

# Back to School, Stay in School: NAACP to provide free school supplies to children

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
August 7 2017 11:09 AM



**ALTON** - For more than two decades, the Alton branch of the NAACP has given free backpacks full of school supplies to students from kindergarten through senior year of high school.

This year's event will take place on Saturday, Aug. 12, 2017, at the grounds of James Killion Park at Salu on Washington Avenue in Alton from 10 a.m. - noon. Besides nearly 1,000 free backpacks full of necessary supplies for all students who attend, the event will feature the Safari Dental Van, which will provide free dental screenings, as well as free snow cones, soda, hot dogs, chips, a dunking booth from the Renegade Football team, a dunking booth, free government cellphones, face painting, a tour of a truck from the Alton Fire Department and local hair stylists and barbers giving discounts on hair cuts and styling.

"This year with our new president Andy Hightower, we are offering a dental bus to come and give free dental exams for children, a bounce house and we are giving away snow cones and hot dogs," Abe Lee Barham, an organizer of the event, said. "We want the community to start embracing that this is for their children. We are looking to help with supplies not only in August, but through the year where kids can come in and get them. Andy Hightower will be introduced at the event. We want to make sure the NAACP is for all the people of this community."

The keynote speaker for the event will be Alton High School Senior Class President Anya Jones.

Free transportation is also provided, but students must be present to receive school supplies. The event is open to everyone, and parents are encouraged to go with their children in order to take part in the free dental screening.

Donors for the event are always welcome.

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)