



Who will feed the kids this weekend?



**ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2019**



DOCUMENT SOURCES:

- i. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security.asp>
- ii. Ibid
- iii. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics/>
- iv. https://www.rti.org/sites/default/files/resources/full_hunger_report_final_07-24-14.pdf
- v. Ibid
- vi. Ibid
- vii. Ibid
- viii. <https://www.blessingsinabackpack.org/about/how-it-works/>
- ix. Ibid

LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends of Floyd County Blessing in a Backpack:

As we sit down to review our tremendous FY 2019 (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019) results, we would like to take a moment to reflect upon the progress we have made since our Floyd County Chapter was established in 2015. What started with a desperate hope and prayer that we would have enough food to feed the children in our county through the end of the school year has grown into a lasting legacy.

Our initial goal was simply to keep the program afloat and keep providing for the children who relied on us for their weekend sustenance. To be honest, there were times that our ability to do that was in doubt. However, the Floyd County community embraced this cause with open arms and checkbooks.



We have been blessed to have had the financial support of the Horseshoe Foundation of Floyd County and the guidance of Executive Director, Jerry Finn, from the very start. The New Albany Education Foundation provided financial support and leadership advice from Director Tyler Bliss, who was instrumental in helping us find our way in the world of non-profits. Most of the credit for our success, however, goes to the individuals who volunteered their time and talent to lead our Chapter. With the establishment of an Advisory Board in 2019, we are prepared to continue our mission of feeding children on the weekend for many years into the future.

With the help of very generous grants in 2019 from Samtec, the Horseshoe Foundation, the City of New Albany and the Floyd County Council, our program no longer ends at the elementary school doors. We realized a long-held goal of expanding the program to serve 5th graders at the middle schools.

The FY 2019 numbers show our impact, but not the full picture. We are now at point that our bank account does not run dry at the end of the year. We have developed relationships with donors who know what we do and are committed to helping us sustain the program and grow it on pace with the need in Floyd County. In 2020, we will pause and make plans for future growth, if feasible, as we know that hunger has lasting effects on adolescents and teens as well as younger children.

We are working to build a stronger community and we give thanks that you have chosen to partner with us in that dream.

Many thanks,

Stephanie Watson

FEED TO SUCCEED

OUR MISSION:

65 hours is a long time to be hungry. Sadly, it's a feeling that too many of Floyd County's youngest residents feel every weekend between Friday lunch at school and Monday breakfast. Many children who qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program lack the financial resources at home to buy sufficient food on the weekend and, for some, there is no adult available to cook a meal.

We cannot solve the problems that cause children to go hungry but we can alleviate the symptoms. Blessings in a Backpack's mission is to fill that 65 hour gap by providing children in need with a small bag of ready-eat, single serving foods every Friday afternoon. We distribute the food to Pre-K through 4th grade students at every elementary school in the New Albany

Floyd County Consolidated (NAFCS) school system. As a result of our work in 2019, we now also provide food to 5th graders at the three NAFCS middle schools.



Blessings in a Backpack fills a need that is not covered by other community food programs by putting the food directly in the hands of the children who

need it. Our primary goal has been and continues to be ensuring that students in need don't go hungry over the weekend and can return to school Monday ready to learn. Secondly, we hope to raise awareness of the problem of childhood hunger in our community.

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 1,143 Students Served
- 45,720 Bags of Food
- 40 Hunger Free Weekends
- New 30 Member Advisory Board
- 5th Grade Planned Expansion
- Met Fundraising Goals
- Continued to Grow Community Support

FEED TO SUCCEED

OUR BEGINNING:

Blessings in a Backpack is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Louisville, Kentucky. The first bags of food were sent home with Floyd County students in 2008.

Funded initially by generous grants from the Horseshoe Foundation and several other groups, the need eventually outpaced the available financial support.

Starting in 2015, a group of volunteers -- mostly teachers, administrators and NAFCS parents -- stepped up to take the program to the next level and set up the Floyd County Chapter of Blessings in a Backpack. Our first steps included developing a lasting partnership with the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation.

In 2019 we took further steps to solidify the presence of Blessings in a Backpack in Floyd County by creating a **30 member Advisory Board**. In the hands of the Board, our financial picture has strengthened and the level of awareness of the need for weekend food has increased significantly.

The national Blessings in a Backpack organization establishes the menu and negotiates the food costs with the Louisville and Southern Indiana food distributor, Sysco Foods. Our board members arrange and plan for all other aspects of the program in Floyd County from coordinating delivery schedules, managing volunteers who back the bags each week, directing all fundraising and sponsorship efforts, and drafting our chapter's foundation grant proposals.



OUR IMPACT

THE PROBLEM:

In the 2018-2019 school year, Floyd County Blessings in a Backpack had a positive impact on the lives of over 1,100 NAFCS Pre-K to 4th grade students whose families experienced food insecurity. Students in all 10 elementary schools in the NAFCS school corporation were provided weekend food. Our enrollment numbers ranged from 1,138 to 1,143 -- a slight increase from 2018 enrollment numbers of **1,113 to 1,126** -- as students entered or left the county or the program.

"Food Insecurity" is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a "household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food." ⁱ **Hunger** is a "consequence of food insecurity that, because of prolonged, involuntary lack of food, results in discomfort, illness, weakness, or pain that goes beyond the usual uneasy sensation." ⁱⁱ

11.1 percent (14.3 million) of U.S. households were food insecure at some point in 2018.ⁱⁱⁱ Ask any NAFCS teacher and they will tell you that children going hungry on the weekend is a serious problem in Floyd County.



**IN 2017, 15.6% OF CHILDREN
IN FLOYD COUNTY, INDIANA
EXPERIENCED FOOD
INSECURITY.**

www.feedingamerica.org

Hungry children tend to have worse physical and mental health. These health affects contribute to an increased risk for delays in cognitive development.^{iv} For instance, one study found that children who experienced hunger in Kindergarten had lower test scores in reading and math by third grade.^v Students from food insecure homes are more likely to repeat a grade than their peers from food secure homes^{vi} Adolescents who experience childhood hunger or food insecurity are more likely to experience mental health disorders, including depression and suicidal thoughts, and have an increased likelihood of substance abuse.^{vii}

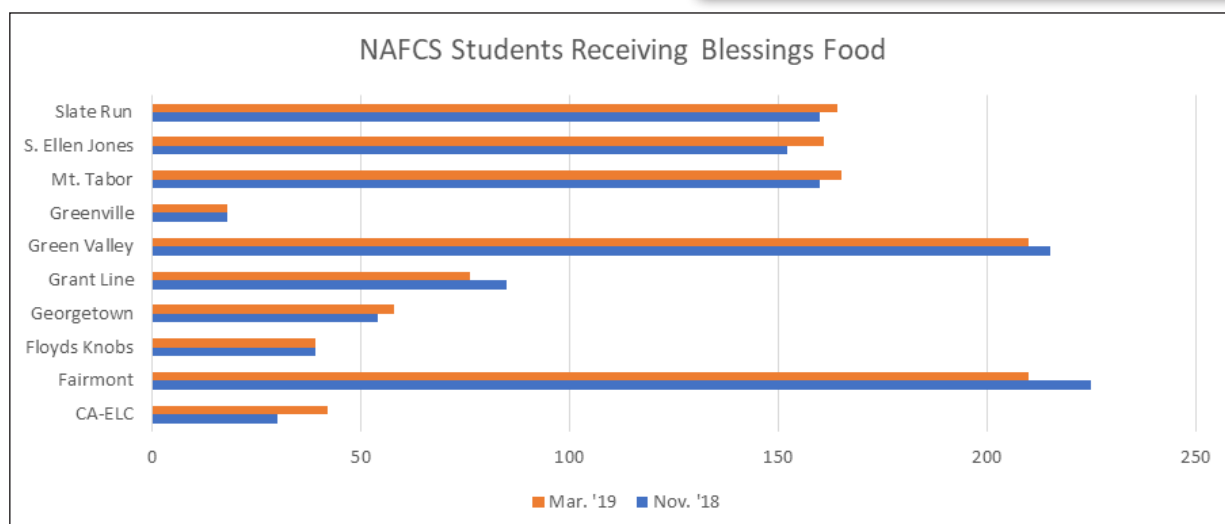
OUR IMPACT

THE SOLUTION:

Blessings in a Backpack's weekend food program is a proven part of a comprehensive solution to childhood hunger. The standard practice in other communities with Blessings in a Backpack is to provide food for 38 weekends. In Floyd County, our chapter recognized the need to accommodate the NAFCS balanced calendar's longer time off from school during the 2 weeks of fall and spring breaks. Thus, our program budgeting allows for **40 weekends** -- with double bags sent home over the longer breaks.

Blessings in a Backpack's national office partnered with Quaker Oats and Ipsos, a leading global market research company, on a national evaluation project that measures program impact on a deeper level than bags and pounds of food distributed.^{viii} This project involved various Blessings' stakeholders, such as children and teachers, in the evaluation process.^{ix} Surveys found that, in addition to no longer feeling weekend hunger pangs, children fed by Blessings experience the following impact on their lives:

- **78% of kids feel cared for by their community**
- **71% of kids feel that Blessings is helping their family**
- **60% of kids have fewer behavioral issues**
- **60% of children report that their school attendance is better**
- **59% find it is easier to learn at school**



OUR PEOPLE

ADVISORY BOARD:

We are teachers and school administrators. We are PTO members. We are parents. We are students. We are business owners and employees. All of us are people who care. All of us are volunteers with Blessings in a Backpack of Floyd County. 2019 was the inaugural year for the Advisory Board which consists of up to 30 members serving two-year terms. Each board member serves on one of four Action Committees and takes an active role in conducting the business of the chapter, including being responsible for fundraising.



Executive Officers: Chair – Stephanie Watson; Vice-Chair – Hollie Bretthauer; Finance Chair – Jennie Olmstead; Secretary – Cathleen Palmer

Members: Kim Baumann; Teshea Barbee; Amanda Braden; Tony Duffy; Amanda Ford; Steve Griffin; Rebecca Harrett; Tamara Ibrahim; Amy Kaiser; Greg Kordsmeier; Anna Kordsmeier; Theresa Lamb; Tricia McClellan; Amanda McMonigle; Kendra Needham; Chelsea Parman; Leslie Smith; Katie Stein; Angie Stokes; Hannah Striegel; Kristy Taylor; Lucy Olmstead; Kolton Kaiser and Ellise Edwards.

Advisors: Tyler Bliss and Jerry Finn.

OUR PEOPLE

VOLUNTEER NETWORK:



Volunteers are the lifeblood of our chapter! We simply could not do what we do without our liaisons at each of the schools who take the food deliveries from Sysco and take charge of the weekly packing of bags. Our volunteers packed over 45,000 bags of food last year! We are so fortunate that we have a steady group of volunteers come back year after year to help us make an assembly line packing effort look easy.

In fact, one of our major challenges is that we don't have enough "to do" for people who want hands-on volunteering. Frequently, we have employers who would like to schedule hours for their employees to volunteer or parents who would like to involve their own children in meaningful volunteer work with our mission. Our plans for the upcoming year include finding ways to plug these people in to our chapter's efforts in ending weekend hunger for kids – either in our

advocacy and fundraising efforts. For example, these Holy Family students collected items and assembled "birthday boxes" which included cake mix and party items for children in need who might otherwise not have the means to have such a celebration.

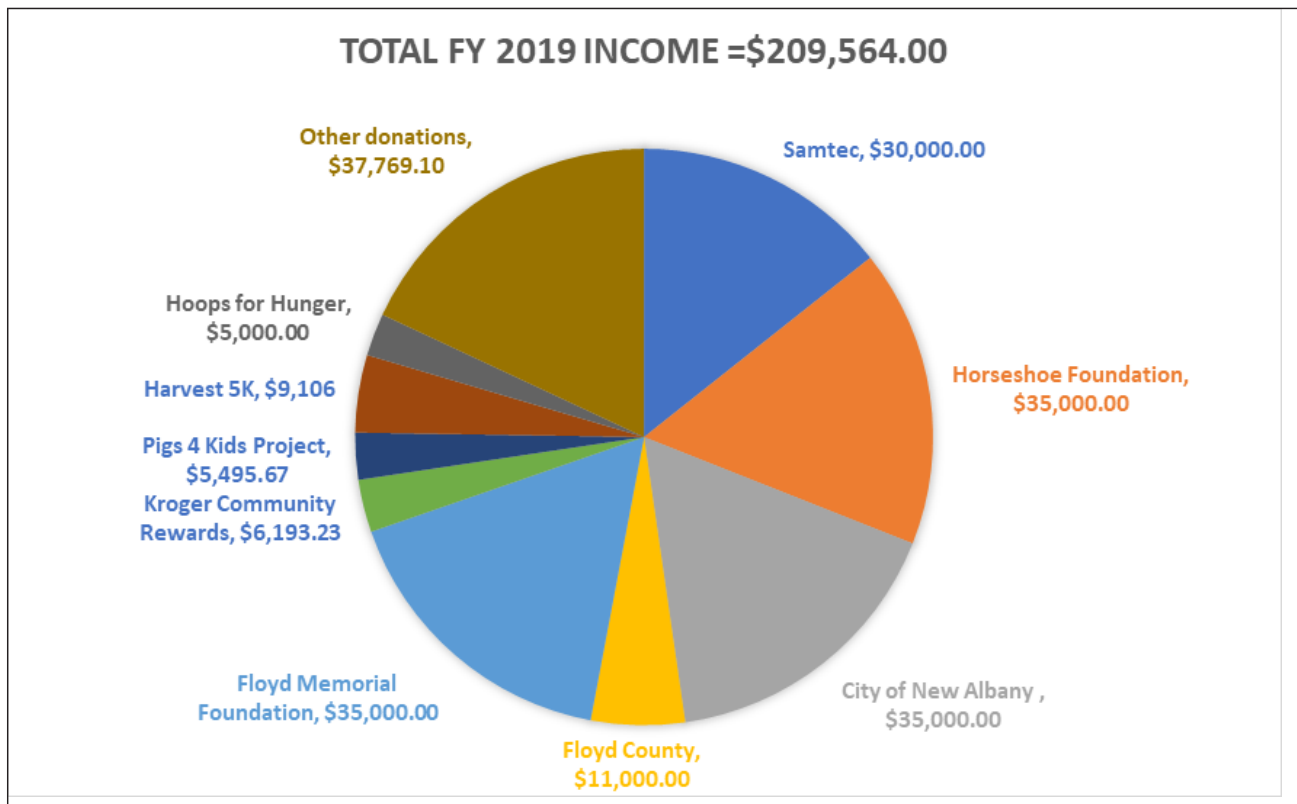


OUR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

COMPLETELY SELF-FUNDED:

Floyd County is one of the most successful Blessings programs in the nation. We are an established and well-known charitable organization in Floyd County that has earned the support of several major foundations, numerous businesses, individuals and local government entities. In 2019, we met our fundraising goal of providing food for current enrollment and allowing the expansion of the program to 5th graders in August 2019.

Although our Floyd County group is part of the national Blessings in a Backpack organization, we do not receive any direct funding from that entity. Rather, the national organization assists smaller groups that are unable to self-fund, promotes awareness of the issue of childhood hunger, maintains the brand and provides some administrative support.



NOMINAL ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES:

Our program is run by volunteers. We have no salaried employees. Our nominal administrative expenses are paid from Board Members' Dues funds. The national organization charges the Floyd County Chapter an administrative fee equal to 4% of food costs. However, we are very grateful to our partner, the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation, which paid the entirety of that administrative fee.

OUR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

FOOD EXPENSES:

For **\$2.63 per week/\$100 year** each child received:

- two entrees (mac 'n cheese; beef ravioli or veg. soup)
- two single serving boxes of cereal or cereal bar
- graham crackers or cheese crackers, and
- Slim Jim beef stick

Due to an increase in Sysco pricing in the Louisville market, our **FY 2020 budgeted cost is \$105 per child for 40 weekends.**

At the start of the 2019 school year, we have **1,584 students enrolled.** This is a 42% increase in enrollment over last year due in large part to the expansion of the program into the 3 NAFCS middle schools in order to serve 5th grade students in need.

**Our
Parents
Say:**

"Most people don't think about how they are going to get food everyday, but that's what I worry about every day. So when this came along, I knew at least we would have something in our cupboard for this weekend."

"It makes me very happy to get Blessings in a Backpack. One time my mom cried because she was happy that we had some food now."

**Our
Kids
Say:**

**Our
Principals
Say:**

"The love and generosity that this program has extended to our students, families, and faculty is astonishing"



OUR DONORS

MAJOR GRANTS:

Without the incredible generosity of our five major donors, we would not have been able to fully fund Floyd County's Blessings in a Backpack program in 2019. Our community is very fortunate to have organizations that support our mission to make sure no child in Floyd County goes hungry on the weekends. Thank you!

Horseshoe Foundation of Floyd County

Donated \$35,000 to feed **350 kids** for 40 weekends

Floyd Memorial Foundation

Donated \$35,000 to feed **350 kids** for 40 weekends

City of New Albany, Indiana

Donated \$35,000 to feed **350 kids** for 40 weekends

Samtec

Donated \$30,000 to feed **300 kids** for 40 weekends

Floyd County Council

Donated \$11,000 to feed **100 kids** for 40 weekends

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING PROJECTS

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING PROJECTS:

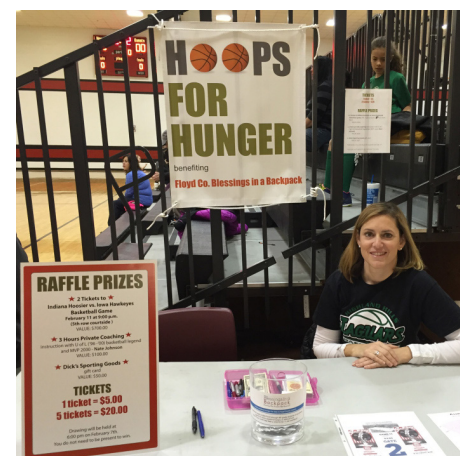
In 2019, Blessings in a Backpack of Floyd County participated in 4 major fundraising initiatives which served to raise awareness of the incidence of childhood hunger in our county and provide funding for our mission.

Kroger Community Rewards – Blessings in a Backpack of Floyd County continued to be a participant in the rewards program established by Kroger through which supporters can enroll and link their Kroger Plus account so that each time they shop a portion of their purchases will be donated to Blessings. Kroger donated \$6,193.23.

Harvest 5K – Blessings in a Backpack was the primary beneficiary of this 5K run/walk held during the first weekend of October 2018 in downtown New Albany. Sorg's Sport and Wellness generously matched the donation to Blessings in a Backpack. \$9,106 was raised.

Pigs 4 Kids – The New Albany Education Foundation created this fundraiser several years ago and now the project is managed by Blessings volunteers. Last year, 75 piggy banks were decorated in adorable themes and local businesses hosted the “pigs” from late November through early January. \$5,495.67 was raised.

Hoops for Hunger – This fundraiser was developed by one of our student Board members and generates awareness for Blessings and raises funds at the New Albany High School and Floyd Central High School basketball games. At each home game, sponsors agree to make a donation for each 3-point shot or free throw. \$5,000 was raised. We were so appreciative to have dozens of local businesses sponsor the games and help raise money for Blessings in a Backpack.



COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

BUSINESS AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS:

As in prior years, we relied heavily on our local businesses to assist with our annual fundraising initiatives, particularly Hoops for Hunger and Pigs 4 Kids. Without their support, we would not have the widespread publicity of our cause that comes with associating with these well-known corporate members of our community. The support of the hundreds of individual donors was so important to meeting our funding needs. Every dollar counts! Many thanks to each and every one of these supporters!

\$5,000-\$9,999

Univera Serve First
New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation
Kroger

\$2,000-\$4,999

Teachers Credit Union (NAFC staff donations)
Harvest Homecoming

\$1,000-\$1,999

Mesa Kids Cooking School, LLC
LaFayette Academy, LLC
Culvers of Jeffersonville
Wiegman Insurance
Greenville Elementary School PTO

\$500-\$999

Falls City Mustang Club
Kiwanas of Historic N.A.

\$300-\$499

Heine Brothers' Coffee Inc.
Kaiser Wholesale, Inc.
Theresa J. Lamb Insurance Agency
Coldwell Banker McMahan Co.

\$200-\$299

First Savings Bank
Hartman Dental Associates, Inc.
ASB, LLC
Committee to Elect Elaine Murphy
Grant Line Elementary School PTO
Jaret Isenberg Waterproofing, LLC
Talon Logistics Services, LLC
First Financial Bank

\$100--\$199

Seabrook Dieckmann & Naville Funeral
Visiting Angels of New Albany
Sprigler Concrete
Periago Orthodontics
Amanda Hines, Inc./Schuler Bauer
Kratz Sporting Goods
Floyd Central High School PTO
Purdue Research Foundation
Pete Palmer Law

Fundraisers by:

812 Pizza
Pure Barre
Zesto
Berry Twist
FKE Students
Mt. Tabor (Ms. Vigar's class)

76 Pigs for Kids Business Supporters -- see our Facebook page!

In kind donations:

Floyd Central Theatre
Insty Prints of Jeffersonville
Humana
Harvest Homecoming
Earth and Fire Pottery
Thornton's
Holy Family Students

COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

SUPPORT FROM COMMUNITY GROUPS:

Blessings in a Backpack's mission strikes a chord with people in the community. We are so fortunate to have the help of a wide variety of school, civic and community groups and businesses who created their own fundraisers for the benefit of Blessings in a backpack. Our sincere thanks goes out to these people for taking action to help kids in need! Here are a few highlights:

Some junior cooks at Mesa, A Collaborative Kitchen created a wonderful dinner and sold tickets to benefit Blessings in a Backpack. They raised \$1,100!



Mesa, A Collaborative Kitchen Fundraising Dinner



Lafayette Academy Rased \$1,092!



Christmas in Greenville Fundraiser



Floyd Central H.S. Students Spread the Word about Blessings

Thank you to all who
helped us build a better
community in 2019!



Who will feed the kids this weekend?

www.biabfloyd.com

