

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

VITA program promotes financial well-being

The VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program at GoochlandCares helps individuals and families prepare and file their tax returns. Trained volunteers ensure that tax returns are accurate and that participants receive their full refund. They also search for unclaimed tax credits.

The service is supported by United Way, the IRS, and the Virginia Community Action Partnership. Virginia households making less than \$56,000 per year are eligible. You do not have to be a GoochlandCares client to participate.

GoochlandCares VITA volunteers undergo rigorous financial certification and tax prep software training to equip them to handle the trickiest tax situations. Volunteers also learn skills needed to interview participants, review information, navigate forms, and deal with issues specific to low-income filers.

Even small success stories are big wins for low-income and at-risk neighbors. One of our VITA volunteers helped a family file their previous year return so they could receive their stimulus payments. Another individual had not filed for several years because he thought returns could only be submitted by a computer and he did not have access to one.

GoochlandCares is the only provider of this service in Goochland County. In 2021, the volunteers at GoochlandCares assisted with nearly 200 returns. With an average refund of \$700, the VITA program truly makes a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable in our community.



SAVE THE DATE

Hardwood Oktoberfest

Saturday, October 2
Hardwood West Creek
12:00 noon – 9:00 pm

Building Bridges of Hope

Thursday, October 14
Hope Church
8:00 am breakfast or
12:00 noon lunch

Brews for Birds

Thursday, November 4
Kindred Spirit Brewing
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Jingle Bell Bazaar

Tuesday, December 7
Richmond Country Club
10:00 am – 8:00 pm

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES EXPANDING

Expansion aims to ensure that more Goochland residents' needs are met

Transportation resources are extremely limited in Goochland, especially in the Central and Western parts of the County. There is no public transit or private bus service in any part of Goochland County. Taxis and other similar transportation options such as Ubers and Lyfts are expensive and have limited reliability in most parts of the county. The demographic and rural factors that affect our citizens create profound isolation, poverty, and lack of access to services which prevent many from having the means to physically reach the point of service.

Lack of transportation is one of Goochland County's most significant challenges.

GoochlandCares is expanding its Transportation Services program to add a volunteer driver component to increase access to groceries, basic shopping, court services, government services, and other vital needs for our clients.

Our Case Management and Transportation Services teams coordinate to assist clients like Sylvia. She and her 2 children are completely isolated and alone. They are unable to leave their home because they have no access to transportation. Sylvia does not have a car or access to one and there are no family members nearby who can help her get to the grocery store or take the children to medical appointments. GoochlandCares Transportation Services can now offer Sylvia access to safe, reliable transportation to obtain basic necessities.

To be eligible for rides, you must live in Goochland County and meet one of the following guidelines:

- Must be 60+
- Must have a disability
- Must make 200% or below the Federal Poverty Level

To access the program, you must register with GoochlandCares by calling 804-556-6260 to schedule an appointment or go to www.goochlandcares.org to complete an online application.

Once you are registered, schedule rides by calling 804-556-6260.

Rides are provided to:

- Medical, dental, health appointments, and pharmacies
- Dialysis (for weekday appointments)
- All GoochlandCares services (includes food pantry and clothes closet)
- Goochland grocery stores
- Goochland Department of Social Services

For more information, go to goochlandcares.org/get-help or call 804-556-6260.



WHAT'S YOUR LEGACY?

Planned Giving continues your commitment to caring for your neighbors

It's August—and it's a great time to think about your last wishes and to make sure that they are carried out as you intended. A will is an easy way to protect the people and communities you love. Everyone needs a will, whether they're 18 or 80. And there's no better moment than now to find some peace of mind in planning for the future.

A gift in your will can take many forms. You can leave a specific asset, a specific sum of money, a percentage of your estate, or what remains of your estate after you have provided for other beneficiaries. You can designate exactly how you want your gift to be used (to honor a beloved relative or a cherished friend) or leave the gift unrestricted.

Planned Giving gives you an opportunity to create a legacy in support of GoochlandCares.

By including GoochlandCares in your estate plans, your gift ensures our ability to deliver life-saving services to neighbors in need. The Mary Ross Reed Society recognizes those individuals who have made provisions in their estate plans for GoochlandCares. Members of the Mary Ross Reed Society extend the impact of their support far into the future. While you're writing your will, you'll also have the opportunity to join the other amazing people who have helped provide basic human services and health care to Goochland neighbors in need by including legacy gifts in their wills.

We thank those who have made provisions in their estate plans for GoochlandCares. Planned Giving is a way to continue your personal tradition of caring – by making thoughtful provisions for your loved ones while also shaping your charitable legacy with support for GoochlandCares.

We can help you get started. Contact Adair Frayser, 804-556-0301, or afrayser@goochlandcares.org to discuss your wishes today.



NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Safety measures allow limited on-site volunteering



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Are you interested in volunteering? We have many opportunities to get involved. We are looking for volunteers to drive clients to appointments. We also need volunteer dentists and dental hygienists. And, as always, we have opportunities in the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet. Please contact Diane Reale at dreale@goochlandcares.org or 804-556-0712 for more information.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS: Partnership for the Future

GoochlandCares is sad to be losing a valuable summer intern. Samantha was placed with GoochlandCares through Partnership for the Future. This college preparatory program provides crucial resources to promising Richmond-area high school students. Internship stipends are paid by corporate partners. Students gain real-life work experience by working in corporate and non-profit settings. They have opportunities for one-on-one counseling and can earn funds that match what they have saved so far for college. The program also includes college search guidance and college application coaching. Rhonda Weaver, Clothes Closet Manager says, "We are so thankful for Samantha's time with us. She is a quick learner with a consistent work ethic. She anticipated clients' needs and made them feel welcome. That is a wonderful skill. We wish her well in her future endeavors."



DONATE securely online at
GoochlandCares.org

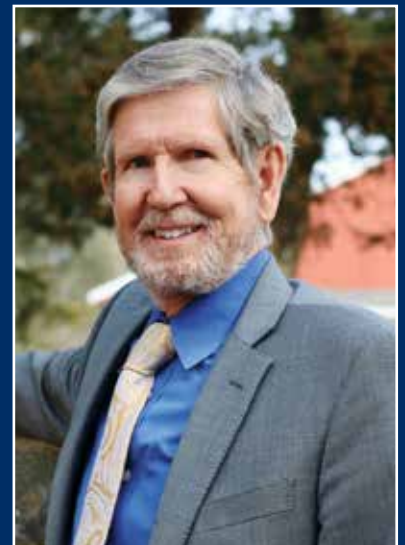
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

"I get more from my patients than they get from me."

Dr. Robert Bennett grew up in Richmond. He attended the Collegiate Schools on River Road and went on to study at the University of Virginia. Dr. Bennett received his medical degree from the Medical College of Virginia. He volunteered as a physician at Crossover Healthcare Ministry. He recently retired from his position as a cardiologist at Virginia Cardiovascular Specialists.

Dr. Bennett saw and understood the urgent need for access to health care for low-income individuals in Goochland County. In 2000, along with other volunteers from St. Mary's Episcopal Church, he was instrumental in the founding of the Free Clinic of Goochland which is now part of GoochlandCares.

Dr. Bennett has volunteered with the Free Clinic for over 20 years and continues to see patients once a month. He is also a GoochlandCares board member. Dr. Bennett says, "Volunteering is my way to give back to the community. I enjoy helping other people and making a positive impact in their lives." When he is not volunteering, Dr. Bennett enjoys dancing, golfing, and woodworking. "But I most look forward to continuing my volunteer work."



~reported by Aidan Mugford

To learn more about volunteering at GoochlandCares, contact Diane Reale, dreale@goochlandcares.org or 804-556-0712.