



NEWS RELEASE

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BEULAVILLE YOUTH CENTER IS SECOND TIME AWARD RECIPIENT

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM CONTINUES TO PROVE EXCELLENCE

RALEIGH, NC – The Nutrition Education Award was presented to the Beulaville Youth Center (BYC) on Wednesday, May 14 during the Standard of Excellence Awards Celebration for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Kids Cafe Programs. The Standards of Excellence Awards Celebration honors Kids Cafe partner agencies that have excelled in the core components and have achieved distinction with the operation of their program. The Agency Services and Programs (ASAP) Department of the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina hosted the event at the Wake County Commons Building in Raleigh. Winners received \$1,000 to improve and further supplement their Kids Cafe Program.

At a time when childhood obesity is on the rise, BYC's nutrition education consists of instructing children on various topics such as choosing healthy snacks, reading nutrition labels, eating balanced meals, food that should be limited and healthy fast food choices. Instruction is provided by staff, volunteers, and partners such as the Health Department, Cooperative Extension, 4H, and the local medical facility. Students also keep a food journal to track what kinds of foods and how much they are eating daily. In addition, they track their weight to monitor growth. This program is trying to address the issues that effect poverty across the board by providing resources and services that are not often available in rural distressed communities.

The Nutrition Education Award rewards the agency that has most effectively incorporated nutrition education into the program operation. Eligible programs are those programs that conduct programming aimed at empowering kids to become advocates for healthy eating and an active lifestyle to achieve a healthy weight both during and outside normal program operation.

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The Beulaville Youth Center, located at 314 N. Park St. in the town of Beulaville, is an after school program offering academic enrichment, mentoring, nutrition education, physical activities, parental involvement and most importantly, a nutritious meal to about 40 youth in the area. It has been a Kid Cafe Partner since October 2000. The program operates Monday through Friday. Since 2002, the program has served nearly 40,000 meals and benefited from more than 4,700 hours of volunteer service to its Kids Café program.

The Food Bank currently has 27 Kids Cafe programs in 26 counties.

Other 2008 award recipients were:

Best All-Around – Scotland Neck Recreation Foundation

Physical Activity – Friends of Chapel Hill Parks & Recreation – Hargraves Center

Parental Involvement – Homework Haven in Raleigh

Community-Based – Wilmington Residential Achievement Place (WRAAP) in Wilmington

The Kids Cafe program is one of the nation's largest charitable meal service programs, providing free and prepared food and nutrition education to children. The Food Bank's programs are sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina.

For additional information on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Kids Cafe program, contact J. Caprice Brown, Outreach, Evaluations & Programs Manager, at 919-865-3037.

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About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that provides food for people who are hungry in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina. The Food Bank serves a network of more than 870 partner agencies offering soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults. In fiscal year 2006 - 2007, the Food Bank distributed more than 32.6 million pounds of food and non-food essentials to these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, more than 400,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families. www.foodbankcenc.org

About the Kids Cafe Program

The Kids Cafe program is one of the nation's largest charitable meal service programs, providing free and prepared food and nutrition education to hungry children. It is a comprehensive approach to ending childhood hunger through after-school programs - initiated by America's Second Harvest - The Nation's Food Bank Network and administered locally by the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina for children ages 15 and under. The Food Bank's programs are presented in collaboration with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. One of the primary strengths to the program is its flexibility. The primary reason for this approach is that poverty and hunger manifests differently in different communities thus requiring a community based approach to solving the childhood hunger dilemma.