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Governor

Rona E. Kramer
Secretary



Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

DEPARTMENT OF AGING

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department of Aging Partners with Food Bank for Older Marylanders Food Program

Maryland Unites Day of Service Offers Helping Hands for Launch of My Groceries to Go!

BALTIMORE, MD (August 12, 2015) – Governor Larry Hogan’s Maryland Unites: Day of Service Initiative provided perfect support for the launch of the Maryland Department of Aging’s new commodity supplemental food program, *My Groceries to Go!* on Wednesday, August 12, 2015 at St. Mary’s Outreach Center, 3900 Roland Avenue, in Baltimore, Maryland.

Maryland Department of Aging Secretary Rona E. Kramer was joined by 15 members of her staff who volunteered their time filling grocery carts as part of the governor’s Day of Service Initiative. More than 100 seniors attended the launch of *My Groceries to Go!* These new participants will continue to pick up 40 pound grocery boxes filled with pantry staples each month as the program seeks to reach 2400 seniors monthly. A bounty of fresh local produce was provided by the Maryland Food Bank as an added bonus for all who attended the launch.

My Groceries to Go! is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to improve health status and reduce nutritional risk. The Maryland Department of Aging administers this federal grant for the state of Maryland and partners with the Maryland Food Bank for day to day program operations including the preparation and distribution of food boxes to eligible participants. The Baltimore City Division of Aging CARE Services plays an indispensable role as the city’s focal point for coordinating services for older adults by offering its expertise to inform the selection of distribution sites and innovative educational outreach.

“The *My Groceries to Go!* supplemental food program allows us to provide nutritious meals to our most precious citizens,” said Secretary of Aging Rona E. Kramer. “We are excited about our partnership with the Maryland Food Bank and the USDA because, with their help, we are able to expand our goal of keeping our senior citizens healthy.” The program also encourages participants to take charge of their nutritional health by including recipes, tips, and educational information in the boxes that promote a healthy diet.

Maryland Unites, www.marylandunites.org, was created in the wake of civil unrest in Baltimore City, and has raised more than \$500,000 toward relief efforts. The Day of Service Initiative is an opportunity for state employees to offer their time and talents to benefit our citizens through community service. State employees who participate receive four hours of paid leave and have the option to volunteer for their agency or a select an activity of their choice.

“*These days of service are about the spirit of giving back and sharing it with our state and our local communities,*” said Governor Hogan. “*I am proud of the overwhelming response we have received to date and encourage all state employees to participate in an event with the shared goal of helping those in need.*”

If you are 60 years of age or older and would like to know more about *My Groceries to Go!*, contact the Maryland Food Bank at 410-737-8282 for eligibility guidelines and registration locations. “*My Groceries to Go!*” is currently available in a limited area of Baltimore City. Expansion will depend on reaching federal goals and availability of funds.

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