

Growing Healthy Minds, Bodies, and Communities Program Hosts at Home Virtual Cook and Learn Event

by Kimberly on December 8, 2020

OXFORD, Miss. – The Growing Healthy Minds, Bodies, and Communities (GHBMC): An Integrated Preschool Curriculum, provided over 150 meals to families in Lafayette and Sunflower Counties.

Dr. Kenya Wolff, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, Dr. Alicia C. Stapp, Associate Professor of Health and Physical Education, and Ms. Tess Johnson, M.S. Health Promotion (2020) and GHBMC Program Manager created the The Growing Healthy Minds, Bodies, and Communities preschool curriculum that emphasizes social-emotional learning through the integration of yoga/mindfulness, gardening/nutrition, anti-bullying/anti-bias, and physical activity to support the wellbeing of children in Mississippi.

Over 150 families from Willie Price Lab School, Bramlett, Lafayette Lower Elementary School, and the Sunflower Consolidated School District all participated in the first annual Home Virtual Cook and Learn Event. The event not only included a meal, but also contained



fun educational activities for students and families about heartfulness and gratitude.

Families cooked alongside chef, Elizabeth Speed, through a virtual cooking demo in order to prepare a well-balanced meal. Meal kits were filled with fresh, local ingredients from the Chicory Market in Lafayette county and

included a link to an activity on gratitude and *The Thankful Book* by Todd Parr.

The event was created with the intention to bring families together and create an opportunity for children to share what they have been learning in their classroom as part of the *Growing Healthy Mind, Bodies, and Communities* program.

In response to the event, families within the community responded with positive feedback.

Courtney Jones says, “My family had a great time cooking the meal together. Our four children took great pride in participating! We truly enjoyed the meal and more importantly the experience. It is a great idea for a weekend activity as the weather gets cold and we look for something to do indoors.”





Another family added, “We are filled with gratitude for this delicious gift tonight. We enjoyed the meal and the experience. Thank you so much! Love, the Amidons.”

The Baker family includes, “Tonight’s meal was phenomenal while also very fun being in the kitchen and cooking together as a family! Thank you all so much for putting this together and for all the hard work! We have been looking forward to it all week! ”

The integrated, preschool curriculum will continue to reach students to address the major challenges that we face in Mississippi including high levels of poverty, childhood obesity and racial segregation through education and community engagement.