

The end of July and beginning of August marked a transition in the COVID-19 local emergency food response as Frontline Foods/World Central Kitchen (FLF/WCK) phased out their Community Meals program. The program—an initiative fostering social and economic impacts—was operated by Frontline Foods volunteers and the Cville Community Cares mutual aid group, in collaboration with the national World Central Kitchen emergency food relief organization.



Since April, over 61,000 hot meals prepared by local restaurants have been distributed across specific community sites and neighborhood locations. Cultivate's Food Justice Network (FJN) played a key role in bringing stakeholders together and leading Frontline Food's ability to advance racial equity during emergency response. Specifically, FJN's leadership team developed the FLF Steering Committee—a stakeholder group that met bi-weekly to advise FLF & Cville Community Cares local operations. Through this group, food equity principles and practices were infused into the local FLF/WCK relief program.



Initially, the move for FJN leadership to collaborate with Frontline Foods' team was marked by a lot of enthusiasm and some concern. After all, the initiative was a new project in an already crowded non-profit scene setting out to do food access, with a focus on for-profit businesses working in a pay-it-forward fashion. Put simply, the bill to support such an initiative would be large. The initiative began to show promise when local FLF leadership sought to understand community concerns and responded by making commitments to avoid tapping into local funding networks (a key source for many FJN organizational partners) and following the guidance of Steering Committee partners.



While anxiety for the funding commitment to materialize, FJN partners remained excited about the opportunity to steer an initiative that might support some economic relief during a time of economic contraction.

Inequities throughout our food system were alive and well prior to the COVID-19 crisis. However, no one can deny the increased nature of the pandemic's catalyzing impact on Black and Brown communities. A mutual goal of the Frontline Foods partnership with the Steering Committee was to center Black and Brown owned businesses as the ones preparing and getting paid for the meals. Reaching this goal was no simple task. The program started out with white owned restaurants receiving a bulk of the money. However, with open communication and transparency from FLF leadership and a commitment to accountability, the program was able to lean into the support of Steering Committee members to assess and adjust partnerships by enrolling more Black and minority owned businesses into the program.

One key partner in this effort to enroll diverse restaurant owners was the Office of Economic Development's Jason Ness, who conducted outreach and provided additional support for FLF to increase their support for Black businesses. Leading into the final week, more than 75% of reimbursed restaurants providing community meals were minority owned and more than \$638,000 went towards the Charlottesville economy as a whole.



However, the benefits of collaborative partnership in the meal program go beyond economic gains. In support of community voice and ownership, Cville Community Cares worked with Cultivate to hire 7 community advocates—residents who supported program implementation, outreach, and feedback. The community advocates and key stakeholders on the Steering Committee representing Black, Latinx, and immigrant communities, dedicated valuable time to ensure the initiative reached the correct families and children. Steering committee members such as Lisa Draine (Cville Community Cares), Gloria Maria Peña Rockhold (Albemarle County Public Schools/Creciendo Juntos), and Charlene Green (Piedmont Housing Alliance), were guiding lights in these efforts to advance inclusive impact in the community meal program.

Without a doubt, community partners engaged in the local Frontline Foods initiative pulled together to illustrate what it looked like to step towards equity in the time of COVID. The local model has been elevated to the national spotlight with Frontline Foods and World Central Kitchen seeking to deploy a Solidarity Campaign bolstering partnerships with Black restaurant owners. In addition, the FLF Steering Committee principles and practices created by the Food Justice Network leadership team have also been shared nationally with all FLF chapters.

Photos courtesy of Cville Community Cares

While the community meals program phases down, our local chapter of FLF remains committed to supporting the COVID-19 Wrap Around Services. The prepared meals, along with other essential services, have been a critical support for people who test positive for COVID-19 in the City and Albemarle County. As the school system prepares for the new school year and the COVID-19 Wrap Around Services continue, conversations about the role of Community Meals and what shape the program might take continue to evolve.

FREE COMMUNITY MEALS: Week of June 15-21 Prepared by local restaurants

MONDAY (June 15)

6:00 pm - 6:30 pm: **South First Street Neighborhood** - 900/1000 S.1st St.
6:00 pm - 6:30 pm: **Friendship Court Community Center** - 418 Garrett St.
6:30 pm - 7:00 pm: **Riverside Neighborhood** - 309/323 Riverside Avenue

TUESDAY (June 16)

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm: **Boys & Girls Club** - 1000 Cherry Avenue
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm: **Greenstone/Prospect/Orangedale Neighborhood**

**In front of Greenstone Apartments -720/772 Prospect Avenue AND*

**Corner of Prospect and Rockcreek Roads*

WEDNESDAY (June 17)

6:00 pm - 6:30 pm: **Friendship Court Community Center** - 418 Garrett St.
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm: **Southwood Mobile Home Park** - 387 Hickory St.

THURSDAY (June 18)

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm: **Townwood Mobile Home Park** - 1701 Crenshaw Ct.
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm: **Boys & Girls Club** - 1000 Cherry Avenue

FRIDAY (June 19)

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm: Deliveries to: **Crescent Halls, The Crossings, and New Beginnings Christian Community**

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm: **Westhaven Community Center** - 803 Hardy Drive

SATURDAY (June 20)

2:00 pm - 2:30 pm: **Michie Drive Community** - 2021/2025 Michie Drive
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm: **Hearthwood Apartments** (by pool) - 2111 Michie Drive

SUNDAY (June 21)

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm - **Church of the Incarnation** - 1465 Incarnation Drive
**Look for volunteers in parking lot by food pantry pickups*

Please note:

- Our volunteers will be wearing masks and gloves.
- Walk-up recipients are asked to stand 6 feet apart while in line.
- If possible, walk-up recipients should bring their own bags to carry meals.
- Recipients may drive up and volunteers will place meals in cars.
- Each person may pick up enough meals for everyone in their family.

Meals are donated & delivered by: **Frontline Foods Charlottesville** (in partnership with **World Central Kitchen**) **Cville Community Cares, Cville DSA, and Cultivate Charlottesville**

COMIDAS GRATUITAS DE LA COMUNIDAD: SEMANA DEL 15 AL 21 DE JUNIO PREPARADOS POR RESTAURANTES LOCALES

LUNES (15 de junio)

6:00 pm - 6:30 pm: **vecindario de South First Street** - 900/1000 S.1st St.
6:00 pm - 6:30 pm: **Friendship Court Community Center** - 418 Garrett St.
6:30 pm - 7:00 pm: **Barrio Riverside** - 309/323 Riverside Avenue

MARTES (16 de junio)

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm: **Boys & Girls Club** - 1000 Cherry Avenue
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm: **Vecindario de Greenstone / Prospect / Orangedale***

**Frente a Greenstone Apartments -720/772 Prospect Avenue Y*

**Rincón de Prospect y Rockcreek Roads*

MIÉRCOLES (17 de junio)

6:00 pm - 6:30 pm: **Centro Comunitario de Friendship Court** - 418 Garrett St.
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm: **Southwood Mobile Home Park** - 387 Hickory St.

JUEVES (18 de junio)

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm: **Townwood Mobile Home Park** - 1701 Crenshaw Ct.
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm: **Boys & Girls Club** - 1000 Cherry Avenue

VIERNES (19 de junio)

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm: repartos a **Crescent Halls, The Crossings, y New Beginnings (La comunidad cristiana nuevos comienzos)**

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm: **Centro Comunitario de Westhaven** - 803 Hardy Drive

SÁBADO (20 de junio)

2:00 pm - 2:30 pm: **Comunidad Michie Drive** - 2021/2025 Michie Drive
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm: **Hearthwood Apartments** (junto a la piscina) - 2111 Michie Drive

DOMINGO (21 de junio)

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm - **Iglesia de la Encarnación** - 1465 Encarnación Drive
**Busque a los voluntarios en el estacionamiento junto a las recogidas de la despensa de alimentos.*

Por favor, tenga en cuenta:

- Las personas voluntarias llevarán mascarillas y guantes.
- Pedimos que las personas que reciben estos almuerzos mantengan 6 pies de distancia mientras esperan en la cola en todo momento.
- Si es posible, las personas que vengan a pie deben traer sus propias bolsas para recoger la comida.
- Las personas en carro pueden manejar hasta la zona de entrega y recibir los almuerzos en sus coches sin necesidad de bajarse.
- Cada persona puede recoger suficientes almuerzos para todas las personas de sus familias/casas.

Almuerzos donados por **Frontline Foods Charlottesville** (en colaboración con **World Central Kitchen**), **Cville Community Cares, DSA Charlottesville y Cultivate Charlottesville**

We want to give a heartfelt thank you to the countless community partners that have dedicated time to ensure this initiative was a success. We look forward to continuing this work with the many partners involved.

~Embracing the gift of collaboration~

Frontline Foods Steering Committee Partners

Cultivate Charlottesville Cville Community Cares | Piedmont Housing Alliance |
Office of Economic Development | Sin Barreras |
PB& J Fund (FJN Leadership Team) | Local Food Hub (FJN Leadership Team) |
International Rescue Committee (FJN Leadership Team) |
Creciendo Juntos | Culinary Concepts A/B | Thomas Jefferson Health
District (FJN Leadership Team) | Department of Human Services | Department
of Social Services (County & City) | Albemarle County Office of Equity &
Inclusion

Additional FJN Leadership Supporting Frontline Foods

UVA Global Policy Center | UVA Health |

Trinity Episcopal Bread & Roses