

Everyone has a dream. It began in 2009. A group of people from a variety of religious followings began to meet with a purpose in mind: to identify a need in our community that would pull together our collective resources in fulfilling that need. Thus, the birth of Food Backpacks 4 Kids and our dream to ensure that no child would go hungry. We had no plan, no budget, no grandiose predictions for the future; we were simply going to feed students in the Peninsula School District.

Packing and distributing nine backpacks the first week of our effort, we were ecstatic – we were feeding kids! Today, we pack nearly 400 backpacks each week, with enough food to supplement meals for an average family of four, and we staff three packing sites with volunteers from the community.

Then the question came, “What do we do for these kids in the summer?” Simple, we would feed them hot meals three times a week. Thus, the Summer Lunch Program.

As our numbers grew, so did the donations. Connecting with the Emergency Food Network of Pierce County led to greater quantities of food items, especially an unlimited amount of dried beans and rice. Contemplating this challenge, the concept of providing slow cookers and recipes evolved into the “Crock Pot Project.” More than 300 crock pots have been distributed, along with a variety of spices as well as market vouchers for meat, dairy and produce. Another dream come true.

Thanks to the greater Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula community, especially the 50 volunteers, Food Backpacks 4 Kids continues to thrive and has the ability to reach out to a greater number of families, for all of which we are very grateful. Keep dreaming!

Karen Jorgenson, FB4K co-founder