



"Feeding The Physical, Spiritual, and Intellectual."

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# Biography



Donyata Shavon Washington was born in the Hampton Roads Area. She was raised by her grandparents until the age of eight. In 1979, Donyata was reunited with her mother, who had entered into the United States Army. They moved to Richmond, Virginia to support her father, who was incarcerated. Donyata attended Richmond Public Schools, Victory Christian Academy, and Marymount School of Richmond. At the release of her father from prison in 1987, Donyata moved back to Hampton Roads with her father to complete her high school education at Green Run High School. She lived with her father until he was tragically murdered by the Virginia Beach Police officers in December 1989. After her father's death she returned to Richmond to reside with family members. In June 1990 she started her college education at Virginia Polytechnic and State University.

Mrs. Washington received her certificate in nonprofit management in November of 2010 from *The Academy of Nonprofit Excellence* at Tidewater Community College to become a certified Nonprofit Manager. She will further her studies to become a certified Dietary Manager from University of Florida.

Mrs. Washington, a former Mary Kay Consultant, experienced a successful career in Mary Kay Cosmetics while living in Fort Washington, Maryland, in the early 90's. Unfortunately, health issues forced Mrs. Washington to put her career aside. Mrs. Washington had a brain tumor removed in August 1997 and is a breast cancer survivor since October 2002.

In 2006, Mrs. Washington was approached to help with the needs of feeding kids in the summertime, in Norfolk, Virginia. She quickly investigated the problem and saw the need was GREAT. Her and her husband, Dr. Christopher Washington decided to sale one of their rental properties. Her husband then aided her in applying for a grant. The grant would help to contribute to providing a solution to ending childhood hunger, during the summer months in Virginia.

In the summer of 2006 Virginia Kids Eat Free (VKEF) successful served over 15, 000 free meals to 5 sites in Norfolk and Portsmouth. In 2007, VKEF successfully served over 74,000 free meals to 29 sites on the Southside of Hampton Roads. In 2008, VKEF served over 287,000 free meals to 151 sites throughout the state of Virginia. In 2009, VKEF successfully served 200,577 free meals to kids in Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Charles City County. In 2010, VKEF successfully served 287,000 free meals to kids in Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Charles City County. Presently, In September 2010, VKEF started its afterschool program. VKEF is currently working with over 24 sites that serves more than 850 kids daily in afterschool programs. VKEF aims to expand its outreach by at least 30% each year.

Virginia Kids Eat Free has received approval from the Virginia General Assembly to have its own Department of Motor Vehicles Specialized License Plate, with the help of Senator L. Louise Lucas (Portsmouth), to help with funding and marketing of the program.

Virginia Kids Eat Free strives to partner with other like-minded individuals and organizations that are concerned about, "*Feeding the Physical, Spiritual, and Intellectual Needs of Kids.*"® We know that we are only a part of the solution. Our combined efforts with Virginia's pastors, coaches, parents, police force, child advocates, teachers, volunteers, politicians, fraternities, sororities, and others help us to encourage our youth that will reach back into their community.

Donyata and her husband Dr. Christopher Washington have been married for 19 years. They are the proud parents of Christina DeJene Washington, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade girl's varsity tennis player at Norfolk Christian School.

# Growing Nonprofit Aims To End Childhood Hunger in VA

The Virginian-Pilot (REFORMATED)

© December 1, 2008

**Donyata Washington's group helped serve 15,000 free meals to Hampton Roads children in its first year.**

The next year, 2007, the group served 74,000 meals. The number grew to more than 287,000 meals across the state this year. Washington, of Norfolk, founded Virginia Kids Eat Free to provide meals to children in the evenings and summer. Her non profit has grown so much that she was able to pay 55 people for work this year and is launching a campaign for specialized Virginia license plates. "There are other people and other agencies doing what we do. We just want to make sure that we're here to feed the kids who are not being reached," Washington said. "I don't want to see any kid hungry." If at least 350 people sign up for a special plate, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles will consider making them. If 1,000 sign up, the group will get \$15 from DMV for each license plate, Washington said. She said she thinks

childhood hunger could come to an end in Virginia if enough people got a plate. Washington is a former Mary Kay saleswoman who underwent surgery for a brain tumor in 1997 and for breast cancer in 2002. When she took her daughter, Christina, to dance classes, she noticed some children had money for fast food, but the ones who didn't would ask their friends for fries. She remembered getting free meals at places such as Boys & Girls Clubs when she grew up in Richmond, and she started bringing snacks to dance class for children who didn't have food. Washington also thought about children in poorer communities who eat lunch at school but might not eat when they get home. In 2006 she worked with the First Baptist Church on Bute Street in Norfolk to start a summer meals program. Her husband, Christopher Washington, a professor of engineering at Norfolk State University, helped her apply for a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She began getting phone calls in 2007 from groups who wanted to serve

food to children. In April, she certified her operation as a non profit under the name Virginia Kids Eat Free, and this summer helped feed children not just in Hampton Roads but Roanoke, Richmond and Front Royal. "It's a blessing to so many people," said Cyndi McGirt, the founder and president of New Beginnings Development Services in Portsmouth, which offers a home and education to pregnant teenagers. Virginia Kids Eat Free delivered a week's worth of food each week this summer, and the girls learned how to prepare a menu, McGirt said. "That was just such a blessing for our girls," she said. "Part of the program is independent living skills." The food also freed New Beginnings to use its own money in other ways. Virginia Kids Eat Free coordinates breakfast, lunch, supper or snacks. A standard lunch might be a ham sandwich, fruit,



carrots, juice and milk. Washington didn't begin as an expert in food service. In 2006 she went to Sam's Club and bought 350 pizzas. "I said, I could not do this every day. I could not cook 350 pizzas," she said. The chef at First Baptist Church showed her how to hire a vendor and get food delivered. Now, Washington is versed in working with vendors. She pays the bills and the Department of Agriculture reimburses her for costs. The Agriculture Department audits the program, she said. And she said she now works with about 130 churches and community groups. One of them is Ebenezer Baptist Church on Baker Road in Virginia Beach, where high school students were paid to prepare meals in the church's industrial kitchen. "We're excited about it," Pastor Terron Rodgers said. "We can't wait to do it again next year."

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2010 SESSION

INTRODUCED

10101116D

SENATE BILL NO. 18  
Offered January 13, 2010  
Prefiled December 23, 2009

A BILL to authorize the issuance of special license plates to supporters of the Virginia Kids Eat Free program; fees.

Patron—Lucas

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. Special license plates for supporters of the Virginia Kids Eat Free program; fees.

A. On receipt of an application and payment of the fee prescribed by this section, and following the provisions of § 46.2-725 of the Code of Virginia other than those relating to the fee for the plates and its disposition, the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles shall issue special license plates to supporters of the Virginia Kids Eat Free program.

B. The annual fee for plates issued pursuant to this section shall be \$25 in addition to the prescribed fee for state license plates. For each such \$25 fee collected in excess of 1,000 registrations pursuant to this section, \$15 shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to a special nonreverting fund known as the Virginia Kids Eat Free Fund established within the Department of Accounts. These funds shall be paid annually to Virginia Kids Eat Free, Inc., and used to support its operation and programs in Virginia. All other fees imposed under the provisions of this section shall be paid to, and received by, the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles, and paid by him into the state treasury and set aside as a special fund to be used to meet the necessary expenses incurred by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

INTRODUCED

SB18

MONTH

# VIRGINIA

YEAR



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**Feeding the Physical, Intellectual and Spiritual Needs of Kids**

PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF EVENTS OVER THE YEARS

