

Foodsharing

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Atlanta Community Food Bank



Fall 2017

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“I feel ready for school when I’ve had a good breakfast.”

Erick and Christopher attend Woodward Elementary in DeKalb County. They, and thousands of students like them, can thrive in school thanks to the Atlanta Community Food Bank’s exciting new child nutrition programs. (Photo: Allison Young)

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Every Child Deserves Food to Succeed

“I feel ready for school when I’ve had a good breakfast,” said Melanie, a third grader who participates in the free and reduced school breakfast and lunch program at Woodward Elementary, located near Buford Highway in DeKalb County. Teacher Colleen Casanova says she can see the difference when students start their day with breakfast. “They have that basic need met, their brain is stimulated and they’ve got the energy they need to focus in the classroom.”

The Atlanta Community Food Bank is collaborating with several metro Atlanta school districts to introduce new models to increase school

breakfast participation, such as offering breakfast in the classroom. The Food Bank is also working to grow the number of schools that take part in its School Pantry Program. Woodward Elementary is among those schools, and Casanova is working with fellow teacher Diana Mitchell to lead the monthly effort. “We’ve had kids who say they aren’t ready for the weekend because they’re not going to get enough to eat,” said Casanova. Both teachers are thrilled to help provide a solution. “We can’t affect change at home unless we provide resources, and that’s what our goal is,” said Mitchell.

Principal Demetria Haddock says she smiles when she sees the Food Bank truck pull up. She is grateful for Food Bank donors who make these nutrition initiatives possible. “To have people who care enough to give on behalf of children who are not their children, who donate to provide these boys and girls what they need to be successful at school... that’s priceless.”

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A Word of Gratitude

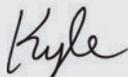
Dear Friends,

As children get settled in their classrooms for another school year, the Atlanta Community Food Bank has been busy expanding our child nutrition programs. In collaboration with our partner agencies, multiple school systems and major supporters like The Junior League of Atlanta, Inc., we're focusing our growth in three key areas: summer meals, school breakfast participation and school pantries.

When you read the stories in this issue, you'll recognize a common theme: No child should ever have to worry about having enough food to eat.

I'm extraordinarily grateful for the level of support we receive from you, our donors. It has a ripple effect that reaches beyond solving the immediate food access problem. Kids who have enough healthy food will do better in school; they'll do better in life, and that can have a tremendous impact on the success of our overall community.

With thanks,



Kyle Waide
President & CEO

(Photo: Marcus Krause)



Veronica Mount is president of Land of Promise, a nonprofit that partners with the Atlanta Community Food Bank to serve students in 14 Fulton County schools through the Nourish the Need Backpack program. Each week, she and her volunteers meet in the food pantry at College Park Elementary School where food received from the Food Bank is filled into backpacks for the kids. (Photo: Allison Young)

Woman with a Mission

Veronica Mount doesn't remember a time she wasn't feeding the hungry. "We had gardens, and I was with my parents when they delivered food to the community. It's always been a part of me." After serving in Africa, she returned home and felt God's calling to continue hunger relief work. She set out to discover how she could best serve and learned through volunteering with Feeding America's 2014 Hunger Study how great the need was in her own community.

Since then, Veronica has been running a weekly backpack food distribution called Nourish the Need, a program of Food Bank partner agency Land of Promise. During the 2016-17 school year, 348 students in 14 Fulton County schools received backpacks filled with food for the weekend. Each backpack contains kid-friendly items like fruit cups, mac & cheese, oatmeal and tuna - enough for two breakfasts, two lunches and two snacks. She says she wouldn't be able to do this work

without the Food Bank.

"The parents are grateful because it lessens their financial strains," said Veronica. "And the children are so appreciative. They tell me they can't believe people would give them food. They always say they're going to share the food with other family members. That is precious to me." She said teachers have noticed the difference. "Kids are less irritated on Mondays and more motivated to learn."

"...the children are so appreciative. They can't believe people would give them food."

Veronica's short term goal is straightforward. "Provide food so students can study during the weekend instead of worrying if they'll eat." She says her long term goal is right in line with the Food Bank's. "Just like you, I'd like to end hunger."



(l-r) Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr celebrates the success of this year's Legal Food Frenzy food drive with Attorney Justin Oliverio, LLC and State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division President Jennifer Mack. Justin won in the Frenzy's Sole Proprietor category. (Photo: Sarah Coole)



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Lawyer Strives to Feed Families

“All my successes in life are because of my mother. She worked more than 40 hours a week as a single parent, and taught me how to set goals, work towards them, and have the determination and patience to overcome adversity,” said Justin Oliverio. During his adolescence, he watched his mother work full time and became aware of the financial stress many single parents in America face.

Justin now runs his own law practice in downtown Decatur. He recently completed his fourth year participating in the State Bar of Georgia's Legal Food Frenzy, an annual food and fundraising

competition among Georgia lawyers benefiting the Atlanta Community Food Bank and the Georgia Food Bank Association. It is one of the largest food drives in the Southeast. Justin has served on the board for two years and won the 2017 Sole Proprietor category for raising 12,733 pounds of food.

Justin says his passion for the food drive comes from his awareness of the struggles many hard working families face. “I know there are a lot of parents and children going through hard times. They're working 40-50-60 hours a week, but struggling to pay rent or buy food.”

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