



Working Together to Serve Arlington Residents

Arlington EATS and the Arlington Food Pantry to Unite to Strengthen Local Food Relief Efforts

Arlington, May 3 -- Food scarcity continues to be a significant issue in Arlington. In 2016, current efforts addressed only 25% of the broader need, per the Greater Boston Food Bank. To focus on this need, two of the town's hunger relief organizations have agreed to merge their operations. Arlington EATS and the Arlington Food Pantry are combining forces to further expand hunger relief efforts in Arlington and ensure long-term sustainability for both programs.

Leaders of both organizations are thrilled with the potential going forward. Having planned the merger for over a year, both are excited to build upon their positive working relationship and increase innovative programming. Working under one administrative umbrella facilitates. The merger will help the organizations manage overhead associated with providing food resources to those who need it and spotlight food scarcity issues in Arlington today. About the merger, one of Arlington EATS' co-founders, Lauren Ledger, says, "We are passionate about making sure kids have enough to eat. Merging with the Food Pantry will allow us to more fully concentrate on that hard and gratifying work, while sharing the back-office duties with an organization that we respect immensely. We are incredibly excited to work with the Food Pantry to serve Arlington in new and innovative ways."

Each organization will retain its name and continue with its unique focus. Arlington EATS will continue to work with schools to provide snacks, summer and vacation lunches, and supplemental food to students who qualify for federal free and reduced price lunches. The Arlington Food Pantry will continue its efforts to provide food resources to all Arlington residents in need through its weekly food distributions.

About the merger, Executive Director of the Arlington Food Pantry, Andi Doane says, "Both programs have grown tremendously in the past year and so it is an ideal time to combine forces to ensure resources are being used to the fullest potential to feed our neighbors in need."

The Arlington Food Pantry and Arlington EATS have community-building traditions that have brought together those struggling with food scarcity and those concerned with food justice. Both organizations will continue to rely on their donor and volunteer networks. Arlington EATS will continue its hyper-local volunteer model that allows residents of all ages to give of their time and money and to see an immediate impact on kids living in their neighborhoods.

For over 20 years, the Arlington Food Pantry (www.arlingtonfoodpantry.org) has addressed the food scarcity needs of Arlington residents. Today, it provides food to 500 Arlington residents each month, servicing roughly 25% of hunger needs in Arlington, according to the Greater Boston Food Bank. In 2017, AFP welcomed Arlington EATS to its masthead. Since May 2014, Arlington EATS (<http://www.arlington-eats.org/>) has focused on ensuring that the over 650 local students who receive free and reduced price lunch (FRL) on school days still have access to healthy meals when school is not in session. In the past year, Arlington EATS provided approximately 18,000 snacks and 20,000 meals to students and their families.

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