



Blue Ridge Area
FOOD BANK
Everyone should have enough to eat.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CEO of Blue Ridge Area Food Bank to Retire Leaving a Lasting Impact on Hunger Relief in the Region

VERONA, VA – [February 12, 2025] – The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank announces that CEO Michael McKee will retire at the end of the organization’s fiscal year, June 30, 2025, after 15 years of dedicated service, first in planning and development, and for the last 12 years, as CEO. His early announcement allows the Board of Directors ample time to conduct a national search for his successor and ensure a smooth transition.

Since 2013, McKee has led the regional nonprofit, significantly expanding hunger-relief efforts across Central and Western Virginia. Under his leadership, the Food Bank has improved food distribution and nutritional quality, with a greater focus on fresh produce. He has driven substantial investments in capacity building and capability development to support partner organizations and has championed innovative programs to combat food insecurity.

In the past year alone, the Food Bank distributed 31 million pounds of food (an organization record) to people experiencing food insecurity. The Food Bank was able to meet the growing need for food assistance because of this capacity building and strengthening.

His impact expands beyond the service area of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. He has had a recurring role as Chair of the Federation of Virginia Food Banks, coordinating efforts among all Virginia food banks. For his leadership, Michael received the highest honor in food banking, the 2024 John van Hengel Fellowship Award from Feeding America.

The Board is committed to ensuring a seamless transition, maintaining operational excellence, and continuing to serve the community without disruption. With a former Board chair leading the Board’s search committee, the national search is currently underway, and the job posting, along with further details, can be found at www.BRAFB.org/careers.

"This is the most important task this Board is going to do—find a CEO who can build on Michael’s legacy and lead the organization forward," said Hatsy Vallar, Board Chair of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. "We are working diligently to identify a dynamic leader with the experience, vision, and dedication to guide the Food Bank into its next phase of strategic growth."

Reflecting on his time in the position, McKee expressed confidence in the organization's future: "I feel a deep sense of satisfaction with what we —our partners, donors, the

entire community, and guests—have achieved together. We have deepened and expanded our impact beyond food distribution to address disparities in access and improve the health of our guests while growing and strengthening our network. And because of the outstanding staff and Board, I have complete confidence that the Food Bank will continue to be even more successful and impactful in the coming years."

"Michael has been an outstanding CEO and a strong advocate for the Food Bank's mission," said Vallar. "His dedication and vision have greatly advanced our efforts to strategically combat food insecurity in Central and Western Virginia. His commitment to identifying and addressing areas of need has significantly improved our ability to support more programs, pantries, and partners, as well as individuals and families living with food insecurity. Michael's legacy of innovation and dedication will continue to inspire us as we move forward. He leaves us well-prepared and ready for the next chapter of the Food Bank."

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About the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank

The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank is the largest hunger-relief organization serving Western and Central Virginia. Founded in 1981, the Food Bank serves 25 counties and 8 cities through distribution centers in Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Winchester, and its headquarters in Verona. Each month, the Food Bank supports an average of 148,200 guest visits, reaching record numbers of Virginians through a network of nearly 400 community partners—food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and program sites. As a partner food bank of Feeding America®, the nation's largest hunger-relief organization, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank pledges to continue innovating and adapting to secure, store, and distribute more food to more individuals, families, children, and seniors experiencing hunger. For more information, visit www.brafb.org.

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