

HCEF: IN MOTION

BACKPACKS FOR NEW BEGINNINGS



HCEF distributed **3,500 backpacks filled with essential school supplies** to students experiencing homelessness and housing instability across the region.

Distribution kicked off at our annual **Summer Bash**, where 300 students received backpacks to help them start the new school year prepared. The remaining 3,200 backpacks were distributed through shelters, schools, housing agencies and community partners.

Beyond the supplies inside, a backpack can provide a sense of normalcy, stability and belonging. For some students experiencing homelessness, it may also be among the few possessions they can truly call their own.



YOUNG LEADERS, BRIGHT FUTURES

100 Teen CEOs gained paid workforce experience across 52 worksites while building skills and professional connections to support their futures.

Throughout the program, students participated in professional development, networking and career-readiness opportunities alongside their work experiences, gaining exposure to different careers and building confidence in professional environments.

The end of program celebration brought students, employers and supporters together to recognize what Teen CEOs accomplished, the relationships they built and the growth they demonstrated throughout the summer. Among the honorees was **JacCerra Gaither**, who received the **AJ Jefferson Award of Excellence**, recognizing leadership demonstrated throughout her Teen CEO experience.



INVESTING IN THEIR JOURNEY



Forty-five students received a record-breaking \$110,500 through HCEF's annual Hope Through Learning Awards to support their continued education.

In addition to the financial awards, students received educational tools and resources, including Chromebooks, to support their transition from high school into college and other postsecondary opportunities.

The awards represent an investment not only in where students are headed next, but in ensuring young people experiencing homelessness have resources to continue pursuing their educational goals.



SUMMER LEARNING ON THE MOVE

Learning continued throughout the summer through HCEF's Winnie's Wagon and library based programming, giving students opportunities to strengthen essential academic skills while school was out.

Through hands on activities, students worked on letter and number sense, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension and math, helping them stay connected to learning and build foundational skills as they prepared to return to school.



CHECKMATE FOR GROWTH



Through a partnership with **Queen's Gambit**, HCEF brought free weekly chess workshops to three shelter-based Summer Programs, expanding enrichment opportunities for children and families experiencing housing instability.

Across approximately 15 workshops, more than 20 students learned chess fundamentals, from piece movement to strategy, while strengthening critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

INCREASINGLY
The workshops gave students an opportunity to try something new, build confidence and engage in an activity that encourages patience, decision-making and strategic thinking both on and off the board.

BY THE NUMBERS

-  **3,500** Backpacks with Supplies Distributed
-  **\$110,500** Scholarships Awarded
-  **100** Teen CEOs in Paid Work Experiences
-  **52** Teen CEO Worksites
-  **410** Students Directly Supported
-  **464** Hours of Direct Support

SNAPSHOTS FROM HCEF'S SUMMER BASH

