



**BLESSINGS IN A
BACKPACK**

HISTORY

In 2005, Missy Hammerstrom was having lunch at a local elementary school in her hometown of Louisville, Ky., when a young girl approached her, asking for Missy's apple — not to eat for lunch, but to save to take home for the weekend. It was eye-opening to Hammerstrom; she realized kids were going to school hungry on Mondays because they lacked sufficient nutrition over the weekends. She immediately aspired to help, buying backpacks and food for students.

Hammerstrom worked with a Louisville philanthropist to start the first Blessings in a Backpack program at Roosevelt Perry Elementary School; a program that is still in existence today.

In 2008, Blessings in a Backpack became a 501(c)(3) charity organization and started its first program outside of Kentucky — feeding kids on the weekends at Normandie Elementary School in Los Angeles. Since then, Blessings has continued to grow across the country.

WHO WE ARE

Blessings in a Backpack is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with over 1,100 volunteer-driven programs across the United States, located in 46 states and Washington, D.C. This school year, we will distribute more than 3 million bags of food to the kids who need us most.

Blessings also has eight regional chapters, located in Chicago; Florida's First Coast, Frederick, Md.; Louisville, Ky.; Northwest Oregon; Orlando, Fla.; Southwest Florida; and Waukesha County, Wis.

WHY WE DO IT

The consequences of hunger are significant. Not getting enough food can result in a weaker immune system, increased hospitalization, lower IQ, shorter attention spans, and lower academic achievement. Children are fed during the school week by federal government programs, but we want to make sure they're getting nutritional meals over the weekend, too.

OUR MISSION

Blessings in a Backpack mobilizes communities, individuals, and resources to provide food on the weekends for elementary school children across the United States who might otherwise go hungry.

OUR VISION

Every school-aged child in the U.S. has the nourishment needed to learn and grow. As a leader in the movement to end childhood hunger, Blessings in a Backpack strives to ensure children do not go hungry on the weekends by empowering individuals and communities to take action.

BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK IMPACT

According to a national evaluation project led by Blessings in a Backpack in partnership with Quaker Oats and Ipsos, in addition to no longer feeling weekend hunger pangs, children fed by Blessings experience the following:

60% of kids have fewer behavioral issues.

78% of kids feel cared for by their community.

71% of kids feel that Blessings in a Backpack is helping their family.

78% of children report that their school attendance is better.

71% find it is easier to learn at school.

NOTABLE MENTIONS



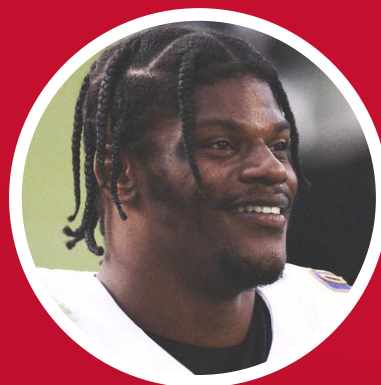
During an interview with USA Today, Vice President Kamala Harris highlights the work of Blessings in a Backpack.

PHOTO COURTESY: USA TODAY



Actress Chrissy Metz plays Celebrity Wheel of Fortune and donates winnings to Blessings in a Backpack.

PHOTO COURTESY: ABC



More than 18,450 Buffalo Bills fans raise \$553,000 as part of a viral donation campaign to support injured Baltimore Ravens quarterback, Lamar Jackson, and his favorite charity, Blessings in a Backpack.

PHOTO COURTESY: ESPN

NOTABLE MENTIONS



HLN's "Morning Express with Robin Meade" highlights the efforts of Blessings in a Backpack during a one-hour segment, "Champions for Change."

PHOTO COURTESY: CNN



Blessings in a Backpack team members ring the Nasdaq closing bell.

PHOTO COURTESY: NASDAQ



Vera Bradley partners with Blessings in a Backpack and donates \$136,000 to the nonprofit.

ATHLETIC PARTNERSHIPS



For more than 10 years, the Jim and Tabitha Furyk Foundation has partnered with Blessings in a Backpack to provide more than 280,000 hunger-free weekends in Jacksonville, Florida and spread awareness nationwide of childhood food insecurities through their annual signature events “Furyk & Friends Concert and Golf Classic” and “Hope for the Holidays.”



Garth Brooks’ “Teammates for Kids Foundation Home Plate Project,” Big League Impact and Major League Baseball partner with Blessings in a Backpack and other hunger-related organizations to offer more than four million meals to students across the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Las Vegas Raiders running back Josh Jacobs teams up with FedEx Cares and the NFL during Football Night in America on NBC to deliver food and inspirational messages to elementary school kids in the Las Vegas area.



The Chicago Bears select Blessings in a Backpack as a recipient of the “Bears100 Community All-Pro” initiative to receive a \$100,000 grant, and game day activations on-field and on-air from the NFL team to further efforts in the greater Chicago area.

PHOTO: CHICAGO BEARS

ATHLETIC PARTNERSHIPS



Since 2009, the PGA TOUR's Justin Rose and his wife, Kate, have worked with Blessings in a Backpack to provide more than 50,000 hunger-free weekends. In 2020, the Kate & Justin Rose Foundation started a Blessings in a Backpack chapter in Orlando to further their impact and help feed local kids.

PHOTO: THE KATE & JUSTIN ROSE FOUNDATION



Shaquille O'Neal, Shawn Johnson and other athletic influencers team up with Vera Bradley in a nationwide tour introducing Blessings in a Backpack programming to children in need.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES FOR VERA BRADLEY



National Basketball Association employees participate in "NBA Cares Employee Day of Giving," working together as a team to pack Blessings in a Backpack bags, reaching 1,000 hunger-free weekends through service.



The Blessings in a Backpack logo is added to Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s car for the ToyotaCare 250 – a race that became Dale Jr.'s first NASCAR Xfinity Series win since 2010, and the first in his own JR Motorsports equipment.

PRESS RELEASES

THE DALE JR. FOUNDATION

Dale Earnhardt Jr. lights up the internet with his love of banana and mayo sandwiches, turning the viral social media post into a fundraiser for Blessings in a Backpack, ultimately providing 44,000+ hunger-free weekends through \$160,000 in donations.

blessingsinabackpack.org/dale-earnhardt-jr-raises-nearly-160k-for-hungry-kids/

THE KATE AND JUSTIN ROSE FOUNDATION

The Kate and Justin Rose Foundation donates \$1 million to Blessings in a Backpack's Orlando Chapter.

blessingsinabackpack.org/rose-foundation-donates-1-million/

BUFFALO BILLS VS. KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Buffalo Bills fans challenge Kansas City Chiefs fans to donate to Blessings in a Backpack following a viral donation campaign to support injured Baltimore Ravens quarterback, Lamar Jackson.

blessingsinabackpack.org/bills-mafia-challenging-chiefs-kingdom/

THE PGA TOUR

The PGA TOUR Volunteer Appreciation Program, sponsored by Myrbetriq, spans two years of support nationwide for Blessings in a Backpack, providing 45,800 hunger-free weekends from the \$230,000 donated at the 23 PGA TOUR event activations each year.

blessingsinabackpack.org/pga-volunteer-program-2020/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=pga-volunteer-program-2020

AS SEEN ON

The
Washington
Post

**Sports
Illustrated**

BUSTLE

POPSUGAR

ESPN

Forbes

CNN

AP

**BUSINESS
INSIDER**

n p r



HUFFPOST

U.S. News
& WORLD REPORT

REFINERY29

Chicago Tribune

**GOOD
HOUSEKEEPING**

msn

Mashable

USA TODAY



People

The New York Times



AS SEEN ON

Dale Earnhardt Jr.
March 26, 2020 · 🌐

Encourage everyone that can to text "cartwheel" to 44321 to donate \$4 to help Blessings in a Backpack feed a child while schools are closed.

Learn more about the #Cartwheels4Meals challenge and how Blessings in a Backpack is responding to COVID-19 at: www.blessingsinabackpack.org/cartwheels-4-meals



The Dale Jr. Foundation
March 26, 2020 · 🌐

We love a good challenge, especially when it feeds hungry children!

We're doing #cartwheels4meals to help Blessings in a Backpack feed kids while schools are closed. We #challenge YOU to get involved and give back!

1. Post a video of yourself/your family doing a cartwheel 🤸
2. Use #cartwheels4meals and tag @blessingsinabackpack
3. Text cartwheel to 44321 to donate \$4 to help Blessings in a Backpack feed a child while schools are closed
4. Challenge 4 friends to do the same!

Learn more about the #Cartwheels4Meals challenge and how Blessings in a Backpack is responding to COVID-19 at: www.blessingsinabackpack.org/cartwheels-4-meals

🔄 SportsCenter Retweeted

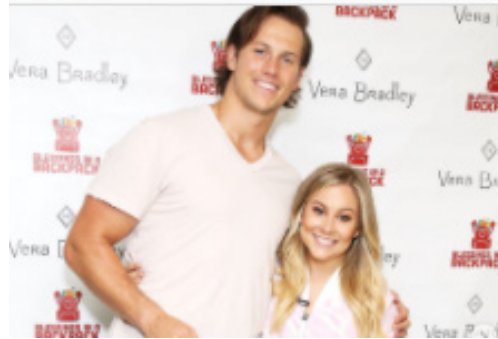


@espn

Love to see this ❤️

Bills fans showed support for Lamar Jackson by donating to his favorite charity, "Blessings in a Backpack," and have now raised over \$327,000.

The foundation helps feed kids while schools are closed due to COVID-19.



shawnjohnson · Follow
Chicago, Illinois



The hubs @andrewdeast and I had SO much fun hanging out with the kids at the @verabradley @blessingsinabackpack carnival yesterday! Love what they are doing for so many kids across the country! They are truly changing lives and we were honored to be a part of it! #verabradley #blessingsinabackpack



shaq · Follow



Thanks to @papajohns @madisonnicolefishflops @worldtechtoys @krispykreme @jakstays @amazon @blessingsinabackpack @macys @clothes4souls @jcpenny @verabradley @greatclips for making my shaq a claus a happy time for all these babies.

67w



amalalqhtany1408 شاك
65w Reply



Josh Jacobs · @IAM_JoshJacobs · Nov 22, 2020

I teamed up with @FedEx and @BlessinBackpack to help deliver food to elementary school kids in the Las Vegas area. Tune in tonight during Football Night in America to check out the feature again! #ad



AWARDS



SINCE 2016

GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency



2012

People Magazine's
Charity of Choice



SINCE 2016

Charity Navigator
Four Star Charity

GIVING TUESDAY CASE STUDY

CHALLENGE: As closures caused by COVID-19 lead to a rise in unemployment and poverty, 18 million American children were experiencing food insecurity. Blessings in a Backpack continued feeding kids — on weekends and while schools were closed — and extended its programming over the summer. During this time, volunteers distributed more than 640,000 bags of weekend food despite the challenges of the pandemic.

OBJECTIVES: Blessings had a fundraising goal of raising \$100,000 on Giving Tuesday, a global day of giving to nonprofits. Through this support, the nonprofit would meet its projection of providing more than 3 million hunger-free weekends to kids during the 2020-2021 school year.

SOLUTION: In partnership with the Spartan Kids Foundation, the nonprofits teamed up for the Giving Tuesday campaign, "Warrior for Kids." This digital campaign encouraged people to be a "Warrior for Kids" by donating to Blessings. This initiative also included a nationwide contest to highlight individuals — teachers, volunteers, and health care workers — who went above and beyond for hungry kids during the pandemic, as well as a \$50K match from the Spartan Kids Foundation.

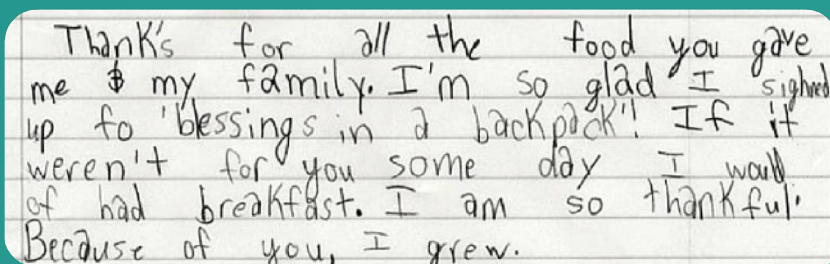
RESULTS: Blessings in a Backpack surpassed its Giving Tuesday goal and raised more than \$184,000, the single biggest fundraising day in the nonprofit's history.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT

blessingsinabackpack.org/giving-tuesday-2020-thank-you/.

BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK IMPACT

Here are just a few ways that Blessings in a Backpack is making a difference to families:



“I was pulled aside at food drop-off yesterday by a teacher who knew me only as the ‘Backpack Lady.’ She wanted me to know that one of her kindergarten students came to school skipping into the classroom — the happiest she ever saw her. When the teacher commented to the student that she looked happy, the girl replied she got to have the backpack breakfast this morning and her belly didn’t hurt.”

—Volunteer, Blessings in a Backpack in Coopersville, Pa.

“My child being a beneficiary of Blessings in a Backpack makes me feel good that there are people who care for our children in cases where we as parents cannot. I am truly thankful.”

—Parent of a Blessings in a Backpack recipient in Jefferson, Maine.

“Blessings is like their security blanket. Kids are less anxious when they get it.”

—School Counselor

“I feel very privileged to be a part of Blessings in a Backpack and seeing the smile on their faces, knowing that my students are safe through the weekend.”

—Teacher at a school distribution location for Blessings in a Backpack in Louisville, Ky.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION,
PLEASE
CONTACT:**

BETH BUSH

Director, Athletic Partnerships

Email: bethbush@blessingsinabackpack.org