

# Rodney K. Taylor

Director of Food and Nutrition Services  
Fairfax County Public Schools

Fairfax, Virginia



"No child should ever know the indignity of being hungry. Kids are suffering in silence and hungry in plain sight. And someone has to do something about it." That someone is Rodney K. Taylor, director of Food and Nutrition Services in Fairfax, Virginia. He is known for starting the first farm-to-school program in the country and changing perceptions of school food.

"Changing the food in schools can be a catalyst for changing the community," Taylor said. "It's possible to have healthy children and a healthy bottom line." Taylor's work has proven that if children are provided with healthy food options, they will modify their behaviors and make healthy eating choices. For the past 25 years, he has been directing school district nutrition programs. In 1997, he began bringing produce from local farmers into his schools. The program became known as the Farmers' Market Salad Bar.

"Forty percent of what local farmers grow gets thrown out because the produce is not as beautiful as what they sell in stores," he said. "We can buy that produce and get it into the schools. It helps the local community, and it gets the freshest food possible to children who don't have access to fresh fruits and vegetables."

When Taylor became director of the Food Services Program in Riverside, California, in 2005, he brought the farm-to-school program with him. By the time he left 13 years later, the Food Services Program went from a \$3.1 million deficit to \$7.1 million in reserve. The program expanded from feeding 47 percent to 70 percent of the district's children.

"My work changed what people thought about school food. It gave access to children who wouldn't have access," he said. "It also demonstrated that we could change children's eating behaviors. We can bring innovation into schools and make school districts proud of the food they serve."

Taylor is now in Fairfax, Virginia, because of his reputation for making change. It's the 10th-largest school district in the country. His Food Services Program prepares more than 149,000 meals per day for his 194 schools plus community organizations.

"I'm here to ensure kids get healthy meals. I come from the inner city, and I know hunger far more intimately than I care to discuss. I don't want any child to ever go hungry," Taylor said. "Not on my watch. Not when I'm here."



## Mexican Chopped Salad with Yogurt Cilantro Lime Ranch Dressing

Greek yogurt and cilantro combine for a refreshingly flavorful dressing that perfectly complements a salad of fresh chopped vegetables. It's the ultimate summer side dish.

For recipe, visit [AAHCalendar.com/recipes/may](http://AAHCalendar.com/recipes/may).



# May 2016

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—Rodney K. Taylor

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 1867: First four students enter Howard University.	<b>2</b> 1995: Shirley Jackson assumes chairmanship of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.	<b>3</b> 2013: Cedric Brooks, saxophone player and influential roots reggae musician, dies.	<b>4</b> 1961: Freedom Riders begin protesting segregation of interstate bus travel in the South.	<b>5</b> 1988: Eugene Antonio Marino installed as first U.S. African American Roman Catholic archbishop.	<b>6</b> 1991: Smithsonian Institution approves creation of the National African American Museum.	<b>7</b> 1845: Mary Eliza Mahoney, America's first black trained nurse, born.
<b>8</b> 1983: Lena Horne awarded Spingarn Medal for distinguished career in entertainment. <i>Mother's Day</i>	<b>9</b> 2010: Lena Horne, singer, actress and civil rights activist, dies.	<b>10</b> 1837: P.B.S. Pinchback, first African American to become governor of a state in the U.S., born.	<b>11</b> 1895: Composer William Grant Still, first African American to conduct a major American symphony orchestra, born.	<b>12</b> 1862: Black slaves commandeered the Confederate ship "The Planter."	<b>13</b> 1914: Joe Louis, hall of fame boxer known as "the Brown Bomber," born.	<b>14</b> 2015: B.B. King, Blues legend and 15-time Grammy winner, dies.
<b>15</b> 1820: Congress declares foreign slave trade an act of piracy, punishable by death.	<b>16</b> 1927: Dr. William Harry Barnes becomes first African American certified by a surgical board.	<b>17</b> 1954: In <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> , Supreme Court declares segregation in public schools unconstitutional.	<b>18</b> 1896: In <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> , Supreme Court upholds doctrine of "separate but equal" education and public accommodations.	<b>19</b> 1993: University of Virginia professor Rita Dove appointed U.S. poet laureate.	<b>20</b> 1961: U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy dispatches U.S. marshals to Montgomery, Alabama, to restore order in the Freedom Rider crisis.	<b>21</b> 2006: Katherine Dunham, pioneering dancer and choreographer, author and civil rights activist, dies. <i>Armed Forces Day</i>
<b>22</b> 1921: <i>Shuffle Along</i> , a musical featuring a score by Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle, opens on Broadway.	<b>23</b> 1900: Sgt. William H. Carney becomes first African American awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.	<b>24</b> 1854: Lincoln University (Pa.), first African American college, founded.	<b>25</b> 1926: Jazz trumpeter Miles Dewey Davis born.	<b>26</b> 1956: Althea Gibson wins the French Open and becomes first African American to win a major tennis title.	<b>27</b> 1942: Dorie Miller, a ship's steward, awarded Navy Cross for heroism during the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.	<b>28</b> 2014: Maya Angelou, renowned poet, novelist and actress, who recited her poem <i>On the Pulse of Morning</i> at the 1993 inauguration of President Clinton, dies.
<b>29</b> 1901: Granville T. Woods patents overhead conducting system for the electric railway.	<b>30</b> 1965: Vivian Malone becomes first African American to graduate from the University of Alabama. <i>Memorial Day Observed</i>	<b>31</b> 1870: Congress passes the first Enforcement Act, providing stiff penalties for those who deprive others of civil rights.				
<p>From the 1930s through the 1960s, chemist and inventor Lloyd Augustus Hall pioneered research into food preservative chemicals. He holds numerous patents for a range of inventions and innovations, including a bacon-curing process and unique method of spice extraction.<sup>5</sup></p>						

Scan code to watch **Rodney K. Taylor** video.

