



*Improving Health Care and Outcomes for Residents of Lincoln Parish*

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## ***Grant Summary***

<b>Initiative:</b>	Healthier Living
<b>Project Name:</b>	Lincoln Parish Schools Hunger Task Force Backpack Program
<b>Funding Period:</b>	September, 2021 – May, 2022
<b>Project Coordinator:</b>	Stephanie Thompson, Community Impact Manager
<b>Project Administration:</b>	United Way of Northeast Louisiana
<b>Total Funding-To-Date:</b>	\$ 22,631.72

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## **Program Summary**

The purpose of this grant is to provide funding for an initiative that addresses the escalating occurrence of student hunger in Lincoln Parish Schools. Since 2016, Lincoln Health Foundation has actively served as the primary funding source for the Hunger Task Force Backpack Program, an initiative that provides nutritious food backpacks to at-risk students whose primary source of food is what they receive in the school cafeteria during the school week. Lincoln Health Foundation provides the funding and financial management support to operate the initiative. Community churches and civic organizations also provide funding and volunteer support for the initiative, and funds received by those organizations throughout the year are used to offset the Foundation's initial annual outlay of funds to purchase the backpacks which averages approximately \$67,000 per year. Since 2016, Lincoln Health Foundation has funded approximately 65% of the total cost of purchasing the food backpacks.

Participating community organizations include: Calvary Baptist Church, CenturyNext Bank, First Baptist Church of Ruston, Origin Bank, Quota International, Rotary Club of Lincoln, Ruston Kiwanis Club, Ruston Rotary Club, Simsboro Lions Club, Temple Baptist Church, The Bridge Community Church, Trinity United Methodist Church, and United Way of Northeast Louisiana.

## **Funding Objectives**

Funding provided by the Foundation and community task force member organizations have enabled the purchase of more than 28,398 food backpacks. These backpacks are distributed throughout Lincoln Parish elementary schools to students identified by school administrators as being at risk for significant food insecurity. The overall objective of the initiative is to provide these students with enough food to sustain them over the weekend until they return to school.