



# 2023 YEAR-END REPORT

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023



[WWW.REALFOODFORKIDS.ORG](http://WWW.REALFOODFORKIDS.ORG)

# A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

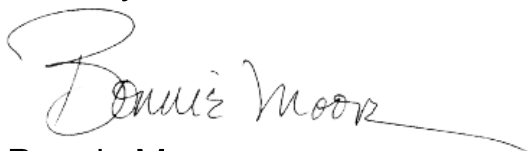
Dear Friends of Real Food for Kids,

We are grateful that you chose to support Real Food for Kids' mission to bring nutrition equity and security to students and their families throughout our region. At Real Food for Kids, we believe nutrition security is a human right and essential for students to be successful in the classroom. We would like to share what your support enabled us to accomplish over the last fiscal year:

- we provided meals, meal kits and produce bags to children and families who continue to experience persistent nutrition insecurity in 14 communities, including 3 new sites in Prince George's County,
- we launched a groundbreaking partnership with Arlington County Schools to train key staff to become SNAP Ambassadors to help students and their families access critically needed food benefits,
- we partnered with hospitality icon, Chef Ype Von Hengst of Silver Diner and Montgomery County Public Schools to develop vegetarian and vegan menu options for students in all grades,
- and we worked with the heavy hitters in Fairfax County, which has led to the reopening of salad bars in elementary schools, the addition of salad bars in middle and high schools this school year, a plan to transition central kitchens to scratch cooking facilities and the hiring of a new Food and Nutrition Service Director to create a comprehensive school food program centered around nutritious, delicious, real, whole foods for all students.

Your support has made it possible for us to meet people where they are to activate a variety of effective programs that bring nutrition security to our communities, particularly to our students, so that they may learn and thrive.

Thank you,



Bonnie Moore

Executive Director, Founding Board Member, Chef and Mom





**Real Food for Kids' mission** is to improve eating behaviors and health outcomes for all children through sustainable access to real whole foods, impactful nutrition education, and systemic policy changes.

## ABOUT REAL FOOD FOR KIDS

**Real Food for Kids is recognized as a leading voice for nutrition equity across the Greater Washington D.C. Region.**

Founded in 2010, Real Food for Kids has advocated for and won positive changes to school food policies, generating institutionalized support for our goal of healthy school food as a critical component of children's wellness and academic success. This work positioned us to expand and address the broader challenges of food and nutrition security outside school walls by improving access to nutritious foods for families through program and policy initiatives. Our successes are the result of innovative, collaborative programs in which the communities we serve play a pivotal role in driving change.





# YEAR AT A GLANCE

- Served over 74,000 plant-forward meals to children and their families who continue to experience nutrition insecurity exacerbated by the pandemic.
- Delivered more than 1,500 Chef-inspired meal kits, including nutrition literacy materials, recipes, and preparation tips to prepare nourishing, family-style, culturally relevant meals at home. Meal kits were widely loved by families for ease of preparation – even by kids.
- Continued to provide additional employment opportunities in one of the sectors hit hardest by the pandemic, the hospitality industry.
- Advocated for the return of all Fairfax Count elementary school salad bars to begin reopening in January 2023 and a commitment to expand salad bars to middle and high school cafeterias in the 2023-2024 school year.
- Expanded access to our Fresh Food Explorers preschool nutrition education program to more than 700 of our youngest learners and their families with positive lessons around eating fruits and vegetables
- Paired hospitality icon Ype Von Hengst of Silver Diner with school nutrition professionals from Montgomery County Public Schools to collaborate on a suite of plant-based recipes for school meal service through our Chef Exchange Program. Dishes now on the MCPS menu were inspired by Silver Diner's Flexitarian menu, blurring the lines between school food and restaurant food to foster a culture of healthy food.
- Received verbal approval from USDA to operate a groundbreaking produce incentive study with SNAP recipients to measure changes in the purchasing and consumption of fruits and vegetables. Real Food for Kids is the only non-academic, non-government entity to ever receive approval for this level of study which is considered the next phase of research toward future SNAP policy.
- Resumed our in-person Culinary Challenge following two years of virtual competition, resulting in multiple student-created dishes being adopted by school districts and private industry.





# NUTRITION EDUCATION





# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: FRESH FOOD EXPLORERS

- Fresh Food Explorers is an 8-week nutrition education program targeted at preschoolers from low-income communities who are at greater risk of developing obesity and related health conditions as a result of diet. The program focuses on building a greater acceptance of vegetables with the goal of increasing consumption at school and at home and improving health outcomes.
- Fresh Food Explorers uses engaging video lessons with hands-on activities and tastings to encourage curiosity and increased consumption. Lessons feature our celebrity crucifer, Mr. Broccoli.



Students at Cedar Tree Elementary in D.C.'s Ward 8 participate in Fresh Food Explorers lessons "I Can Eat a Rainbow" and "I Can Grow and Eat a Bean," as well as a tasting of Morning Glory Oatmeal.



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: CULINARY CHALLENGE

Since 2012, The Real Food for Kids Culinary Challenge has given area students a voice in what is served in their school cafeterias. This initiative is open to high school and middle school students across the DMV and challenges teams to create a healthy school lunch designed to meet high standards for nutrition, taste, presentation, and originality. Using approved ingredients and USDA school nutrition guidelines, students demonstrate how they - the consumers - can impact the taste and reputation of the lunch line with creative approaches that benefit entire school systems. Students also receive practical education in culinary skills and nutrition that can lead to a lifetime of healthy eating habits. Culinary Challenge entries are judged by students, school nutrition professionals, celebrity chefs, and other local luminaries. The winning lunch dishes are adapted by school districts in the region and past recipes have also been adapted by private food service operations that cater to families with school-aged children.

The Real Food for Kids 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Culinary Challenge was held on April 15, 2023, at Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, Virginia.

The 2023 Real Food for Kids Culinary Challenge was  
hosted and sponsored by





# 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CULINARY CHALLENGE

The culinary theme for the 2023 competition was "FRESH TAKE ON TRADITION", plant-forward meals reflecting the school community, cultural, and lived experience of team members.



## 2023 CULINARY MENTOR

**Ype Von Hengst**, co-founder and Executive Chef, Silver Diner & Silver New American Brasserie

## JUDGING



The Culinary Challenge 2023 judges included Chef Tim Ma, Founder & CEO Lucky Danger; Lindsey Fern, Director of Beverage for The Inn at Little Washington and Patty O's Café; Forrest Gonja, Two-time Culinary Challenge Competitor from Chantilly High School; Chef Jerome Grant, James Beard-nominated founding chef of Sweet Home Café at the National Museum of African American History; Ed Kwitowski, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Chef Daniella Senior, CEO Colada Shop; Allison Sosna, Director of Community Nutrition and Procurement at Tangelo and Former Director of Nutrition at World Central Kitchen; and Chef Katherine Thompson, Pastry Chef and Co-Owner of Thompson Italian.



# 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CULINARY CHALLENGE

## Celebrity Chef Cooking Demos

with Chef Ryan Moore of Sababa and Chef Kevin Tien of Moon Rabbit

Moderated by Bonnie S. Benwick



REAL FOOD for KIDS



# 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CULINARY CHALLENGE

## PUBLIC TASTING



## EXHIBITORS



Real Food for Kids' Mr. Broccoli Photo opportunity, American Culinary Federation, CareFirst, Chef Kevin Tien, Chef Ryan Moore, Colada Shop, Cookology, MightyMeals, Silver Diner, The Inn at Little Washington, Virginia Cooperative Extension



# 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CULINARY CHALLENGE

## 2023 FINALISTS



### FIRST PLACE:

Ethio-nadas, Atakilt Wot, Ethiopian Spris | Takoma Park Middle School (MCPS, MD)



### SECOND PLACE

Bocado de Tostada | Herndon High School (Fairfax Co. Public Schools, VA)



### THIRD PLACE

Harvest Butternut Medley Soup | C.D. Hylton High School (Prince William County Public Schools, VA)





REAL **FOOD** *for* **KIDS**

NUTRITION **INNOVATION**





# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: CHEF EXCHANGE PROGRAM

In 2021, Real Food for Kids launched its first Chef Exchange Program – an initiative to align the sister industries of school food and hospitality through multi-week exchange programs with school nutrition professionals and restaurant chefs. For the first Chef Exchange Program, Real Food for Kids collaborated with food and nutrition professionals at D.C.'s Cedar Tree Academy, Chefs Tim Ma of Lucky Danger and Bar Chinois, Ben Lin of B.Lin Catering and Ed Kwitowski, School Nutrition Director at DC Central Kitchen.

The program is designed to foster innovation in farm-to-school menu development, increase chef-inspired plant-based options on school menus, reframe school meals as a guest experience, and better engage students and families to increase school meal participation. Plant-based meals in schools address a wide range of religious and dietary needs as well as offer comparable hot entrees to the growing number of students who identify as vegan or vegetarian.

- In 2022, Real Food for Kids identified the opportunity to align Silver Diner and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to develop new plant-based school recipes for the district's more than 160,000 students.
- MCPS assembled a group of students in its newly formed School Meals Working Group to inform the future of school food in Montgomery County.
- Real Food for Kids facilitated introductions between Silver Diner and key players in school nutrition at MCPS.
- Silver Diner's Chef Ype Von Hengst visited the MCPS Division of Food & Nutrition Services facility in Gaithersburg to better understand production capacity.
- MCPS visited Silver Diner to sample its vegan menu with Chef Ype and to gain an overall understanding of a guest-driven recipe development process.
- Ype took MCPS on an R&D tour to understand the process that Silver Diner follows when developing new menu items.
- A suite of four plant-based recipes were developed by MCPS.
- A student and VIP tasting event was held in September 2022 with an MCPS Student Focus Group comprised of 22 students who provided feedback reviewing recipes prior to their debut on MCPS school menus later that fall.

Maryland's Largest School District

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**SILVER DINER®**





Real Food for Kids: Chef Exchange Program aims to blur the lines between school food, restaurant food, and home food to create a culture of healthy food where we learn and live.



SPONSORED BY



**VEGFUND**

supporting vegan advocates globally





REAL **FOOD** *for* **KIDS**

# NUTRITION **SECURITY**







## REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: CHEFS FEEDING FAMILIES

In 2021, Chefs Feeding Families shifted from an emergency response to a program promoting sustainable healthy eating habits for families throughout the Greater D.C. region.

Chef-inspired meal kits and curated fresh produce bags were introduced in collaboration with multiple community partners serving local low-income families. Meal kits, created by Chefs Tim Ma, Ben Lin, and Shannon Shaffer, provided a combination of fresh and semi-prepped ingredients to feed a family of four over several days.

Produce bags included 10 pounds of regionally-sourced, seasonal, fresh produce from local farms to address families' limited access to and affordability of quality fruits and vegetables.

Meal kits and produce bags included recipes, easy preparation tips in multiple languages, as well as food literacy collateral to support families' cultural ownership of these ingredients and to inform and inspire the preparation of nourishing meals at home.

Chefs Feeding Families remains a critical component of Real Food for Kids' mission and work to address the broader challenges of food and nutrition security outside school walls by improving access to healthful foods and nutrition education for families across multiple platforms.



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: CHEFS FEEDING FAMILIES

Together We Nourish Communities

NUMBER OF NUTRITIOUS MEALS SERVED  
TO STRUGGLING FAMILIES IN 2022

73,364

NUMBER OF NUTRITIOUS MEALS SERVED  
TO STRUGGLING FAMILIES

274,326

NUMBER OF CHEF / RESTAURANT /  
FARMER PARTNERS

12

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY PARTNER  
DISTRIBUTION SITES

16

This impact was made possible through the dedication and support of our chef and restaurant collaborators, community partners, corporate partners, individual donors and volunteers.



Real Food for Kids funds the cost of food, supplies, and restaurant staff to feed as many families as possible and creates employment opportunities within the restaurant community also greatly impacted since the pandemic.



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: CHEFS FEEDING FAMILIES

Restaurant / Chef / Farm Collaborators



RASA

CHEF **TIM MA**



*Mighty X Meals*



DESIGNCUISINE



**Shlagel Farms**

CHEF **KEVIN TIEN**

ELLIE  
KRIEGER



# COMMUNITY PARTNERS + VOLUNTEERS

## Community Partners

Alison Sosna	Goldifresh
AFAC	Fairfax County Public Schools
Arlington Chamber of Commerce	FRESHFARM Markets
Arlington County Food Security Task Force	Healthy Community Action Team
Arlington County Board of Directors	Junction Bakery
Arlington County Government	MightyMeals
Arlington County Public Schools	MoCo Food Council
Arlington Housing Corporation	Montgomery County Public Schools
B.Lin Catering	Pizzeria Paradiso
Bayou Bakery Coffee Bar & Eatery	RASA
Bridges to Independence	Schagel Farms
Cedar Tree Academy	Silver Diner
Chef Kevin Tien	So What Else
Chef Tim Ma	St. Mark the Evangelist Church
Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization	Temple of Praise
Cunningham Park Elementary School	Vienna Business Association
DC Central Kitchen	Virginia Hospital Center Pediatrics
Design Cuisine	
Ellie Krieger	

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY  
PARTNERS

35

from Fairfax, Prince Georges,  
Alexandria City, Arlington,  
Montgomery County and  
Washington, D.C.

NUMBER OF COUNTIES  
SERVED

6

Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax,  
Prince Georges County,  
Montgomery County and  
Washington, D.C.

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY  
VOLUNTEERS

185



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: SNAP PRODUCE INCENTIVE STUDY

*Realizing nutrition equity for SNAP participants by increasing affordability of fruits and vegetables*

Real Food for Kids SNAP Produce Incentive Study will operate in Arlington County under a USDA Equal Treatment Incentive Waiver beginning in 2024. As the only community advocacy organization to ever secure this type of waiver from USDA, Real Food for Kids credits our success to an intentional design that engages actual SNAP recipients, allows them to shop at any SNAP participating retailer, and preserves choice in what they purchase. The study will measure the impact on SNAP purchasing where participants receive incentives they buy fruits and vegetables and avoid sugary beverage purchases. The study is considered the next phase of the research toward changes to future SNAP policy and has garnered attention from Capitol Hill, state governments and large academic research institutions focused on nutrition and health.



SNAP, or SNAP-EBT, is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that provides benefits to low-income individuals and families to supplement their grocery budgets to purchase healthy foods.



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: SNAP PRODUCE INCENTIVE STUDY

Real Food for Kids' proposed USDA Demonstration Project in Arlington County, VA offers a \$0.30 financial incentives for any dollar spent to purchase FVs with SNAP benefits, while restricting the incentive if SSBs are purchased using SNAP benefits.

## RESEARCH PARTNERS

Center for Science in the Public Interest

Virginia Commonwealth University

University of Illinois - Chicago

University of Minnesota

University of North Carolina



Supplemental  
Nutrition  
Assistance  
Program

“

Real Food for Kids work in Arlington follows a decade of successful work in nutrition education in schools and advocating for improvements to school meal programs. Their commitment to centering the voices of partners and participants in their work and engaging stakeholders at all levels to achieve lasting change uniquely suits them to lead this SNAP Demonstration Project toward its eventual goal of expanding a produce incentive model throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- **Dena Leibman Executive Director, Future Harvest**



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: SNAP PRODUCE INCENTIVE STUDY – Letter of Support

“Dear Ms. Ortiz:

I write in support of Real Food for Kids’ (RFFK) SNAP Project design and Incentive Equal Treatment waiver request. I hope you give their waiver request full and fair consideration.

The RFFK SNAP Project would allow SNAP participants to receive a fruit and vegetable incentive if they opt not to purchase sugar-sweetened beverages. The use of a mobile app would allow the participants to shop at any SNAP retailer. The RFFK SNAP Project will assess the food purchasing, food security, nutritional intake, and preferences of SNAP participants across three approaches: the usual SNAP program, receiving a fruit and vegetable incentive, and receiving a fruit and vegetable incentive if they opt not to purchase sugar-sweetened beverages.

Our country faces a catastrophic health crisis stemming from diet-related diseases. This study tests the effectiveness of addressing food security and two factors that reduce diet-related risks – increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and decreasing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages. This pilot program would generate important data to improve the nutrition and food security of SNAP recipients.

I appreciate your careful review of this Project and waiver request.”

– United States Senator Cory A. Booker



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: SNAP AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



In 2021, it was estimated that only 30% of Arlington residents eligible for SNAP received benefits, with misinformation and the “chilling effect” of the 2019 Public Charge Rule cited as primary barriers to enrollment. Expansion of eligibility in Virginia and the reversal of the Public Charge Rule in 2021 created opportunities for 14,000 more residents to access this critical social support program. The SNAP Ambassador Program, created in partnership with the Arlington Department of Human Services, supports residents in a variety of community settings to safely apply for benefits to access greater amounts of healthy food and reduce nutrition security for themselves and their families.



# REAL FOOD FOR KIDS: SNAP AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

*Extending the arm of DHS*

- Formerly known as Food Stamps, SNAP recently expanded to reach more eligible individuals and families and reduce food insecurity.
- In 2021, Real Food for Kids launched its SNAP Ambassador Program to train and certify community members to increase awareness of benefits and assist eligible applicants with the SNAP application.
- SNAP Ambassadors work alongside Real Food for Kids and the Arlington Department of Human Service (DHS) at SNAP Enrollment Clinics and community outreach events.
- Community members can certify as SNAP Ambassadors by taking a self-paced, online training.

REAL FOOD FOR KIDS  
CERTIFIED  
SNAP AMBASSADORS

58

To perform outreach  
to inform and  
educate and to  
encourage enrollment

OUTREACH EVENTS HELD

13

EVENT ATTENDANCE

800

INCREASE IN  
APPLICATIONS TO DHS

500+

Households

WITH SUPPORT FROM



CENTER FOR  
Science in the  
Public Interest

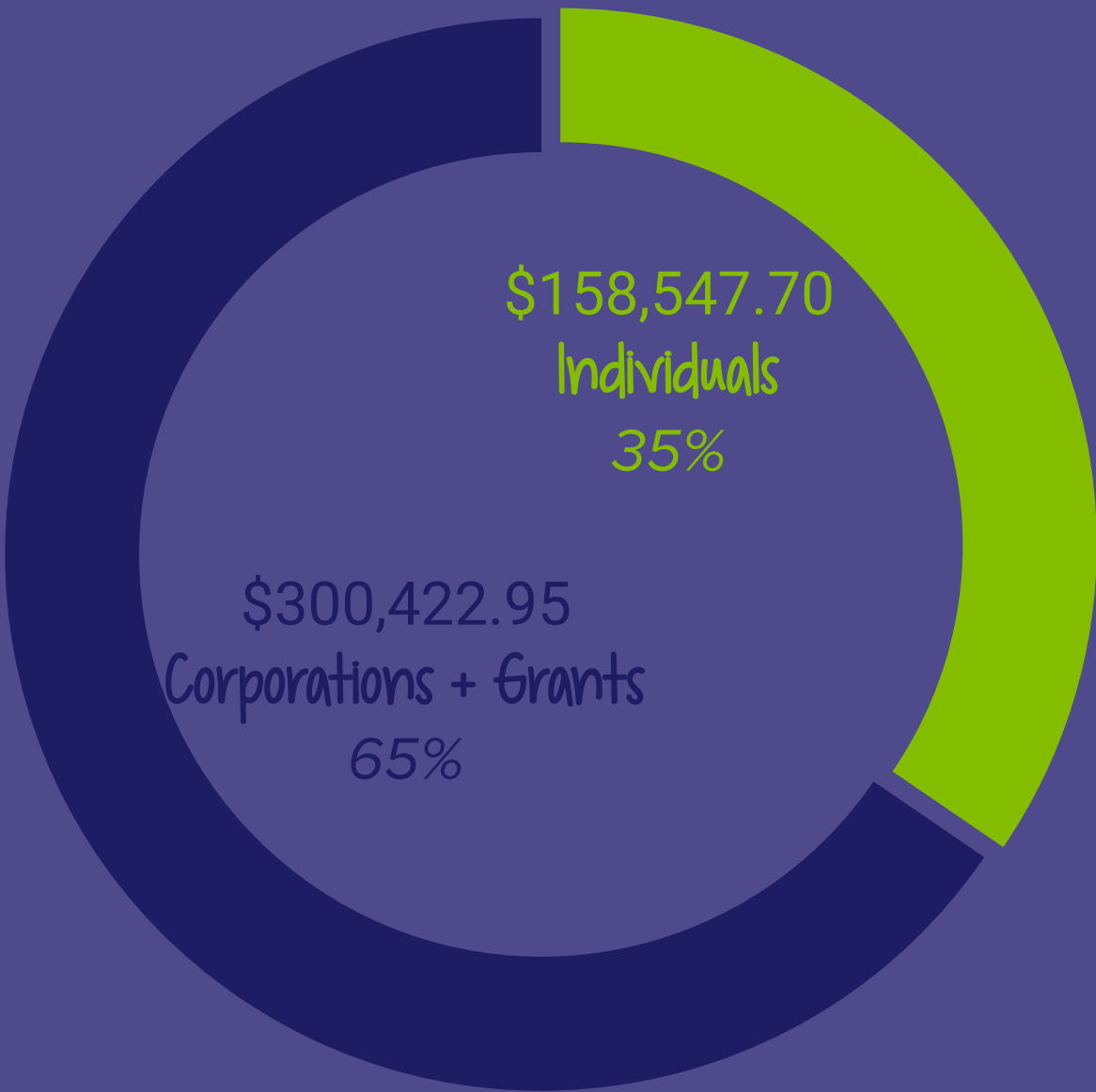




**Because of you,** Real Food for Kids has been able to alleviate nutrition insecurity for children and families throughout the Greater Washington Region with nutritious, plant-forward foods and nutrition education to promote a sustainable, healthy lifestyle.



# FYE 2023: TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED



\$458,970.65



**\$50,000 and above**

Tides Foundation

Sampson Foundation

**\$20,000 - \$49,999**

Albertsons Companies Foundation

Mead Family Foundation

Bender Foundation

**\$10,000 - \$19,999**

Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation

Washington Forest Foundation

Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI)

CedarTree Academy

## **FYE 2023 CORPORATE SPONSORS + GRANTS**

**\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Silver Diner

Vegfund

Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation

Arlington County Virginia

American Endowment Foundation

The Emerald Fund

**\$2,000 - \$4,999**

Battlefield Toyota

Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture

Zoe Feldman Design

Chop't Creative Salad Company

CMC

**INKIND DONORS**

Willowsford

KWC Certified Public Accountants

Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati



# INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

## Key Highlights

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL  
DONORS

**981**

for the year

NEWLY ACQUIRED  
DONORS

**621**

(63.56% of total donors)

AVERAGE FYE 2023  
DONATION (\$) BY INDIVIDUAL

**\$148.22**

(\$70.45 for newly acquired donors)

HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL  
DONATIONS MONTH (\$)

**DEC 2022**

over \$39,739.48

AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL  
DONATIONS TOTAL (\$)

**\$ 12,031.06**

per month

AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL  
DONATION COUNT

**149.17**

per month

## Board of Directors



**Rick Barnard**  
Board Chair



**JoAnne Hammermaster**  
Board Member



**Bonnie Moore**  
Executive Director  
and Board Member



**Rodney K. Taylor**  
Board Member



**Ed Kwitowski**  
Board Member



**LaTonya Henderson**  
Board Member

## Executive Staff



**Bonnie Moore**  
Executive Director  
and Board Member



**Mary Porter**  
Director of Programs





For more information, please visit  
**[realfoodforkids.org](https://realfoodforkids.org)**



**@realfoodforkids**

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