



## Smithfield Foods Donates \$50,000 to the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation to Improve Quality and Access of Early Childhood Education

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SMITHFIELD, Va., July 12, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The [Smithfield Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of [Smithfield Foods, Inc.](#), is pleased to announce a \$50,000 donation to the [Virginia Early Childhood Foundation](#) (VECF). This donation will fund an innovative pilot program that aims to improve the quality of early childhood education in the communities where Smithfield's employees live and work. Positively benefitting many Virginia families, the donation will provide educational resources for parents as well as funds to help improve the quality of childcare facilities, as measured by [Virginia Quality](#), the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System.

"The Virginia Early Childhood Foundation is delighted to partner with Smithfield Foods to improve the quality and availability of early childhood programs for their employees and the surrounding community," said Kathy Glazer, president of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation. "Smithfield's strategic investment underscores the benefits of quality early childhood education for both their current and future workforce. We applaud Smithfield for their leadership and look forward to working together on behalf of Virginia's children and families."

A key component of this pilot program is providing hands-on support for families working at Smithfield Foods' facility in Smithfield, Virginia, through personalized guidance on understanding young children's development and what parents should know when assessing child care options that best fit their needs. The donation will also provide direct support for VECF's efforts to improve the quality of early childhood centers by raising the score of several local facilities by at least one level on the Virginia Quality Rating and Improvement System.

"Smithfield is passionate about supporting a variety of educational initiatives in the communities we call home," said Keira Lombardo, president of the Smithfield Foundation. "We are proud to help provide access to high-quality early education opportunities, especially here in our own backyard. This partnership provides VECF with the resources they need to increase access and quality of facilities for all Virginians as well as our Smithfield Family."

Understanding that supporting education dramatically strengthens communities, Smithfield's donation to VECF aligns with the company's commitment to contribute to the vitality of the communities where its employees work, live, and raise their families. Founded in Smithfield, Virginia, in 1936, the company remains headquartered there and employs more than 3,000 local employees.

For more information about Smithfield's charitable efforts, visit [www.smithfieldfoods.com/key-outreach-efforts/smithfield-foundation](http://www.smithfieldfoods.com/key-outreach-efforts/smithfield-foundation).

### About Smithfield Foods

Smithfield Foods is a \$15 billion global food company and the world's largest pork processor and hog producer. In the United States, the company is also the leader in numerous packaged meats categories with popular brands including Smithfield®, Eckrich®, Nathan's Famous®, Farmland®, Armour®, Farmer John®, Kretschmar®, John Morrell®, Cook's®, Gwaltney®, Carando®, Margherita®, Curly's®, Healthy Ones®, Morliny®, Krakus® and Berlinki®. Smithfield Foods is committed to providing good food in a responsible way and maintains robust animal care, community involvement, employee safety, environmental and food safety and quality programs. For more information, visit [www.smithfieldfoods.com](http://www.smithfieldfoods.com).

### About the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

VECF creates results-oriented partnerships to ensure that young children are healthy and prepared for school, life and workforce success. To learn more about VECF and the Smart Beginnings initiative, visit [www.vecf.org](http://www.vecf.org).

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