



# NEWS RELEASE



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## **MAJOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT DURING 26<sup>TH</sup> ABC 11 HEART OF CAROLINA FOOD DRIVE EXCEEDS 5.5 MILLION POUND GOAL**

**RALEIGH**— ABC 11 issued a call to action to viewers in its 22-county broadcast area on November 16th when they kicked off the 26th Annual Heart of Carolina Food Drive. The food drive ended on Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> with Drive Thru Day. Throughout the day, ABC 11 Eyewitness News aired live reports every half-hour from three Triangle locations. By the time families and individuals rolled full grocery carts to the trucks stationed at each location, preschool children came with teachers to drop off their food drive collections and challenges were issued the community had donated more than 5.5 million pounds of food.

“In a time when tough financial decisions have to be made in order to make ends meet by more and more of our neighbors at risk in our 34 county service area and by corporations having to watch the bottom line, to see the overwhelming community support of individuals, families, companies coming together to donate more than 5.5 million pounds is humbling,” said Peter Werbicki, President & CEO of the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina. “Thank you for your generosity.”

Triangle viewers were able to drive up in their vehicles anytime between 5:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. to make nonperishable food and monetary donations at three locations: Kroger at Creedmoor and Strickland Roads in Raleigh, Kroger at Maynard and High House Roads in Cary, and Kroger on Hillsborough Road in Durham.

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In 2006, ABC 11 set what was then a very aggressive goal – 500,000 pounds of food – to be collected during the station’s annual two-week holiday food drive which supports two food banks its broadcast area. They ended up collecting 750,000 pounds that year. The decision to increase the goal each year since that time has been driven out of necessity more than anything else as a direct response to a sharp increase in the number of people at risk of hunger.

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina, one of the beneficiaries of the annual Heart of Carolina Food Drive, has seen the demand for their services continue to rise, as have food banks around the country. The Food Bank now has more than 560,000 people at risk of hunger in its service area.

**More than 100 volunteers** staffed the sites from well before sun up to well past sun down.

### **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 more than 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 2011-2012, the Food Bank distributed nearly 45 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 560,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families. [www.foodbankcenc.org](http://www.foodbankcenc.org).

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