



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Metro Area's Largest Hunger Relief Organization Announces Budget Increases for Senior Food Programs

*New national report on food insecurity among older Americans ranks the District
fourth highest in senior hunger, just behind Mississippi*

WASHINGTON, DC, April 24, 2015 – The Capital Area Food Bank today announced expansion plans for its three senior hunger programs: Grocery Plus (aka the Commodity Supplemental Food Program), the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Brown Bag Program. “More seniors in our region are struggling to make ends meet,” said Capital Area Food Bank CEO Nancy Roman, saying the reasons include the increased number of aging residents as well as the aftermath of the 2008 recession. “It’s our job to step into the breach and provide better, smarter access for as many of those as we can.” Senior hunger is higher in our nation’s capital than in all but three states, says [a new national report on food insecurity](#) by the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger.

The CAFB will position itself to reach more seniors in need with better food by

- Expanding service to low income seniors through its Senior Brown Bag program
- Expanding enrollment through its Grocery Plus program, including the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
- Including more fresh fruits and vegetables in food provided monthly by both programs

A recent major gift in memory of Judith Shaffert will allow the CAFB’s Senior Brown Bag program to expand by 20% to serve 5,200 seniors across Washington, Maryland and Virginia. The gift covers the entire cost of the program, which provides income-qualified seniors with healthy food and nutrition education materials on a monthly basis at no charge. Seniors who are food insecure are 53% more likely to have a heart attack and 40% more likely to have a heart disorder, according to a recent NFESH report.

The Grocery Plus program provides 5,300 low income seniors living in the District with monthly packages of healthy groceries at no charge, including about 30-40 pounds of protein, whole grains and vegetables along with cooking and wellness tips. In summer, SFMNP farmers’ market vouchers for free produce complement the monthly food packages. The program looks to increase enrollment by expanding pickup site locations, and growing its partnership with DCOA under the leadership of Dr. John Thompson.

“The Grocery Plus program really has been a lifesaver to me,” said Dorthea Mary Timeyin, a D.C. resident. “As a senior living on a fixed income, the additional food helps to cut down on my monthly food bill; I can tremendously improve my eating habits and begin to use the ingredients to prepare healthy meals.”

The CAFB will celebrate Older Americans Month this May through its second annual [Senior Strong](#) campaign highlighting the resilience and resourcefulness of the seniors it serves. The public can support the campaign by donating on the [website](#), (give.capitalareafoodbank.org/redhen_campaign/14/donate), following @foodbankmetrodc and posting photos of seniors using the hashtag #SolveSeniorHunger.

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About the Capital Area Food Bank

The Capital Area Food Bank is the largest hunger relief organization in the Washington metro area, serving over 530,000 people through direct food distribution programs and a network of 500 partner agencies. This year, the Capital Area Food Bank distributed 42 million pounds of food – the equivalent of 35 million meals – one third of which was fresh fruits and vegetables. A member of Feeding America, CAFB takes a comprehensive approach to addressing hunger by increasing access to nutritious food, initiating change through skill-building and advocacy, and creating sustainability with outreach and training for those at risk of hunger. To learn more, visit: www.capitalareafoodbank.org, or find the Capital Area Food Bank on Facebook at facebook.com/CapitalAreaFoodBank, and Twitter at @foodbankmetrodc.

For information about the [Grocery Plus](#) program for seniors living in Washington, D.C., visit capitalareafoodbank.org/programs/seniors/Grocery-Plus or call 202-644-9880. For information about the Senior Brown Bag program, please contact Lavette Sims, Director of Distributions, Capital Area Food Bank at lsims@capitalareafoodbank.org or (202) 644-9839.