

# Special Report: Summer Initiatives 2021



# Governor's Summer Meals Programs

The Governor's Summer Meals Programs work to address gaps left by inadequate federal child nutrition programs that don't meet the needs of all of Ohio's families. Since their inception in 2012, the programs have served tens of millions of meals to hundreds of thousands of Ohio children. Governor Mike DeWine and his Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives have continued Ohio's commitment to its underserved, food insecure children.

The **Summer Weekend Meals Program** provides take-home food for children attending Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites to eat over the weekend, when SFSP sites aren't open. In summer 2021, we partnered with 24 SFSP sponsors to distribute take-home weekend meals (two breakfasts, two lunches, and two dinners) to about 10,000 children each week, for 600,000 meals total.

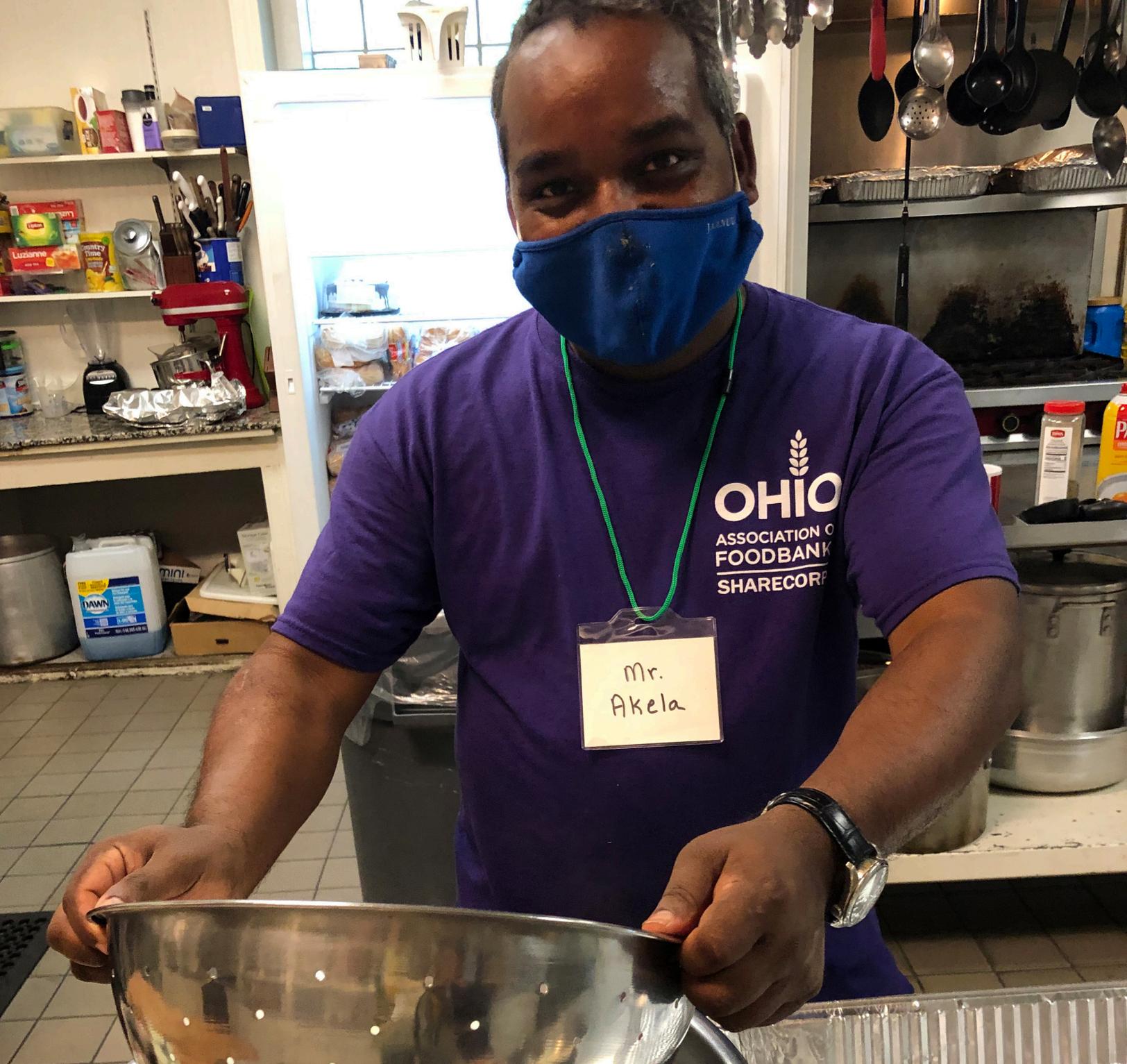
The **Summer Rural Delivery Meals Program** targets children in rural, underserved areas where SFSP sites don't exist or where kids may not be able to access a site. In 2021, we partnered with 9 organizations to distribute a week's worth of kid-friendly, shelf-stable lunches, as well as breakfasts, lunches, and dinners for over the weekend, to about 4,400 children each week, for 484,000 meals total.

The **Mobile Farmers Market Program** provides fresh fruits and vegetables and protein items to families with children participating in the Summer Weekend or Summer Rural Delivery Meals Programs. In 2021, we distributed 958,464 pounds of food at just 56 cents per pound.



During summer 2021, Congress approved, and the State of Ohio implemented, a wide-reaching **Pandemic-EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) program** for students who qualified for free or reduced-price school meals and for children under 6 in SNAP households. The State of Ohio also sought, and the USDA permitted, waivers that allowed many summer food sponsors to serve more children in need and to provide meals through delivery or take-home, non-congregate settings. We are proud of the successful models Ohio has built to make flexibilities like these operable and we hope that these steps to modernize child nutrition programs, which were driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, can be made permanent to better serve our kids and families going forward.





# AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates

We have partnered with AmeriCorps to place VISTA Summer Associates across Ohio since 2009. In our 13th year of partnership, we deployed 62 AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates at 32 locations, including summer meals programs for kids, community gardens, and more.

Many of our VISTA Summer Associates serve at Summer Food Service Programs and work on preparing and serving meals, developing menus, implementing educational and recreational programming, introducing new foods and planning nutrition education, mentoring and supporting at-risk children, and encouraging more children in need to visit their sites for healthy meals. In 2021, our Summer Associates helped their sites to serve **650,985 meals and 68,536 snacks** to food insecure Ohio kids. They even helped to provide on-site or delivered meals to nearly 50,000 new participants!

“The last two years have taken us out of our comfort zone in providing summer programming to area disadvantaged youth. Last summer we were able to feed many families with our VISTA workers, this summer we were able to engage in face to face programming that would not have been possible without the VISTA support. I look forward to a time when we can gather 200 campers together in our normal summer camp environment but COVID has shown me that we can continue to make a difference even in the most challenging of times. It has also shown me that our young VISTA volunteers are capable of so much if we give them the opportunity and have faith in them.” *Ohio University Kids on Campus*



ShareCorps members also recruited more than **500 volunteers** and implemented 57 new processes and procedures to help their sites carry out their missions to address childhood hunger and other food access disparities. They even harvested or salvaged nearly **20,000 pounds of produce** from community gardens or through food recovery efforts!

“The VISTAs made it possible for us to grow and distribute fresh produce to our students and local community. With a beautifully designed planting map, the team is now well on its way to producing over 2,400 pounds of produce. They have planted over 70 types of tomatoes and 32 other crops, including a three-sisters garden of corn, winter squash, and beans. They have recruited, on average, 15 volunteers each week, including faculty and staff from Otterbein, college students, community gardeners, 25 children, and members of the local Rotary Club. The team has hosted 24 Farmers Markets on campus and at the Westerville Saturday Farmers Market, serving low-income students living on campus in the summer and SNAP beneficiaries at the city’s market.” *Otterbein University*

There are so many other ways that our VISTA Summer Associates make an impact during their terms of service. They provide the capacity that nonprofits, faith-based organizations, schools, and other organizations need to make their programs and services available to vulnerable children and families.

“The fact of the matter is that before the VISTAs joined our team, we were considering not offering the free summer meal program. While other pantries and facilities closed down during COVID, we did not. Our volunteers were worn out from trying to provide 300+ families a week food. [The AmeriCorps VISTAs’] enthusiasm and ‘we can do this’ attitude was refreshing. Their help streamlining our processes and attracting new volunteers to our ministry are the only reason we succeeded this summer. We cannot thank AmeriCorps enough for coming to our rescue.” *Lodi Family Center*

### **Summer Weekend Meals Program Sponsors**

COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley  
Community Action Organization of Scioto County  
Elgin Local Schools  
Freestore Foodbank  
Marion City Schools  
New Lexington School District  
Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission  
Ross County Community Action Commission  
Second Harvest Food Bank of Clark, Champaign and Logan  
SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen  
Stark County Community Action Agency  
TLC Ministries  
Washington-Morgan Community Action  
Washington Court House City Schools  
Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM)  
YWCA of Van Wert County

### **Summer Rural Delivery Meals Program Sponsors**

Adams-Brown Counties Economic Opportunities, Inc.  
COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley  
Community Action Committee of Pike County  
Freestore Foodbank  
Meigs Local School District  
The Potter's House Ministries



Ross County Community Action Commission  
SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen  
St. Francis Evangelization Center

### **Mobile Farmers Market Program Sponsors**

Adams-Brown Counties Economic Opportunities, Inc.  
Community Action Committee of Pike County  
Community Action Organization of Scioto County  
Dayton Public Schools  
Elgin Local Schools  
Freestore Foodbank  
Livingston High School  
The Potter's House Ministries  
St. Francis Evangelization Center  
Stark County Community Action Agency  
Steven A. Hunter Hope Fund  
TLC Ministries  
Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM)  
Washington-Morgan Community Action  
YWCA of Van Wert County

### **AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate Host Sites**

Adams-Brown Counties Economic Opportunities, Inc.  
Breakthrough Cincinnati  
Camp Chabad  
COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley  
Cornerstone Christian Fellowship  
Festa  
The Foodbank, Inc.  
Franklinton Farms  
Greater Cleveland Food Bank  
The Hardy Center  
Heart Reach Neighborhood Ministries  
Homeless Families Foundation  
Lodi Family Center  
New Albany Food Pantry  
Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission  
Oberlin Community Services Council  
Ohio University Kids on Campus  
Otterbein University Community Garden  
Our F.A.M.I.L.Y. (Legion Field Community Garden)  
The Potter's House Ministries  
Thea Bowman Center  
The University Church  
Victory Ministries  
Washington United Church of Christ  
Washington-Morgan Community Action



THERMO KING

ABCAP  
SUMMER FOOD  
PROGRAM



RURAL  
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MENU ONE

ABCAP  
SUMMER FOOD  
PROGRAM



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