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UA STUDENTS PARTNER WITH SECRET MEALS FOR HUNGRY CHILDREN TO HOST FUND-RAISING EVENTS

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – University of Alabama students are partnering with Alabama Credit Union to raise awareness and funds for Secret Meals For Hungry Children Nov. 1-8. Fundraising events include a trivia night at the Bear Trap in Tuscaloosa, an awareness campaign at Innisfree Irish Pub and a donation drive at Piggly Wiggly. The students and Secret Meals will also be hosting a Textathon to raise money.

Students in Susan Daria's service-learning course, APR 419 Public Relations Development, are assisting Secret Meals with the design and implementation of awareness materials and events. All proceeds and donations will support the program, created by Alabama Credit Union in 2008.

"I chose Alabama Credit Union's Secret Meals program as a class client because most people do not realize how prevalent childhood hunger is and how little it takes to help a child in West Alabama," said Daria, instructor in the Department of Advertising and Public Relations. "Working with Alabama Credit Union as been wonderful. They have embraced my students' efforts wholeheartedly."

The program discreetly provides impoverished school children with packets of food for the weekend. Teachers identify children based on whether they habitually eat everything available and hoard food as the weekend approaches. [Food packs are secretly slipped into children's backpacks and include items that provide adequate nutrition while being nonperishable and child-friendly.](#)

[The donation drive at Piggly Wiggly will take place Nov.1-8 at the four locations in the Tuscaloosa area: Northport, Alberta, West End and Greensboro Avenue. Participating customers will donate \\$1 at the register to help a child in need. Upon making a donation, Piggly Wiggly customers can sign a backpack to hang in the store window and receive a sticker signifying they helped feed a hungry child.](#)

The Textathon will run Nov. 1-7. The text message "food" to 27722 will automatically donate \$10 to feed an impoverished child for an entire month.

The event at Innisfree will be held Thursday, [Nov. 3](#), from 9 [p.m.](#) to 11 p.m. It will provide customers with an inside view of childhood hunger and inform them of how Secret Meals helps. Informational materials will be distributed and donations are welcome.

The students and Secret Meals teamed up to host the Bear Trap's Tuesday Night Trivia [on](#) Nov. 1. Participants answered trivia questions about hunger. [Teams won](#) prizes from Secret Meals designed by students.

[Daria developed the service-learning component of APR 419 while participating in the UA Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility's Faculty Fellows in Service Learning Program, a one-year fellowship that trains faculty to design new courses or modify existing courses to include service learning.](#)

[Service learning is an educational experience that combines organized service activities with academic study and thoughtful reflection to enhance learning of course content and foster a sense of civic responsibility. These service activities, carried out in conjunction with community partners, often provide students with practical experience in their chosen fields.](#)