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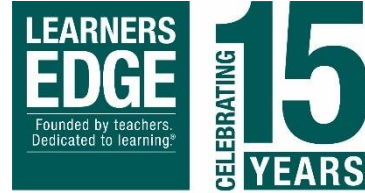
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# Press Release

## **Learners Edge Celebrates 15 Year Anniversary with a \$15,000 Donation to Blessings in a Backpack**

**Lakeville, MN, February 27, 2017:** On February 26, 2017, Learners Edge celebrated 15 years of providing professional development to teachers nationwide. In honor of this anniversary, Learners Edge has committed \$15,000 to Blessings in a Backpack, a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to mobilize communities, individuals and resources to provide food on the weekends for elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, approximately 16 million American households with children are food insecure (1) and several studies (2)(3) have revealed the damaging effects that food insecurity can cause in brain development, social development and ultimately academic success. "From the beginning of my teaching career, I have always been aware of the challenges faced by children who would come into my classroom hungry," said Joe Cotter, President and CEO of Learners Edge. "When I learned about Blessings in a Backpack, I knew Learners Edge had to be a part of this amazing organization."

Learners Edge will make an initial corporate donation in February and a secondary donation in honor of National Blessings in a Backpack week in mid-September. "The Learners Edge mission is to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and this can only be fulfilled if children come to school being fully nourished," continued Cotter. Brooke Wiseman, CEO for Blessings in a Backpack stated, "Blessings in a Backpack exists because of valued partners, like Learners Edge, who help make hunger-free weekends a reality for children facing food insecurity across the country. We are thrilled with our new partnership with Learners Edge and congratulate them on their 15th anniversary."

From humble beginnings, Learners Edge Co-Founders and former middle school geography teachers, Joe Cotter and Kyle Pederson started the company because they believed they could develop higher quality and more effective professional development than the "sit-and-get" PD they experienced in their young teaching careers. This philosophy has continued throughout the history of the company with courses consistently developed with a keen focus on rigor while insuring applicability to today's classroom.

Over the past fifteen years, Learners Edge has grown tremendously and is proud to have served tens of thousands of amazing teachers from every state in the Union in addition to several countries around the globe. Learners Edge currently partners with seven, regionally accredited college/university partners from across the country in an effort to serve the professional development needs of teachers.

"I am constantly humbled by what Learners Edge has become," Cotter says, "I am amazed by our committed and loyal teacher customers that do their best every day in serving an ever-changing student population. We are grateful to be a part of their career." Over the years, Learners Edge has expanded continuing education offerings beyond their more than one hundred graduate credit courses to include free educational webinars and online workshops to meet the needs of teachers and districts during all stages of their career.

**About Blessings in a Backpack:** Blessings in a Backpack mobilizes communities, individuals, and resources to provide food for the weekend to elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry. Over 90,000 students receive food each Friday in more than 1,000 programs in 47 states and Washington, D.C. To learn more or to donate, visit [blessingsinabackpack.org](http://blessingsinabackpack.org).

**About Learners Edge** (<http://www.LearnersEdgeInc.com>): Learners Edge has been committed to helping teachers reach the highest level of success in their classrooms and in their careers since 2002. Offering over 120 self-paced, continuing education courses for teachers across the country and around the world, Learners Edge is continually working towards its mission of improving the quality of teaching and learning.

- (1) United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service  
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx>
- (2) The Borgen Project  
<https://borgenproject.org/effects-of-hunger-on-education/>
- (3) American Psychological Association  
<http://www.apa.org/pi/families/poverty.aspx>