

## **‘Champions’ Needed to Help End Child Hunger in North Carolina**

### ***School Meals for All NC recruits advocates for new initiative***

One in six children in North Carolina experiences hunger on a daily basis; one in three in rural areas. Providing no-cost school meals can help. Now, North Carolinians across the state are signing up to advocate for this initiative to combat child hunger in schools.

The statewide nonpartisan [School Meals for All NC Coalition \(SMFA NC\)](#) recently unveiled its [Champions program](#) to help budding advocates share their stories and make the case in their local communities and among state policymakers.

“Far too many students in schools across North Carolina are hungry,” says Kayla Holland, Food and Nutrition Program Manager at The Center for Black Health & Equity. “Our students need advocates who have perspective on the issue of child hunger to bring their lived experiences and drive positive policy change in our state.”

#### **What is a SMFANC Champion?**

SMFA NC Champions are advocates of school meals for in North Carolina who are willing to share their story. There are many levels of sharing your story as a SMFA NC Champion and the only expectation is issue advocacy, not lobbying. Our hope with this SMFA NC Champion opportunity is to amplify community voices and empower advocacy.

#### **Who can become a SMFANC Champion?**

Anyone who supports the mission of School Meals for All NC and is willing to speak out in order to edify, educate and advance policy change can become a Champion. Students under 18 are welcome to become Champions with parental consent.

#### **Who can attend the Monthly Strategy Sessions with SMFANC Champions?**

The monthly SMFA NC Strategy Sessions are open to anyone in support of SMFA NC, interested in becoming a SMFA NC, and of course SMFA NC Champions for support and training. Attendance for SMFA NC Champions is not mandatory, but attendance is highly encouraged to familiarize with coalition messaging and take advantage of various trainings.

#### **When are the Monthly SMFANC Strategy Sessions?**

SMFANC Strategy Sessions with SMFANC Champions are typically held the second Monday of the month from 6pm to 7pm.

April 8th, 2024 @ 6-7pm
May 13th, 2024 @ 6-7pm
June 10th, 2024 @ 6-7pm
July 8th, 2024 @ 6-7pm
August 12th, 2024 @ 6-7pm
September 9th, 2024 @ 6-7pm
October 14th, 2024 @ 6-7pm
November 11th, 2024 @ 6-7pm

**Where can I register for the Monthly Strategy Sessions with SMFANC Champions?**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0sc-CtqjwpHNSWxPxVjkAFK3pcPEsoFGh>

**Where can I sign up to officially become a SMFANC Champion?**

All supporters of SMFA NC interested in becoming a SMFANC Champions can sign up at <https://schoolmealsforallnc.org/become-a-champion/> to learn more.

**Will all the Monthly Strategy Sessions with SMFANC Champions be in English?**

At this time, we plan to offer three strategy sessions in Spanish. We will provide an update on which meetings will be available as soon as possible.

**We are happy to share three SMFA NC Champion stories:**

1. [Leah Carper's story](#) highlighted in the SMFA NC Blog
2. [Jannet Barnes' story](#) published in Greensboro's News & Record
3. [Elder Conrad Pridgen's story](#) published in Asheville's Mountain Xpress
4. [Elizabeth Santamour's story](#) published in Moore County, N.C.'s The Pilot

The School Meals for All NC coalition is led by the [North Carolina Alliance for Health](#), [The Center for Black Health & Equity](#), [Carolina Hunger Initiative](#), and [A Better Chance A Better Community](#). The SMFA NC mission is to ensure every child in every public school in NC has access to breakfast and lunch at no cost. To learn more visit [www.schoolmealsforallnc.org](http://www.schoolmealsforallnc.org).

**SMFA NC COALITION CONTENT/SOCIAL MEDIA:**

1. [Twitter/ X](#)
2. [Facebook](#)
3. [Instagram](#)
4. [Threads](#)
5. [LinkedIn](#)
6. [YouTube](#)

**VISUALS/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:**

Interview with SMFANC Champion upon request.