Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art News
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Since 1990, ceramic students from the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art (BFSDoArt) host the Empty Bowl Project, a service project in support of the Statesboro Food Bank. Lead by ceramics Professor Jane Pleak, the goal of the Empty Bowl Project is to create unique bowls and then serve a simple meal to the public in exchange for a $10 cash donation.

The annual Chili Bowl Sale will be held in the Rotunda on the Georgia Southern University campus on Thursday, October 21 from 11am - 1pm. Patrons keep the bowls as a reminder of the meal’s purpose. Last year, in just 2 hours, the Empty Bowl Project raised $1,700 in proceeds that were given to the Statesboro Food Bank. “We hope every time someone uses their bowl, they will be reminded that someone else’s bowl is empty and by purchasing their bowl they helped to alleviate hunger,” says Pleak.

The Ceramics Studio has had hands-on help in preparing for the Chili Bowl Sale -- Georgia Southern University President, Dr. Brooks Keel and First Lady, Dr. Tammie Schalue, took their turn throwing clay on a pottery wheel to make bowls for the community fundraising project.
The last census reading stated that 1/3 of Statesboro was considered at the poverty level. During their after school program, The Boys and Girls Club of Statesboro feeds 250 under privileged children, daily, to ensure they are getting the nutrition they need. They also provide breakfast and lunch during the summer weeks when kids aren’t at school. The Statesboro Food Bank feeds anyone in need. However, they mainly service the working poor. For every dollar donated, the Statesboro Food Bank is able to provide the equivalent of 7 meals to one of these people.

BFSDoArt ceramic curriculum contains a service and business component that allows students to gain skills in producing multiple editions of their product. Pleak explains, “Becoming in tune with your community is very important to artists who make their living from their craft. Students begin to understand they have a skill that is viable and can offer great help to those in need. While their students work continues to improve, they develop a critical knowledge of what community is and how a basic fundamental form can connect so many people in such a positive way.”

The Empty Bowl Project will also be hosting a silent auction for 20 - 40 one of a kind ceramics pieces made by MFA Candidates, Alumni and local professional artists -- all proceeds also benefiting the Statesboro Food Bank. Check the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art website for up-to-date information. For more information on the Empty Bowl Project, please contact Jane Pleak at jpleak@georgiasouthern.edu or 912.GSU.7461. For directions to the Ceramics & Sculpture Building, please visit http://class.georgiasouthern.edu/art/contact_cs.html.