



ARLINGTON COUNTY FOOD SECURITY MINI GRANTS FY 2024 IMPACT REPORT

OVERVIEW

The Arlington County Food Security Mini-Grants, funded through the County Budget, were awarded in FY 2024 to 10 organizations working to improve food security. The grant program supports the implementation of the Food Security Strategic Plan, which was published in October 2022. Organizations received funding for six months to bring to life projects designed to address elements of the strategic plan. Projects were chosen using an equity lens that considered target population, program impact, and sustainability. Funded projects include features such as capacity building efforts, innovative ideas, evidence-based interventions, and projects based on participant input. The grant program was funded for a second round in FY 2025 as well.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



FY24 GRANTEES



DC FOOD PROJECT



FOOD FOR NEIGHBORS®



Randolph
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



FOOD SECURITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Below are the strategies of the Food Security Strategic Plan that were addressed by this year's funded projects.

CATEGORY	STRATEGY	ORGANIZATIONS
Systemic Change 1.2	Improve nutrition equity by working to eliminate, reduce, and prevent disparities in food security policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that all those in need of food assistance receive the support they need.	Bridges to Independence DC Food Project Kitchen of Purpose Meals on Wheels YMCA
Food Access 2.1	Enhance school-based supplemental food offerings, including food pantries, in-school snacks, and weekend food support.	DC Food Project Kitchen of Purpose
Food Access 2.2	Establish new charitable food distributions in neighborhoods with unmet need.	Kitchen of Purpose Salvation Army
Food Access 2.3	Increase capacity to deliver charitable food to those unable to access available resources.	AHC Arlington Thrive Bridges to Independence Food For Neighbors Meals on Wheels Randolph Elementary Food Pantry Salvation Army YMCA
Food Access 2.5	Increase food rescue & redistribution operations.	Bridges to Independence DC Food Project Salvation Army
Outreach & Education 3.1	Promote food assistance resources and assist residents with enrolling in programs for which they may be eligible.	AHC Arlington Thrive
Outreach & Education 3.5	Increase nutrition education opportunities for residents of all ages.	AHC Arlington Thrive DC Food Project YMCA
Informed Decision Making 5.2	Use varied levels of engagement to encourage food assistance recipients to provide valuable feedback on programs and services.	Salvation Army

PROJECT LOCATIONS



PROJECT SUMMARIES

AHC, INC.

- Provided 130 older adults with rolling carts so they were better able to safely transport food from food distributions to their homes.
- Assisted 51 residents in applying for food assistance programs.

Residents report that they can carry more items at once, thus minimizing trips to the store and making shopping more efficient.



ARLINGTON THRIVE



- Held 3 Meals to Thrive On events with cooking demonstrations and information about food assistance resources, serving 90 households.
- All participants received a grocery giftcard and Breadcoin, which provided a free meal at the Kitchen of Purpose cafe.
- 85% of participants said that they gained nutritional knowledge by attending.

BRIDGES TO INDEPENDENCE

- Installed a freezer in the food pantry at Sullivan House.
- Now able to accept more meals through food rescue partnerships and offer a variety of food items to participants, such as meat and frozen vegetables.

DC FOOD PROJECT

- Established Share Tables at 8 elementary and 2 middle schools.
- Students can leave whole fruits and packaged food that they will not eat for another student to enjoy.

Approximately 27 lbs of food is collected and redistributed at each school daily.



FOOD FOR NEIGHBORS

- Establishes and supplies food pantries and snack supplies at six Arlington middle and high schools.
- Provided 6,743 pounds and an additional \$10,000 worth of food and toiletries.
- Increased Red Bag Program donor base by 55%.
- Schools served: Arlington Career Center, Arlington Community, Wakefield, and Washington-Liberty High Schools, and Gunston and Kenmore Middle Schools.



“Having FFN food available during the day contributes to creating a school environment that supports the whole-student by meeting the foundational need for food so that students are available for learning and not distracted by hunger.”

KITCHEN OF PURPOSE



- Became a certified program operator for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which reimburses some costs for providing afterschool meals to at-risk students.
- Established a partnership with Aspire! Afterschool to provide meals to students in their programs at Drew and Randolph Elementary Schools.

The kids now have a complete, balanced meal available to them after school, something the after-school program has neither the resources nor capacity to provide without their partnership with Kitchen of Purpose.

MEALS ON WHEELS OF ARLINGTON

- Provided approximately 80 meals weekly to homebound residents under 60 years old who are unable to prepare their own food.
- Improved fundraising infrastructure for future sustainability.



RANDOLPH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOOD PANTRY

- Provided an average of 122 families highly-desired foods and household items at the monthly food distribution to supplement what is received from the Capital Area Food Bank.
- Some items provided included eggs, potatoes, canteloupe, sugar, butter, spices, laundry detergent, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

The items distributed were selected based on four years of operating and knowing what items are of high value to our families.



SALVATION ARMY, ARLINGTON CORPS



- Distributed 53 rolling carts to older adults and people with disabilities and delivered 50 bags of food to 18 older adults in independent living facilities.
- Hired a Spanish-speaking social services worker to coordinate programming and build relationships with participants.
- Surveyed participants to learn more about their preferences and satisfaction.

“Through this project we have established a stronger relation with the community that we will keep for the future.”

YMCA OF GREATER WASHINGTON

- Fifty hypertensive patients of VHC Outpatient Clinic received up to 12 weeks of fresh produce delivered to participants' homes.
- Provided Spanish-language virtual cooking classes called “Simple Cooking with Heart” and a Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program.

“I am learning how to eat healthier, thank you!”

“This has been so amazing for my mother’s diet and takes a weight off our shoulders. We are very lucky to have fresh food every week and cannot thank you enough.”