

Backpack Beginnings founder a finalist for humanitarian award; vote online

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Parker White, Backpack Beginnings' founder and executive director, is a finalist for The NASCAR Foundation's sixth annual Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award presented by Nationwide.

The award honors volunteers from across the country who dedicate themselves to children's causes in their communities. Backpack Beginnings is a 100 percent volunteer organization that helps feed, comfort and clothe children in need.

White, a Greensboro native and the mother of two children, is the only finalist based in the Southeast region of the United States.

Backpack Beginnings, which started out as a program in one school feeding 50 children, has grown to a multi-program organization serving about 6,000 children who experience hunger and trauma.

It serves children in need in 38 Guilford County schools and has partnered with 20 agencies that help children in Guilford, Forsyth and Alamance counties.

"Our Food and Comfort Backpacks make all the difference for a child facing a long weekend filled with hunger or a day shattered by a traumatic experience," White said. "... This grant will help us reach more children."

Two upcoming sports events in Greensboro will benefit Backpack Beginnings: The PGA Tour's Wyndham Championship Aug. 15-21 at Sedgefield Country Club and the Kirkwood 5K road race on Aug. 27.

The NASCAR Foundation will donate \$175,000 to four charities: The winner's charity receives \$100,000, and remaining finalists' charities get \$25,000. The national winner will be announced on Sept. 27, 2016 at the NASCAR Foundation's Honors Gala in New York, N.Y.

Public voting to determine the award winner began July 13 and runs through 5 p.m. Sept. 26. Voting is limited to one vote per day per person.

Other finalists are Jim Giaccone, Tuesday's Children (New York), Andy Hoffman, Team Jack Foundation (Nebraska) and Logan Houptley, Mikayla's Voice (Pennsylvania).

The award was established in 2011 to honor The NASCAR Foundation Founder and Chairwoman Emeritus Betty Jane France's passion for service and volunteerism. Since its inception, the award has donated over



Parker Wood White

Parker Wood White of Backpack Beginnings.

\$875,000 to children's charities in honor of 20 finalists, impacting nearly 200,000 children.