



NEWS RELEASE

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**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF THE SANDHILLS TAKES HOME
BEST ALL AROUND AWARD
*Best Out of Twenty-eight Programs***

RALEIGH, NC – The Best All-Around Kids Cafe Award was presented to the Boys and Girls Club of the Sandhills on Wednesday, May 13 by the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina during the 2009 Standard of Excellence Awards Celebration held at the Wake County Commons Building in Raleigh, NC. The Standards of Excellence Awards Celebration honors Kids Cafe after school programs that have excelled in the core components and have achieved distinction with the operation of their program. Winners received \$1,000 to improve and further supplement their 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 children. The Food Bank's programs are sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. This program provides a hot, nutritious meal, physical activity, academic and mentoring opportunities to children at risk of hunger.

The Boys & Girls Club of the Sandhills located at 160 Memorial Park Court in Southern Pines and a Kids Cafe partner since November 2003, operates Monday through Friday and serves 100 children. Since its partnership with the Food Bank, the program has served 72,150 meals and benefited from 3,033 hours of volunteer service to its Kids Cafe program.

"The Boys and Girls Club of the Sandhills has seen a rise in the number of kids attending the program overall especially during this tough economic time we are experiencing," said Michael Cotten, Outreach Coordinator for the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Sandhills. "We believe parents recognize that this organization is doing a tremendous job and may be able to provide a meal for their children and perhaps take some of the pressure off the family right now as they struggle to make ends meet."

To win this award, the Boys and Girls Club of the Sandhills consistently:

- Submits Kids Cafe monthly reports by reporting deadlines and responds promptly to request for re-submission when necessary.
- Shops at the Food Bank on a consistent basis with focus on Kids Cafe product and regular Food Bank product.
- Is an active participant in the evaluation process with adherence to original evaluation deadlines for directors, participants and parents surveys.
- Implements core Kids Cafe components to meet the available resources at the sites while looking at the needs of their children.
- Site director/president works tirelessly to support the program and the children

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The Food Bank currently has 28 Kids Cafe programs in 29 counties.

Other 2009 award recipients were:

- **Community Involvement** (co-winner) – Wilmington Residential Achievement Place (WRAAP) in Wilmington
- **Community Involvement** (co-winner) – New Trinity Community Development Center in Clayton
- **Nutrition Education** – Rebuilding Broken Places: Project Y.E.S.S. in Goldsboro
- **Parental Involvement** – Homework Haven in Raleigh
- **Physical Activity** – Boys & Girls Club of Nash-Edgecombe Counties in Rocky Mount

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.

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 nearly 900 partner agencies offering soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults. In fiscal year 2007 - 2008, the Food Bank distributed nearly 32 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 450,000 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.

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