



CITRUS COUNTY Blessings

Silencing Weekend Hunger

FEED THE KIDS
a summer feeding program



Fighting hunger since 1999

January 2023

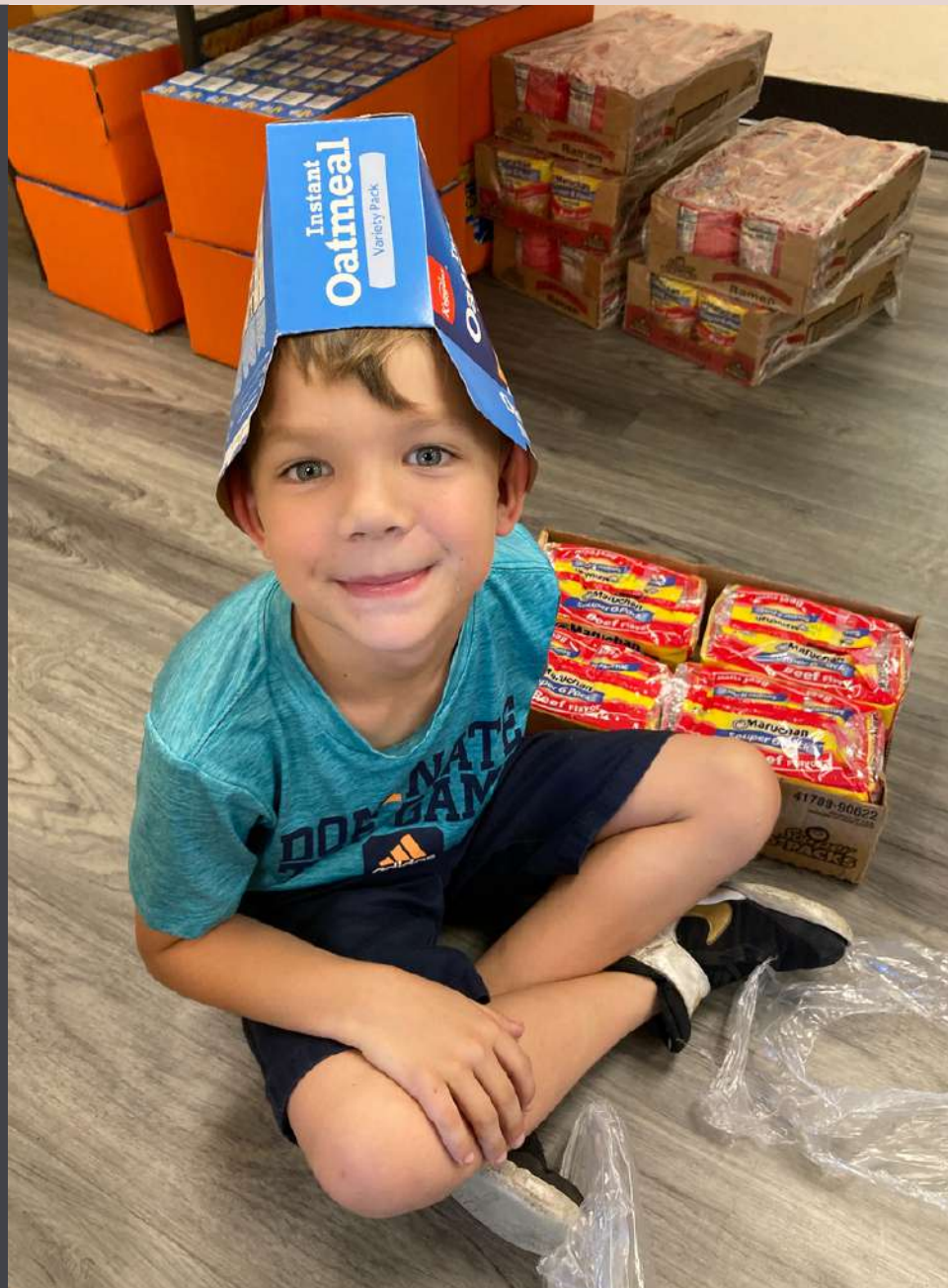
We have been busy!

Our student enrollment has increased to serve 2450 kids as of December 2022. Citrus County Blessings has distributed 287,892 pounds of food so far this school year.

411 participants received fresh produce through our summer Feed the Kids program.

At the heart of our program is the commitment of our volunteers. An average of 400 volunteers give their time each month to make all of this possible. We want to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who supports our mission of silencing weekend hunger.

Rachelle Garrett-Butler
Operations Director



Our programs are possible in part from support by:



Citrus County Blessings, P.O. Box 82, Lecanto FL 34460
352-341-7707

Note from our Executive Director

2022 Adapt and Overcome

This past year had unique challenges for our program and families. Our families have experienced rising food, housing, and gas prices. Our program also experienced continued product shortages and two major storms that disrupted the distribution of weekend bags. In addition, we have seen an increase in enrollment in our program by 28% over the previous school year.

Our Mission
To provide meals for local students and children in need through donors, partners, and volunteers.



Compound what we as a community and other charitable organizations have faced since 2020 with what we are facing now - things have to look different regarding how we handle these unique challenges. We have learned that the children and families we serve need our help with or without a global pandemic; they need our help with or without a major hurricane. Our children need our help regardless and because of what is going on. When faced with hundreds of things that could halt our program, the only answer for us to give is to adapt and overcome. It is a motto we have adopted as more of a mantra these days. It is a promise we provide to our families, donors, and volunteers. We are in this together and will constantly adapt and overcome to ensure we work towards our vision of silencing weekend hunger for the children of Citrus County.

Christina Reed, Executive Director

Why is Blessings important to you?

it helps the Hungry

How do you feel when you get your Blessings bags?

Hungry

Your impact, their words

Why is Blessings Important to you?

Blessings bags are important to me because we are running out of food and we try to get them as fast as we can.

How do you feel when you get your Blessings bag?

I feel happy because it makes my sisters, brothers, and parents happy.

My parents can't get enough money to get food

How do you feel when you get your Blessings bags?

Like I am going to be full

My family is having a hard time with getting money. That is why this is so important to me.

Because it helps us to survive

It's nice to know there is enough food for me.

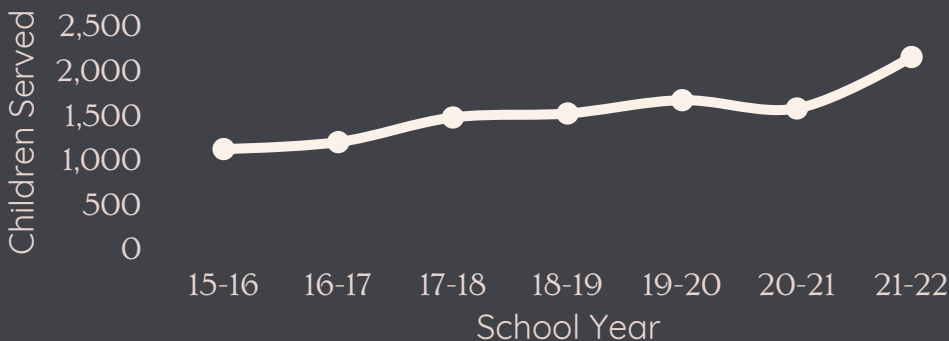
because it provides us food and sometimes we can't get any right away.

Well to be honest, never expected to be raising grand children. So it kind of put me in a pinch with my bills and trying to save for retirement that went out the window. Your food helps me keep the girls with good wholesome food for them. We really thank you for what you do.



Thank you for blessing bags.

Willow



The children are at the heart of everything we do. Because of your generosity, we can grow our program and help even more children in need.

Volunteers the heart of our organization

Amy Jo Jobe

There was a time when my family counted on Citrus County Blessings to have enough food on the table each week. I was a young single mother, doing my best to just get by for several years. The volunteers and leaders at Blessings came alongside me and encouraged me through some of the hardest days of my adult life. Though I was a single parent, I knew I was blessed with a village in my community that poured into my family. Through that encouragement, I found my strength to go back to school, while working multiple jobs and raising my children on my own.

It's much more than a bag of food. Blessings bags are filled with joy, hope, encouragement, support, and a reminder that you are part of a village - the Citrus County Blessings Village! I know that my family has been blessed through this organization in so many ways, and we are abundantly blessed to be able to share those same blessings with our community.

Gail Bockairo

As a classroom teacher, I witnessed the impact that Blessings had on our Citrus County students. Remembering one Friday before spring break, a student was in tears because he thought that he would not be receiving his weekend food bag. However, Blessings stepped up to the plate by making sure even more items were sent home during vacation time. When I retired, I knew that Blessings would be the one organization that I would devote my time to. Silencing weekend hunger is a priority.

Missy Hall

When I moved to citrus county 10 years ago my life was not in order. I was a single mom who had moved here with my son in an attempt to escape an abusive relationship I had in KY. We left in the middle of the night with little more the clothes we wore, my sons video games, and his stuffed dog, Sally. We had no vehicle, no home of our own, and I had no job. I know what it's like to try to land somewhere soft, or just try to land on your feet. I know what it's like to only care about having your child fed and safe. And I know how it feels to wonder if you can do those things every day. Blessings is a program that helps make sure that children can stay fed and healthy during those times. Children in poverty are there through no fault of their own. Citrus County Blessings offers helps to parents like me who need to focus on getting the life our kids deserve without the worry of if they can eat without the help of school lunches or breakfast on the weekends.

