



PO BOX 1326  
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Thank you for helping us build a  
community without hunger!

280

Volunteers

12,132

Volunteers Hours

\$1.87

Million in Support

740,838 LBS.

Food Donated

CORA is a member agency of  
Chatham County United Way.



**CORA**  
**IMPACT REPORT**

Fiscal year 2023 - 7/1/2022 - 6/30/2023

Since 1989, CORA has experienced remarkable growth fueled by a desire to meet the evolving needs of this community. On a mission to create a community without hunger, CORA has expanded its programs and services to address the multifaceted challenges faced by the people we serve.

One key factor behind CORA's growth has been its unwavering commitment to this shared mission. With an understanding of our community's needs, each of CORA's new programs is designed to better meet the needs of our neighbors experiencing hunger. Initially focused on providing emergency food assistance, CORA has implemented innovative programs such as our Mobile Market, CORApacks, Delivery, and Satellite Pantry programs which significantly increase our reach and impact.

Support and engagement from the community have played a vital role in CORA's growth. Our partnerships with donors, volunteers, neighbors, local businesses, farmers, and many others have enabled CORA to access the resources necessary to expand our programs and physical space. Our construction and renovation projects are finally complete! By the time you read this, our Pantry will be open for choice shopping once again, and staff and volunteers will be welcoming neighbors into our new waiting, meeting, and office space. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who helped us stay on course during this period of extensive growth and change. We are also looking forward to the opportunity to serve this wonderful community in new and exciting ways in the years to come!

Sincerely,  
  
Melissa Driver Beard  
Executive Director

**Please visit**  
[www.corafoodpantry.org](http://www.corafoodpantry.org)  
**today to donate!**



Photo by John Michael Simpson, Chatham Magazine




**OUR MISSION**  
CORA provides nutritious food to community members facing food insecurity.

**OUR VISION**  
CORA envisions a community without hunger.


**SIGN UP**  
Scan the code to get our monthly e-newsletter.



**Want to make a difference every month of the year?**



You can become a monthly donor for CORA by setting up automatic monthly donations in an amount that suits you. This hassle-free method ensures that your contributions are conveniently drafted each month, allowing you to support all of CORA's programs with secure, automatic payments from your bank account, credit card, or debit card. Scan below to get started.



**Staff**  
Melissa Driver Beard, Executive Director  
Rebecca Hankins, Development & Communications Director  
Kristine Ashwood, Operations Director  
Mackie Hunter, Program Manager  
Admaira Roman, Community Support Manager  
Peggy Overton, Data Manager  
Dottie Schmitt, Bookkeeper  
Patty Mahder, Support Staff  
Travus Viera, Transportation & Warehouse Supervisor  
Reggie Blue, Inventory & Logistics Specialist  
Riley Ward, 2022 SNACK! Coordinator

**2021-2022 Board of Directors**

Cindi Ebert, President	Bibi Fragozo
Bobbie Morel, Vice President	Greg German
David Marty, Treasurer	Steve Maynor
Rich Helgans, Secretary	Wilma Shroeder
Pamela Barker	Linda S. Todd
Wendy Bellard	Mike Wagner
Suzen Bria	

CORA is registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law, tax identification number 56-1668767.

**Stay Connected With Us!**





At CORA, we believe that dependable, equitable access to safe and nutritious food is a fundamental human right. We also believe that food is more than a basic need. Food provides so much more than just nourishment; it is a way for people to connect. This holds true in Chatham County – where food connects us to family, celebrates our different cultures, and is essential to a thriving community. Over the past five years, we have grown tremendously and now offer various programs to assist our neighbors.

Recently, we reopened CORA with a new choice shopping pantry, warehouse, and community space. The new facility spans over 4,000 square feet and allows us to efficiently, safely, and compassionately meet the demand for food in our community. Our new choice pantry is set up like a grocery store, and community members can select the food that matches their preferences and needs. This creates an atmosphere of dignity and builds a sense of community between staff, volunteers, and those we serve.

CORA has expanded our pantry services by providing monthly deliveries to home-bound seniors, our most vulnerable population. We provide extra food monthly to income-eligible individuals through a partnership with the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina and the United States Department of Agriculture's TEFAP and CSFP programs, serving approximately 1,150 people monthly.

In 2023, CORA established a satellite pantry in Siler City in partnership with Love Chatham, a non-profit organization established to serve those in our community facing homelessness and hunger. We are working closely with their leadership team to ensure they have the tools, food, and support needed to expand CORA's services into Siler City.

CORA's Mobile Market delivers nutritious food to people facing food insecurity beyond our pantry in Pittsboro. We hold monthly Mobile Markets in Siler City and Chapel Hill and occasional markets in other areas meeting the need where it is. Since 2019, this program has provided 28,000 individuals with over 500,000 meals.

Our SNACK! program provides food to children who depend on free or reduced-cost meals at school but face a lack of proper nutrition when school is not in session. In Chatham County, approximately 50% of public school children receive free or low-cost meals through the federal school lunch program because their family income is at or near the poverty level. Last summer, we served 1,327 children with more than 186,000 pounds of food. We also provide food on weekends and during school breaks from September through June with CORApacks, where each child receives a monthly food box containing three meals and two snacks daily for when they are not in school. We hope to serve 150 students through the CORApacks program in the upcoming school year.

Research shows that access to nutritious food is the key to a healthy community where children do well in school, families thrive, and seniors do not face the stress of choosing between food and other necessities. Last year, CORA served 10,220 individuals 1.28 million meals through our various programs.



CORA's community is bound together by our collective vision—a community without hunger, where we compassionately care for our neighbors in need. We consider ourselves incredibly fortunate to be part of this dynamic and enduring community that works together to create significant impact and lasting transformations for those we serve.

## Our Neighbors

Judy

Judy resides in western Chatham County and has a family of five to six individuals, accommodating anyone needing a place to stay. She has been a resident of Chatham County for six years, residing on her grandparents' property. Currently, she is facing challenging circumstances, having experienced the loss of her sister and daughter. Additionally, her car recently broke down, and she lives in a 103-year-old house without access to running water. Judy's situation reflects that of many members of our community. With escalating food prices, gasoline costs, electricity expenses, and rent, it has become increasingly difficult for individuals relying on minimum wage to support their families.



Judy recently experienced a change in her social security benefits, which caused a reduction in her SNAP benefits to just \$23 per month. On top of that, she's had to manage without running water and buy it separately. She truly appreciates the support that CORA and other organizations have offered her during this challenging time. Thanks to our assistance, she can allocate funds that would have otherwise been spent on food towards essential expenses like gas and electricity. "Asking for help is hard, and I am so grateful for CORA and their help. The variety of food is nice, and choosing some of the items I need is incredible; last year, I even received seeds to plant in my garden." Judy shared. "I feel cared for at CORA, and I can't wait to be in a position to give back."

Despite the difficulties she's facing, Judy remains optimistic about her family's prospects. She's confident that they can overcome these temporary setbacks and emerge stronger. She's genuinely grateful for the help and care that CORA has provided. We're proud to be able to help her and others like her during their times of need.

Lillie



Lillie, an 86-year-old retired nurse residing in Siler City, spends most of her time alone at home. Although she is mostly homebound, she appreciates the opportunity to venture outside with some assistance. Since her retirement, Lillie has faced challenges in securing adequate groceries, but she finds comfort and safety in visiting CORA, where she can obtain the nutritious food she needs. The support she receives extends beyond the senior box and fresh produce; she values the kindness exhibited by the staff and volunteers. Engaging in conversations with everyone involved at CORA has become a highlight for Lillie, fostering a sense of connection and belonging. She feels at ease reaching out to caring neighbors and seeking the assistance she needs. "You've helped me out tremendously. I cannot thank you enough," Lillie says.

Lillie's situation is not uncommon among seniors, as their fixed incomes often fail to keep up with the escalating costs of essential items, including food. This financial gap forces families to make impossible choices, such as prioritizing medication or rent over putting food on the table. At CORA, we are dedicated to serving Lillie and all our neighbors in need, ensuring they receive the support and nourishment they need.

### *Chatham Community Church*

Chatham Community Church embodies loving one's neighbors and addressing their needs within the community. CORA wholeheartedly shares this philosophy and has established a strong partnership with the church dedicated to serving Chatham County. The church has been an incredible partner throughout the years, organizing food drives, assembling hygiene bags, supplying volunteers, providing financial support, and hosting important meetings. Chatham Community Church has been a steadfast ally, standing beside us in our mission to assist individuals facing food insecurity.

"We are glad to partner with organizations in the community who are doing outstanding work--CORA being on the top of the list when it comes to helping to deal with food insecurity," shared Alex Kirk, Lead Pastor. "We love how CORA is both practical and creative, finding ways to meet needs that dignify the recipient. CORA is thoughtfully run and is a great gift to Chatham County." CORA is excited to continue working alongside this fantastic organization as we find creative and innovative solutions to hunger across Chatham.

### *Chatham Trades*

CORA has had the pleasure of partnering with Chatham Trades for several years, and they have been an essential part of our operations. The use of their warehouse space was crucial during our transition to the new building, as they kindly received and stored pallets of food for our various programs. Chatham Trades' consumers skillfully pack food boxes for our Mobile Markets and SNACK! initiatives, enabling us to serve countless hungry individuals throughout the county. They also have been critical partners in helping us meet the increased need and assisting with food delivery to many of our SNACK! distributions sites. "Chatham Trades is proud to partner with CORA to give back to the community. The assembly and packaging of food boxes for their programs has provided skill training and employment for persons with intellectual developmental disabilities," shared Shawn Poe, Executive Director.

Partnerships like the one we have with Chatham Trades are crucial in tackling food insecurity and ensuring people have access to nutritious food. Their willingness to collaborate and provide essential services has, no doubt, had a positive impact on those we serve.

## Our Supporters

For over ten years, Nancy Piet-Pelon and David Piet have been steadfast supporters of CORA, generously donating every month to help fight food insecurity in our community. Their unwavering dedication has made an immense impact on the lives of many neighbors.

Their passion for giving back comes from a heartfelt belief that access to healthy, nourishing food is essential for everyone to thrive. After experiencing firsthand the devastating consequences of inadequate nutrition while working in international health, they knew they had to take action and support the fight against food insecurity at home.



*Nancy and David*

Despite being one of the wealthiest counties in North Carolina, Chatham County still has a significant portion of its population struggling with low incomes. Shockingly, more than one in six households reported that cost is a barrier to eating a healthy diet. Nancy and David are always looking for ways to help their community, particularly in public health. They understand the importance of providing resources to ensure families and communities lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

They also understand that the need is only getting more acute, and we all need to help ensure that families and communities have a healthier and more productive life. "We hope CORA will continue to look for innovative ways to care for our community and assist others that are less fortunate," David shared. "We all must remember that we all have the same life goals - to strive to make a difference in the world we live in - to make a difference for others as we live, work, and share the road of life."

We are so grateful for Nancy and David's support and dedication to our mission. Nancy and David understand that their generosity and compassion are truly inspiring, and we are lucky to have them as members of our community.



### Rolander Family Foundation

CORA  
SNACK!



For over a decade, the Rolander Family Foundation has steadfastly supported CORA's efforts to combat hunger in our community. Specifically, they have been instrumental in assisting our SNACK! program, which provides free groceries to children during the summer months. The foundation was founded in 2000 by Art and Millie Rolander, who, having achieved business success, sought to give back to local non-profit organizations where their contributions could have a meaningful impact. Today, the foundation's directors are family members residing in various locations, including Canada. Each director assesses local non-profits and their mission statements to determine whether they are making a positive difference in the communities they serve.

Director Nancy Leroy, a resident of Governors Club, was introduced to CORA and became deeply inspired by our mission to provide food assistance to residents in Chatham County. In 2009, Nancy met with Beth Budd, CORA's then Executive Director, to learn more about the organization and explore how the foundation could make a difference. During this meeting, it became apparent that CORA's SNACK! program needed funding to support its summer food assistance initiative for children.

"By meeting with CORA's Executive Directors and leadership team over the years, I have witnessed the organization's growth, including the addition of a new building, warehouse, professional refrigeration, and trucks for food distribution," said Nancy. "I can't wait to see the new offices and conference room as CORA expands its services for Chatham County residents." The partnership between the Rolander Family Foundation and CORA exemplifies the transformative power of philanthropy. Through their ongoing support of the SNACK! program, the foundation has played a vital role in ensuring that children in Chatham County receive the nutritious food they need. This program serves over 1,300 children each summer.

## Our Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of CORA, and their contributions significantly impact those facing hunger in our community. Nearly every day of the year, volunteers play a vital role in the flow of food that comes through our pantry. Volunteers sort donations, inspect produce, stock shelves, bag food, greet families, and ensure families get the nutritious food they need. Over 280 volunteers provide 12,132 hours of service to help expand our organization's reach and enhance CORA's ability to fulfill its mission.

280

Volunteers



12,132

Volunteer  
Hours



88

New Volunteers



Sudie Taylor has volunteered at CORA for over five years, demonstrating her dedication and versatility in taking on various roles within the pantry. Sudie proactively ensures smooth operations by engaging in tasks such as Retail Recovery, Food Prep and Distribution, Choice Assistance, Food Quality Control, and more. Her energy and enthusiasm are always present as she arrives for her volunteer shifts, ready to support the staff and fellow volunteers. Sudie's positive attitude, wonderful sense of humor, and unwavering commitment to CORA's mission make her a true delight at the pantry.

Sudie



"I had never heard of CORA before I received an annual report in the mail. My late grandmother's name was Cora, so I took that as a sign. I began volunteering. What shocked me and hurt my heart was learning how many neighbors were only a job, an illness, or an accident away from food insecurity. CORA was there. When I retired, I missed working with kind folks for a common goal. Fellow volunteers amaze and inspire me. CORA is such a lovely organization."

Len

Len Ritter has devoted more than 350 hours of his time as a dedicated volunteer at CORA, and his commitment continues to grow. He excels as a volunteer leader, supporting and guiding fellow volunteers during service. Len possesses a keen focus and a deep understanding of the pantry's ever-changing needs. He combines patience with strategic thinking to ensure that service runs efficiently and safely. Len dedicates his volunteer hours to Food Prep and Distribution, as well as assisting at the Mobile Markets. He has assumed a leadership role in our Parking Committee, diligently working to ensure a smooth flow of traffic and parking for our upcoming Reopening in July.



"I was raised by godly parents who taught their children that we should not be above one another but help lift those in need. I believe the words of Matthew in the New Testament of the Bible that state: '...for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in'.... When His disciples asked when they had performed such acts of charity, Jesus replied, '...inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me...'. I enjoy volunteering and serving alongside like-minded individuals, of all faiths and beliefs, with one goal in mind - Building a community without hunger."



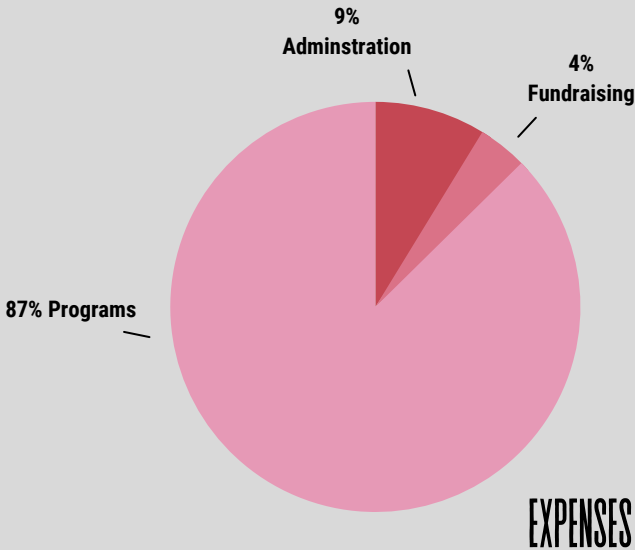
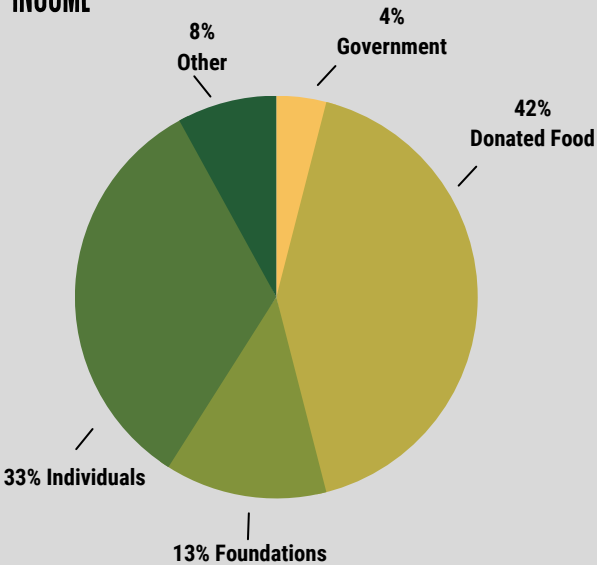
PORCH Chatham is one chapter of many across the United States, and it supports CORA's mission of providing nutritious food to community members facing food insecurity. This year, twenty-six communities and over 100 volunteers collected food and cash donations through monthly neighborhood food drives. Over the past year, PORCH has filled our shelves with more than 107,000 pounds of food, from cereal, oranges, and olive oil, to pasta, beans, and toiletries. It is truly remarkable how communities that come together once a month can enormously impact our neighbors in need. Thank you, PORCH Chatham, for your incredible generosity! If you would like information on how to start a PORCH program for CORA, please contact Rebecca Hankins at [rebecca@corafoodpantry.org](mailto:rebecca@corafoodpantry.org).



# OUR FINANCIALS AND IMPACT

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the entire community, we met the needs of those facing food insecurity in our community over the past year and closed our fiscal year in exceptionally good financial health. In FY2023, we secured nearly \$1.9 million in support. CORA is excited about our ongoing efforts of building a healthy, strong, and connected community where all people have equitable access to abundant, safe, nutritious, and culturally relevant food.

## INCOME



## EXPENSES

CORA operates with fiscal efficiency – directing 87 cents of every dollar toward programs – thanks in large part to the support we receive from our generous donors who provide monetary donations, volunteer hours, and food.

## WAYS TO GIVE



- Online Donations: Visit [corafoodpantry.org](https://corafoodpantry.org) and make a one-time gift or set up a monthly donation.
- Check: Mail a check to CORA to PO Box 1326, Pittsboro, NC, 27312.
- Donor-Advised Funds: If you have a DAF and want to make a transformational impact at CORA, we recommend making a grant to make a difference.
- Planned Giving: Will, Trust, Life Insurance Policy, or Retirement Account? By including CORA in your financial and estate plans, you can help ensure that we will continue to build a community without hunger.
- Qualified Charitable Distribution: If you are 70½ years old, donations from your IRA to CORA reduce your taxable income and can help meet a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) if you have one.
- Stocks or Securities: By donating appreciated assets, you can save on two types of taxes, avoiding capital gains tax and often getting a full deduction for the value of your gift. CORA accepts gifts of stocks and securities through Blake Stewart at Edward Jones. For information on how to make a gift, please call Blake at 919-542-3020.

1.28

Million Meals Distributed

12,132

Volunteer Hours

740,838

Pounds of Food Donated

854

New Families Served

65,519

Requests for Assistance

10,220

Individuals Served

236,666

Pounds of Fresh Produce Distributed