



TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2007

In only a few days, your Kansas Food Bank will be honored as the recipient of the Kansas National Education Association (KNEA) 2007 Friend of Education Award. The presentation of this singularly prestigious award will be carried out during the KNEA State Representative Assembly on April 14-15 in Topeka. About 600 teachers, representing virtually every school district in the state, are expected to attend.

KNEA is the largest educational organization in Kansas with a membership of more than 25,000 teachers and other professionals. They chose to honor us for the Award because of the work of our Food-4-Kids Back Pack program.

From a zero start-up in 2004, the program now provides food to more than 2,500 kids every Friday of the school year in more than 130 schools in 35 Kansas school districts. Since the program began, more than 130,000 Back Packs of food have been distributed, putting more than 650,000 pounds of kid-friendly food into the hands of those Kansas school children most likely to go hungry on weekends without the assistance of Food-4-Kids.

But for all of this growth, we still think in terms of one Back Pack kid at a time and the positive impact the program will almost certainly have on his or her health, well-being and ability to do well in school and beyond. And the thought keeps occurring that someday some of these kids will go out and make the world a better place for all of us.

When we accept the award, we will not only do it in our name but also in the names of our participating partners, the generous donors, the school professionals, the community activists and all others who helped us put the Food-4-Kids Back Pack program in place.

The award your Food Bank will receive truly has many owners. And each and every one of them has assisted in turning a noble cause into a reality.

Our thanks to one and all.

—Brian Walker, President/CEO

RAH! RAH! ROCKHILL HIGH! When a chartered bus carrying 14 members of the Rockhill High School chapter of the National Honor Society rolled into our parking lot at about 10 a.m. on April 5, they had just completed half of a 356-mile round-trip from Mankato, Kansas, and back. In spite of getting up early and spending more than three hours on the road, they arrived fresh and eager to get going on the work they had volunteered to perform on behalf of the Food Bank.

The group was accompanied by Rockhill High business ed teacher Nicol Parde who also serves as faculty advisor for Rockhill Honor Society members and their projects. The student group—almost equally divided between boys and girls—hit the floor running when shown to the assembly room where they were to fill food packets for our Food-4-Kids Back Pack program. They chose to serve as Food Bank volunteers, Ms. Parde explained, after hearing about it from a member of the Jewel County food pantry operation. From her professional perspective, Ms. Parde considered it not only a fine community service experience, but a chance for students to expand their world view beyond their rural environment.



She also revealed that the student-volunteers planned to conduct a food drive for their local hunger relief agency and to create a website supporting the HungerCare work of the Food Bank. She indicated there probably will be future work visits to the Food Bank by the wonderful kids from Rockhill High. It seems that good deeds can be contagious!

A GRASSROOTS EFFORT to provide hungry Kansans with fresh garden produce this spring, summer and fall is now underway with the first plantings in a community garden site in Colwich. The garden is sponsored by your Kansas Food Bank and will be attended by Community Lawn Care, a long-time KFB friend and supporter.

The new 150' by 60' site will be cultivated, planted and harvested by volunteers from the Lawn Care firm throughout the growing season. Branden Osborn, manager of the project for Lawn Care, says that even though heavy rainfall has caused a late start in the spring plantings, potatoes and other seasonal items will soon be in the ground. Eventually, the new KFB Community Garden will produce onions, peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, melons, cucumbers, zucchini, squash and (perhaps) pumpkins. The harvest of all these items will be delivered to the Food Bank, to be distributed among those hunger-relief agencies we supply.

The Community Garden concept is a win-win proposition for all involved. We're pleased to be a sponsor and grateful to receive the harvest of fresh garden produce for those who need HungerCare. Finally, we are proud to partner-up with Community Lawn Care, a locally owned firm with a compassionate heart and an eagerness to serve.

POSTSCRIPT Along with our sponsorship of the Community Garden described above, your Food Bank remains committed to its earned leadership role in the Wichita Area Plant-A-Row to Feed the Hungry program. Last year, this program collected fresh garden produce to the tune of more than 10 tons to give to our food pantry partners. This year, the Food Bank will accept garden produce at our new address, 1919 East Douglas, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please pass the word about this year's Plant-A-Row harvest.



APRIL 2006, EDITION #21

If you're new, we welcome you!

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