



**Annual
Report 2024**

Building A Community Without Hunger

For a Thriving Chatham County

Message from our Executive Director

This past fiscal year has been a period of extraordinary achievement for CORA, marked by our return to choice shopping, the end of the pandemic, and the completion of construction and renovation projects. We successfully distributed over 1.8 million meals to nearly 13,000 individuals, a 27% increase from the previous year. These statistics not only represent service numbers more dramatic than those from earlier pandemic years but also the collective impact of our efforts. Our achievements were made possible by the incredible support of our donors and the tireless efforts of our volunteers, whose ranks have grown substantially from FY23 to FY24.

This year we demonstrated our commitment to our strategic plan and to the community by furthering our partnerships with local farmers and businesses. This allowed us to offer a wider variety of fresh produce and healthy food options, meeting immediate needs and promoting long-term health and well-being in our community.

We also demonstrated our adaptability and responsiveness to community needs by expanding our programs. Our CORApacks program now serves 174 children, and our senior delivery program benefits 94 older adults. In addition, our two mobile markets and satellite pantry at Freedom Family Church ensure that nutritious food reaches underserved communities, making our services more accessible.

As we celebrate our 35th year, we aim to build on these accomplishments with ambitious plans. We are focused on increasing our presence in western Chatham County, enhancing our food supply chain, and expanding our mobile pantry services and nutrition education programs.

These initiatives reflect our commitment to innovation, growth, and the well-being of those we serve to help create and build a thriving Chatham County. We are deeply grateful for the continued support of our donors, volunteers, and partners. We are confident that with your help, our 35th year will be our most impactful yet.



MELISSA DRIVER BEARD

Executive Director

Melissa@corafoodpantry.org

Building a Thriving Chatham County

Our Commitment to Nutritious Food

Access to nutritious food is vital for fostering a thriving community. Research consistently shows that healthy and nutritious food helps children excel in school, strengthens families, and relieves seniors from having to choose between food and other necessities. In underserved areas, providing nutritious food improves individual health and enhances the community's economic vitality.

In Chatham County, the need for food assistance is significant. Approximately 10% of the population lives at or below the poverty level, and 26% are considered low-income. Alarmingly, 13% of residents are food insecure, struggling to obtain enough food for a healthy diet. CORA addresses this critical issue by improving access to nutritious food and enhancing the quality of life for those facing food insecurity through a comprehensive array of programs.

Our Programs

CHOICE PANTRY

Our Pantry is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for shopping and we offer drive-through service on Fridays. We also have a satellite pantry at Freedom Family Church in Siler City, open on the second Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

DELIVERY

Our delivery program for 94 older adults provides nutritious food directly to home-bound seniors, helping them maintain their dignity and independence.

MOBILE MARKET

Our Mobile Markets use a drive-through model to distribute food safely and conveniently. We host two monthly markets, one in Siler City and one in Chapel Hill. These markets serve between 100 and 200 families per month.

SNACK!

The SNACK! program supports over 1,300 children who typically depend on school meals by providing enough food for 21 healthy meals each week during the summer.

CORAPACKS

From September through June, CORAPacks delivers monthly food boxes to over 170 students' homes, supporting them during weekends and school breaks.

CORA remains committed to expanding our reach and enhancing our services to meet the growing needs of our neighbors and ensuring that everyone in Chatham County has the opportunity to thrive.

Our Impact

July 2023 - June 2024



1.8 Million
Meals Distributed



865,694 lbs.
Food Donated



12,995
People Served



987
New Families
Served



90,453
Requests for
Assistance



303,108 lbs.
Fresh Produce
Distributed



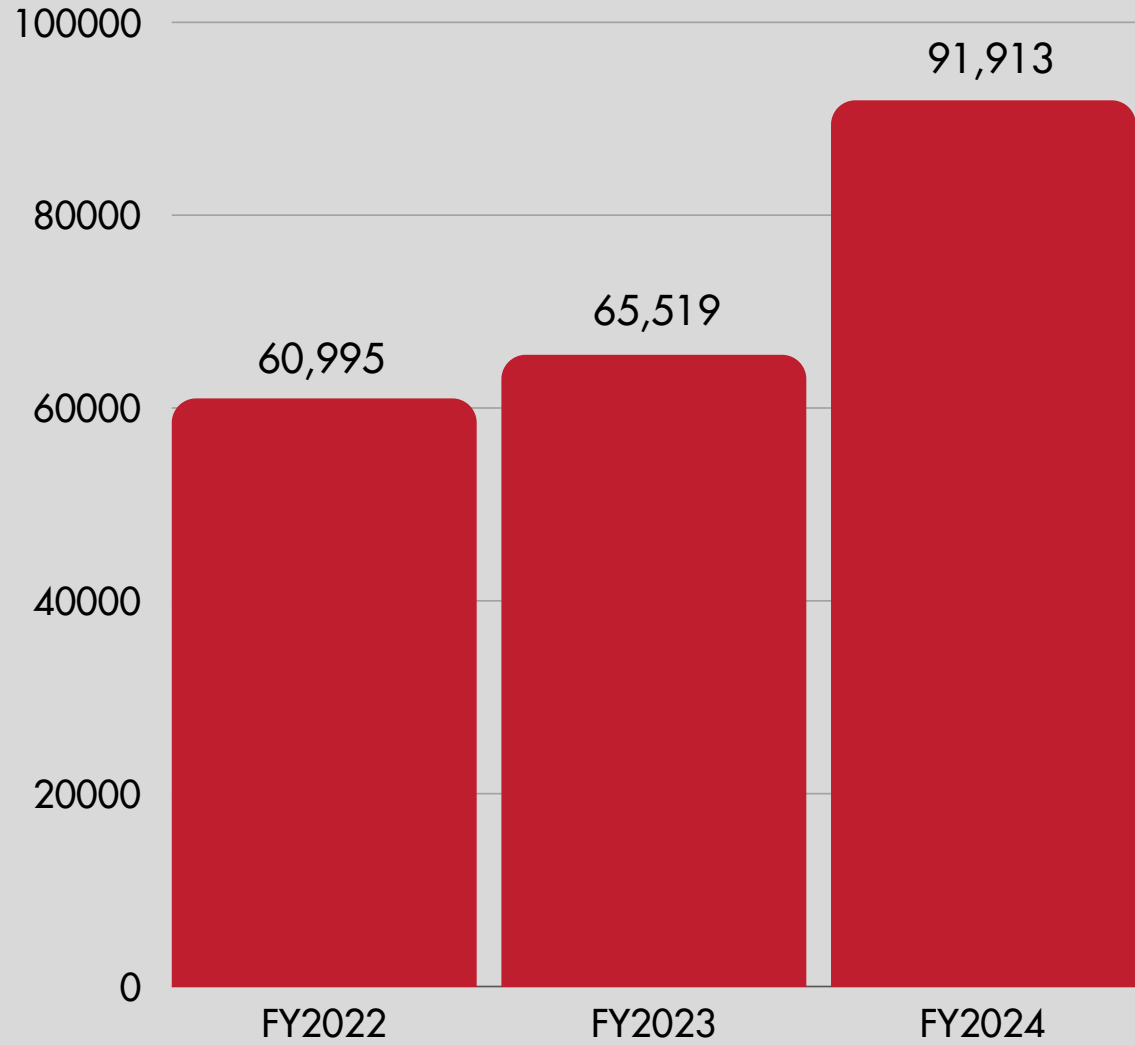
17,098
Volunteer Hours



1,893
Donors

Increase in Need

Number of Visits to CORA





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Volunteering at CORA has shown me how a little kindness can make a big difference. Caring for others isn't just about providing food—it's about giving hope and showing that every person matters. ~Colton



With Our Volunteers The Heart of CORA's Mission

Volunteers are the heart of CORA, playing a crucial role in our mission to combat food insecurity in Chatham County. With 388 dedicated individuals contributing 17,098 volunteer hours, their efforts are equivalent to eight full-time employees. These compassionate volunteers enable us to run our programs and services efficiently, ensuring that nutritious food reaches those who need it most.

Our volunteers bring empathy, kindness, and a deep sense of community to CORA. Whether stocking shelves, assisting clients in the Food Pantry, or delivering food to home-bound seniors, they infuse every task with inclusivity and support. Their dedication allows us to expand our reach, improve our services, and positively impact the lives of countless families, children, and seniors.

We are deeply grateful for their invaluable contributions and look forward to continuing this journey together.



Honoring Enrique Romero: A Legacy of Dedication and Service



Enrique Romero, a beloved community member and passionate volunteer, passed away on February 11, 2024. Through his dedication and hard work, Enrique tirelessly served his neighbors, significantly impacting organizations like CORA. CORA posthumously honored Enrique with the inaugural Volunteer of the Year Award this year. This award recognizes a volunteer who exemplifies the same dedication, passion, and commitment to helping CORA build a community without hunger, just as Enrique did daily.

Enrique is deeply missed by everyone who knew him. We feel the absence of his cheerful "Buenos Dias" greetings, his enthusiastic fist bumps and high-fives, the sound of his leaf blower every morning, and his unique talent for easily fitting ten bags of groceries into a small car. Rest in peace, Enrique.

PORCH Chatham – Partners in our Fight Against Hunger

PORCH Chatham, one of many chapters nationwide, supports CORA's mission to provide nutritious food to those facing food insecurity. This year, twenty-five communities and over 100 volunteers collected food and cash donations through monthly neighborhood food drives. Their efforts have filled our shelves with more than 105,270 pounds of food, including cereal, tuna, olive oil, rice, and vegetables.

The impact of communities coming together once a month is truly remarkable. PORCH Chatham's generosity has made a significant difference in the lives of individuals and families facing hunger across Chatham. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our dedicated PORCH Chatham volunteers for their ongoing support.

If you would like to start a PORCH program for CORA, please contact Rebecca Hankins at rebecca@corafoodpantry.org. Your involvement helps us provide food for our neighbors in need.



With Our Neighbors

At CORA, we assist a diverse community of people, including those living at or near the poverty level. We support individuals and families who find themselves in the difficult position of earning too much for traditional assistance but too little to meet their basic needs. Half of those we help are children or older adults who are especially vulnerable. No matter the circumstances, CORA is dedicated to offering compassionate support and helping everyone achieve healthier and more enriched lives.



Rene's Story: Navigating Life with CORA's Support

Rene and her partner Marco are members of the Chatham County community. Rene, a mother and grandmother of two, has lived a remarkable life. Born in Japan as an "army brat," she has had a variety of professional experiences, including a career in New York City, serving in the Navy, and working as an Au Pair in Germany before settling in Chatham County.

Since 2019, Rene has been shopping at CORA. She describes herself as "land-rich but money-poor" and has found navigating the complicated process for assistance frustrating. In contrast, CORA's simple approach has been a relief. The anxiety she feels over increasing grocery store prices has impacted her health and even caused nausea, making CORA's services even more vital.

Rene is incredibly grateful for the food she receives from CORA, which allows her to feed herself and Marco. Recently, she made a delicious pork butt, showcasing her culinary skills. Both Rene and Marco have dietary restrictions, and CORA's ability to accommodate their needs has been a blessing.

Rene recently shared, "CORA has been a lifeline for Marco and me. Navigating assistance programs can be so frustrating, but CORA makes it simple. The food we receive fills our plates and brings joy and better health to our lives. Thanks to CORA, Marco's type 2 diabetes is managed without medication, and we can enjoy meals that accommodate our dietary needs. The support we get from CORA truly shows how much our community cares for one another."

Rene's outgoing and adventurous spirit exemplifies the essence of our community, which cares for one another. Her story is a testament to CORA's positive impact on the lives of those we serve, fostering health, happiness, and a sense of belonging.



CORA has been a lifeline for Marco and me. Navigating assistance programs can be so frustrating, but CORA makes it simple. ~Rene

With Our Partners

Partners are essential to CORA's work, enabling us to expand our reach and enhance our services. Through their support, we can provide nutritious food and additional resources to those in need, fostering a healthier, more resilient community. Here are two partners helping CORA and making a difference in Chatham County.

CORA's Partnership with UNC School of Nursing Mobile Health Clinic

The UNC School of Nursing Mobile Health Clinic (MHC) is a nonprofit organization that serves as an innovative, nurse-led, inter-professional practice and free health clinic. Since 2022, it has partnered with CORA and the UNC Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health to expand its community-oriented public health services in Chatham County, a rural and medically underserved area.

Each Monday during the school year, UNC nursing students provide free health care screenings and education to individuals and families visiting CORA's choice food pantry. Food insecurity is a risk factor for malnutrition, obesity, chronic diseases such as hypertension, coronary heart disease, diabetes, and mental health issues such as depression and psychological distress. This partnership enables CORA to take another significant step in building a healthy community. "Partnering with CORA is a wonderful opportunity for our inter-professional students to see Whole Health Care in action within a supportive and effective working environment. We love CORA!" Jean Davison, Medical Director and Family Nurse Practitioner, UNC SON Mobile Health Clinic.

In addition to focusing on nutrition, CORA is dedicated to improving the overall health of those we serve in a compassionate and caring environment. Through this collaboration with the UNC School of Nursing Mobile Health Clinic, CORA continues to enhance the well-being of our community, addressing both food insecurity and healthcare needs.

Building Healthier Communities



Partnering with CORA is a wonderful opportunity for our inter-professional students to see Whole Health Care in action within a supportive and effective working environment. We love CORA! ~Jean Davison

Annie Taylor McCrimmon and SNACK! at Taylors Chapel Missionary Church

SNACK!

Nourishing Hope

CORA's SNACK! program thrives due to support from community partners like Ms. Annie Taylor McCrimmon of Taylors Chapel Missionary Church. For over a decade, Annie has been a pillar of compassion and dedication, managing the SNACK! program and serving an average of 20 a week families with nutritious meals.

Annie's roots trace back to the founding of Taylors Chapel in 1879. Her commitment is a legacy, deeply ingrained in her. Her personal touch, such as calling each family when their food is ready, ensures participants feel cared for.

Annie is thrilled with SNACK!'s improvements, especially the addition of fresh produce. She proudly acknowledges that CORA's approach reduces the stigma associated with hunger, fostering dignity and hope. Reflecting on her experience, Annie says, "I bloomed where I was planted, and SNACK! gave me another opportunity for fellowship and giving back. It is an excellent program that makes an outstanding difference."

CORA's collaboration with Taylors Chapel Missionary Church and individuals like Annie Taylor McCrimmon are vital to our mission. We are profoundly grateful for these partnerships that make a real difference every day.

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I bloomed where I was planted, and SNACK! gave me another opportunity for fellowship and giving back. It is an excellent program that makes an outstanding difference. ~ Annie McCrimmon



Annie May Brim and Annie McCrimmon at SNACK! (L-R)

With Our Donors

Dianne and Bruce Birch: Champions of CORA and Community Well-being

Dianne and Bruce Birch, residents of Fearington Village, are active and dedicated members of the Chatham County community. Their deep concern for their neighbors and dedication to service has significantly impacted numerous local nonprofits, including CORA.

The Birches share CORA's strong belief in our mission to end hunger in Chatham County. With long careers in healthcare, Dianne and Bruce understand the critical importance of nutrition for health, particularly for children. Dianne recently expressed, "I am grateful that I do not have to choose between paying my rent or eating. I am grateful that I can give to CORA to help provide food to those in need. I am also extremely proud of CORA's focus on nutrition and helping the kids of Chatham through their SNACK! and CORApacks programs."

Over the years, we have been inspired by CORA's effective leadership and the collaborative spirit among donors and volunteers. We deeply appreciate CORA's resourcefulness, respect for those they serve, and partnerships with other nonprofits and agencies. Supporting CORA through donations and volunteering has been a privilege, and we are proud to contribute to their important efforts across Chatham County.

Dianne continued, "Over the years, we have been inspired by CORA's effective leadership and the collaborative spirit among donors and volunteers. We deeply appreciate CORA's resourcefulness, respect for those they serve, and partnerships with other nonprofits and agencies. Supporting CORA through donations and volunteering has been a privilege, and we are proud to contribute to their important efforts across Chatham County."

Dianne and Bruce Birch's generosity and dedication exemplify the impact of community collaboration and compassion as they help CORA build a community without hunger.





Aqua's Commitment to CORA: A Holistic Approach to Philanthropy

Since 2021, Aqua has been a steadfast supporter of CORA, providing both financial assistance and active volunteer participation. Aqua exemplifies a comprehensive approach to philanthropy, reflecting a deep commitment to the communities where its employees live, work, and play.

Aqua's employees are enthusiastic volunteers eager to contribute their time and energy to CORA's mission. Each year, their teams bring an evident sense of dedication, embodying the company's values and commitment to community service.

Aqua's President, Shannon Becker, highlights the importance of giving back: "At Aqua, we try to give back to the communities we serve through contributions and volunteering our time. Each November, we launch our 'Fall for Food Banks' initiative to fight hunger and raise awareness of food insecurity in the communities we serve. The CORA staff and volunteers work selflessly to help our Chatham neighbors avoid facing food insecurity and build a stronger, healthier community. Aqua believes in CORA's mission and we are proud to join in and support their mission!"

Aqua's partnership with CORA is a dynamic, hands-on collaboration that strengthens our efforts and amplifies our impact. Aqua's contributions and volunteerism make a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve. CORA is immensely grateful for Aqua's ongoing support. Together, we are building a community where no one faces food insecurity.



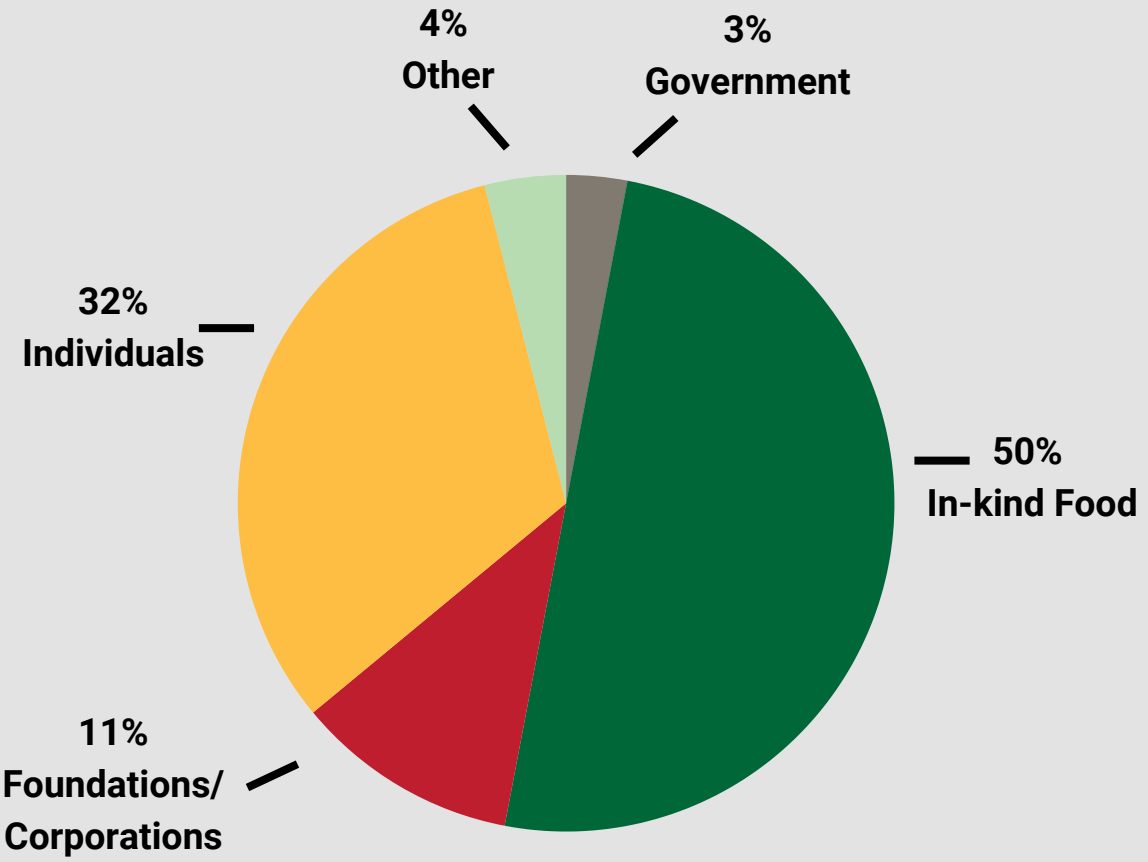
Aqua Volunteers and Check Presentation



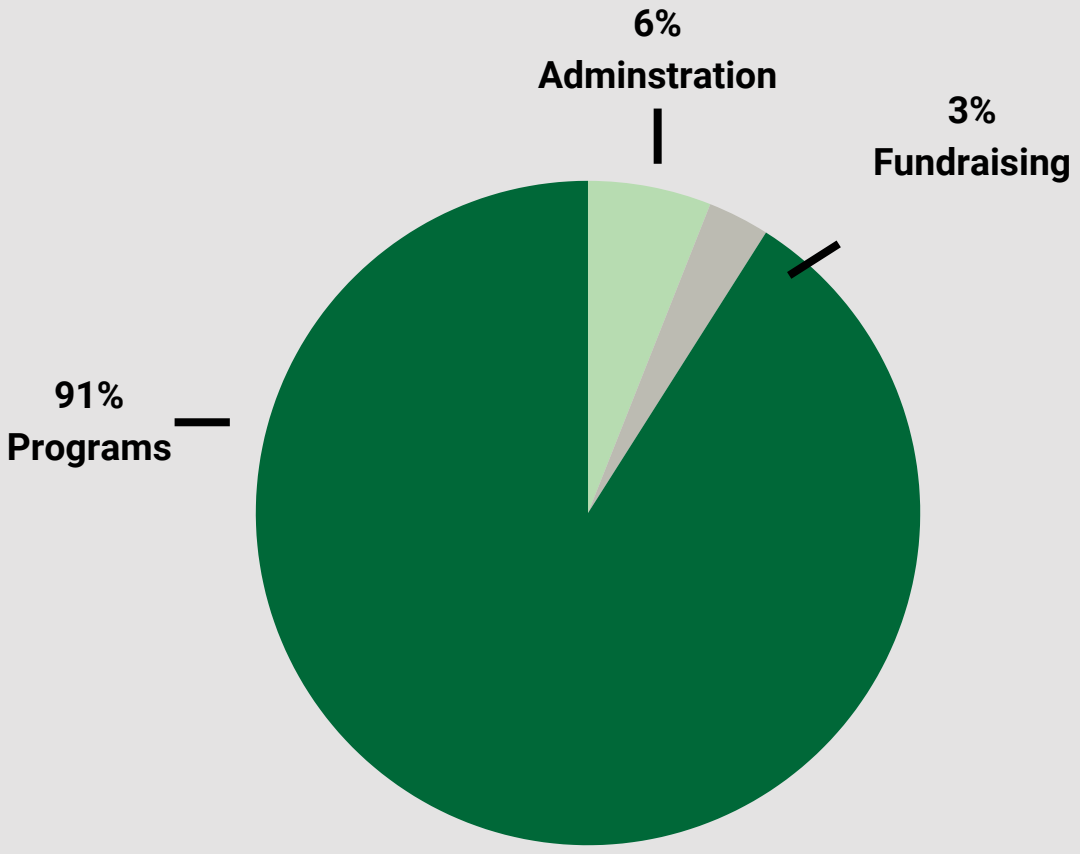
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Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our community, we successfully met the needs of those facing food insecurity this past year. We concluded our fiscal year in excellent financial health. In FY2024, we secured \$3.3 million in support. CORA is excited about our ongoing efforts to build a healthy, strong, and connected community with equitable access to abundant, safe, nutritious, and culturally relevant food.

INCOME



EXPENSES





Join the League of Hunger Heroes

Become a Hunger Hero by making an automated monthly gift today! Monthly giving is a convenient and budget-friendly way to make a lasting difference.

A monthly donation of any amount can add up to a significant impact. Recurring gifts provide support we can count on to keep the pantry running and welcome new neighbors into our programs.

Because monthly giving is so vital to our mission, every Hunger Hero will receive a welcome kit that includes a coupon to our online t-shirt store, an exclusive monthly behind-the-scenes email showing the direct impact of your gifts, and other special opportunities throughout the year.

Unleash your superpower today and commit to helping build a community without hunger!

Start a monthly donation.

**\$10 A
MONTH**

**PROVIDE 120
MEALS TO
FAMILIES FACING
HUNGER.**

**\$25 A
MONTH**

**KEEP OUR
TRUCKS ON THE
ROAD TO DELIVER
FOOD TO OUR
MOBILE
MARKETS.**

**\$50 A
MONTH**

**FEED A CHILD ON
WEEKENDS AND
BREAKS DURING
THE SCHOOL
YEAR THROUGH
CORA PACKS.**

**\$100 A
MONTH**

**PROVIDE 1,200
MEALS TO
FAMILIES FACING
HUNGER.**

Ways to Give

Donations are vital to CORA's mission of building a community without hunger. They enable us to collect and purchase nutritious food, ensuring equitable access for residents facing food insecurity. Contributions support our food pantry and related programs, fostering a healthy and connected community. CORA is registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law; the tax identification number is 56-1668767.

WRITE A CHECK

*Mail a check to CORA at
PO Box 1326, Pittsboro,
NC, 27312.*

MAKE A GIFT SECURELY ONLINE

*Visit
www.corafoodpantry.org
and make a monthly or
one-time gift.*

QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION

*If you are 70½ or older,
donate from your IRA to
reduce taxable income
and meet RMD
requirements.*

DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS

*Recommend a grant
from your DAF to make
a significant impact.*

STOCKS OR SECURITIES

*Donate appreciated
assets to save on taxes.
Contact Blake Stewart
at Edward Jones (919-
542-3020) for details.*

WORKPLACE GIVING PROGRAMS

*Check if your employer
offers payroll deduction
donations to benefit
CORA.*

Give Today!



Platinum
Transparency
2024

Candid.

Charity
Navigator



✦ FOUR-STAR ✦

For questions about donations or to learn more about how your gift makes a difference, please contact Rebecca Hankins at rebecca@corafoodpantry.org.

Our Leadership



2023/2024 Board of Directors

Cindi Ebert, President
Suzen Bria, Vice President
David Marty, Treasurer
Rich Helgans, Secretary
Pamela Barker
David Cook
Bibien Fragozo
Bob Goetze
Dakota Philbrick
Phyllis Rankin
Pam Somers

2023/2024 Staff

Melissa Driver Beard, Executive Director
Rebecca Hankins, Development & Communications Director
Kristine Ashwood, Operations Director
Mackie Hunter, Program Manager
Jessica Mashburn, Volunteer Coordinator
Emily Corbett, Development & Communications Manager (new in FY25)
Lance Patterson, Pantry & Warehouse Assistant
Peggy Overton, Data Manager
Dottie Schmitt, Bookkeeper
Travus Viera, Transportation & Warehouse Supervisor
Reggie Blue, Inventory and Logistics Specialist
Yoana Rubi Mendoza Sosa, Interpreter & Translator
Riley Harris and Hannah Jones, 2023 SNACK! Interns

Mission and Vision

CORA's mission is to provide nutritious food to community members facing food insecurity. We envision a healthy, strong, and connected community where all people have equitable access to abundant, safe, nutritious, and culturally relevant food. Through our work, we will help build a healthy Chatham County, a place where families thrive, children do well in school, and seniors do not face the stress of choosing between food and other necessities.

*Sign Up for
Our Newsletter!*



CORA is a member agency of
Chatham County United Way.



Thank you for helping us build a community without hunger!



STAY CONNECTED!



Visit our socials or get in touch via phone, email, or mail.

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