



**For Immediate Release:**

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**Athens Technical College Gives Back**

Athens Technical College, IAAP Student Organization, and Phi Theta Kappa are holding a food drive to benefit the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia. Together we hope to bring food to many families that will depend on our donations during this holiday season.

Items that are most needed include peanut butter, canned soup, canned vegetables, canned fruit, pasta, cereal, tuna, and dried or canned beans. With many donation canisters located throughout the Athens Campus, the college hopes to make a large donation to the food bank. The Food Bank receives food from a variety of sources and distributes food to over 250 partner agencies in 22 counties of Northeast Georgia. Some of the agencies include local child care programs, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, foster parents, food pantries, senior centers, and church programs. Through these local partnerships, 250 families are given the opportunity to receive food through a direct commodities distribution in their own community. In the Food Bank's 14-county services area, there are over 65,000 individuals in need. Their goal is to distribute 100 pounds per person per year of 6.5 million pounds. This is approximately 13,800 meals per day.

More than 35.9 million people live in poverty in the United States. The problem is not the lack of food, but limited access to the food which is available. Food Banks provide that access by linking people to food. Clarke County has the highest poverty rate of all 14 counties within the Food Bank's service area at 28% (the average rate in a service area is 16%). One out of seven senior citizens living in poverty in Northeast Georgia resides in Clarke County. Among all of the children in Clarke County, 25% live in poverty as compared to 15% average rate in the remaining counties in the Food Bank's service area. There are 25,000 children that qualify for free or reduced lunches in local schools.

The need is there. Please give generously as we wish to provide as much food for families in need during the holiday season. The food drive will continue through December 18, 2008.



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