



giving **KIDS** an appetite for **READING**

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





What would
your life be like
today if you never
learned to read?

That's what
children are
faced with
right now.

From the Board President

Looking back on the past year, it was one like no other! In the midst of a world-wide pandemic, you—our volunteers, donors, partners, and friends—rallied around our mission like never before. Because of you, not only did Read and Feed meet the challenges posed by COVID-19 head on, but I am proud to report that we have emerged stronger than ever.

It is clear that the pandemic laid bare the critical nature of our work and amplified disparities in education, food security, and income. Our services were essential, yet we had to think differently in our response. We learned how to deliver tutoring and story times online. When safe to do so, we took tutoring outside. There was more need than ever for healthy meals and books, particularly in underserved neighborhoods. Our mobile classrooms and willing volunteers delivered those resources. Some innovations worked so well they will now become part of our enhanced service model.

This past year brought about changes to the organization's leadership too. We welcomed Sherry Overton Shudra as our new Executive Director in December 2020. Despite joining us in the middle of the pandemic, she hit the ground running and kept us laser focused on **three main objectives: maintain health and safety for all, continue to fulfill our mission in creative ways, and prepare to relaunch tutoring services.** Each of these objectives was achieved in addition to adding an evidence-based learning component to our curriculum, selecting six new program sites for the fall, and enhancing our volunteer training.

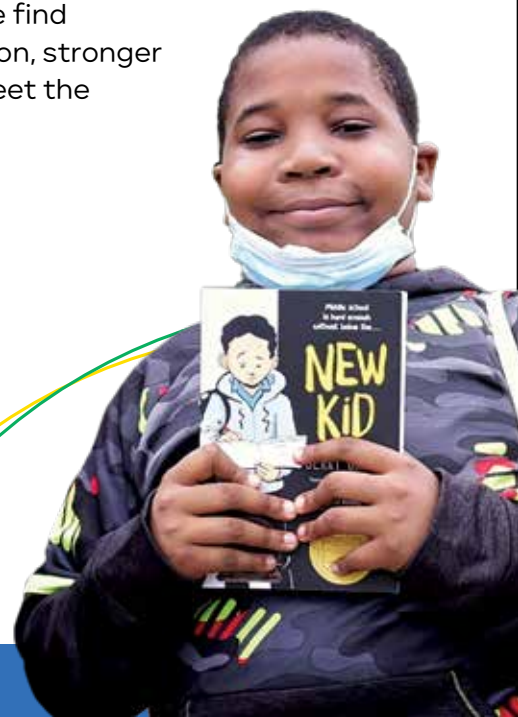
You made it all happen! Although we may never return to a pre-pandemic normal, we find ourselves re-committed to our mission, stronger than ever, and better prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

Kristina Vrabel
President, Board of Directors



919-463-9744
info@readandfeed.org
PO Box 5865, Cary, NC 27512
www.ReadandFeed.org





"I like Read and Feed because there is food. In my house, there is nothing to eat... except strawberries, and I am allergic to those."

– Program Participant

From the Executive Director

COVID-19 created a timestamp in our lives. It's truly one of those pivotal shared experiences of life "before" and life "after." Now as the world moves forward, we have the opportunity to share in overcoming the challenges this past year brought. It is my privilege to have joined Read and Feed this year. Together we will continue to take on the heightened critical mission of literacy and food security for our communities' children and families.

I am convinced that there has never been a time that underserved children have needed us more than right now. Because of your support, we are well-positioned to assume this challenge, serve more children with an extensive range of services, and emerge as a leader in literacy and food security services in Wake County.

Strengthening our strategic focus, our daily operational efforts, and our relationships with partners, volunteers and donors has increased Read and Feed's capacity to serve with intent. Together, we are creating more impactful outcomes for children.

Since I began this work, I consider the tremendous value of learning to read along with the safety and security I had as a child. Now, every day forward, I know we will provide that same value for children in need.

Sincerely,

Sherry Overton Shudra
Executive Director

"Read and Feed is so much fun. I like that we get to read with amazing teachers."

– Program Participant

— By the Numbers —



554
Children
Served



308
Active
Volunteers



2,760
Volunteer Hours



26
Locations

— Program —



116
Tutoring
Programs
Conducted



1,075
Hours of Targeted
Instruction
Accomplished

— Services —



10,048
Meals
Distributed



4,414
Healthy Snacks
Consumed



11,063
Books Added to
Home Libraries



774
School Supply
Bags Issued

Program Highlights

A FAST Partnership

As a new school year began with virtual learning for all Wake County students, a critical need for safe academic environments and meaningful learning opportunities emerged—especially for children unable to remain at home. Several area non-profits joined forces to create the **Families and Schools Together (FAST) Initiative** to provide some relief to working families. In collaboration with the **YMCA of the Triangle** and the FAST Initiative, Read and Feed traveled to four Scholastic Success Sites weekly to provide school supplies and age-appropriate books for children to take home. It was yet another way that Read and Feed met children where they live, learn, and play when many community programs were placed on hold.

Diversifying our Shelves

Children are more likely to become lifelong readers when they have access to books that reflect and affirm their lived experiences. That's why we called upon our community to help diversify our shelves in 2021. As a result, we received 425 brand new books from 98 people via our Amazon wish list. Our partners at **Usborne Books** and **KPMG** also stepped forward, bringing in 296 additional books as well as several cash gifts.

The combined in-kind and cash contributions to this campaign translated to a **\$9,228 investment to provide culturally responsive books for all.**



Meals-To-Go


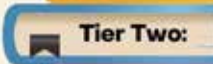
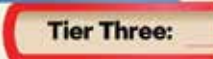
Eating a nutritious meal together was not an option during the pandemic, so we implemented a meals-to-go service at many of our locations. Read and Feed ensured meals were simple for children to prepare on their own and could be shared with other family members at home. Our meal distribution ranged from Treat Bags containing three complete meals, quick-frozen meals from the **Inter-Faith Food Shuttle**, as well as pizzas from **Papa Murphy's**.

Our Tiered Roll Out

Once schools returned to in-person learning, Read and Feed rolled out a tiered operating plan to deliver programs and services

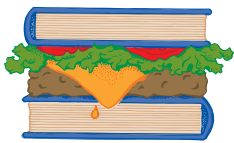
in conjunction with our school and community partners. Where safely possible for students and volunteers, in-person tutoring resumed. Locations that were not ready to meet in person managed a blended program of virtual sessions and book and meal distribution. Each site progressed through the tiers at its own pace to best serve their students safely. **By the end of the 2020-21 academic year, there were 11 sites operating at Tier 3 and 15 offering a blended program.**

Read and Feed COVID-19 Operating Plan

	Tier One: <i>Deliver books and meals</i>
	Tier Two: <i>Deliver books and meals with virtual tutoring</i>
	Tier Three: <i>Weekly in-person tutoring with book and meal delivery</i>



For 7 weeks, approximately **60 Boys & Girls Club Members** received specialized tutoring from Read and Feed.



read
and
feedsm



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA**

Teaming Up to Tackle COVID Learning Loss

This past academic year took a toll on underserved children in Wake County. Educators reported that students with the fewest educational opportunities before the pandemic are on track to exit with the most significant learning loss. **Madison Reed, Academic Intervention Manager with the Boys & Girls Club**, saw first-hand the downward trend in academic performance among her students and knew something had to be done. By teaming up with Read and Feed, she found her solution.

Madison was acutely aware that children served at the Boys & Girls Club were academically behind before the pandemic, but the past year revealed more immediate needs and serious academic deficits. She was elated when Amber Simmons, Program and Evaluation Director with Read and Feed, offered to supply volunteer tutors for her summer academic enrichment camp. **"It's refreshing to have a partner like Read and Feed willing to jump in with energy and ask, 'what can we do to help?'"** shared Madison.

As a part of the program, Madison leads large group sessions for three days during the week and Read and Feed tutors provide the targeted reading instruction during the other two days. "Our kids are now receiving five straight days of high-quality literacy support," she explained.

Madison is thrilled with the progress she is seeing and relieved that the children are getting the services they deserve. On a daily basis, Madison is witness to the children's growing enthusiasm toward reading and remarked, **"It's amazing how much our kids can flourish when they have that specialized attention and someone just believing they can do it."**



From October 2020 to March 2021, over **1,400 Treat Bags**, totaling over **4,200 meals**, were assembled and went to families in need.

Friends You Can Count On

Before the pandemic, a significant portion of children in Wake County relied on schools for food. For many, it was the only food they might receive on a given day. Yet this year, with so many children not attending school full time, childhood hunger became an increased threat in our community.

To combat this problem, Read and Feed joined forces with non-profit partners and government entities, providing over 10,048 meals to children in need. One such partner ready and willing to pitch in was the **Junior League of Raleigh**.

Junior League members worked with Read and Feed in the past—often as volunteer tutors. Yet, as the pandemic forced us to shift how we delivered programs, the Junior League quickly adjusted their volunteer roles to meet our students' immediate needs.

Junior League of Raleigh, Heritage Park Co-Captain, Heather Bronson, was a key player in this shift. "I think the keyword for everyone this year has been *pivot*," said Heather. "The pandemic shifted our priorities. Instead of helping children thrive, we focused on the basics, like food and what they needed to survive the year."

Coordinating meal distribution was no small feat, yet the vast number of Junior League members willing to step up made the process almost effortless. Food collected from drives across the county were quickly sorted and bagged into kid-friendly bundles known as Treat Bags. Each bag contained enough food to feed one elementary school child for three meals. Knowing that children could take a bag full of nutritious, kid-friendly food and be fed for an entire day gave the volunteers a proactive opportunity to make a difference. **The food that was packed with such care became a lifeline for kids stuck at home with limited means.**

From October 2020 to March 2021, the Junior League of Raleigh assembled over 1,400 Treat Bags, totaling over 4,200 meals, that were then supplied to families in the Read and Feed network.

"Read and Feed provided a way for us to stay involved and connected to our community," explained Heather. "They were an ideal partner and were great in recognizing the food security needs of children in Wake County. The Junior League is proud to play a part in helping our community during this crisis."



A hallmark of Read and Feed's model is to take our services to the child. As such, we rely on partnerships to deliver our mission—meeting children where they live, learn, and play. Thank you to our programmatic partners for the 2020-2021 year.

School Partners

- Apex Elementary School
- Baileywick Elementary School
- Cary Elementary School
- Fuquay-Varina Elementary School
- Holly Springs Elementary School
- Knightdale Elementary School
- Lake Myra Elementary School
- Lincoln Heights Elementary School
- Northwoods Elementary School
- Rolesville Elementary School
- Weatherstone Elementary School
- Wilburn Elementary School
- Wildwood Forest Elementary School
- Yates Mill Elementary School

Community Partners

- The Green Chair Project
- Inter-Faith Food Shuttle
- Junior League of Raleigh
- Raleigh Boys Club
- Raleigh Girls Club
- Washington Elementary Boys and Girls Club
- YMCA of the Triangle Area
- Zebulon Boys and Girls Club

"The Wake County Public School System is fortunate to partner with Read and Feed in supporting our vision that students will be prepared to reach their full potential and lead productive lives in a complex and changing world. Read and Feed recruits and trains volunteers to strengthen students' literacy skills and help build confidence that will serve them for a lifetime. It's a real win for our community!"

– Kathryn S. Toma
Director, K-12 Literacy
Wake County Public School System



Faith-Based Partners

- Apex United Methodist Church
- Bethlehem Baptist Church
- Church of the Apostles*
- First United Methodist Church of Cary
- Fuquay-Varina Baptist Church*
- Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church
- Grace Bible Fellowship Church
- Greenwood Forest Baptist Church*
- New Hope Baptist Church*
- Northside Community Church
- St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church
- St. Raphael the Archangel Catholic Church

*A FAST Initiative location



"Each week Michael is excited to attend the program and his enthusiasm for reading lasts well beyond his time with his tutor. We have seen improvement in Michael's reading ability and a greater willingness to try challenging tasks. Read and Feed has instilled new found confidence in all aspects of his life."

– Parent of a Participant



Read and Feed volunteers, provided over **1,075 hours of targeted instruction** to children struggling to read.

Time Well Spent

During this tumultuous year, the key to our success is primarily due to our volunteers—people like **Graham Smith** who give back to their community. Their time and dedication undoubtedly makes a difference in the life of a child.

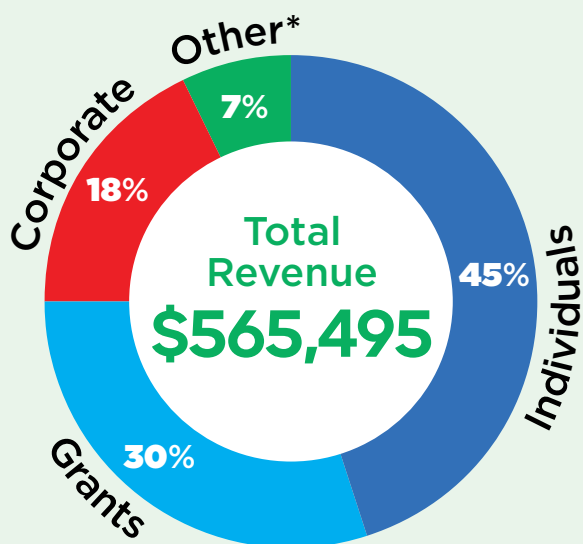
Graham learned about Read and Feed during his time with the North Carolina Football Club. As a soccer player, he participated in team book drives and dropped by as a mystery reader. When the pandemic hit, Graham felt compelled to do more. **"What started out as a good deed grew into a genuine desire to help these kids any way I could,"** he said.

During the pandemic, Graham led both virtual and in-person tutoring sessions. "It was hard at first, but I learned to ask questions and make personal connections with the kids before jumping into the reading." Graham realized that part of his role was to bring a bit of normalcy back into the student's lives and did so with simple conversation. "I wanted them to know someone on the other end of the computer cared."

When asked what he enjoys most about Read and Feed, he quickly remarks about the inclusivity of the program. "There is always enough food available to help a child who needs it. There's always enough books to tell a kid to take as many as you want," Graham explained. **"During a time when everything seems scarce, it is great to be a part of something that gives so unconditionally."**



2021 Financials At-A-Glance



* Includes gifts in kind.

Total Assets
\$620,326



Growth
(FY21 over FY20)

Total Revenue increased by
12%



Total Cash increased by
14%



Total Assets increased by
13%



Giving kids an appetite
for reading

Boulder
2



"I love Tuesdays! That's when the big bus comes with books and food. We play games and read. It gives me something to do."

– Program participant





Read and Feed pays tribute to the many individuals, organizations, foundations and corporations that supported our work in 2020-2021.

Corporate & Community Partners (Giving \$1,000 or more)

- Bailey's Fine Jewelry
- Bryan Properties
- Capital City Clauses
- Cary Chamber of Commerce
- Cary-Page Rotary
- Cisco
- Clark Pavement Marking, Inc.
- KPMG
- Levitate
- Marathon Petroleum Co. LP
- North Raleigh Optimist Club
- National Charity League, Cardinal Chapter
- Pacific Western Bank
- Quail Ridge Books
- Saint Mark's Episcopal Church
- Scott Insurance
- Smith Debnam Attorneys at Law
- Sunrise United Methodist Church
- Twickenham Holdings, LLC—Papa Murphy's Pizza



Grant and Foundation Partners

- The Agarwal Family Foundation
- Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
- Duke Energy Foundation
- Tom and Pat Gipson Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation
- The Leon Levine Foundation
- Lonnie and Carol Poole Family Foundation
- Raymond J. & Mary C. Reisert Foundation, Inc.



"I am so grateful for the books, meals, and instruction we received this past year. It's been a challenging year for Ani with less time in school and more time at home, but your program kept her reading and learning. Thank you."

– Parent of a Participant

Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tina Vrabel, President
Retired, Fidelity Investments

Nancy Vodicka, Vice President
Vice President Marketing, Archive Social

Sue Stevens, Secretary
Retired, AmerisourceBergen Consulting

Christopher Meredith, Treasurer
Director of Financial Reporting,
Pyxus International, Inc.

BOARD MEMBERS

Miriam Andrews
Affiliate Contractor, moss + ross

Carmita Bass
Solutions Director, Business Critical Services,
Cisco

Diana Bernas
Change Management & Communications
Manager, Cisco

Jan Frantz
Founder & Past President of Read and Feed

Samantha Hatem
Media/Marketing Manager,
Empire Eats & Empire Properties

Matt Merletti
Benefits Consultant, Scott Insurance

Curlee Petty
Retired, Pharmacist

Kathryn Raymond
Director, PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP

Margo Stutesman
Retired, SAS

Leressa Suber
Evaluation & Talent Development Specialist,
NC State University

Mayra Szeto
Teacher Support Coordinator,
Wake County Public School System

Kristin Walker
Deputy State Budget Director,
NC Office of State Budget and Management

Wilson Zhang
Senior Audit Manager, KPMG US

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Marty Clayton
District Manager, Duke Energy

Bobbie Furr
Retired, Bernard Robinson & Company, LLP

Jan Frantz
Founder & Past President of Read and Feed

Leslie Ann Jackson, Vice President
Community Investment & Engagement,
North Carolina Community Foundation

George Jordan
President, George H. Jordan III Development Co.

Pamela Meek
Global Head of Communications, SAS

Cecile Noel
Community Leader

James Stem
Retired, Transportation Safety Consultant

Calvin Stevens
President, Bernard Irby Inc.

Suzanne Stroud
Vice President, Wealth Management Advisor,
Merrill Lynch

Staff

Sherry Overton Shudra, Executive Director

Lisa Brown, Development Associate

Kelly Donaldson, Fleet Manager

Tricia Sandridge, Volunteer Coordinator

Amber Simmons, Program and Evaluation Director

Will Transou, Systems Administrator





Our Mission

To strengthen literacy skills among underserved elementary school children and provide meals in a nurturing neighborhood environment.

Our Vision

A community in which all children have the confidence and the ability to succeed.

www.ReadandFeed.org

Join Us



FOLLOW US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA



BECOME A
VOLUNTEER



MAKE A
DONATION

Read and Feed is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Federal Tax ID number: 20-3246207.
Copies of our 990 forms are available upon request.



read
and
feedsm

171-10 High House Road
Cary, NC 27511

NONPROFIT
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CARY, NC
PERMIT NO.
1836812