

Bridges Over Barriers – 2017

NON-PROFIT AWARD: Mayfield Graves County, Truck Puller Association (Mayfield, KY)

VooRRR, vooRRR,vooRRR, is a familiar sound to spectators, FRYSC staff, and local residents alike on a hot August night as “suped up” trucks and tractors drag a metal weighted sled along the dirt track during the annual Mayfield Graves County Pulling for Kids, truck and tractor pull. The members of the Mayfield Graves County Truck and Tractor Pullers Association donate their time, resources, and expertise yearly to sponsor the event that brings thousands of spectators cheering for their favorite modified stock. As the summer comes to a close and children prepare to begin another school year it is certain that Larry Wooley, Kenneth Wiggins, Kenny Wiggins, Ricky Wilson, and their team are preparing to put smiles on faces of thousands of children and families. The pull takes place the third week in August with pullers making rounds to the local schools with their modified trucks and tractors. This advertising gains support for the pull that brings in approximately \$20,000-\$30,000 from ticket sales each year to benefit the Community Christmas Connection of Mayfield and Graves County. In addition to gate profits, the pullers offer the FRYSC the opportunity to host a concession stand, which allows centers to share proceeds to address various needs including clothing and shoes for students, assistance with transportation costs to doctor visits, and anything deemed a necessary expense for the center. With the funding from this parent and community involvement activity the CCC is able to assist many families to provide gifts during the holidays for their children. As resources continue to dwindle, the Pull is instrumental in addressing this community holiday program. During Christmas 2016, the FRYSCs were able to provide 651 students with gifts. Our mission of FRYSC is simple. The way each center carries out the mission is unique. We feel very blessed in Graves County to have these big-hearted community partners that go beyond to assist us in reaching our mission to remove non-cognitive barriers. Although it is true that Christmas gifts may not be a basic need, we believe they are a catalyst for sustaining partnerships that enhance students’ ability to succeed in school. By providing presents, we open doors to assist families in other ways, and create relationships with the families. The collateral effects of the program are numerous including gained community support and knowledge of the FRYSC centers’ vision. Not only do children, families, and FRYSC staff win during Christmas we win all year long and this is due to the community involvement and outreach, initiated by caring individuals who want each child to succeed on that “level playing field.” These advocates for kids (and FRYSCs) are the members of the Mayfield Graves County Truck and Tractor Pullers Association. Our community now knows our mission because of the attention brought to the Family Resource and Youth Services Centers by the pullers event, “Pulling for Kids.”