



Deeper Dive

Community Updates from the Hilton Head Island Deep Well Project

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Our Food Pantry is facing an unprecedented surge in demand as inflation drives up food costs, making it harder for many families to keep food on the table. The impact on children has been especially severe. More families than ever are struggling to provide nutritious meals for their kids, with many being forced to make tough choices between paying bills and putting food on the table.

In the past, we served 8-10 families per day with grocery items in the Food Pantry. Now, we're helping 15-20 families each weekday—a 200% increase. As recently as 2022, Deep Well had an annual budget of \$50,000 to purchase supplemental food—primarily perishable items like milk, eggs, meat, and fish. Last year, that number soared to \$180,000. In 2024, we provided approximately 270,000 meals valued at over \$734,000, with about 40% of those meals going to children.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), half of the students in the Hilton Head public schools (1,863 students) received free or reduced lunches through the National School Lunch Program in the 2023-2024 school year. During the summer months, when school is out, many families lose access to these crucial

subsidized meals, leaving children especially vulnerable to food insecurity. This makes community donations even more critical to ensure that children don't go hungry.

Thankfully, local organizations have stepped up to help fill the gap. Their food drives are a lifeline for families, particularly those with children who rely on child-friendly groceries to get by. The following partners have made a significant difference in the past couple of months: Bluffton United Methodist Church, Central Church, Collins Group Realty, Congregation Beth Yam, HHP Women's Club, Indigo Run, Piggly Wiggly, Publix, Rotary Club of HHI, Sea Pines residents and Heritage gardeners, Sea Pines Resort, SERG, South Atlantic Bank, and the USPS Letter Carriers/Stamp out Hunger Campaign.

Partnerships also play a critical role in our mission. With the support of food-rescue nonprofits like **Second Helpings**, which delivers to us three days a week, we can extend our reach and feed even more families. On average, we now distribute about \$70,000 worth of food each month, nourishing roughly 1,000 people in our community. Many of those served are children who depend on these meals for basic nutrition.

Every donation, big or small, makes a difference. Together, we can help ensure that no child in our community goes hungry. Thank you for your continued support!

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Volunteer Spotlight:

Robin and Rod Smucker

The day Robin and Rod Smucker joined the **Children's Program** volunteer team for the Circles Program was truly a blessing! In addition to raising two wonderful sons and being loving grandparents to two little ones, they have devoted their lives to caring for children. Robin's passion for helping kids began early—growing up in a small town, she was the go-to babysitter for everyone.

While living in Shreve, Ohio and running their family printing business, Robin and Rod made a lasting impact by mentoring six children through Wayne County Children's Services. When they sold the business, they felt a strong call to continue working with children and decided to relocate to the warmer climate of Hilton Head Island in 2009.

They joined the Junior Players Golf Academy and quickly became house parents to 12 teenagers, ages 14-18. Robin took on the role of a nurturing mom, cooking meals and keeping the home running smoothly, while Rod became the trusted chauffeur for the school year.

Their commitment to helping young people continued through their new job with the Tulifinny organization, a 12-step treatment program for troubled teenage girls formerly based in Bluffton. More recently, they volunteered to care for the children of PGA players during Heritage Week, creating memorable experiences for the three and four-year-olds. They also volunteer with Young Life, caring for the children while parents are attending worship services.

Rod recently retired from working in engineering maintenance with Marriott Vacation Club, while Robin continues to share her warm, caring spirit as a nanny for three different families on the island. Like so many kind-hearted souls, they began their volunteer journey with Deep Well in the Santa Shop, and their impact has only grown from there. We are so fortunate to have Robin and Rod as part of our Circles Program family!

The Circles Children's Program has an urgent need for more volunteers. Please email Lori Alexander at volunteer@deepwellproject.org if you are interested or would like more information.



Your generosity fuels hope!

See your **impact**
in **action**

Join us for a **Deep Well Project**
Info Session & Tour

Wednesdays 2:00-3:30pm

Fridays 10:00-11:30am

Learn how your support is making a difference for local families in need and how we're responding to rising requests for assistance. To register, please click [here](#)

Thanks for the Grant Support!

While the majority of funding Deep Well receives comes from private individuals, we do apply to various grant funders seeking specific help for individual programs or projects. Here's a list of some of the wonderful grants we've received so far in 2025 to power our work and serve our community, including the program each helps support:

- Beaufort-Jasper Housing Trust - Livable Housing home repairs
- Church Mouse Thrift Store - Emergency Rent/Mortgage assistance
- Colleton River Charitable Fund - Livable Housing repairs
- Heritage Classic Foundation - Matching grants, various programs
- Hilton Head Presbyterian Church - Circles program
- Hosts 4 Community - Emergency Rent/Mortgage assistance
- Manion Family Foundation - School Readiness program
- Providence Presbyterian Church - Santa Shop
- United Way of the Lowcountry - Housing Aid in Jasper County
- Ward Foundation - Circles program
- Wexford Foundation - Emergency Rent/Mortgage assistance
- Women in Philanthropy - Circles program

Welcome back from
maternity leave Circles
coach and facilitator
Gabby Husband!



Through services and advocacy, The Hilton Head Island Deep Well Project partners with neighbors to meet their basic needs and create a bridge to self-sufficiency.

Champions Fore Charity



Hilton Head Island Deep Well Project

Add extra impact to your support of **The Deep Well Project!** The **Heritage Classic Foundation** will add an **extra 20%** to all donations between \$1,000 and \$10,000 made via the **Heritage Champions Fore Charity** matching program. Be sure to select **Deep Well Project** as the recipient for your donation.

Thank you for your support!

Make your donation to the Deep Well Project by clicking the button below:



Donate now



The Deep Well Project • 80 Capital Drive • Hilton Head Island, SC 29926 • deepwellproject.org



Visit our website to make a credit card donation deepwellproject.org/donate

The Deep Well Project • 80 Capital Dr. Hilton Head Island, SC 29926 • 843-785-2849

DID YOU HEAR?

Deep Well will have a table
at the Juneteenth Celebration
at Historic Mitchelville
Freedom Park on June 14th!
Stop by and say hello!