

# SEABEE COURIER

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## NCBC wraps up Feds Feed Families program

By **Brian Lamar**  
NCBC Public Affairs

Naval personnel and family members of the Naval Construction Battalion Center wrapped up the Feds Feed Families food drive Aug. 31 with more than 7,000 pounds of food donations to food pantries and missions around the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

The program coordinator, Religious Programs Specialist 2nd Class, Henry Shoemaker, a chaplain's assistant with the Seabee Memorial Chapel, had set the initial goal of raising more than 2,000 lbs. of food.

"Last year we raised 2,000 pounds. We decided that would consider the program successful if we could raise more than that this year," said Shoemaker.

Shoemaker set out food donation boxes in prime locations around the base, but the most fruitful collection points was the commissary.

"The commissary put together bags of about 20 pounds of food each with a \$10 la-

bel on them. It was easy to give this way because customers could just tell the cashier that they wanted to donate and \$10 would be added to their bill," said Shoemaker.

Shoemaker and other chapel staff dropped off deliveries to five different food pantry's around the South Mississippi area each week throughout the food drive season that began June 1. The food deliveries added up to 5,300 pounds while \$400 was delivered to the 12 Baskets Food Bank for food purchase. According to Jennifer Keegan, the cash donations translated into food purchases of one pound per .19 cents. The \$400 donation gives the food bank 1,700 pounds of buying power.

The 12 Baskets Food Bank is only one of two official food banks in Mississippi. They rely on their budget and corporate donations. The amounts are an allotted amount for the service area of South Mississippi.

The food collected goes directly to soup kitchens and homeless shelters. "These donations give us wiggle room in our budget. We don't get a lot of donations like this. We



**Religious Programs Specialist 2nd Class Henry Shoemaker a chaplain's assistant at the Seabee Memorial Chapel, unloads food at the 12 Baskets Food Bank in Gulfport, Aug. 31.** (U.S. Navy photo by Brian Lamar/Released)



**Religious Programs Specialist 2nd Class Henry Shoemaker a chaplain's assistant and Steelworker Constructionman Tyler Norha, a limited duty personnel assigned to the Seabee Memorial Chapel, unload food at the Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, July 29.** (U.S. Navy photo by Brian Lamar/Released)

have a budget and we have to purchase the food. We are so glad the Seabee base does this for us," said Keegan.

The food bank takes summer donations seriously because of a hidden additional need.

"During the summer, we typically get less donations that we would during the holiday season, but summer donations are important because many students aren't in school where they would normally receive two hot meals. While they are home during the summer, parents feel the added strain and many are not receiving adequate nutrition," said Keegan.

The next Fed Feeds Families season is not open until June 1, 2017, but Shoemaker is accepting ideas of how to improve the program and to make it even better next year.

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# NCTC provides Quarles with reading assistance

**By Builder 2nd Class Yeraldy Ramos**  
 NCTC Public Affairs

Steelworker 1st Class Michael Brackett, a member of the Naval Construction Training Center has joined forces with Dr. Jan Hansen, Quarles Elementary School principal, providing reading improvement to the students through the "Power Up!" pro-

gram. Dianna Miller, the lead teacher in charge of the program, has high hopes for the success of the students that participate in Power Up. Since the program's inception in February, NCTC has been integral assisting students reading more than 1,000 books through 18 military personnel who have volunteered their time to mentor 42 students ranging from kindergarten through third grade. Currently, there are 40 students enrolled in the program.

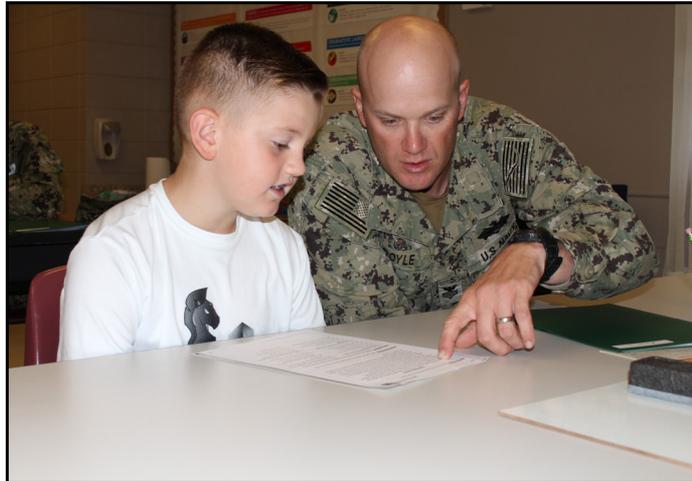
"Students develop stronger fluency, comprehension skills, and improve their reading proficiency," says Miller. She goes on to say that, "Students are more confident from the positive interaction

with community mentors who take time to read one-on-one with them." The support NCTC personnel provides through the Power Up program is being noticed by faculty.

"Students benefit from this additional support in reading," says Miller. "Adult mentors serve as readers for the students, as well as positive role models." The military members that have volunteered understand the value as well.

"It shows the students that other people, aside from their teachers, do care about their success and progress," explains Builder 2nd Class Nathaniel Callahan.

The Power Up program is designed to improve reading skills by providing a thirty-minute session for a military member to sit and listen as their sponsored student reads a story. If the student reading struggles, the military member assists them in sounding out words they have difficulty with. At the end of the session, the students take an Accelerated Reader Test on the computer, which the military member stands by in support of the sponsored student.



**A Seabee works with a student at Quarles Elementary in reading comprehension skills Aug. 19.** (Courtesy photo)

## NCBC staff tests teamwork, emergency reaction skills during exercise



**Above: Naval Construction Battalion Center medical staff test their emergency response skills, communications effectiveness and teamwork skills while responding to an active shooter exercise Aug. 30.**

**Right: A moulage team volunteer pretends to be a victim during the exercise. The base uses moulage makeup and effects to add realism to the training.** (U.S. Navy photo by Billy Ducote)



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