

NVFS INSIDER



Special Edition: Updates and Good News

Message from CEO Stephanie Berkowitz

Being a hero means not only responding in the first moments of crisis, but remaining steadfast in all the moments that come after. At NVFS, we are committed to being here for our neighbors today, tomorrow, and for as long as it takes to recover from this crisis.

The first weeks of the crisis were filled with action—prepping, planning, reacting. Now we are in the middle of the fight, and this is where the hero in us must reach down and strengthen our resolve. We are heartened by your willingness to care for and support local families and children. Please stay safe and healthy.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie".

Updates From the Field

- In light of the current circumstances, **we must cancel this year's Road to Independence Gala, previously scheduled for May 8th.** We will miss the opportunity to celebrate our shared commitment to helping our neighbors in need. The Gala is our largest source of unrestricted support and makes it possible to serve more than 42,000 of our most vulnerable community members year-round. These same community members and many more will need your support more than ever as we endure the short-term impacts and plan for long-term recovery of this crisis. **[Please consider making a donation today to enable us to continue proactively responding to community needs](#)** - both through the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.
- The Hunger Resource Center and SERVE Shelter have seen an amazing outpouring of support from the community! **Volunteers have stepped up to prepare meals**

off-site and deliver them to the shelter as well as help pack grocery carts for families in need. [Current volunteer slots are full, but please check back as volunteer needs continue to change weekly.](#)

- Currently, the **Hunger Resource Center is running low on the following items:** pasta sauce, canned vegetables, canned tomatoes, canned and dry beans, rice, soup, applesauce, mac & cheese, cooking oil or spray, easy-make single serving meals, pasta, and canned meats. Any low-sodium items are also needed and appreciated. The number of requests continues to rise as the number of food donations decreases.
- **Youth Initiatives and Healthy Families are starting virtual case management and home visits** this week. NVFS staff will start with phone calls and then transition to video chats (if technology allows).
- **Healthy Families Alexandria celebrated a successful Spring2ACTION yesterday**, raising more than \$20,000. Thank you to all the generous donors that participated!
- To date, we have **received over 600 requests for emergency financial assistance totaling more than \$1,000,000 in need.** In our Early Childhood Programs alone, more than one-quarter of parents have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Do You Need Assistance?



As news of the coronavirus in Northern Virginia continues to unfold, we continue to prioritize the health and wellbeing of our community. We are closely following the guidance of our local and state health departments as well as city and county governments across the region. At the same time, we are working on longer-term strategies and planning.

If you need assistance or know someones who does, please [complete this form](#) and upload the required documentation.

Si necesita ayuda o sabe de alguien que lo haga, por favor [complete este formulario](#) y adjunte la documentación requerida.



Stories of Resilience



COVID-19 Emergency Response



Thanks to a partnership with the Greater [DC Diaper Bank](#), **NVFS received 44,000 diapers** to distribute to families across the region. On Day 1 of distribution, each family in our Healthy Families' programs **received 100 diapers per child**. The remaining diapers were delivered to the Hunger Resource Center at the SERVE Campus to be distributed over the next few months to families in need.

Local Girl Scout Troop 1969 discussed a few different ways to help families during the COVID-19 pandemic. They voted unanimously to **decorate cards and donate delicious girl scout cookies to the families staying at the SERVE shelter**. Thank you for brightening everyone's day and making the world a better place.



Baby Ashura and her family are currently enrolled in our Healthy Families program. Ashura was a preemie, but you wouldn't know it when you see her today. So far, she has met or exceeded all of her developmental milestones. And recently, mom sent us a video where **Ashura took her first steps!** It was an exciting moment for everyone.

The SERVE family shelter has **helped eight families successfully move out of the shelter** into permanent housing since the COVID-19 pandemic hit. **One was a first-time home buyer.** The staff hasn't missed a beat and there are **five pending moveouts scheduled for May 1.**



Thank you to our local hometown heroes and the more than 300 friends of NVFS for contributing towards our COVID-19 emergency relief efforts!





Hungry to Help? How You Can Be a Community Champion



Your support helps fuel our COVID-19 emergency response, as well as ensures our staff can continue to serve our most vulnerable neighbors during this crisis. If you're able, please consider the following ways to help a neighbor in need.

- Purchase these high need items from our [Amazon Wish List](#) for a family in need. Currently, the SERVE shelter has a high need for no contact thermometers.
- [Donate online](#) to our COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund or send a check to 10455 White Granite Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA, 22124.

- If you're able and not showing symptoms, consider helping a neighbor in need with a grocery delivery.

Or try one of our five **virtual volunteering opportunities** below.

1) **DIY Protective Face Masks** - In an effort to preserve commercial face masks for medical facilities, we're asking for home-made face masks for our staff who continue to deliver services to local families and for guests staying at our family shelter. Contact [C'Asha Faltz](#) for questions.

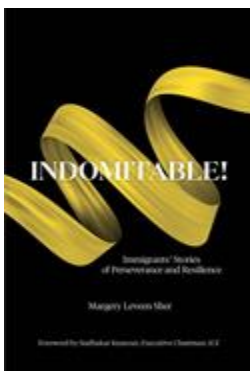
2) **Virtual Story Time** - Help younger children meet the recommended 15-20 minutes of daily reading by sharing a recording of you (or your family) reading a book out loud. The best videos will be posted to the NVFS YouTube Channel for children in our early childhood programs. Contact [Navara Cannon](#) for questions.

3) **Movement Matters** - Stay-at-home orders are tricky for energetic young bodies. You can help keep them moving. Experienced yoga instructors, dance teachers, personal trainers, and preschool and PE teachers are encouraged to record and submit kid-friendly activity videos to keep children moving throughout the day. The best videos will be posted to our YouTube Channel. Contact [Navara Cannon](#) for questions.

4) **Homemade Summer Camp Kits** - You can help make summer special for children staying at the SERVE family shelter by creating summer camp in a bag! Assemble daily activity kits for children 5-12 years old. Contact [Julie Martinez](#) for questions.

5) Social Media Ambassador - Follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter. Then repost or retweet our messages to your network of followers.

Author Spotlight



NVFS is very proud to partner with our longstanding volunteer and champion, **Margery Leveen Sher**, on her newest book, [INDOMITABLE! Immigrants' Stories of Perseverance and Resilience](#). Telling the stories of thirty-two current asylum-seekers and immigrants (many of whom were NVFS clients and staff) to our country, this book is a powerful reminder of the extraordinary courage people take to come to this country to flee prosecution, pursue love, career, and a better life.

NVFS will receive a portion of all book sales.

[Get the Book](#)

NVFS featured in the Washington Post article: Coronavirus crisis will make Washington region 'a more class-divided place'

[Read It Here](#)

NVFS featured in WUSA9 article: Coronavirus pandemic hits DC-area food banks hard

[Read It Here](#)

Upcoming Events

National Volunteer Week: April 19 - April 25

Coffee & Conversations - A Virtual Volunteer Appreciation Event: April 22

#GivingTuesday: May 5

Did you enjoy this edition of the Insider? Have a suggestion? [Email us and let us know what you liked or didn't like](#). We love hearing from our readers and are continually striving to provide relevant content.



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