityfoundation.org](http://www.cbcommunityfoundation.org) or email [info@cbcommunityfoundation.org](mailto:info@cbcommunityfoundation.org).

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Established in 2005, the Colonial Beach Community Foundation is a 501(c)(3) whose mission is to enhance the quality of life for residents in and around Colonial Beach. For more information visit [www.cbcommunityfoundation.org](http://www.cbcommunityfoundation.org).