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Feeding America Southwest Virginia Hosts Seventh Annual Elected Officials Volunteer Day

Virginia elected officials and their staff volunteer at Feeding America Southwest Virginia to increase awareness of hunger in our region

SALEM, Va. (Sept. 20, 2017) – In recognition of Hunger Action Month, Feeding America Southwest Virginia today hosted local elected officials, their staff, families and friends to participate in the seventh annual Elected Officials Volunteer Day.

The event, held during Hunger Action Month serves to mobilize the public, corporations and national, state and local government officials to act on behalf of Feeding America Southwest Virginia and its more than 370 partner feeding programs. During the month, the national Feeding America organization asks Americans to take action to fight hunger in their communities, including more than 150,000 in Southwest Virginia.

“As is our tradition every year, we pause during our frenetic pace during Hunger Action Month to invite our elected officials to see what we do, how we’re making a difference right here in our region,” said Pamela Irvine, president and CEO of Feeding America Southwest Virginia. “Today’s event symbolizes the public-private effort needed to eliminate hunger and is emblematic of the theme we’ve been using this month inspired by a quote from Mother Teresa: ‘together, we can do great things’.”

Attending elected officials and staff included: U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, state Sen. John Edwards, Del. Sam Rasoul, Del. Greg Habeeb, Del. Nick Rush, Roanoke City Vice Mayor Anita Price, Roanoke City Sheriff Tim Allen, Roanoke County Sherriff Eric Orange, Clifton Forge Town Manager Darlene Burcham, and Roanoke City Council members Bill Bestpitch, John Garland and Ray Ferris.

During the event, Senator Edwards presented Pamela Irvine with a copy of House Joint Resolution 715, commending her for her 35 years of service in the fight against hunger.

Following this event, Rasoul, who held his first job with Food Lion and is an alumnus of Greenvale School, led a group of elected officials and guests including Vice Mayor Price, Sheriff Allen, Christine Broughton of Congressman Goodlatte's office, Pamela Irvine, and local Food Lion volunteers, as they handed out lunch bags with sandwiches provided by Food Lion Feeds to more than 80 pre-school children at Greenvale School.

As part of this effort, Food Lion set the Guinness World Records title for the most bagged lunches assembled in one hour on Tuesday, Sept. 19. A total of 10,320 bagged lunches were prepared and donated to area food programs. Feeding America Southwest Virginia and Food Lion Feeds distributed 5,500 lunches to Roanoke City schools including Forest Park Academy, William Fleming High, Breckinridge Middle, Noel C. Taylor Academy at Oakland, Lucy Addison Middle, Stonewall Jackson Middle, James Madison Middle, Patrick Henry High and Woodrow Wilson Middle. The packed lunches include a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, fruit, snack bar and bottled water.

Research shows that there is a direct link between food insecurity and poor health, especially for children. Studies document that children who experience hunger face significant stress and challenges that can have a lasting effect on their physical, cognitive and behavioral development.

About Feeding America Southwest Virginia

Feeding America Southwest Virginia was founded locally in 1981 and proudly commemorates 36 years of fighting hunger and changing lives through community partnerships. For the last three and a half decades, the Food Bank's ultimate mission has remained the same: eliminate hunger in the region. The primary function of the Food Bank is to secure and distribute large quantities of food for Southwest Virginia's hungry. Approximately \$26.5 million worth of food and grocery related products are channeled annually through a network of more than 330 partner feeding programs in our 26-county, 9-city region that provide food or meals to those in need. The local Food Bank is an affiliate member of Feeding America. Visit www.faswva.org for more information or like us on Facebook.

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