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## Leading academics receive prestigious award

**Leading academics at Northumbria University, Newcastle have received a prestigious professional award for their research into school breakfast clubs and holiday hunger.**

Professor Greta Defeyter, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor, Strategic Planning & Engagement, and Dr Pamela L Graham, Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow, at Northumbria, have received the North East of England Branch of the British Psychological Society Public Engagement Award 2016.

The Award recognises individuals or groups who have made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of psychology to the general public in the North East of England. Nominations for the award are made by British Psychological Society members, with the winner decided by a panel, comprised of members of the North East of England Branch Committee.

Professor Defeyter and Dr Graham lead Northumbria University's Healthy Living Lab, which explores pressing social issues, bringing together a team of over 20 academics including experts in health economics, nutrition, psychology, social work, sociology, sports science, sports psychology, and law.

They academics directly involved the views of children, parents, teachers and holiday club staff in their research into school breakfast and holiday clubs, showing that the clubs are a necessary resource to support families throughout the year. As a result of the research a number of school breakfast programmes, focussing on improved nutritional, educational and social outcomes have been funded, as well as a number of interventions aimed at reducing so called 'Holiday Hunger'.

Professor Defeyter advises a number of national governmental and international committees on the importance of school breakfast clubs and holiday interventions. She is a key academic advisor to the All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food, providing guidance and advice to the 25 strong MPs and Lords group.

In 2015, she was made a Fellow from the British Psychological Society. More recently, she won a Food Heroes Award (Sustain, 2016) for her research and evaluations on school breakfast clubs and holiday hunger.

Commenting on the award, Greta said: "It's a real honour and a huge accolade to receive this award, especially as we have been nominated by our peers. It is incredibly rewarding to know that the research we are conducting is having a positive influence on families; and that our research findings are being used to inform policy."

Dr Pamela L Graham, a Vice Chancellor's Research Fellow, added: "Colleagues within our Lab have worked hard to ensure that the views of children, parents and school and community staff are represented throughout our research and are shared as widely as possible. To have the value of this work recognised is

an excellent achievement for the whole Lab and we are delighted.”

Professor Defeyter accepted the award at a meeting of The British Psychology Society’s North East Committee in York.

Dr Beth Bell, Chair of the British Psychology Society’s North East Committee, said: "The Public Engagement Award recognises outstanding practice, and it is a pleasure to award it to Greta and Pam this year. Their work at the Healthy Living Lab clearly demonstrates the value and importance of involving the public in research and the significant impact that this has had on practice and policy. They are widely recognised as experts in their field and through their research are making a very positive impact on children’s lives."

The British Psychological Society is the representative body for psychology and psychologists in the UK.

For more information about Northumbria's Research visit  
[www.northumbria.ac.uk/research](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/research)

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