

# Annual Report 2016

## Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School



A backpack food program at Perry Harrison School in Pittsboro, NC

# About Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School

In an effort spearheaded by Board of Education member Holly Duncan in 2007, Chatham County Schools teamed with school and community partners to ensure that students in need have food at times when school is not in session.

During the 2007-2008 school year, a program called “Fuel Up” began in three Chatham County Schools: Siler City Elementary, Moncure School and Virginia Cross School. In the spring of 2008, a small group of Perry Harrison School parents decided to bring this program to Perry Harrison School as well.

The Fuel Up food program was created to provide bags of food to students (anonymously and discreetly) to meet their nutritional needs during weekends and breaks in the regular school year months. For a regular weekend, the backpacks contain three dinners, two lunches, two breakfasts and two snacks. (Additional food is provided for long weekends and extended breaks from school.) With the exception of the fresh fruit that is provided each week, the food is shelf-stable; and a child would be able to prepare most of, if not all, the items him- or herself.

Food provided to program participants is either donated by members of the community or is purchased using grant money or grocery store gift cards and funds donated by members of the community.

## *How the program works:*

1. Students are chosen to participate in the program by the school Guidance Counselor based on self-reporting, recommendations by teachers and/or recommendations from the school Social Worker.
2. Food donations and monetary contributions are collected from Perry Harrison School families and from the community. (Monetary contributions purchase food to supplement what is donated by the community)
3. Each Wednesday, the bags are packed by volunteers and given to homeroom teachers. They discreetly place bags in the students’ backpacks, which the students take home on Thursday afternoons (allowing an extra day if a child is absent).
4. Students return their bags to school on Mondays so that they may be re-packed.

## **Cost to feed a child each weekend:**

**One weekend = \$15**

**One month = \$60**

**One quarter = \$125**

**One semester = \$250**

**One school year = \$500**

# **A Message from the Director**

## **The more things change, the more they stay the same**

2016 was our 9<sup>th</sup> year serving the food-insecure children at Perry Harrison School. It has been an amazing year for growth and learning here at Fuel Up, yet our mission and focus have not wavered.

We started the fiscal year by welcoming a new board member: David Klein, a retired pediatric neurosurgeon and dedicated volunteer and donor for the past 3 years. Dave began his tenure with Fuel Up in 2013 after learning about our program through a presentation at his church by our previous director. Since then he has rarely missed a Wednesday morning of bag packing, always leads the charge filling produce bags during holiday break bag assemblies, adopts/shops for Summer Gap and holiday break bags, and enlightens us with his wisdom and humor. Upon joining our board, he has enlisted the help of friends and neighbors at Carolina Meadows in raising money for our program and updating our by-laws. He is constantly proposing ideas and suggestions for process improvement. Dave is a phenomenal ambassador and invaluable member of our team!

Another amazing addition, was our new partnership with Women of Fearington. A member of this wonderful organization, Martha Tollers, heard about Fuel Up through her granddaughter who attends PHS. She contacted me to learn more and ended up lending her hands to our Spring Break Bag assembly session. After answering her many questions and giving her a “tour” of our operation, she promptly nominated Fuel Up for a grant through Women of Fearington. We were awarded a very generous grant to support fresh food purchases for our 2016 Summer Gap program. Martha also collects coupons from her Fearington neighbors and routinely supplies our shopping team with a variety of these money savers that help stretch our charity dollars!

Our shopping team welcomed a new member last fall: Amy Rogers. She happened upon us by way of board member, Kat Godehn, as she was looking to “do more” in her community. Amy is a baker by trade, mother to a current 1<sup>st</sup> grader at PHS and a PHS grad, and an absolute ray of sunshine! She arrived at a trial shopping trip with our crew and had us at “Hello.” A hard and conscientious worker straight out of the gate, she lends her knowledge of food preparation and flavor combinations to our menu selections, as well as a good dose of practicality and flexibility. We feel fortunate that she has decided to share her talents with us.

The newly designed Fuel Up website changed how we recruit, notify, and track donors and volunteers. Since its launch in the fall of 2015, we have streamlined our newsletters, advertising, fundraising, and volunteer sign-up processes. Thanks to Fiona Kapilovic for her brilliance in creating and organizing a beautiful system. We are so lucky to have such an experienced and patient website designer / administrator. Another steadfast volunteer, Chesley Cuicchi, is now Fiona’s partner in the website endeavor. Chesley has been taught the ropes well and also exhibits great patience in her role.

A few things—THANKFULLY—remained unchanged this year. We continued to enjoy partnerships with our very generous grantors Carolina Meadows, Galloway Ridge, and Chapel of the Cross. Their monetary gifts sustain us and we so appreciate their ongoing support. In fact, when we received notice in December that we would be awarded a grant from Carolina Meadows for 2017, they reminded us that since our program began in 2008, they have given us over \$65,000! Words cannot express our gratitude for their munificence.

Our relationships with CORA Food Bank, our fellow backpack food programs throughout Chatham County, Farmer Foodshare, the remarkable administration at PHS, and the tremendous school community remain strong and cherished. Of course, the program could not function without the incredible contributions of private donors and the extraordinary volunteers who share countless hours and resources to ensure that Fuel Up serves PHS children at risk for hunger. We continue to be humbled by the generosity of our “village.”

Jennifer Buckmire  
Executive Director, Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School

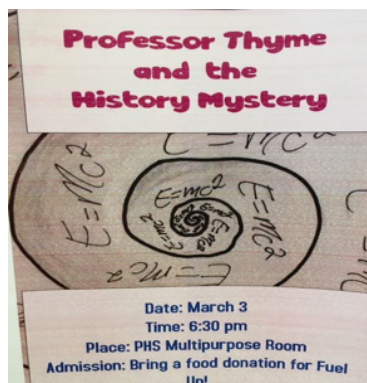
# 2016 Events

## Ice and Snow and Cold, Oh My!

The New Year began with some inclement weather. Fortunately, our website administrator is also quite the weather nerd. Fiona Kapilovic helped us stay ahead of impending cold, icy conditions which allowed us to rally volunteers to purchase, fill, and discretely distribute supplemental "inclement weather bags" to our Fuel Up students in case school got canceled. We are grateful to and for Fiona, as well as steadfast volunteers Ashley Barnes, Chesley Cuicchi, Ashley Frost, and Kat Godehn for helping our participants weather these little storms throughout January and February.

## Show Thyme

The PHS Drama Club collected 145 donations & \$45 for Fuel Up --in lieu of paid admission--to their adorable production of "Professor Thyme and the History Mystery" on March 3rd. We are grateful to all the actors and audience members who brought in donations. And HUGE thanks goes to the directors, Ms. Sevelovitz and Mrs. Hawkins, for making it possible!



## Spring Break Bag Project

A few years ago families who participated in our Summer Gap program reported it to be a very meaningful experience and asked for more opportunities to help, so we began offering for volunteers to "adopt" bags/students for Spring Break and Winter Break as well. This year, additional funds were donated that were used to purchase fresh fruit, milk, and other perishables, as well as bread, apples, and potatoes delivered by Farmer Foodshare. We were fortunate to have lots of volunteers on hand to help assemble the extra food items to add to bags in time for the children's parents to pick them up.

We appreciate everyone who shopped for (or provided funds for our committee to shop for) each of the 46 Fuel Up participants for Spring Break 2016. The bags were literally overflowing with great food, and many even included fun gifts and activities to make the break more fun for these children.





\*Spring Break perishables



\*Helping hands fill fruit bags

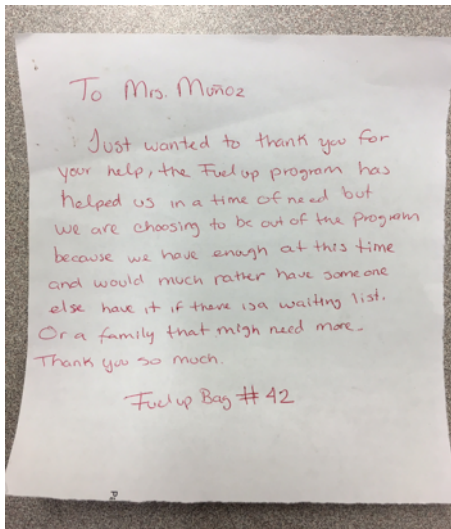


\*Sunflower bread from 9<sup>th</sup> St Bakery



\* "Bonus" bags filled with fresh fruit, potatoes, supplemental snack and breakfast items, and fresh bread

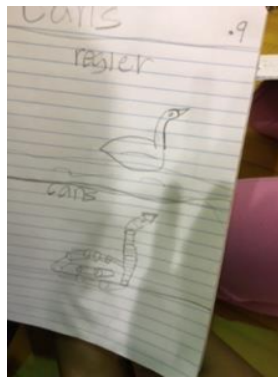
During the spring break bag pick up, caregivers expressed appreciation to the Guidance Team. One mom said, "Thank you for helping to feed my kids." A participant's mother, who recently called the School Counselor to report they no longer needed our service proclaimed what a huge help this program has been to them this year. The next week, she sent a letter of gratitude along with the child's Fuel Up bag:



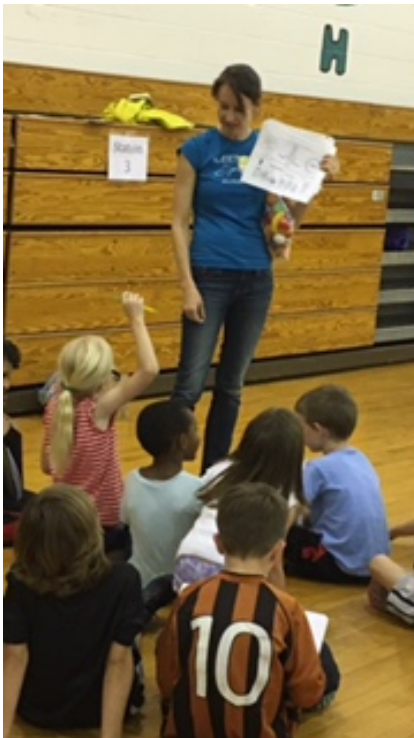
To Mrs. Muñoz  
Just wanted to thank you for your help, the Fuelup program has helped us in a time of need but we are choosing to be out of the program because we have enough at this time and would much rather have someone else have it if there is a waiting list. Or a family that might need more. Thank you so much.  
Fuelup Bag # 42

## Spring Food Drive and CANstruction Contest

In April, our annual spring food drive and CANstruction Contest was held. A total of 299 items were donated. The 1<sup>st</sup> graders donated the most canned goods, so they “won” the privilege of building CANstructures in the school lobby after school. We also held a miniature “preview” of the CANstruction fun a few days prior to the building adventure during their Specials class block time, with the help of the PHS Specials teachers and some very dedicated parent volunteers. The children got to talk about their favorite foods, discuss healthy food & “My Plate” recommendations, food labels, and what is IN our food, sketch and design “CANstructures,” sort our donations, and play fun movement games related to healthy food choices.



\*some impressive “CANstructure” design ideas



\*Volunteer Coordinator Jen Adams talks to the 1<sup>st</sup> graders about what’s IN our food and how to make healthy food choices.



During the after school building fun, Fuel Up board members and volunteers, as well as a helpful group of 5<sup>th</sup> grade “Deckhands” (PHS student ambassadors) ran stations wherein we: ate healthy snacks, discussed the difficulty of concentrating and learning if you are hungry, had a hand-and food-washing tutorial with our school nurse, played word and survey games about food, colored food pictures, and built 3 small CANstructures: a fish hook, a thermos, and a lunchbox.



Board Member Nancy Fahrbach plays “Survey Says” about the 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes’ favorite fruits & vegetables



“Deckhands” help with sorting and carrying cans for “building.”



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1<sup>st</sup> graders “build” a fishing hook out of canned goods => final product (+ 1<sup>st</sup> graders’ favorite snacks written or drawn on paper fish)

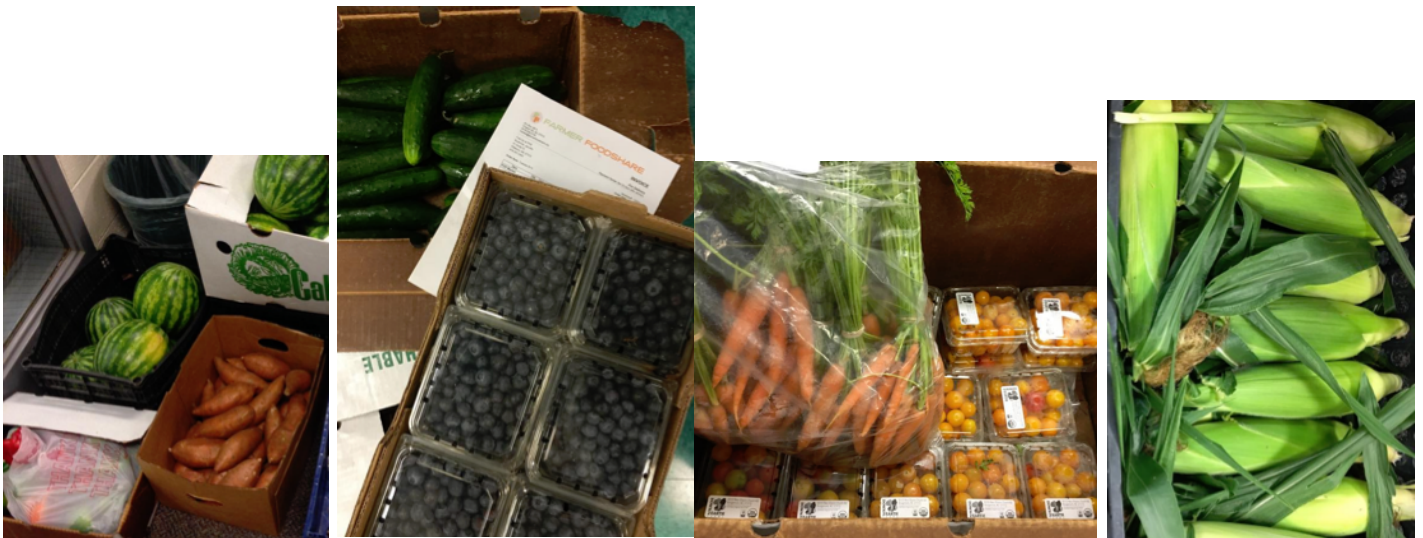
# Summer Gap Program

2016 was the seventh year of our Summer Gap program. This unique project allows us to continue to provide food for our participants in the Summer months, when school meal assistance programs are not available, and when many participants find our program most beneficial.

In order to supply enough food for the 10-week break for the children who participate in Summer Gap, we reach out to the community. Thanks to social media blasts (Facebook and NextDoor), word-of-mouth advertising, and the incredible ease of signing up on our website, all of the summer bags were sponsored in a few days' time! Community members who "adopted" bags for the summer received a detailed list of shelf stable grocery items and dropped them off each week to the school office, where they were picked up by participants' caregivers. One of our officers and PHS Exceptional Children's Teacher, Terri Fannin, also delivered food to 1 family weekly due to their lack of transportation.

For the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church graciously awarded funds that allowed us to purchase milk and other perishables (i.e., yogurt, cheese, deli meat, eggs) for each child every week of break. They have been our most reliable and generous Summer Gap supporter to date.

This was the 1<sup>st</sup> year we were invited to apply for a grant through the Women of Ferrington. We are incredibly grateful to Martha Tollers—donor, volunteer, and proud grandmother of a PHS student-- for nominating us! They granted us funds that enabled us to order fresh produce (i.e., corn, cucumbers, carrots, potatoes, melons—just to name a few!) and 9<sup>th</sup> St Bakery Bread from our partner Farmer Foodshare, as well as fresh fruit purchased from local grocers. Each week, every child received a loaf of bread or rolls, and 1-2 produce items -- delivered with cheer by Farmer Foodshare veteran driver, Ryan--as well as at least 8 pieces of fresh fruit.



\*Just a few examples of the produce delivered by Farmer Foodshare, funded by Women of Ferrington



“Summer Gap” served 20 children this past summer. We received valuable feedback through written surveys from four of our participating families. Survey data revealed that these families “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the children liked the fresh fruit / produce, bread and perishables they received. Their responses confirmed that Summer Gap helped them save money, felt connected to and supported by the community, and that they were glad they signed up for the Summer Gap program. Three of the families affirmed that they would not have had access to fresh bread or produce without Summer Gap. One family wrote that they “love that someone cares.” Another family informed us “receiving food from the program has been helpful while the children are out of school, eating more at home!”

Due to her work schedule, one parent routinely arrived early every Wednesday morning—before set up was complete-- to pick up her children’s food bags. Each visit, she informed the volunteer who greeted her how much her children loved the bread and fresh foods they had received the week prior, and how much she appreciated the help Fuel Up gives her family.

We are so thankful for the extra hands that helped shop for and assemble fruit and perishable bags, and assisted with set-up. None of this would have been possible without the PHS front desk staff, Monica Jackson and Rebecca Johnson, as well as Principal Hicks, and our incredible custodians, Mr. Ronnie and Ms. Beth—the support they offered volunteers and participants this summer was incredible!

## Fall Food Drive

Our annual Fall Food Drive was held at the school October 17<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup>. PHS students contributed 580 food items and \$135 in grocery cards and monetary gifts. The groceries alone were enough to fill 48 weekend backpacks. We continue to be impressed and humbled by the outpouring of support Fuel Up receives from the school and surrounding community.



Mr. Perry Harrison smiling upon the overflowing collection bin during the 2016 Fall Food Drive.

## Winter Break Project

As in past years, volunteers for the Winter Break Bag Project were given a child's grade and gender, then asked to shop for a list of prescribed food items for that child. Thanks to the many loving hearts and hands that made sure our 35 Fuel Up kids had plenty of good things to eat while they were out of school for the 2-week holiday break.

Farmer Foodshare graciously used grant funds to provide these fresh foods to our participants at no cost to us: two varieties of apples, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and 9<sup>th</sup> St. Bakery Breads. Cedar Grove United Methodist Church in Pittsboro donated funds for perishable foods. Thirty area families “Fund”-ed or “Fill”-ed shelf stable grocery bags and /or donated money to afford extra perishables and fruit. One dozen volunteers assembled the beautiful bounty and our dedicated School Counselor, Mrs. Leann Munoz, coordinated pick up sessions, worked extra late and delivered bags to those without transportation.

The Fuel Up families were thrilled by the abundance of nutritious food. One grandmother, who is helping her son take care of her grandchildren, called our School Counselor to express her incredible gratitude for all the food they had received. She reported they had fallen on particularly hard times that week as her son had just lost his job, and broke down in tears while expressing how overwhelmed she felt. Another parent, who had to get a ride from a friend because she does not have a vehicle, was speechless and visibly emotional when she came to pick up her children’s food bags. Our School Counselor reported to our committee that this parent has shared what great support she feels at PHS and much of that is due to Fuel Up.



\*a volunteer demonstrates the massiveness of the sweet potatoes from Farmer Foodshare



\*FFS Market Manager Karla Capacetti shows off the juicy tomatoes they donated to our winter break bags



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\*a peek inside a Winter Break produce bag...and a “cold” bag (funded by Cedar Grove UMC)

Many of the Winter Break Bag donations were given in honor of some very special people:

Rosemary Cuicchi, in honor of her grandsons **Will and Paul Cuicchi**

Wayland and Judy Ramage, in honor of **William & Norma Ramage**

**Eric Brantley and Debbie Meyer**, each in honor of the other

Every year since we began this “adopt-a-bag” project, Eric Brantley and Debbie Meyer shop for a child as their holiday gift to each other. “We are always glad to do it,” Debbie reported.

## Philanthropy at Its Finest

In December, Girl Scouts Troop 997 in Briar Chapel spearheaded a canned food drive in their neighborhood to benefit Fuel Up. They invited our director to speak to them about food insecurity, and the connection between hunger and school performance. Lots of great questions about and suggestions for providing more fresh food to our Fuel Up kids were posed at this meeting. These enthusiastic young ladies did a fabulous job of collecting healthy food for our pantry: 241 items! We are very grateful to this troop for their generosity and hard work. Congratulations to them on obtaining their Philanthropy Badge through this endeavor.



(Photo courtesy of Kristan Shimpi, GS Director)



# 2016 Financial Report

<b>2016 Revenues</b>	
<b>Chapel of the Cross ABC Fund</b>	\$1500
<b>Carolina Meadows Community Grants Program</b>	\$5000
<b>Galloway Ridge Community Foundation</b>	\$3000
<b>Women of Fearington</b>	\$1700
<b>Other/Private Donations</b>	\$10,200
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$21400
<b>Expenditures (food purchases)</b>	\$21040.30
<b>Operating Surplus</b>	\$359.70

Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School is a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status granted by the IRS. With grants, personal monetary contributions and donated food and gift cards, Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School was able to provide delicious and nutritious food throughout 2014 without gaps due to holidays or breaks from school.

# Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School Organization

## Executive Director

Jennifer Buckmire

## Officers

Sarah Blake Finigan

Nancy Fahrbach

Terri Fannin

Mary Beth Grealey

## Board of Directors

Susan Brannum

Emily Geizer

Katereya Godehn

David Klein

## Perry Harrison School

Freda Hicks - Principal

Leann Muñoz--School Counselor and Intake Coordinator

## Special Thanks

Our Core Crew of Volunteers

[who made the magic happen each and every week]

Jennifer Adams, Ashley Barnes, Michelle California-Aguiar, Sherrie Calvano, Rachel Chang, Marcey Clark, Chesley Cuicchi, Catherine Ellis, Kat Godehn, Ashley Frost, Dana Harshaw, Fiona Kapilovic, Dave Klein, Jen Marr-Kupka, Alexa Moore, Wayland Ramage, Tonya Randell, Amy Rogers, Helene Salier, Jane Salm

## Bag Sponsors and On-Call Volunteers

Avery & Jackson Adams, Michelle Aguiar, Anna Marie Ambrose, Sharon Barth, Maggie Borum, Mandy Bowen, Linda Coerr, Chandra Colwell, Karyn Jean Deguerre, Jaime Detzi, Tina Edwards, Sarah Blake Finigan, Emily Geizer, Revy & Berkeley Godehn, Katereya & John Godehn, Dana Harshaw, Lisa & Scott Hartman, Kate & Glenn Hicks, Mika & Liza Honigmann, Cate House, The Kennedy Family, Cee Koehler, Sharon Konowitz, Charlie & Martha Lewis, Leah MacMillan, Stephanie Mathews, Connie & Ed McCraw, Michael McGregor, Debbie Meyer & Eric Brantley, Andrea Mills, Kristine Nickerson, Jaime Riddle, Heba Salama, Espran Sutton, Jamie & Erick Swaine, Carol, Carter & Gabby Terrell, Tracy Vernon-Platt, Amy Wilson, Patti Winters, Yeu-li Yeung with Mia & Mabel Collins

## **Donors**

Jennifer Adams, Phardia Bourjolly Adibe, Kristen Beck, Ben & Sarah Birken, Maggie Borum, Mandy Bowen, Jennifer Bowman, Johnnie Britt, Glenn & Molly Brooks, Kim Bui, Beth Chang, Elizabeth & Tim Coykendall, Frank & Chesley Cuicchi, Rosemary Cuicchi, Martha Danek & Edward Pickens, Tammie & Ronald Eddins, Catherine & Bruce Ellis, , Gigi Fein & Ron Geizer, Ron & Heather Faircloth, Karen Floyd, Jimmy & Christina Ford, Paul & Winnifred Fowler, Ashley Frost, James & Kristen Harrington, Dana Harshaw, Lisa Hartman, Tioga Honigmann, Cate House, Margaret Jones, The Jonsson Family, Millie Kabrick, Fiona Kapilovic, Carolyn & Stephan Kang, Carolyn & Dennis Koehler, Erik & Jennifer Kristiansen, Charles & Martha Lewis, Brooks & Sarah Linkhorn, Linda & Shelton Lloyd, Tammy Lynn & Charles Lloyd, LuLaRoe Amber Rodriguez, James & Kay Mann, Donna Mergilano, Ed & Connie McCraw, Caron Misita, Clayton & Blair Nell, Melanie & Stephen Oglesbee, Ana Owusu-Tyo, "Random Acts of Kindness," Judy & Wayland Ramage, Jaime Riddle, Deborah & Edward Roach, Kate Roach, Pam & Robert Schaecher, Lauren Shepler, Jennifer Sherman, John & Priscilla Singletary, Julia Soplop, Heather Stober, Mary Wyatt Tiger, Martha & Vince Tollers, Daren & Emily Trudeau, Tracy Vernon-Platt, Cynthia Weeks, Yeu-li Yeung

## **Grantors**

Carolina Meadows Community Grant

Chapel of the Cross ABC Fund

FROG Fund

Galloway Ridge Community Foundation

Women of Fearington

## **Sponsors**

Cedar Grove United Methodist Church

Mt. Gilead Baptist Church



Please Contact

Jennifer Buckmire at [director@fuelupkids.org](mailto:director@fuelupkids.org)



[www.fuelupkids.org](http://www.fuelupkids.org)