



FoodShare Cherokee serves over 430 families in 2023

FoodShare Cherokee started in April 2021 as a member of the FoodShare SC network. This program is available to anyone and provides a 15-25 pound box of fresh healthy fruits and vegetables every two weeks. Families order one week and pick up their box the next, so they can order a box every cycle or once in a while. Each box contains 9-12 different items and costs \$20 cash, \$21 with a credit or debit card, or \$5 on a SNAP card.

SNAP customers get this discount because FoodShare participates in the SC Healthy Bucks program, which reimburses KNOW(2) \$15 for every box purchased with a SNAP card. Healthy Bucks is managed by the SC Department of Social Services and was originally designed for Farmer's Markets. FoodShare is the largest user of Healthy Bucks in the state.

For more information on FoodShare and our calendar for 2024, please visit our website:

www.know2cherokee.com.

A Note from Teresa...

With a strong volunteer base, faithful supporters, a dedicated Board and committed staff, KNOW(2) is making a difference in Cherokee County. We continue our core programs— FoodShare Cherokee, BGEN, Neighborhood Ambassadors, Wholespire Cherokee, and educational efforts. Through all of these efforts, we have touched over 1,200 families, put over 60,000 pounds of healthy foods into homes, and encouraged 100's in their education efforts. Our coalition improves the lives of local residents through focused work in economic development, public health, education, and families and youth-at-risk. We thank our many donors, volunteers, and partners who make this impact possible.

This report outlines some of our programs, efforts and activities for the year, which we hope will demonstrate how your support of KNOW(2) as a volunteer, donor, partner or friend is changing lives in our community.

All my best,

Teresa Spires

Executive Director

KNOW(2) Thanks our Platinum

Partners for 2023...

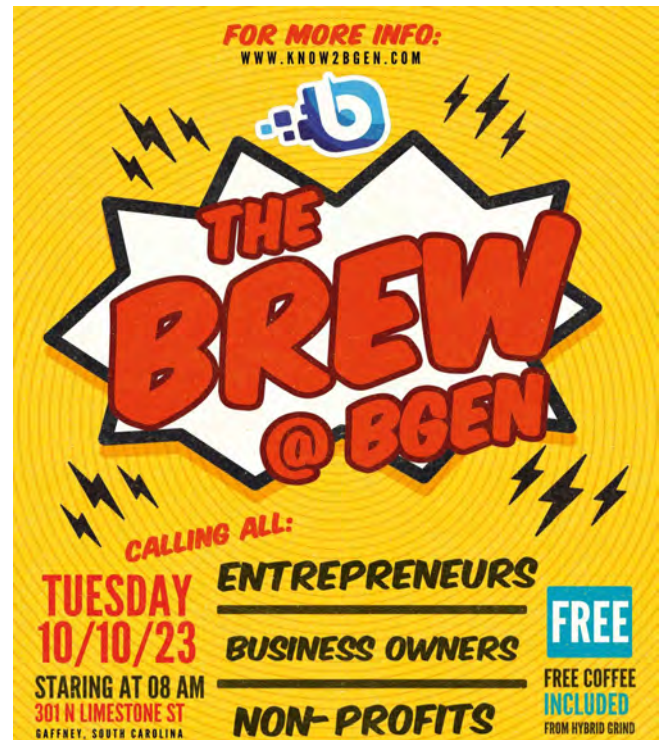


BGEN Launches THE BREW & receives Grant to provide more resources to Local Small Businesses

BGEN, the business generator, supported by KNOW(2) and located at 301 N. Limestone Street in Gaffney is more than a place for small business start-ups. It does have multiple resident businesses and is working on a hoteling model for some of its space; however, it is also a great example of how our downtown buildings can be refurbished, renewed and reinvigorated to bring new life to downtown.

BGEN is also a hub for local small businesses and potential entrepreneurs seeking answers, assistance, or new knowledge. THE BREW is as unique as Cherokee County and has become well attended as local business owners discover this new way of supporting each other. Program manager, Brian Ziegelhefer, describes it as Shark Tank for business owners seeking viable and timely solutions and peer support. Several participants even travel from other towns to attend.

BGEN also offers space for workshops during the year on a variety of business management topics from taxes to marketing and Brian or Natalie Bradley are available to talk with potential entrepreneurs or home-based businesses looking to try a more public presence. For more information about BGEN, please check out www.know2bgen.com or go see Brian or Natalie.



KNOW(2) salutes our Gold Level Partners for 2023...



KNOW(2)'s Board and Staff are grateful for the work of Oscar Fuller in establishing KNOW(2). Oscar was a doer and encourager for many and made KNOW(2) possible .

We are saddened by his passing, but know that his legacy lives on in his family, friends and in the many, many projects that he tirelessly worked to make possible in this community. We are looking for a way to honor Oscar and welcome any ideas and donations in his honor. toward this effort.

Neighborhood Ambassadors Volunteering, Mentoring, Leading to Make a Difference ...

KNOW(2) Neighborhood Ambassadors are led by Dr. Carol McFadden. This group of about 70 volunteers serve as the ambassadors to their families, neighborhoods, churches and communities. They meet monthly to learn about new resources and opportunities, then share this knowledge with others. In addition, they work on a number of critical community projects to help children and families in Cherokee County.

In the summer months, the Neighborhood Ambassadors transport meals from local schools to our public housing communities, so that children without transportation can still get a healthy meal. This summer, they served five public housing communities and fed approximately 200 children 4 days a week.

A group of Neighborhood Ambassador men also provided volunteer support inside Gaffney High School and local middle schools. These men walk the halls, eat lunch with students and serve as positive role models to all.

This year, the Neighborhood Ambassadors participated in cancer education including the importance of early screening. They learned how to talk with others about screenings. As a result of their work, over 18 local men were screened for prostate cancer.

The Neighborhood Ambassadors also support student after-school learning and provide caring adults for students who need them. For example, students living in Granard Courts have after-school tutoring and mentoring provided by a group of Neighborhood Ambassadors. One Friday a month, these adults host a birthday party/movie night for the students. All the children who have a birthday in that month are celebrated. Pastor Ricky Davis, who leads the Granard Courts efforts stated that he and his wife realized that many children in the Granard Courts community do not get a birthday celebration and that all children should have the opportunity to feel special on their birthday.



Altonnia Wilkins, Neighborhood Ambassador, shares information about his career as a caterer with campers at KNOW(2)'s Ty Lindsay Summer Academy in June 2023.

KNOW(2) Impacts in 2023

FoodShare Cherokee:

- ⇒ Over 60,000 pounds of healthy foods—fresh fruits and vegetables into the community.
- ⇒ Over 435 families served.
- ⇒ Almost 3,000 Fresh Food boxes produced.

Neighborhood Ambassadors:

- ⇒ Trained about 60 Cancer Screening Ambassadors.
- ⇒ Provided over 6,000 summer meals to students in local public housing communities.
- ⇒ Tutored and/or mentored for over 750 hours.
- ⇒ Encouraged hundreds of families through mentoring, tutoring, feeding, and helping.

KNOW(2) Board Members ...

Phil Orr | Jackie Bridges | Ben Kochenower | Chris Steed | Cody Sossamon | Ann Angermeier | Barry Morgan | Candace Waters | Christina Cody | Cody Butts | Drake Scott | Rev. Kerwin Wray | Kristina Harris | Mandy Painter | Paige Stephenson | Renee Smith | Tim Smith | Timena Sarratt

KNOW(2) Impacts

Education ...

KNOW(2) continues to work to improve educational opportunities and to encourage local youth to work harder and seek enrichment activities, so that they are ready to pursue their dream careers. KNOW(2) also works with Spartanburg Community College to encourage first-generation college students to pursue and persist with educational work beyond high school.

In 2023, KNOW(2) received two grants to help with their educational work. One was from the SC Department of Education to provide a free, 4-week summer camp to 24 middle school students for the summer of 2023 and the summer of 2024. KNOW(2) has partnered with The Classic Society, another local nonprofit, to provide a similar camp using volunteers and a very limited budget over the last 3 years.

KNOW(2) also received a \$249,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to create Project Engage at Gaffney Middle School. Project Engage works with 7th and 8th grade students, imparting additional life and leadership skill development. It also provides professional development opportunities for teachers at the school.

Over the past year, KNOW(2) has established a new Educational Task Force to review information about needs in the community and to seek new opportunities to influence and encourage greater educational attainment and training for every local resident.



Campers in the summer of 2023 learned math and logic skills by playing chess. Students had class time daily, as well as field trips, guest speakers, crafts and community service.

KNOW(2) Staff and Key Volunteers ...

Teresa Spires | Brian Ziegelhefer | Natalie Bradley | Carol McFadden | Marcellus Robbs | Novella Brown (FoodShare)

KNOW(2) Donors 2023 ...

Platinum Partners:

Brown Packing Company | Spartanburg Community College

Gold Partners:

Piedmont Natural Gas | Cherokee Medical Center

Silver Partners:

BMW Manufacturing

Donors:

MLS Landscaping & Erosion Control, Baylor's Care, Concord Baptist Church, Teresa & JT Spires, Founders Federal Credit Union, Rev. Kerwin Wray, Hazel Hubbard, Gaffney High School, Cherokee County School District, Bethel Baptist Church, Academic Technology and Wellness Academy, Duke Energy, Larry Sossamon, Sossamon Construction, Carol Robbs McFadden, Wholespire, Inc., Gaffney Board of Public Works, Blakely Funeral Home & Crematory, Regenes Health Care, Burns Chevrolet, Cherokee County Government, Rogers Hardee Allstate, Cody Sossamon, D & J Uptown Properties, Chris Steed, First Piedmont Federal, Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce, Ann & Ingo Angermeier, Correll Insurance, Phil Orr, The Zigs Creative, and Sara Setzer.