

"Backpack in the Park" benefits Atlanta and Decatur public schools

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Kids enjoyed giant water slides at last year's Backpack in the Park event

With the back-to-school season just a few weeks away, Atlanta's gay and gay-friendly community will once again support Atlanta area elementary and high school students who lack the necessary school supplies to begin the new school year. The 2nd annual Backpack in the Park, presented by the Atlanta non-profit organization For the Kid in All of Us, seeks to top last year's event where more than 500 backpacks filled with school supplies was collected.

Backpack in the Park is a family- friendly event to be held, Saturday, July 28 from 4 – 8 p.m. at Magnolia Hall in Piedmont Park. In addition to complimentary food and beverages, there will also be activities for people of all ages, including a moonwalk, music and a mechanical bull. The only requirement for attendance is to bring a new unwrapped backpack containing a preset list of items or a gift card valued at \$30 or more. For a complete, printable list of school supplies to include in each backpack, visit www.FortheKid.org.

"Backpack to the Future' might be a more appropriate name for this event," Alex Wan, founder of the For the Kid in All of US said. "Starting school on the right foot, with all the necessary school supplies, is as fundamental as reading and writing,"

According to the UGA Initiative on Poverty and the Economy, in 2003 there were over 496,000 children under the age of 18 living in poverty in the state of Georgia, of which over 150,000 living in the metro Atlanta area. Many of these children dread the beginning of school every August as their families lack the financial resources to provide them with even the basic supplies they will need to do well. Without a sound education, most will face a more difficult future. Students at Atlanta Public Schools and City Schools of Decatur are the designated beneficiaries for this year's Backpack in the Park.

Sponsors for Backpack in the Park include ING, Temporary Accommodations, Brainstorm Creative Group, A Legendary Event, CARES Foundation (Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage), CR Mortgage Solutions, David

Magazine, Southern Voice, Einstein's, Cowtippers Steaks & Spirits, Joe's on Juniper, Georgia Beverage Association, Ciroc Vodka and Peroni Beer.

For more information or to become a patron or sponsor of Backpack in the Park, visit www.ForTheKid.org.