

# Annapolis restaurant, interfaith group launch Feed Anne Arundel to help families and businesses during coronavirus pandemic

By NAOMI HARRIS

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Owner Monica Alvarado hold the Vegan "Chicken" Cheesesteak at Bread and Butter Kitchen in Eastport. (Joshua McKerrow / Capital Gazette)

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To support both families in need and the Anne Arundel County economy, a small business owner in Eastport and an interfaith social activism group have partnered to pay restaurants that make food for families who might go hungry during the

coronavirus pandemic.

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Feed Anne Arundel, an initiative between [Anne Arundel Connecting Together](#) and owner of the Bread and Butter Kitchen in Eastport, was announced Thursday afternoon in response to the spread of coronavirus.



The idea was born out of conversations between [Monica Alvarado](#), owner of the Bread and Butter Kitchen, and the Rev. Ryan Sirmons, lead organizer of ACT.

“We can keep our restaurants busy and make sure they can pay their staff,” Alvarado said. “That food goes directly to the people in our community who are in need.”

The two organizations recognized that the pandemic has created hardships for the county, as restaurants have had to “cut hours, lay off employees or shut down completely,” and families who already are food insecure “are experiencing

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even more insecurity as access to food is limited," according to the press release.

Feed Anne Arundel plans to pay restaurants to make food for those in need. The organization also has a [donation page](#) for those interested in supporting the project.

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Alvarado said that local restaurant owners and employees were emotional after hearing the decision by Gov. Hogan Monday to shut down except for deliveries. She said she and Sirmons wanted to make a positive situation out of a bad one.

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“Anything we can do to help the community and keep our staff employed is amazing,” she said.

So far, 15 restaurants have agreed to the partnership and she said she has emailed over 60 restaurants, with an expectation to hear back from many more.

The organization also will work with Anne Arundel County Partnership for Children, Youth and Families and mobile food pantries to provide prepared meals as well as groceries. For interested restaurants, Alvarado said to reach out to her. So far, ACT has identified the families in need.

The initiative will hold a trial run on Saturday with 300 meals, according to Reverend Ryan Sirmons.

From there, they will redirect meals to additional food kitchens and follow the schedule provided by the county agency. The initial goal is to feed over 600 people and increase the meals as much as possible to meet the necessary demand and funds, he said.

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The partnership is creating a database of volunteers and locations to pick up meals and where to distribute them, Alvarado said.

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