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More than 6,000 Sack Suppers for Kids' Food Basket

By Alex Jacobsson,
GVSU Staff

Students, faculty, and staff from the Grand Valley State University College of Education (COE) and College of Community and Public Service (CCPS) decorated a total of 6,214 brown paper bags for Kids' Food Basket of Grand Rapids. COE volunteers then delivered the decorated bags and helped assemble sack suppers.

The brown bag dinners are distributed directly to classrooms and provide a meal to more than 6,000 elementary students each weekday in the Grand Rapids area. This is part of an ongoing partnership between COE and the Kids' Food Basket Sack Supper Program.

Kids' Food Basket is a non-profit organization that combats childhood hunger by providing evening meals. Throughout West Michigan, 20 percent of school children experience food insecurity.

Erica Hamilton, assistant professor in the COE, started coordinating the partnership at Grand Valley in 2014. "It's



amazing to see how this 'drive' has grown and how much creativity our volunteers put into decorating each bag," said Hamilton said.

This year, the COE formed a friendly competition with CCPS to see which college could decorate the most

bags. COE decorated 2,605 bags, and CCPS decorated 3,609 bags. An honorary trophy was presented to the winning college. "It was wonderful to have the competition with CCPS," Hamilton said. "We hope that each year we continue to serve our community by providing the decorated sack supper bags."

Tom Owens, director of the COE's Student Information and Services Center, also coordinates a "loose change" drive to complement the bag decoration efforts. Through this drive, more than \$400 was collected for Kids' Food Basket this fall.

To learn more about the Kids' Food Basket, visit <https://kidsfoodbasket.worldsecuresystems.com>