

**SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD BANK
OF METROLINA**

Together We CAN End Hunger

News Release



Atrium Health



**BlueCross BlueShield
of North Carolina**

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For Immediate Release

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Sort-A-Rama Brings 700 Volunteers Together to Repackage 176,000 Pounds of Bulk Food to Help Feed Hungry Children and Families This Summer

Presenting Partners Food Lion Feeds, Atrium Health, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, and TIAA – along with Major Partner MapAnything on site May 24th at the Charlotte Convention Center to Help Feed Those in Need

(CHARLOTTE, NC) – May 14th, 2018 – On May 24th at 9:00 am, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina will host their **3rd Annual Sort-A-Rama**, a half-day of volunteer service jam-packed with energy, networking and teambuilding. Through company event sponsorships, Sort-A-Rama offers employees and customers a fun, meaningful opportunity to combine volunteerism with employee engagement and customer relations by bagging food for distribution across the Food Bank's 19 county service area. To accomplish this, **over 700 volunteers** from Presenting Partners **Food Lion Feeds, Atrium Health, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina**, and **TIAA** and Major Partner – **MapAnything** will gather at the **Charlotte Convention Center** to spend the morning sorting and packing meals.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina's goal is to **pack 176,000 pounds of bulk food** (brown rice and pinto beans) to be used to fight hunger by assembling **almost 100,000 meals** to distribute to families in need during the summer months. Sadly, no school meals mean no breakfast and lunch for thousands of children when they are out of school in the summer. With school meals not available, families turn to the Food Bank and its partner agencies for the extra food. With summer bringing lower donations of both food and funds, Sort-A-Rama shines a light on an important time to help kids and families.

Without the support and partnership of SHFBM 2018 Sort-A-Rama Sponsors, this event would not take place. We thank each of them for their continued support and look forward to this great volunteer / teambuilding event.

"At **Food Lion** we care deeply about the communities we serve," said Scott Libbey, Vice President of Food Lion's Central Charlotte division. " We believe that no one should have to choose between dinner and rent or gasoline and buying groceries. Sort-A-Rama is one of the ways we partner with Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina to help eliminate the difficult choices too many of our neighbors are forced to make, especially during the summer months when children are out of school. During this critical time it's important we do our part to ensure no child will go hungry this summer."

"As **TIAA** celebrates its centennial through our '100 Days of Difference' campaign, we appreciate the opportunity to further our local commitment to fighting hunger and championing initiatives that support youth in our community by working with the Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina (SHFBM) on this critically important event," said SHFBM Board Member and TIAA Charlotte Senior Vice President of H.R., Jon Dimalanta. "Over the past four years, this event is one that TIAA Serves is proud to support and is one of our most popular volunteer events with nearly 200 employees there to lend a helping hand."

Families turn to SHFBM and partner soup kitchens and emergency food pantries during the summer to fill meal gaps when breakfast and lunch meals at school are no longer available. Partner agencies become flooded with requests from those in need during this time. For food banks like SHFBM, summer is usually a time when both food and financial donations are low. Sort-A-Rama and other late spring and summer food and fund drives help bring awareness to the need during this time. The event is also held in several other cities in North Carolina.

"Sort-A-Rama is a wonderful event to kick off the '**School's Out But Hunger Never Takes a Vacation**' campaign", says Kay Carter, CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina. "In the 19 counties we serve, over half of the children attending school receive free-reduced lunch. This is indicative of how great the need is during the summer and how we need help to meet this need."

"**MapAnything** has been involved with Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina for many years, and is proud to join the 2018 Sort-A-Rama event," said John Stewart, CEO, and co-founder of MapAnything. "As part of our Pledge 1% efforts, we're dedicated to contributing 1% of our profits, our product, and our employees time back to the Charlotte community. We're happy to support this great organization with all it does to fight hunger, especially in the summer months when children are in the most need."

North Carolina has one of the highest percentages in the United States of children under the age of 18 at risk of hunger. One in four children in North Carolina are at risk of hunger. In the Metrolina region, there are over 188,000 children at risk of hunger.

"When it comes to keeping communities healthy, our responsibilities do not begin or end at the hospital door," said Chris Bowe, President, **CMC and CMC-Mercy, Atrium Health** (previously Carolinas HealthCare System). "If someone leaves one of our hospitals, but does not have access to fresh, affordable food, that person cannot truly be healthy. By supporting organizations like Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina, we extend the Atrium Health mission of health, hope, and healing for all."

"**Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina** is honored and humbled to serve as a community partner in our state. And we're pleased to work alongside so many committed people and businesses who share the common goal of making North Carolina a better place to live for all of us" said Reagan Greene Pruitt, Vice President of Integrated Marketing & Community Engagement. " It's not possible to reach that goal while so many of our neighbors are hungry. Sort-A-Rama is one immediate way we can relieve hunger for some families in need, but we must all continue to work toward eliminating hunger entirely."

Individuals and organizations who are interested in helping to stop summer hunger can visit SecondHarvestMetrolina.org to donate or learn how to get involved. **Click [here](#) to view photos from last year's event.** For additional information, please contact Donna Ragan, SHFBM Marketing & Communications Manager at 704.572.1812 or dragan@secondharvest.org.

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About Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina

As part of Feeding America, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina serves 19 counties in North and South Carolina. In FY2016-2017, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina distributed over 54 million pounds of food and household items to over 700 hunger feeding agencies including emergency pantries, soup kitchens, senior programs, shelters and low-income daycares.

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