

Food Security Task Force Bios

Robin Broder is the President of Arlington Friends of Urban Agriculture, and the Deputy Director of Waterkeepers Chesapeake. Robin has worked for social and environmental justice nonprofits here in Arlington and the region for over 35 years. Robin has a Master's degree in Public Policy from the University of Chicago's Harris School, and is a life-time member of Leadership Arlington (Class of 1999). In her spare time, she tends to her front yard vegetable garden and works on her daughter's organic vegetable farm, Shine Farms, in Richmond.

Wendy Carria is the Supervisor for School Psychology and Social Work, in the Office of Student Services, Department of Teaching and Learning in APS. She supervises the 70+ psychologists and social workers across the school division. Wendy is a resident of Arlington where she serves on the Community Services Board (CSB) and co-chairs the CSB committee for Children and Youth.

As Bureau Chief for DHS's Aging and Disability Services, **Rachel Coates** oversees programs and services funded by the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) to help keep older adults and persons with disabilities safe, independent and remain in the community. These programs include home-delivered meals (Meals on Wheels), congregate nutrition (Social 60+ Cafés), meal subsidies (Culpepper Garden) and nutrition counseling and education programs. During the pandemic, Rachel helped expand the home-delivered meals program, launch the AFAC grocery delivery program and delivered emergency shelf-stable meals to homebound older adults and persons with disabilities.

Lawrence Collins has lived in Arlington for the past 20 years. He has worked as a social worker at CPS in DC, 30 years as a commercial truck driver, and for also VDOT in Arlington, but is currently unemployed. He has experienced substance use, but is now sober, is a certified substance abuse counselor, and is pursuing a CDL license to drive trucks again. Lawrence currently meets his food needs by using AFAC and SNAP.

Susan Davidson, Director of Resident Services, joined AHC in the fall of 2017. Susan is a strong advocate for onsite Resident Services, having witnessed firsthand the positive changes these programs can bring about for children and adults. She brings more than 20 years of experience in providing services to individuals and families living in affordable housing communities in Northern Virginia. She was the Director of Resident Services at both Wesley Housing Development Corporation and the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development.

County Board Chair **Matt de Ferranti**'s career, first as a teacher in a low-income community in Houston and later as a lawyer, has been dedicated to helping people build better lives for themselves and their children. As an attorney, Matt worked on land use and economic development issues for local governments. He subsequently served as an advocate for economic and educational equity at Feeding America, Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding Together, and the Education Trust. First elected to the Arlington County Board in November 2018, Matt was unanimously elected as Chair of the County Board by his colleagues on January 4, 2021.

Sally Diaz-Wells is the Social Justice and Outreach Minister for Our Lady Queen of Peace, and has held this position for over three years. She has a bachelor of Art in Sociology from Arcadia University in Glenside, PA and in May, 2020, received a certificate from Villanova University to become an Accredited Representative. This means she can work with Immigrants and Refugees and even take cases through the immigration court system just like an immigration attorney does. She is married and has one daughter who is in graduate school at VCU.

Tracy Gaither has been an educator for over 20 years and has served as the assistant principal at Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary School for the past four years. Her interest in food and nutrition began in 2005 when she became certified in health coaching and began working with women to make healthier nutritional choices.

Arron Gregory, J.D., is a 19-year senior educational leader with a proven track record of transformational school leadership practices that improve equity and excellence for professional learning communities. Most recently, he served as Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion for the Trotwood-Madison City School District in Ohio. Some highlights of his work include leading the development and implementation of proactive diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and presiding over the installation of the district's school-based health center advisory council.

David Guas is the chef and owner of Bayou Bakery, Coffee Bar & Eatery, an Arlington neighborhood gathering spot that celebrates Southern foodways, especially those of his New Orleans roots. At the outset of the pandemic, Guas co-founded Chefs Feeding Families with RealFoodforKids.org to connect with his community - leading the mission to provide free healthy meals to students and families who are challenged with food insecurity. The non-profit has distributed over 135,000 meals and continues to provide nourishment to the people.

Kim Haun is the Urban Agriculture Coordinator for Arlington County. The mission of this program is to support access to fresh, healthy food in Arlington through collaboration, education and demonstration. She is the liaison with the 9 farmers markets, the point of contact with Virginia Cooperative Extension and manage the County Community Garden program. She is a Board member of the Virginia Farmers Market Association, a member of the Council of Governments Ag Work Group and a founder of the Arlington Friends of Urban Ag.

Stephanie Hopkins has spent the past 10 years working in non-profits in Arlington and Fairfax County, supporting and empowering low-income children and adults. Prior to working for Arlington County, Stephanie served as the Director of Programs at AFAC, where she helped establish a delivery program during the coronavirus pandemic. She has led collaborative initiatives, including Opportunity Neighborhood Mount Vernon and the launch of Community Schools in Fairfax County. Stephanie also volunteered as a monthly distribution supervisor at AFAC for nine years.

Cassie Bate Hurley is Director of Events and Strategic Partnerships at the National Landing Business Improvement District, and has also worked in various roles at the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, the Newseum and the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization. A native Arlingtonian and a Leadership Center for Excellence 40 under 40 awardee, Cassie is passionate

about building community through programming and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. She has been engaged in food security issues and spearheaded the BID's Farm to Families program in 2020 in partnership with FreshFarm and local PTOs to get fresh produce to families during the pandemic.

Daniela Hurtado is a dynamic leader whose focus is on the empowerment of underserved communities through food, leading change and building engagement. As the Director of Operations & Programs of La Cocina VA, Daniela ensures the organization's standards are met and that the services offered have a positive impact in the lives of their clients.

Jody Steiner Kelly is the Director of Clinical Administration at Arlington Free Clinic. In addition to managing all administrative functions at the Clinic, she oversees their in-house Pharmacy and their Dental program. Jody was instrumental in setting up and managing the grocery card program to aid Clinic patients who did not have enough food to eat.

Amy McWilliams is the deputy director for the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization. Until last year, her involvement with food issues was limited to the Columbia Pike Farmers Market. Last year the organization developed the Feed Our Families program that raised \$100,000 to provide 4,800 boxes of produce from our farmers to residents at Harvey Hall, Gilliam Place, Arlington View Terrace and Our Lady Queen of Peace Food Pantry from May through October 2020.

Charles Meng has been Executive Director & CEO of the Arlington Food Assistance Center for the last 14 years and has had a 45 year career in the management of both large and small nonprofit organizations.

Natalia Muniz is the Program Associate at the Arlington Community Foundation (ACF). She provides support for many of ACF's programs including Bridges out of Poverty, Shared Prosperity, and some of our smaller initiatives. Food security is incorporated into ACF's initiatives and it works closely with the County and other nonprofits in their efforts to promote food security in Arlington.

Marvin Nells has led a lifetime of public service as an Army veteran, who retired after twenty years. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Arlington NAACP Unit 7047. One day while exercising at the intersection of S Four Mile Run Rd and S Walter Reed Dr, he assisted a young man who was eating out of the trash can. This was disappointing to witness, in Arlington, and since then, he decided that he needed to do more and fortunately this opportunity presented itself.

Mary Porter joined Real Food for Kids as Director of Programs in 2016 where she oversees the organization's signature programs: Food Day, The Culinary Challenge and Fresh Food Explorers, and manages operations for Chefs Feeding Families which has served over 135,000 plant-forward meals in communities of high need throughout Greater Washington Region since March 2020. She is a 2009 graduate of the Institute for Integrative Nutrition and served on Fairfax County Public Schools' School Health Advisory Committee where she initiated work on the division wellness policy following passage of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act.

Abby Raphael co-chaired the Cooperative for a Hunger Free Arlington in 2020. She has served as co-chair of Destination 2027 since 2017, a County initiative focused on equity. Abby also works with the Arlington YMCA and the Community Progress Network and is a former Chair of the Arlington School Board.

Pat Rivers is the Public Assistance Bureau Chief at Arlington County DHS. She has worked in Public Assistance for the last 39 years, and in Arlington for 19. She is a Georgia Peach at heart and the most doting grandma of a two-year princess named Savannah.

Aisha Salazar is the Associate Extension Agent in Family & Consumer Sciences for Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) for Arlington County and the City of Alexandria. She oversees the Master Food Volunteers and Master Financial Education Volunteers, and co-leads the Energy Masters program. Aisha serves on the boards of Friends of Urban Agriculture and the DC Food Recovery Working Group, co-chairs the Healthy Community Action Team (HCAT) Arlington, serves on the steering committee of the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, and is a member of the Fairfax Food Council and Arlington's Destination 2027. She is also the Market Manager at Fairlington Farmers Market. Prior to VCE, she spent five years managing the Cooking and Nutrition Education program at Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). She has worked as a science educator in the fields of food security and public health and has served as a preceptor for nursing students and dietetic interns for several years.

Mary Sanders is the Coordinator for the Healthy Community Action Team (HCAT) and manages a coalition of organizations and individuals involved in reducing childhood obesity in Arlington through better access to healthy foods and increased physical activity. Prior to joining HCAT, Mary worked with affordable housing communities in Arlington on an energy and water efficiency program. Mary started her career working on international public health programs in Africa and Asia and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nepal working on women's human rights.

Cynthia Singiser is the Senior Director of the Northern Virginia region of the Capital Area Food Bank, a Feeding America Partner, a role she's held since 2018. Prior to that, Cynthia held roles with Community Foodworks in Washington DC and HBO in New York City. While in New York, she served as the co-leader of the Stanton Street CSA for 7 years.

Bethany Zecher Sutton, a 20-year resident of Arlington, lives in Douglas Park and is active in a number of volunteer roles with Arlington Public Schools, including serving as the Food Pantry Coordinator at Randolph Elementary School since March 2020. Bethany works in higher education as a leadership & career coach and executive search consultant, specializing in leadership development for women.

Violet Taylor has resided in South Arlington, VA over twenty years. Along with ASPAN, she has been allowed other resources during quarantine via AHC which provide meals for seniors. Along with the SNAP program, she has used other informal supplies in the community to meet nutritional needs during retirement.

Janeth Valenzuela has been a parent advocate in APS schools for the past 17 years and focuses her efforts around improving the experiences of the immigrant community. She has been working closely with a group of mothers from Kenmore MS since the start of the COVID pandemic to provide families in need with food, hygiene products, diapers, formula and grocery gift cards on a monthly basis. Janeth and her team work hard to care for their neighbors by protecting their dignity and providing essential and culturally appropriate foods, including rice, beans, maseca (corn flour), oil and sugar.