**Feed the Soul**
*The Aspen Institute Seeks to Find "Weavers" and Arlington County Honors Chef David Guas*

For journalist **David Brooks** - *The New York Times* columnist and commentator on *PBS*"NewsHour," *NPR*'s “All Things Considered," and *NBC*'s "Meet the Press” - it's clear that our country has a *crisis of connection*. But Brooks believes that the national divide is a relational problem that will only be solved in our neighborhoods by “weavers.” Founded by Brooks**, Weave: The Social Fabric Project** at **The Aspen Institute** supports this counterculture movement, forged by community leaders who value relationships and connection over self-serving achievement. **Chef David Guas** of **Bayou Bakery, Coffee Bar & Eatery** was honored as one of four**Weavers in Arlington County**by **the Aspen Institute.**Guas was recognized for his unconditional efforts to help solve the problem of hunger during the pandemic - co-founding **Chefs Feeding Families.**

***Brooks states, "What's beautiful about this story is David's not just on the block, he's in the block!"***

Immediately following the closure of Arlington County Public Schools on March 17, 2020, Guas looked at his team in the kitchen, most had been with him for over 5 years, and thought of their children who are reliant on the school meal program. David asked himself - “Where will their meals come from? How will these children and so many others be fed? No one planned for this, so they are not prepared.” Drawing on his experience as a New Orleanian, having rapidly responded to raise money for victims from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina; all the while learning of the loss of his family’s home, Guas went “rogue.” Within a day of schools shutting down in Arlington, Virginia, Guas created a make-shift kitchen outside on the patio of his restaurant and began serving Camellia Red Beans and Rice, a New Orleans staple, to students and families – no questions asked. The rapid response relief effort grew into a coordinated wide-reaching initiative almost overnight after being captured on Good Morning America. **Chefs Feeding Families**, which now includes additional chef partners and distribution sites –**has served way over 100,000 free plant-based meals to students and their families, spanning across the entire county.**

"Guas and Chefs Feeding Families epitomize the mission of a community weaver," Brooks shares with the viewers. “Weavers see a problem and they need to respond to it...What is beautiful about this story - is that Guas feels like he is deeper into the neighborhood than he ever was. He had his life transformed by this situation. He took on this burden and sometimes by taking on burdens you actually lighten your life.” Guas and Chefs Feeding Families are continuing their efforts, but only with on-going support and donations.

**Please contribute to**[www.realfoodforkids.org](https://simoneink.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=6f815f0dedb8cb9fbdb392d1e&id=54af812046&e=3df99285fc)**and continue to build a stronger community by taking care of students and their families with chef David Guas.**