



FAIRFAX Food Council

healthy • accessible • affordable

COMMUNITY FOOD NEWS

The latest news and updates from the Fairfax Food Council

IMPORTANT DATES

URBAN AG WORK GROUP MEETINGS

January 9 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
February 13 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
March 20 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

FOOD ACCESS & LITERACY WORK GROUP MEETINGS

January 25 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
February 22 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
March 29 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

FFC STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS*

January 26 4:00 – 5:00 pm
* meets quarterly

Want to attend? All Fairfax Food Council meetings are open to the public. Anyone interested in learning more or getting engaged in supporting the food system in Fairfax is welcome to attend. Meetings are currently being held virtually, so please email FairfaxFoodCouncil@fairfaxcounty.gov for more information and/or how to 'attend' a meeting.

Winter 2023 News

by Diane Charles, Project Manager, Fairfax Food Council

The Fairfax Food Council released its [Care to Share Toolkit](#) in late 2022 to support the rescue of food in the schools. The Toolkit supports the re-routing of unconsumed food to those who may need it, while also supporting the planet's sustainability. [The Care to Share Toolkit](#) is a hands-on/how-to toolkit that provides step-by-step guidance to rescue food waste in our schools.

Many schools are taking up this important effort. Lake Braddock Secondary School students have just begun implementing their *Care to Share* Program to help fight food insecurity. The Philanthropy Club designed posters to highlight the donation bins for the cafeteria. Both their Green Club and Philanthropy Club designed public service announcements and set-up Advisory period updates to educate staff and students about food insecurity and how the *Care to Share* Program can support the community.



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Care To Share is also expanding at Cub Run and Braddock Elementary Schools, as well as being added to existing programs such as SACC (School Age Child Care). As the word spreads, more people are excited to start the program in their schools. Some schools are collecting food and sending home with their own students, while others are looking into the various food banks in Fairfax County that welcome donations. As parents, teachers, and administrators use the [Care to Share Toolkit](#), any questions can be sent to fairfaxfoodcouncil@fairfaxcounty.gov.



FOOD COUNCIL HAPPENINGS

Leadership Evolutions

The Fairfax Food Council (FFC) continues to shine because of the many community leaders who choose to get engaged in helping to guide and lead the Food Council.

Food Access & Literacy Work Group

During November and December, the FFC's Food Access & Literacy Work Group welcomed Gillian Kimura and Jo Doumbia to join Amy Biestek as this Work Group's new Co-Chairs. Amy took on this role at mid-year and is now rejoining after a maternity break. Amy is the Northern Virginia Program Manager of No Kid Hungry Virginia. Jo joined as Co-Chair through her community work after retiring from the World Bank. She is an active volunteer with FACETS and a community leader in the Faith Alliance for Climate Change. Gillian Kimura is the Manager of Health Equity for the Capital area Food Bank. This trio will take the lead of the Food access & Literacy Work Group into 2023.

The Food Council has been extremely fortunate to have the leadership, expertise and constant support of Katie Strong of Virginia Cooperative Extension in her role as Co-Chair of the Food Access & Literacy Work Group for many years. Katie's insight on nutrition combined with her passion to engage the community around healthy eating has been a valued gift and the Food Council is very grateful for her service.



Gillian Kimura



Jo Doumbia



Amy Biestek

Urban Agriculture Work Group

The FFC's Urban Agriculture Work Group is happy to welcome Casandra Lawson, an active member of the Urban Ag Work Group, as a new Co-Chair in 2023, joining Juan Pablo Echeverria. Casandra has interest in selling her backyard edible garden produce to her neighbors and she currently works at Potomac Vegetable Farm. Juan Pablo and Casandra will lead the Urban Ag Work Group in 2023.



Cassandra Lawson

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Matt Mulder Moves to Co-Chair of Fairfax Food Council

The Fairfax Food Council is thrilled to welcome Matt Mulder as its new co-chair. He will serve alongside Co-Chair Kate Garsson who will continue for another year. The Food Council has been fortunate to have both Annie Turner and Kate serve as Co-Chairs for the last two years. While Kate will stay on for one more year to enable staggered Co-Chair terms, we thank Annie for her outstanding leadership for the last two years as she steps down and promises to continue her sought-after engagement in the Food Council.

Matt Mulder is currently the director of operations at Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture. He is responsible for organizational development, strategic partnerships and outreach and communications for Arcadia's programs. Matt wants to continue developing and deepening the council's connections to the local communities that make up Fairfax County's food system. He joined the Fairfax Food Council in 2015 and became co-chair of the Food Access Work Group. Over the years, he has learned about the different components and complexities of Fairfax County's food system. "I've learned how important it is to consider both community-level concerns and broad county-wide policy at the same time," he said. "I've also learned that the Food Council's greatest strength is in our members and our biggest potential impact is in supporting and amplifying their efforts." Bringing new perspectives and voices to the table is a major focus for Matt in the coming year.



Matt Mulder

Greenhouse Workshop

In October, the Fairfax Food Council's Urban Agriculture Work Group supported Arcadia's workshop on backyard greenhouses. The Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture has been working closely with Rising Hope Mission Church on Richmond Highway to build a greenhouse which will be used to grow food and plants for community members and teach them about gardening. Local gardeners, school teachers, and church members learned useful information about extending their growing season while getting the most use out of their greenhouse.

ARCADIA CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Hobby Greenhouse Workshop

by Cynthia Metcalf

DATE: October 11th
TIME: 4:30 - 6:00 pm
LOCATION: Rising Hope Mission Church
8220 Russell Rd, Alexandria, VA 22309

Register at: 

more info call: 206 502 6019

Real Food for Real Change

The Fairfax Food Council's (FFC) **Real Food for Real Change Toolkit** is ready to roll! A dedicated Task Force of the FFC has spent over two years to create this toolkit, including conducting focus groups with middle school students - to support the increase in consumption of fruits and vegetables by Fairfax County youth. This is so important because fruit and vegetable consumption is associated with a reduced risk for several chronic diseases. Research suggests that when healthy eating is aligned with important and widely shared adolescent values, it creates the needed motivation to change behaviors. **The Real Food for Real Change Toolkit** provides positive experiences around eating fruits and vegetables using activities and cooking while also helping students understand the larger picture of the choices they make around food consumption. Tied to youth values of supporting a healthy planet, the Toolkit is for educators, after school instructors, faith leaders, scout troops and others who intersect with middle school students. It is made up of investigations, flexible for a variety of settings and can be implemented in-full or select individual activities that meet different needs. It will soon be available on the FFC website. To learn more, contact FFC Project Manager Diane Charles at diane.charles@fairfaxcounty.gov.



EVENTS

2023 Virtual Sugar Reduction Summit

The [Center for Science in the Public Interest](#) is holding a 2023 Virtual Sugar Reduction Summit on April 25-27th. Save the date for this not-to-be missed event for public health professionals, researchers, public health advocates, and other professionals working in the field of sugar/SSB reduction.



Future Harvest's Annual Conference: A Time to Grow

For more information about this in-person conference that will take place on January 12-14, visit [Future Harvest website](#).



2023 Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs

Take control of your health in the new year! If you or a loved one is living with a chronic condition, managing our conditions on a day-to-day basis greatly determines our symptoms and quality of life. Join a virtual Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) through Virginia Cooperative Extension in the new year to practice evidence-based tools that control symptoms, better manage health problems, and enable leading fuller lives. Participants meet 6 times over Zoom for this program, which has no fee.

Who should attend? Adults who have or care for someone with a chronic health condition such as anxiety/depression, arthritis, autoimmune disease, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, long COVID, and more.

When? Virginia Cooperative Extension is currently scheduling virtual sessions for 2023. Contact them and they will notify you when the dates are finalized.

Any Questions? Katie Strong, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent, Fairfax | kstrong@vt.edu

Save the Date: Champions for Youth Summit

Join the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) and Prevention Connections (PC) for an exciting opportunity to be part of the **Champions for Youth Summit** in Falls Church, Virginia on April 24-26, 2023!

We will convene hundreds of prevention professionals from around the country who are committed to exploring best practices to impact youth and young adults on topics such as tobacco and nicotine use, substance use, and factors that impact childhood obesity.

Join hundreds of champions throughout government, nonprofits, public health, and more to explore and learn evidence-based practices that empower youth to make healthy choices.

Registration will open soon, but in the meantime, you can [learn about what topics will be covered, our draft Summit schedule, registration cost, and more!](#)

About Host Organizations

Established in 1999 by the Virginia General Assembly, the **Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY)** empowers Virginia's youth to make healthy choices by reducing and preventing youth tobacco and nicotine use, substance use, and childhood obesity.



Hands on Harvests Seed Swap - Saturday, January 28, 2023 at Tysons - Pimmit Library



Listening Sessions: USDA & American Farmland Trust on Needs of Urban Producers

American Farmland Trust is working with the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to better understand the needs of urban producers around land access, availability, and tenure. They are seeking input on ways NRCS programs can support these needs through two virtual listening sessions with service providers, scheduled for January. The sessions will be hosted by the [National Agricultural Land Network](#).



Any service provider working directly with urban farmers are welcome to join and share insights and perspectives. The listening sessions will explore ways in which producers farming in metro areas can be better supported in accessing land and building more secure land tenure, including through NRCS programs. The primary focus of these sessions will be outdoor, land-based production. There are two sessions. Click on a link below for the registration form.

[Urban Agriculture Needs Listening Session #1 – Thursday, January 19 from 1:00 – 2:30 EST](#)

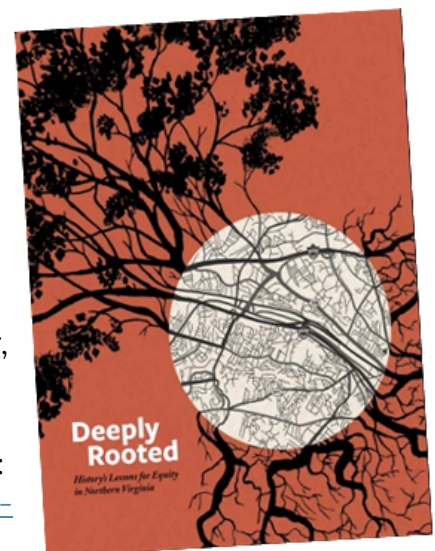
[Urban Agriculture Needs Listening Session #2 – Friday, January 27 from 1:00 – 2:30 EST](#)

RESOURCES

Deeply Rooted: How History Connects to the Health of Our Community Past, Present and Future

At the Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax's Annual Meeting on December 7, 2022, the findings of this 2021 report were discussed. The Deeply Rooted author, Steven Woolf, MD, MPH and Director Emeritus of the VCU Center on Society and Health, discussed how the long history of exclusion and segregation in Northern Virginia has harmed the health of residents of some communities and concentrated wealth and opportunity for others.

Be on the lookout for the posting of the recording of the meeting, including Dr. Woolf's presentation, in early 2023. *The Deeply Rooted* report and the website containing all the research materials from the development of the report, can be found here: [Deeply Rooted: History's Lessons for Equity in Northern Virginia – Northern Virginia Health Foundation \(novahealthfdn.org\)](#)



COMMUNITY STORIES

FCPS Salad Bars to Reopen



Real Food for Kids is pleased to announce that after a three-year hiatus, salad bars are returning to Fairfax County elementary schools. "These reopenings prioritize school communities that face nutrition insecurity on a daily basis," says Real Food for Kids Executive Director Bonnie Moore. "For many of our children, the salad bars provide access to critical nutrition -- fresh, whole fruits and vegetables as well as protein sources. This is a huge step in helping our students show up well-nourished and ready to learn."

FCPS's Office of Food and Nutrition Services first partnered with Real Food for Kids in 2016-2017 to bring salad bars to all of its 141 elementary schools, with a goal of phasing in a substantial number of them each year.

The county-wide list of 36 Title I schools set to reopen salad bars by January 31 includes Forest Edge, Sleepy Hollow, and Woodburn. See the [full list of January salad bar reopenings](#). Volunteers are needed at many of these schools to support food services staff at these openings. To volunteer please visit the Real Food for Kids [Salad Bar SignUp](#). Please follow Real Food for Kids on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) sites to stay current on upcoming salad bar openings.

SeedEd Farm

An incubation farm located at the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture, SeedEd Farm is a seed saving farm with the mission to save heirloom seeds. SeedEd Farm is primarily a learning farm focused on how to harvest seeds and study germination rate, promoting soil regenerative practices that they "Perspire to Inspire".

Check-out SeedEd Farm, especially during the growing season when they host Thursday gatherings with education, art, food and fun (starting in March on Thursdays from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m.) Additional information via Instagram and their newsletter

<https://www.instagram.com/seededfarm/>.



Oak Tree Loss Turns into Garden Win

After the loss of a huge oak tree in October on a traffic island in the McLean Mews community, Heidi engaged her and other children to plant a children's garden. Young children got a kick out of working alongside Heidi to build raised beds, add soil amendments and plant winter-hardy vegetables such as onions, broccoli, white cauliflower, purple cauliflower and several others. Harvests are happening throughout the winter by covering the beds. Additionally, some hardy drought-tolerant native perennials were planted outside the boxes, as well as pansies and crocuses. Fairfax County Master Gardeners answered Heidi's questions about soil proportions.

Now, neighbors of all ages enjoy seeing what happens in the garden. One neighbor sent photo updates to her family in Texas. One mom told Heidi that she periodically stands in front of the garden to relax. The garden attracts birds and people. There were more birds this past year, and Heidi met more neighbors and walkers this year when they'd stop to look at the plants. Clearly, the neighborhood was primed for the raised beds.



Before



After

Lorton Community Action Center Nutrition Classes are a Healthy Success



In November and December, the Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC) provided nutrition classes for adults and for children in the new Lorton Community Center. LCAC clients requested services to help them focus on good health. The nutrition program came through a LCAC partnership with the Potomac Health Foundation and Good Shepherd Housing. Children and adults participated on different nights to learn more about how to make healthy food taste delicious with menu planning and preparation tips. Oatmeal smoothies and healthy zucchini muffins ranked as favorites by the children.

Participants appreciated the classes which were beneficial to healthy lifestyles, providing them with ideas for better eating that does not cost more. At the conclusion of each class, LCAC provided all the ingredients needed for participants to prepare the meals at home. The nutrition classes were part of LCAC's broader work, including its food pantry, ensuring all community members have access to nutritious food.



James Lee Community Center Carries on its Edible Gardens

The James Lee Community Center Gardens continue to flourish after a true partnership in 2018 brought them into play for summer camp participants. It has grown to now include 11 raised edible garden beds that are tended to by staff of the community center, seniors and students.



Hogge Park is the Site of New Garden Plot Rental Program

Throughout 2022, the Fairfax County Park Authority's Garden Plot Rental Program was growing. Expansion took place in Hogge Park (corner of Glen Carlyn Road and Magnolia Ave, Falls Church) with the site of a new garden plot rental program that includes 17 new garden plots. These plots are all small plots (6' x 9') inside of one big fence. This is in contrast to the county's other 671 garden plots that are bigger (20' x 30') and individually fenced. The Hogge Park garden plot model will enable more urban locations that allow gardeners to walk to their gardens, while also incorporating an annual turnover to reduce the long waiting lists for the other gardens. At Hogge Park there will be opportunities for garden education and will enable increased diversity, equity, outreach and partnerships. These plots are all wheelchair and ADA accessible. Registration for any garden plot, including the new Hogge Park plots can be found here: [Community Garden Plot Rental Program | Park Authority \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parksandrec/garden-plot-rental-program)

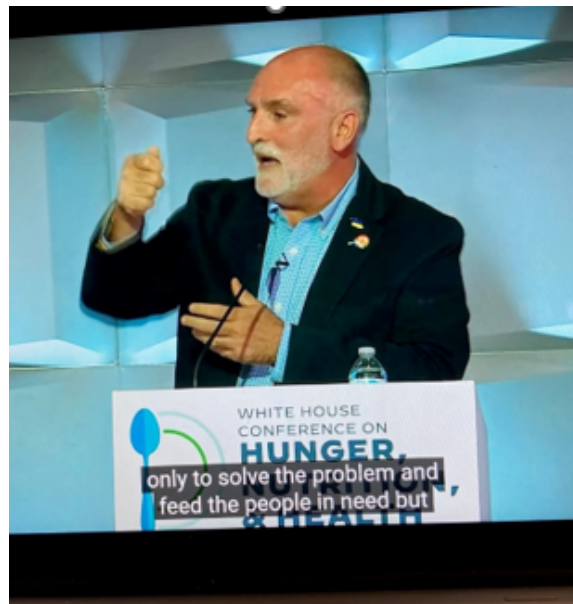


White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition & Health

In late September, 2022, the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health was held virtually and in-person to address the numerous interrelated issues around health, nutrition and hunger. Focused on five pillars, there were keynote speakers (including President Biden and Chef Jose Andres) and many panels tackling the key issues. The five pillars that the Fairfax Food Council and the Fairfax Emergency Food Strategy Team provided feedback in advance to the White House were: improving food access and affordability; integrating nutrition and health (food as medicine); empowering all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices; supporting physical activity for all; and enhancing nutrition and food security research. To learn more and review the White House's National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health, check out the [White House Conference website](#).



President Biden opens the September 28, 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health with bold policy recommendations to address hunger and make the important connections between nutritious food and the health of the country.



Chef Jose Andres delivers a keynote speech, inspiring those who will lead the grassroots and national efforts to improve the linkages between nutrition and healthy food for all.

Little Free Pantry Network Expands in the DMV

In 2020, Fairfax County residents Amber and Sterling Marchand started a food drive with a plastic box by their driveway to show their four young children a tangible way to help their neighbors during the pandemic.

Thanks to the generosity of their community, that box was immediately – and repeatedly – filled to the brim with non-perishable foods. The outpouring of support led to the creation of [Be The Good Project](#), a grassroots-fueled 501(c)(3) non-profit with a simple mission: to connect local volunteers with safe and easy ways to help feed our neighbors.



One of the newer little food pantries across from the Mount Vernon Governmental Center.

Today Be The Good offers local volunteers three primary opportunities to help achieve this mission: making seasonal non-perishable “Care Packages,” making sandwiches for the homeless in partnership with Martha's Table and filling the Little Free Food Pantries with unexpired non-perishable food.

To date, more than 1,500 Be The Good volunteers have donated more than 84,000 pounds of food and almost 95,000 sandwiches for neighbors experiencing hunger and homelessness across the region. Be The Good has also donated more than \$70,000 in grocery gift cards through its care package program

In 2021, Be The Good started its “Little Free Food Pantry” program to provide communities with a discrete, low-barrier resource to access emergency non-perishable food, 24/7. The little pantries are stocked weekly by Be The Good volunteers - with a simple message: “take what you need, leave what you can.” There are 14 Be The Good Little Free Food Pantries in Fairfax County. Be The Good is 100% volunteer-run. If volunteers are interested in getting involved to stock a Little Free Food Pantry, make Care Packages for local families, or make sandwiches for the homeless, they can learn more at bethethegoodproject.org.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Food & Friends Volunteers Needed

Food & Friends, the only community-based organization in the Metro region providing home-delivered medically tailored meals and medical nutrition therapy to neighbors living with cancer, HIV/AIDS, and other serious illnesses, needs volunteers during the winter season! Helping those in need during the winter is one of the most powerful ways to share hope. Sign up for individual and group shifts here: <https://foodandfriends.org/volunteer/>



Fairfax County Park Authority - Farmers Markets Seeking Volunteer Market Managers

The Fairfax County Park Authority is currently seeking volunteers to help manage the 10 Fairfax County Farmers Markets during the 2023 market season, starting in April 2023. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets to learn about the FCPA Farmers Market program and the farmers market schedule. To learn more about and sign-up for the Fairfax County Farmers Market volunteer opportunities visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/market-manager>. Any questions, contact Marketing & Outreach Coordinator, Molly Cullen at Molly.Cullen@fairfaxcounty.gov.

JOIN FAIRFAX COUNTY FARMERS MARKETS AS A

VOLUNTEER MARKET MANAGER

Manage daily market operations, connect with your community,
 and support local farmers and food producers!

Annandale, Burke, Herndon, Kingstowne, Lorton, Mt. Vernon, McLean, Oak Marr, Reston, Wakefield

SCAN ME

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/market-manager

JOB OPENINGS

Virginia Cooperative Extension - Family Nutrition Program Assistant

Virginia Cooperative Extension is seeking a bilingual (Spanish and English) individual to teach adult participants in Fairfax County about basic principles of food resource management, food preparation, nutrition, and physical activity. The job posting will be open January 6 – 20, 2023. Contact Meghan Garrett at meghangarrett@vt.edu and she will notify you when the job posts later this month.



Center for a Livable Future seeks Program Officer

The Center for a Livable Future is recruiting for a program officer to contribute to the development, implementation, and evaluation of a selection of projects and activities that support CLF's mission and strategic goals, advance policies for food systems change, and promote the engagement and mobilization of public health professionals and allies in agriculture and food systems policy.

For details visit: [Program Officer \(jhu.edu\)](https://www.clf-jhu.edu/program-officer).



Montgomery County Food Council Job Opening

The Montgomery County Food Council is recruiting for a [Equity and Community Engagement Coordinator](#). [Click here for a full job description](#). To apply, email a cover letter and resume to jobs@mocofoodcouncil.org with the subject line "Equity and Community Engagement Coordinator."



MONTGOMERY
COUNTY
FOOD COUNCIL

Compost Cab is Looking for Drivers



JOIN OUR TEAM

F/T and P/T drivers
weekend market team
up to \$180 per shift

If you're a passionate person who wants to protect the planet, we want to hear from you! Apply at team@compostcab.com, or visit compostcab.com/joinourteam

COMPOST Cab
COMMUNITY COMPOSTING MADE EASY
SINCE 2010

Assistant to the Garden Plot Coordinator for Fairfax County Park Authority

Location: Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA

Hours: 15-20 hours/week; not to exceed 900 hours per year; weekend and occasional evening work required. Pay: \$15.00 per/hour. Not eligible to earn benefits, paid leave or receive holiday pay.

Position Duties: Assist with the administration and upkeep of Fairfax County's Garden Plot Rental Program which includes 705 plots in 10 public parks. To learn more or to apply, email resume to: Pamela H Smith at pamela.smith2@fairfaxcounty.gov. 703-324-9781

No Kid Hungry – 2023 Summer Youth Ambassador Program

Through grant funding provided by No Kid Hungry, organizations can apply to host up to two youth ambassadors to undertake projects and initiatives related to childhood hunger, preferably but not limited to summer meals.

The deadline to apply is January 23, 2023. Partners will need to submit an application, a work plan, and a list of recruitment opportunities. Copies of these materials, as well as an FAQ document, can be found [here](#).

The [online application](#) can be saved and resumed later.



Farmers Market Summer 2023 Internship - Fairfax County Farmers Markets Food Security Intern

Green Spring Gardens and the Fairfax County Farmers Markets invite undergraduate students to apply for their 2023 Food Security Internship. The goal of the internship is to develop community engagement skills with a special focus on promoting the SNAP at Market program.

The intern will be a temporary, part-time employee of the Fairfax County Park Authority. Compensation is \$12.00/hour for up to 300 hours. Applicants must be enrolled in a two or four-year college and be able to provide written enrollment verification. Students who graduated within the 2022-2023 academic year are still eligible. For more information about the position or to apply, send resume to Caroline Hockenberry at Caroline.Hockenberry@fairfaxcounty.gov.



This information is provided by the Fairfax Food Council.

fairfaxcounty.gov/food-council

10777 Main Street
Fairfax, VA 22030



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