

GREENVILLE COUNTY SCHOOLS TO ROLL OUT SECOND FOOD TRUCK

Riley Fellows project provides free meals to more children

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREENVILLE, S.C. – On Wednesday, July 31, at Travelers Rest United Methodist Church, a group of Riley Fellows will unveil a food truck for its first service to Greenville County students. With this donation, Greenville County Schools will now have two food trucks serving free, nutritionally balanced meals during the summer months.

“The generous gift of this incredible new food truck will allow us to continue to expand the reach of our Seamless Summer Feeding Program by adding mobile routes into the Berea and Travelers Rest communities. During the regular school year the new food truck will service Berea and Travelers Rest schools with pop-up lunch events, nutrition education opportunities, fresh fruit and vegetables sampling and taste testing new menu items,” said Joe Urban, Director of Greenville County Schools Food and Nutrition Services.”

The Riley fellows donating the truck call themselves “Swamp Rabbit Express,” a nod to the truck’s service area along the Swamp Rabbit Trail. They are graduates of the Riley Institute at Furman’s Diversity Leaders Initiative (DLI). As part of the DLI program, participants work in small, cross-sector groups to respond to real issues and opportunities in their communities through service projects.

“Nearly half of Greenville County Schools’ approximately 76,000 students rely on the Food and Nutrition Program, leaving a gap in the summer months. Many of these students come from historically distressed areas or backgrounds. We wanted to do something to close the gap,” said Traci Hogan, Swamp Rabbit Express team member and GCS Assistant Superintendent for Special Education.

Through the USDA Seamless Summer Feeding Program, Greenville County Schools is able to provide breakfast and lunches free of charge to all children 18 years old and younger in qualifying locations. Greenville County Schools Seamless Summer program operates in over fifty schools and community center locations. A food truck delivers meals to children in communities that do not have transportation to access Seamless Summer locations.

“We know children in lower income homes are more at risk for obesity and related health conditions such as diabetes,” says Dr. Don Gordon, executive director of the Riley Institute. “Increasing access to nutritious food and encouraging kids to be active are critical components for building healthier communities.”

Media is invited to attend the first meal service to children from the new food truck at noon on July 31st. Travelers Rest United Methodist Church is a Seamless Summer feeding site. To add an element of play for students, the city of Greenville will bring out Mobi-Rec. The mobile recreation vehicle is the product of another DLI Community Action project and is designed to increase opportunities for youth to participate in safe, quality, structured play and recreation in areas where services are not available.

Representatives from the Riley Institute, Greenville County Schools, and Greenville County Schools Food and Nutrition Services will be available for interviews.

The Riley Fellows on the Swamp Rabbit Express team are:

Stacey Bechtold, Greenville County Parks, Recreation and Tourism
Marty Herndon, Snider Fleet Solutions
Traci Hogan, Greenville County Schools
Toni Land, Prisma Health-Upstate
Rimes McElveen, Mere Christianity Forum
Danny Merck, Pickens County Schools
Cherod Webber, Innovative Global Supply
Will Whitley, Michelin North America

The Riley Fellows on the Mobilizers “Mobi Rec” team are:

Ann Bourey, community leader
April Buchanan, Prisma Health-Upstate
Lynne Fowler, Michelin North America
Andreas Kalscheuer, BMW Manufacturing
David Lominack, TD Bank
Arelis Moore de Peralta, Clemson University
Michael Posey, Clemson University
Patricia Ravenhorst, SC Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Assault
Paul Thompson, North Greenville University

For more information about the Diversity Leaders Initiative or the Riley Institute at Furman, contact Megan Dodgens at megan.dodgens@furman.edu. For more information about Greenville County Schools and its Seamless Summer feeding program contact Beth Brotherton at ebrotherton@greenville.k12.sc.us.