**Cup & Brew**

111 Caffeine Corner

Auburn, AL 36830

www.cupandbrewcoffee.com

Media Contact:

Lady Frances Hamilton, Chief Communication Officer

(123) 456-7890 | lfh0007@cupandbrewcoffee.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 20, 2020

**Harbert happily helps those in need and discovers a new passion along the way**

AUBURN, Ala. (Oct. 20, 2020) — Hannah Harbert, a current junior in high school and an established barista at Cup & Brew, thought that she had her life mapped out and well planned. She would graduate high school, attend college, study finance and take a job as a certified accountant. Little did she know that a few afternoons completing community service hours would change her life path forever.

Hannah Harbert loves coffee; therefore, she loves working as a barista at the local coffeehouse, Cup & Brew. It allows her to be creative and to save some money. After Cup & Brew announced its new partnership program with the Sweet & Salty Soup Kitchen, Harbert was asked to volunteer.

“Mr. Latte reached out to me and encouraged me to volunteer with Sweet & Salty,” Harbert said. “To be honest, I needed a few more community service hours, so I decided to go check it out.”

Sweet & Salty Soup Kitchen, which is located in Lee county, offers meals to the hungry five days per week. Sweet & Salty originally opened its doors because according to data from the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau, 19 percent of all Lee county residents are impoverished.

This statistic was high and one that opened the eyes of many in the community. Determined to help decrease this number and feed residents, Sweet & Salty began serving. Unfortunately, volunteers were few and far between; however, as soon as the partnership with Cup & Brew was finalized, more people began to volunteer.

Hannah Harbert was one of those volunteers. She arrived at her first shift feeling curious and a bit apprehensive. “I really did not know what to expect, but as soon as my first shift was over, I knew that I needed to come back…my work here was just beginning,” Harbert noted.

As a volunteer, Harbert had the opportunity to serve in a few different capacities. At the beginning of her shift, she helped with the preparation of Cup & Brew’s contributions. Through their partnership, the coffeehouse supplies Sweet & Salty with post-meal pastries, coffees, and teas.

-MORE-

**Hannah Harbert, 2--**

After the prep work, Harbert set up shop and began to meet with people and to serve them.

“What struck me the most about the people I met was how open they were with me. They did not hesitate to share their stories with me, and I began truly connecting with them after just a few minutes of honest conversation.”

Sweet & Salty Soup Kitchen serves a few hundred citizens daily, so Harbert had the opportunity to meet and to speak with many people during her shift.

Poverty runs rampant in the state of Alabama, as 16.9 percent of Alabama residents live below the federal poverty line, meaning that over 800,000 Alabamians are living in poverty, according to data found in the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau.

Harbert noted that she was, “surprised that Sweet & Salty had as many guests dining as [they] did, but I am grateful that we have the resources available in Lee county to be able to give back to those in need.”

After Harbert concluded her first shift, she immediately signed up to volunteer at Sweet & Salty weekly.

“It was as if a chord struck within me. I realized how fortunate I am, which was deeply humbling. But, I also realized that I am passionate about serving my community and getting to know those around me.”

Harbert has always been known to be extroverted and outgoing, a true people person, according to her teachers. So, this role is a natural fit for her. However, her desire to serve runs deeper than the conversations she had.

“I want to help provide food security. Furthermore, I want to decrease the number of impoverished and hungry citizens in Auburn as much as I possibly can.”

Through this experience, Harbert discovered a new passion. She quickly realized that she has a true heart for service, and she fell in love with the regulars at Sweet & Salty.

As she reflects on her hours spent volunteering, Harbert notes that she gained some “much needed perspective through this eye-opening experience”, and she even admits to being embarrassed that she originally only volunteered to gain community service hours.

“What originally stemmed from a selfish desire has honestly changed my outlook on life forever. I don’t even want to become an accountant anymore. In fact, I’ve decided to pursue a degree in Nonprofit Studies because I hope to take over Sweet & Salty someday.”

Hannah Harbert is following her dreams while making others’ come true as she thoughtfully serves her community.

For more information on Harbert’s story, as well as Cup & Brew’s new partnership with the Sweet & Salty Soup Kitchen, please visit [www.cupandbrewcoffee.com](http://www.cupandbrewcoffee.com)

###