



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 12, 2011

Moore County Backpack Program Transitions to Food Bank Cotten Promoted to Branch Director

SOUTHERN PINES – In July 2011, Moore County Schools transitioned administration and operation of the Backpack Pals Program to the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Sandhills. The Food Bank and Backpack Pals have been partners in the Moore County Schools programs since 2006. Former Director of Backpack Pals Linda Hubbard has been brought on staff at the Food Bank to help with a smooth transition from Backpack Pals to the Food Bank's Weekend PowerPack Program. Hubbard will also continue her phenomenal efforts in fundraising, volunteer recruitment and ultimately carrying out the Food Bank's mission to ensure no one goes hungry in central and eastern North Carolina. The Backpack Pals Program first began at one school distributing food to 25 students and by the end of the 2010-11 school year had served 850 students and distributed 27,000 backpacks.

In addition to the Backpack transition, the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina announced today that Michael L. Cotten has been named to a new position as Sandhills Branch Director. Cotten holds an Associate's Degree in Human Services from Sandhills Community College and a Bachelor of Science in Social Science with a concentration in Human Services from Gardner Webb University. He began working with the North Carolina Department of Correction in 1977, working in many capacities until his retirement in 2005. Cotten joined the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Sandhills in 2008 as Outreach Coordinator. As Sandhills Branch Director, Cotten will serve as a key executive of the Sandhills Branch and will lead all aspects of branch operations including fund development, community relations, warehousing, facility and equipment maintenance, safety and execution of all policies and procedures. Michael resides in Carthage, NC with his wife of 33 years, Shirley A. Cotten.

In 1980, the Food Bank opened with a staff of one in a 3,600-square-foot warehouse in a Raleigh suburb. **In November of 1981, we expanded our service area and founded our first branch to serve the Sandhills area. The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Sandhills celebrates 30 years of fighting hunger this year.**

Based in Raleigh, the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina serves 34 counties in the central and eastern through six warehouses in Durham, Greenville, New Bern, Raleigh, Southern Pines and Wilmington.

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About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that has provided food for people at risk of hunger in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina for 30 years. The Food Bank serves a network of more than 800 partner agencies such as soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults through warehouses in Durham, Greenville, New Bern, Raleigh, the Sandhills (Southern Pines) and Wilmington. In fiscal year 2010-2011, the Food Bank distributed more than 42.75 million pounds of food and non-food essentials through these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, more than 500,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families. www.foodbankcenc.org.

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