2013 Empty Bowl Project raises $5,425

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Ceramic students contribute ‘largest singular monetary donation’ to Statesboro Food Bank

On Monday, November 4, Joe Bill Brannon, the operations manager of the Statesboro Food Bank, stood in awe as Georgia Southern University’s Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art’s advanced ceramics class revealed the total amount raised from its efforts during October’s Empty Bowl Project.

The “big check” presented to Brannon totaled $5,425 that students raised by handcrafting bowls and selling them full of chili. As a part of the national Empty Bowl Project, bowls are sold with a simple meal and the bowl serves as a reminder of the many who are in need both locally and nationally.

“The students and I work all year long to prepare for this project,” said Ceramics Professor Jeff Schmuki. “Students come in on their own time, outside of the class, to make many of these bowls.”

Schmuki’s advanced ceramics class is a service-learning certified course, where students apply academic knowledge and critical thinking skills to meet genuine community needs.

“The mission of this event is something I believe in, as well as something the students and community believe in,” said Schmuki, “and when we all work together that is when an event such as this will be successful.”

During Brannon’s visit to the ceramics studio, he explained the importance of the local food bank, stating that one in seven American families are on food stamps. In Bulloch County, the food bank serves a hot meal to upwards of 700 people two days each week and provides canned and frozen foods to those in need. Brannon also mentioned that he has learned that there are students on Georgia Southern’s campus who are in need, proving that the need is growing.

“The only way to do what we [the Statesboro Food Bank] do is through donations of food or money,” he said.

Brannon also announced to students that the food bank would soon relocate to the former Julia P. Bryant Elementary School building located off West Main Street. With the move, Brannon said that the Statesboro Food Bank hopes to open its doors for five or even six days a week to serve hot meals at lunchtime, efforts which will require continued assistance and support from the local community.

“It can only happen because people care, and not only that but that people know about the need,” said Brannon. “Everyone who helped with this project deserves a heartfelt thanks from everyone here in Bulloch County.”

View more images from the Empty Bowl Project!

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