

Centene Charitable Foundation Sponsors "Operation Backpack" To Feed 100 Students On Weekends - Apr 28, 2014

ST. LOUIS, April 28, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Centene Charitable Foundation has sponsored more than \$15,000 to St. Louis-based Operation Food Search's weekend feeding program for children, *Operation Backpack*. Through this leadership contribution, Operation Food Search will be sending home backpacks of nutritious food to 100 children from low-income families every weekend of the 2013-14 academic year.

In addition to this sponsorship, Centene is also donating over 600 children's books and activity guides from the company's award-winning book series, *The Adventures of Bolngg & Sprockette*, which will be included in the backpacks. The books range in topics from healthy nutrition and fitness, to advice on avoiding-smoking tobacco, and maintaining good hygiene.

In the St. Louis public schools, 85 percent of the children rely on free or reduced-cost meal programs. Without Operation Backpack, some of these children would receive little to no food on weekends.

"With so many children going home on weekends to no food, it is crucial for us to help relieve the hunger problem," said Sunny L. Schaefer, executive director, Operation Food Search. "Centene's support of the Operation Backpack program shows a commitment to improving the health of our community, one nutritious meal at a time."

During the 2013-14 academic year, Operation Backpack is working with nine school districts across the St. Louis metro area to supply over 4,000 low-income children with backpacks each weekend. Each backpack is filled with six nutritious meals, plus healthy snacks. Over 115,000 backpacks will be provided to these children before the end of the school year.

About Centene Corporation:

Centene Corporation, a Fortune 500 company, is a leading multi-line healthcare enterprise that provides programs and services to government sponsored healthcare programs, focusing on under-insured and uninsured individuals. Many receive benefits provided under Medicaid, including the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), as well as Aged, Blind or Disabled (ABD), Foster Care and Long Term Care (LTC), in addition to other state-sponsored/hybrid programs, and Medicare (Special Needs Plans). The Company operates local health plans and offers a range of health insurance solutions. It also contracts with other healthcare and commercial organizations to provide specialty services including behavioral health, care management software, correctional systems healthcare, in-home health services, life and health management, managed vision, pharmacy benefits management, specialty pharmacy and telehealth services.

About Centene Charitable Foundation:

Charitable outreach is an important part of Centene Corporation's business philosophy. Since 2004, Centene Charitable Foundation has contributed a substantial amount to initiatives that improve the quality of life and health in our communities.

About Operation Food Search:

Operation Food Search was established in 1981 to address the growing problem of hunger in the St. Louis area and has since become the largest distributor of free food in the bi-state area. The organization distributes more than 2.75 million pounds of food and household essentials to nearly 300 community partner agencies which in turn feed 150,000 poor people each month, nearly one-third of whom are children. For every dollar donated by individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations, OFS provides \$21 worth of food and nutrition services to support the hungry. To learn more about Operation Food Search, visit www.OperationFoodSearch.org.

About Operation Backpack:

Operation Backpack was launched by Operation Food Search in 2008 to address the issue of childhood hunger. This program provides backpacks full of food for the weekend to children most at risk for hunger and food insecurity at schools in the City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, Franklin County, St. Clair County (IL) and at Head Start sites. Weekly backpacks include nutritious, kid-friendly, easy-to-prepare foods and "easy-to-digest" nutrition information. Helping children get their school week off to a great start, well-nourished and ready to learn, the Operation Backpack program currently serves 4,000 children.

SOURCE Centene Corporation

For further information: Deanne Lane, (314) 725-4477

<https://investors.centene.com/2014-04-28-Centene-Charitable-Foundation-Sponsors-Operation-Backpack-To-Feed-100-Students-On-Weekends>