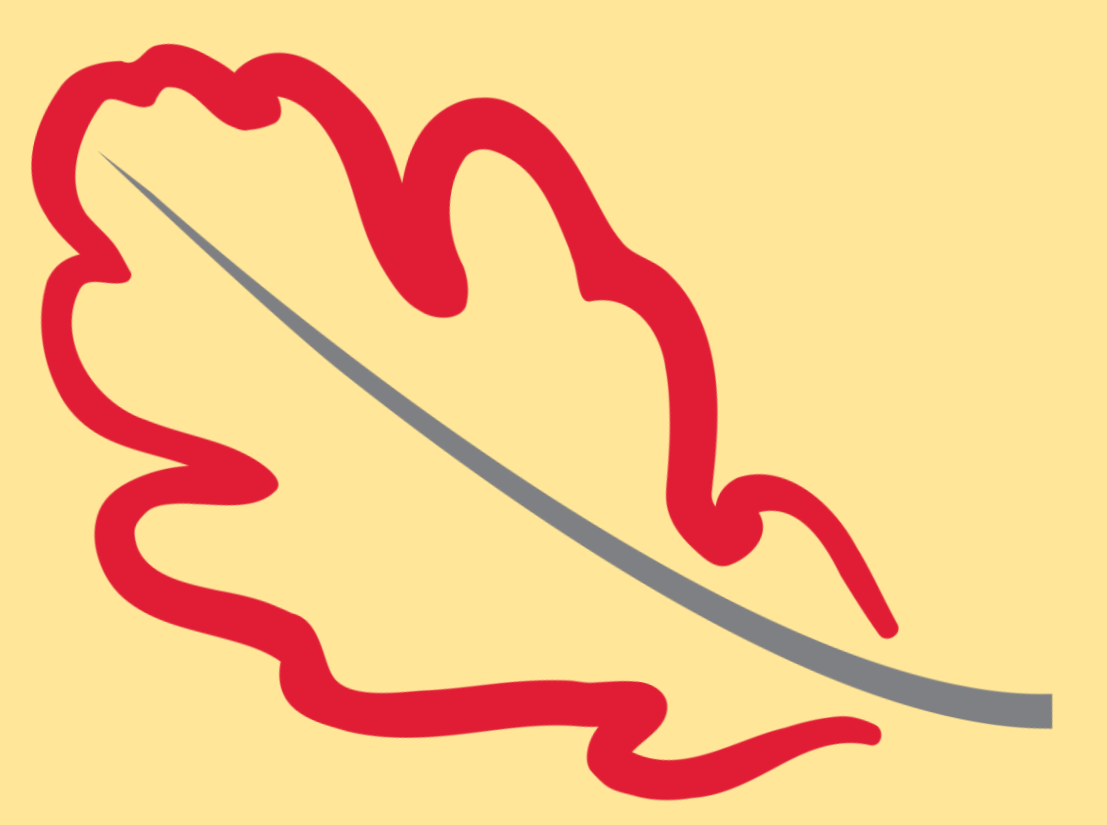


SNAP Benefits NC: Making Resources More Available in NC

Lucas Seijo

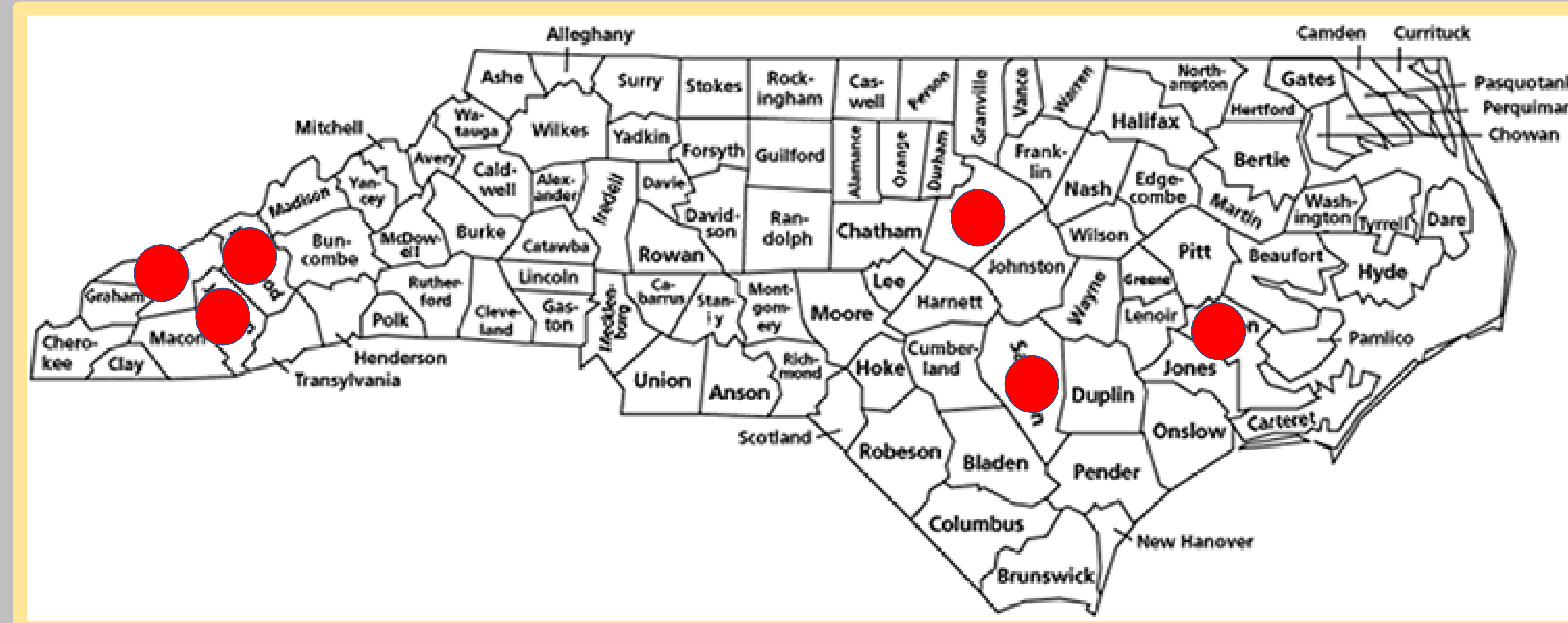
Oaks Leadership Scholars



Call to Action: Reach out to the Representatives and Senators who represent you in the NCGA and ask them to support the repeal of the “Protect North Carolina Workers Act”.

Introduction:

- New SNAP policy changes require individuals without dependents who are between the ages of 18-49 to work 20 hours a week, or else they can only receive benefits for 3 months over a 3-year period. (1)
- To circumvent these requirements, waivers can be offered; however, waivers are not permitted in North Carolina due to the “Protect North Carolina Workers Act” of 2015. (1)
- 39 counties in North Carolina lost jobs last year, and \$25,000,000 could be loss in economic statewide due to not offering waivers. (2)



Map of NC with Counties (Above): The counties with a red dot indicate where in NC flyers were passed out as part of the SNAP Benefits NC Campaign.

Volunteers:

- All Oaks Scholars volunteers received training on what to do on Friday, February 21st. There, they received the background information on the campaign, expectations of behavior, a guide to campaigning, safety information, along with instructions on how to collect data while campaigning.
- By March 3rd, we had 4 volunteers signed up to pass out flyers in Wake County, 1 in Sampson County, the Representative passed out information in Jackson, Swain, and Haywood Counties.

SNAP Benefits NC!

What is SNAP?

- ⇒ The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federally funded program that is housed within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- ⇒ The program is used by about 38 million Americans annually. SNAP benefits are distributed monthly to allow families to purchase fresh produce, meats, dairy products, and more!
- ⇒ SNAP has been shown to decrease food insecurity by nearly 30%.

Why Does it Matter to You?

- ⇒ In rural parts of the country, SNAP can be very beneficial to local economies, generating \$1.79 in local economic activity for every SNAP dollar spent, helping to bring in new customers and expand markets for local farmers.
- ⇒ In Craven County alone there are an estimated 15,600 food insecure people, 31% of whom are currently ineligible for SNAP benefits.
- ⇒ SNAP offers and has offered quick assistance to people affected by natural disasters such as Hurricanes Florence and Matthew.

What is Happening With SNAP in NC?

- ⇒ SNAP currently allows able-bodied adults (between the ages of 18-49) working under 20 hours a week to receive SNAP for only 3 months out of a 3 year period.
- ⇒ In areas where there is limited employment opportunities, such as rural areas, states could waive the work requirement. However, starting April 1, 2020 states ability to waive work requirements will be limited.
- ⇒ These limits can be waived by a state's Governor, especially in places like NC where 39 counties lost jobs last year, and in the eastern part of the state were 19 of the 20 poorest counties are located, however, Governor Pat McCrory blocked NC from providing waivers in the “Protect North Carolina Workers Act” of 2015.
- ⇒ Because of the lack of waivers, there is an estimated 100,000 people at risk of losing benefits, resulting in an estimated \$25,000,000 loss in economic activity in NC.
- ⇒ With 300,000 NC citizens living on the east coast having already reported they didn't have enough food following Hurricane Florence, this problem would become more severe.

What Can You Do?

- ⇒ In 2019, members of the General Assembly wrote legislation that would repeal McCrory's act, allowing NC to offer waivers again, however it wasn't passed.
- ⇒ To show you support repealing this act, call or email your local representatives and let them know you support the repeal of the “Protect North Carolina Workers Act”!

State Senator Norman Sanderson
Phone: (919) 733-5706
Email: Norman.Sanderson@ncleg.net

State Rep. Michael Speciale
Phone: (919) 733-5853
Email: Michael.Speciale@ncleg.net

Have questions? Want to get involved more? Contact Lucas Seijo. Email: snapbenefitsnc@gmail.com

SNAP Benefits NC Flyer - customized by district - were passed out as part of the campaign.



The flyers were passed out on March 3rd, NC's Primary Election Day (3)

Findings:

- A number of those reach out to did not know what SNAP was but were open to calling to show support.
- When words such as ‘Food Stamps’ or even ‘SNAP’ weren't used, support for supplemental nutrition programs was much higher.
 - The term ‘Food Stamps’ was not used by myself or any other volunteers but was used by multiple people talked to.
- Overall, a strong base was built to where this campaign can flourish in the future, with a possible second round during the Generals.

Citations:

- (1) Haynes-Maslow, L. S. (2019, December 11). Trump administration's destructive cuts to food assistance will harm 700,000 Americans. NC Policy Watch.
- (2) Queen, J. S., Turner, B., Ager, J., & Gailliard, J. (2019). Nutritional Assistance for Employment Deserts. *HOUSE BILL DRH30362-LU-26B*.
- (3) Whitley, G. (2020, March 3). Primary Election Day. Sun Journal.