

Annual Report 2015

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 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 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 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 pay for 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 or lockers, 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

Expanding Roles, Expanding Goals

It has been a whirlwind of a year, taking over the helm of this well-run ship that is Fuel Up at PHS. I have my predecessor, Sarah Blake Finigan, to thank for her leadership and vision, which have helped to positively shape not only this program, but also, the community of Perry Harrison School for years to come!

After volunteering with Fuel Up in multiple capacities since November 2008, I began serving in my new role as Executive Director in January 2015. As a speech-language pathologist by trade, I am well versed in the importance of communication, organization, and documentation. Therefore, I am grateful for the amazing “logbooks” Sarah Blake kept during her tenure. These, along with our close working partnership over the years, have aided my transition and assisted us in our journey this year.

We have been very busy, navigating new and exciting waters, in addition to cruising familiar ones. Our brand new web site, designed and implemented by Fiona Kapilovic, allows us to receive credit card donations. Also, volunteers can now use our online scheduling system to sign up for specific jobs, days, and times. This has greatly increased our individual donations AND our community volunteer base.

In response to the flood of volunteers (YEAH!) a new position was created by veteran volunteer, Jennifer Adams, that has helped me tremendously: Volunteer Coordinator. She keeps track of volunteers interested in various duties, their availability, and helps with training. She is able to contact and organize our team -- upwards of 25 people--as needed, sometimes at the last minute (as was the case of our Inclement Weather bags, assembled mere hours ahead of ice storms)! She also helped expand the roles of our volunteers.

We welcomed three new members to our Board of Directors. Susan Brannum is a School Resource Nurse for Northern Chatham County and long-time supporter of Fuel Up. She has a good energy and presence, and we need her to keep us on course--especially during meetings☺. Emily Geizer is an integrative nutrition and health coach, and 3-year veteran Fuel Up volunteer. She shares her passion for eating well, advice about food/menu selection, and helps with networking and resource expansion. Kat Godehn (a solid Fuel Up volunteer for over five years) is a graphic designer, and our marketing and public relations specialist. She redesigned our logo and spearheads our flyer designs and distribution, creates informational materials, and helps manage our Facebook presence. Kat has expanded our “alternative gift-giving” options by supplying donors with a selection of honorarium cards for all occasions.

Fuel Up’s shopping team tripled this year thanks to Ashley Frost and Kat, who graciously extended their volunteer duties, joining me in the quest to stretch our charity dollars.

Our food selection has also expanded due to survey feedback from participants interested in more fresh foods. We are constantly seeking new outlets interested in collaborating with us, and meanwhile continue our valued partnerships with Farmer Foodshare and CORA. We share operating ideas, challenges, and resources with Panda Packs (Pittsboro Elementary’s backpack food program) director, Emily Boynton, and maintain our connections with other local school food backpack program coordinators.

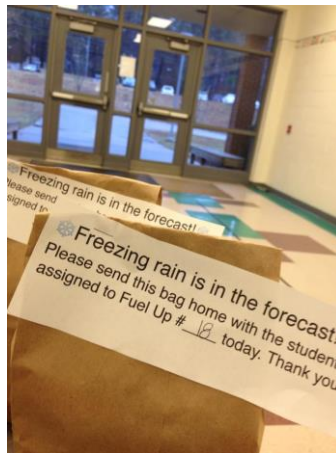
This program would not be possible without the incredible support of our “anchor” sponsors (Carolina Meadows, Galloway Ridge, and The Chapel of the Cross), the growing number of private donors, an increasing number of dedicated volunteers, and the phenomenal PHS Administration. We are incredibly grateful to all who join us in our fight against hunger in our school community...and hope for a time soon when our services are no longer needed and we can retire this ship.

Jennifer Buckmire
Executive Director, Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School

2015 Events

Old Man Winter Came Callin' (TOO OFTEN!)

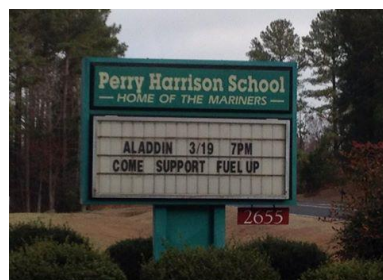
We missed an awful lot of school due to record low temperatures, snow, and ice. To ensure our participants would have something to eat while stuck at home, our volunteers raced to action. On three separate occasions they packed supplemental bags and/or purchased extra food to add to weekend bags whenever inclement weather was expected and time out of school looked imminent. We are thankful for the alerts we received from our favorite “weather nerd” (aka Sarah Blake Finigan) who isn’t SO far away that she can’t keep us abreast of Old Man Winter warnings in our area. The fact that we could easily afford to provide this supplemental food is thanks to the generosity of our community donors.



Paper sacks packed with emergency food

Aladdin's Treasure

The Perry Harrison School Drama Club sponsored a very successful food drive for Fuel Up in March at their spring performance of “Aladdin.” In lieu of paid admission, they asked attendees to bring donations for Fuel Up. Before the show started, the directors of the play, Mrs. Jennifer Hawkins and Ms. Stephanie Sevelovitz (PHS 5th grade teachers), presented an overview of the Fuel Up program and encouraged audience members to contact the director to learn more. Additionally, they included flyers (provided by us) inside the playbills that outlined what we do, and how the school community can help via donations and volunteering. Not only was it a phenomenal show, but we collected 110 canned goods, 337 individually packaged breakfast and snack items, 9 family-sized items usable in spring break bags, and \$40! Bravo, Mariner Thespians, and thank you for thinking of us!



Spring Break "Adopt-a-Bag" Project

For the past five years, thanks to the success and popularity of our Summer Gap adopt-a-bag program, we have offered community members the opportunity to shop for participants during spring and winter breaks, as well. The response has been astounding! In addition to getting all bags sponsored quickly this year, we raised an extra \$615 that was used to purchase perishable foods for each student, including bread, milk, cheeses, yogurt, and lots of fruit, as well as bonus snack and breakfast items. We are immensely grateful to all donors and volunteers who made this project possible.



Shelf-stable items included in each break bag



Perishables purchased for each Fuel Up student



~1 dozen pieces of fruit per bag



Bonus snacks & breakfasts

Summer Gap Program

This was the sixth year of our Summer Gap program. This special project allows us to continue to provide food for our program's participants in the summer months, when school meal assistance programs are not available, and when many participants find our program especially beneficial.

In order to supply enough food for the children who participate in Summer Gap, we reach out to the community. This year, it took only 24 hours via social media and word-of-mouth advertising to get all bags sponsored! 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. We also delivered food to 4-6 families weekly due to their unreliable transportation.

For the 6th consecutive year, the Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church graciously granted funds that allowed us to purchase milk, six or more pieces of fruit, and other fresh foods for each child every week of break.

The families of the 28 children served expressed sincerest appreciation to our front desk staff or the volunteers who delivered to them for all the great food they received. One volunteer was routinely greeted by 2 children happy to help carry in the abundantly packed bags and perishables. Their father reported: “This helps us out so much! I can’t thank you enough for what y’all do for my kids.”

The bag sponsors, including Linda Coerr, also gave positive feedback about this program, “It is easy to do and much needed.”

We are especially thankful for the extra hands that helped shop for and assemble fruit bags, assisted with set-up, and delivered bags to families. None of this would have been possible without the PHS front desk staff, Dawn Williams and Monica Jackson, as well as Principal Hicks –the support they offered volunteers and participants this summer was incredible!



~1 week’s worth of food for a pair of Summer Gap siblings



Fruit ready to be divided into 28 bags for week 2 of SG

“Speed Dating for Community Organizations” at the Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church

In September, Fuel Up was invited to take part in a unique seminar hosted by the Outreach Ministry Committee at the Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church in Chapel Hill. The “Speed Dating” event brought together 32 local non-profits to share information, make connections, and brainstorm collaborations.

It was inspiring to hear about and see all the amazing things other like-minded organizations in our surrounding community are doing. This networking opportunity was incredibly valuable.

Fall Food Drive

The 2015 Fall Food Drive was the most successful in our organization's history! From November 2nd -9th, we collected 691 canned or packaged vegetables, lunch- and dinner-items, 1252 individually packaged breakfast and snack foods, and 54 family-sized items usable for our holiday bags. The food collected was enough to feed all 48 kids in the program for ~4.5 weekends! Most impressively, \$3882 was raised in this one week--enough to support 7 students for an entire year, and clear out our wait list. We have our own Board Member, Emily Geizer, and her daughters Cora and Brynn Dodge to thank for their hard work spreading the word and collecting donations in the Briar Chapel neighborhood. The results were spectacular!



Brynn & Cora rolling out flyers and canvassing their neighborhood



This is just SOME of the incredible bounty collected in 1 week

Chapel Hill Giving Party

On December 3, Fuel Up at PHS was a designated charity at the Chapel Hill Giving Party. The Giving Party is a wonderful annual event wherein the hostesses introduce their friends to local charitable organizations and give attendees the opportunity to "Give Until it Feels Good." This year, we not only collected \$2500 for our program but were thrilled to talk with so many people who care deeply about our community. We also enjoyed networking with the other charities invited to share their stories. We so appreciate Mary Beth Grealey, Perri Kersh, Casey Saussy, and Sue Egnoto for hosting this amazing "alternative gift-giving" event and allowing us to be part of it!

Winter Break Bag Project

Thanks to the ease and speed of donating and volunteering through our new website, winter break bags were snatched up within a few days of our posted request for sponsors.

The Winter Break Bag Project works the same as for Spring Break, wherein each sponsor is given a child's grade and gender, then asked to shop for a list of prescribed food items for that child. Thanks to a generous donation made by Cedar Grove United Methodist Church, Fuel Up purchased milk, bread, and other perishables for our participants. Additional donations allowed us to order an abundance of potatoes through Farmer Foodshare and to supply “bonus” snack & breakfast items, as well. Our Guidance Team reported many families were overwhelmed and immensely grateful for the holiday bounty they received!

Bag donations were made in honor of some very special people for the holidays:

Wayland and Judy Ramage, in honor of **Mr. & Mrs. William Ramage** and **Mr. & Mrs. John Stack**
Lisa & Scott Hartman, in honor of **Jim & Carolyn Hartman**, **Ron & Sara Boardman**,
and **Barry & Diane Hensley**

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

Margaret Jones, in honor of her great-niece and nephew, **Montgomery and Van Reece**

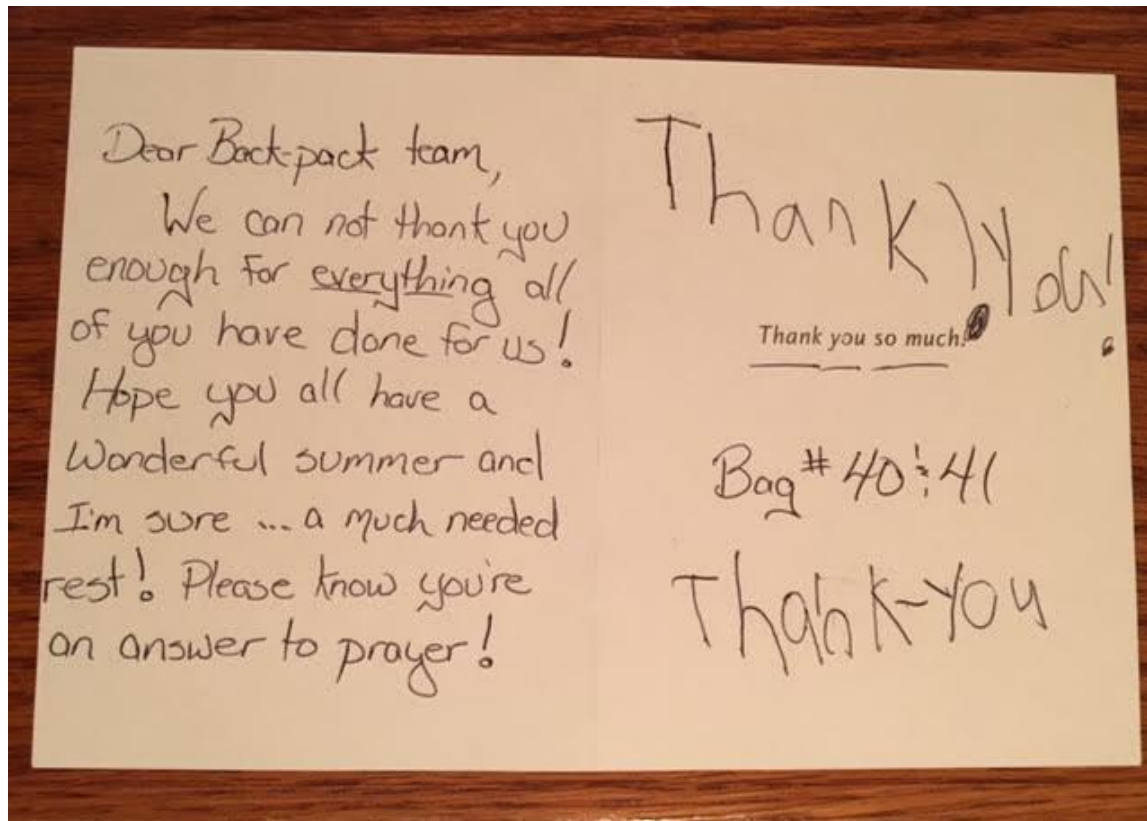


Volunteers assemble fruit, potatoes, and bonus items into bags for winter break, topped with loaves of bread



Reflections on the Water

As we review our growth this past year and prepare to stay our course in 2016, we appreciate direct feedback from participants and donors who let us know we are making a difference and meeting our primary goal of alleviating food insecurity at PHS:



“Thank YOU!!

Your unwavering dedication to the health and well-being of the kids in our community ensures the most basic of human needs is met regardless of whether school is in session or not. Coordinating and maintaining this type of project takes incredible teamwork, logistics, sacrifice, and energy. Thank you for the leadership, commitment, and love that it takes to keep Fuel Up such a successful program.

It truly does take a village.”

~Dr. Tara Rubinas

2015 Financial Report

2015 Revenues	
Chapel of the Cross ABC Fund	\$1200
Carolina Meadows Community Grants Program	\$5000
Galloway Ridge Community Foundation	\$2000
Chapel Hill Giving Party (private donations)	\$2500
Other Private Donations & Gift Cards	\$15644.50
TOTAL REVENUE	\$26344.50
Expenditures (food purchases)	\$18748.59
Operating Surplus	\$7595.91

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 PHS was able to provide delicious and nutritious food throughout 2015 without gaps due to holidays or breaks from school.

Fuel Up at Perry Harrison School Organization

Executive Director

Jennifer Buckmire

Officers

Nancy Fahrbach

Terri Fannin

Sarah Blake Finigan

Mary Beth Grealey

Board of Directors

Susan Brannum

Emily Geizer

Katereya Godehn

Perry Harrison School

Freda Hicks - Principal

Leann Muñoz and Dawn Williams - Intake Coordinators

Special Thanks

Our Core Crew of Volunteers

[who make the magic happen each and every week]

Jennifer Adams, Brennan Allen, Ashley Barnes, Kristina Berly, Maggie Borum, Michelle California-Aguiar, Rachel Chang, Marcey Clark, Chesley Cuicchi, Kat Godehn, Catherine Ellis, Ashley Frost, Cate House, Fiona Kapilovic, Dave Klein, Jen Marr-Kupka, Jane Salm, Wayland Ramage, Tonya Randell

Bag Sponsors and On-Call Volunteers

Avery & Jackson Adams, Laura Blanchard, Erin Boecke, Barbara-Ann Bybel, Laura Carter-Scheid, Linda Coerr, Tracie Collins, Chandra Colwell, Jaime Detzi, Susan & Jason Dell, Doris & Ronnie Gilmore, Terri Fannin, Sarah Blake Finigan, Emily Geizer, Revy & Berkeley Godehn, Lee Harrison, Lisa & Scott Hartman, Kate Hicks, Mika & Liza Honigmann, Cate House, Kay Irish, The Jonsson Family, The Kennedy Family, Cee Koehler, Sharon Konowitz, Tammy Lee, Charlie & Martha Lewis, Leah MacMillan, Connie & Ed McCraw, Ann & Steven McDowell, Michael McGregor, Debbie Meyer & Eric Brantley, Andrea Mills, Kristine Nickerson, Allison Reckman, Jaime Riddle, Heba Salama, Katie Schectman, Maria Servidio, Jamie & Erick Swaine, Carol Terrell, Tracy Vernon-Platt, Jennifer Vick, Julia Wadell, Adam Walton, Donna Whitt, Eva Marie Whorley, Amy Wiley, Dawn Williams, Amy Wilson, Yeu-li Yeung with Mia & Mabel Collins

Donors

Jennifer Adams, Alpha Alpha Epsilon Zeta “ZHOPE” Fund, Ashley Barnes, Arthur & Diane Belden, Heather Benjamin, Bean & Barrel Restaurant, Ben & Sarah Birken, Mandy Bowen, Jennifer Bowman, Shirley Brazda, Briar Chapel Moms Group, Johnnie Britt, Linda Britt, Glenn & Molly Brooks, Mary Brown, Francis & Virginia Buckmire, The Burgert Family, Cackalacky, Dana & Jamie Campbell, Sarah & Jody Campbell, The Cantrell Family, Cedar Grove UMC, Beth Chang, Anne Chelminski, Hope Colen, Frank & Chesley Cuicchi, Rosemary Cuicchi, Martha Danek & Edward Pickens, Aimee Dean, Pam Dominick, Stacey Donelan, Amy Dowden, Sue Egnoto & Morris Wallack, Catherine & Bruce Ellis, Lauren Erikson, Nancy Fahrback, Kelly Fedoriw, Gigi Fein & Ron Geizer, Wayne & Margaret Anne Flournoy, Kori Flower, Jimmy & Christina Ford, Ashley Frost, Rick & Susan Gagan, Dana Gelin, Mary Beth Grealey, Missy Hagan, Dana Harshaw, Drs. Russell Helms & Wendy Greene, Mary Kent Hill, Tioga Honigmann, Cate House, Colleen Jelley, Harland Johnson, Margaret Jones, Liam Jonsson, Millie Kabrick, Fiona Kapilovic, Perri Kersh, Erik & Jennifer Kristiansen, Tammy Lynn & Charles Lloyd, James & Kay Mann, Suzanne Masse, Catherine Masterson, Donna Mergilano, Patricia Miguez, Chip & Krista Millard, The Morris Family, Leann Muñoz, Cecily Nisbet, Dorothy O’Connell, Melanie & Stephen Oglesbee, Emily Patterson, Maragaret Pennybacker, Judy & Wayland Ramage, Liz & Ben Reece, Shelby Reece, Courtney Ritter, William C. Robbins, Jr., Deborah & Edward Roach, Kate Roach, Dina Rousset, Tara & Pete Rubinas, Rachel & Andy Ruvo, Vicki Sandiford, Emily Sartor, David & Casey Saussy, Neftali Serrano, Jennifer Sherman, The Singletary Family, Heather Stober, Anne Taylor, Karen Taylor, Sara Tiegreen, Martha Tollers, Cynthia Weeks, Kim Williams, Allison Worthy, Stacey Yusko, Anton & Erin Zuiker

Grantors

Carolina Meadows Community Grant

Chapel of the Cross ABC Fund

Galloway Ridge Community Foundation

Please Contact

Jennifer Buckmire at director@fuelupkids.org



www.fuelupkids.org