



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 3, 2020

Michael J. Cerio  
Cerio Communications  
(401) 743-8269  
[Michael@CerioCommunications.com](mailto:Michael@CerioCommunications.com)

## Local Pantries Receive \$7,500 for Food Acquisition, BankRI Encourages Community to Help Hunger-Relief Efforts

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** – Although unable to hold its traditional late summer food drive in its 20 branches statewide, **Bank Rhode Island (BankRI)** is helping ensure their food pantry partners have resources to meet the increased need brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. In support of food acquisition, the bank has provided a total of \$7,500 to 15 pantries, which serve communities from Woonsocket to Middletown.

The charitable dollars are BankRI’s second wave of funding to combat hunger since the pandemic began, following a \$10,000 grant to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. As part of its latest funding, BankRI is encouraging members of the community to help support their local pantry if they’re able. A list of the bank’s food pantry partners and their information can be [found here](#).

In Warwick, Westbay Community Action, whose pantry received funding from BankRI, is seeing people who never before needed help.

“The reality is, more and more people are in need of food during these pressing times – some who never had to worry about putting food on their tables prior to the pandemic,” said Paul Salera, President and CEO of Westbay. “We are reaching out to the community for assistance with volunteers and donations, where we can work together to help others and change lives.”

According to a recent report by the RI Community Food Bank, the number of people seeking help through emergency food programs has increased by almost 30 percent since March. That equates to 67,000 people served monthly – a figure that nearly matches the number of people receiving assistance at the height of the recession.

“There is not a community in our state where our neighbors have not been impacted by what’s going on in the world right now – too many people are worried about how they’ll feed their families,” said Mark J. Meiklejohn, President and CEO of BankRI. “At the same time, when Rhode Islanders see a need, they want to help. Our hope is that those who can will consider helping their local pantry.”

### Food pantries to receive funding from BankRI are:

Coventry Friends of Human Service	Comprehensive Community Action Program (Cranston)	East Greenwich Interfaith Food Cupboard	East Bay Community Action Program	Tri-County Community Action Agency (Johnston)
Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center (Newport)	North Kingstown Food Pantry	Blackstone Valley Emergency Food Center (Pawtucket)	Crossroads Women’s Shelter (Providence)	Better Lives Rhode Island (Providence)
St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry at St. Philip Church (Smithfield)	Jonnycake Center of Peace Dale	Westbay Community Action Program (Warwick)	Connecting for Children & Families (Woonsocket)	St. Peter’s by-the-Sea (Narragansett)

**About Bank Rhode Island**

Bank Rhode Island, a wholly owned subsidiary of Brookline Bancorp, Inc. (NASDAQ:BRKL), is a full-service, FDIC-insured financial institution headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island. The bank operates 20 branches and more than 40 ATMs throughout Providence, Kent, Newport and Washington Counties. For more information, visit [www.bankri.com](http://www.bankri.com). You can also find BankRI on [Facebook](#).

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