

The United States Conference of Mayors and Sodexo

CHILDHOOD ANTI-HUNGER PROGRAMS IN 24 CITIES

November 2009



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS





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FOREWORD

For a quarter-century The U.S. Conference of Mayors has reported to the nation on the status of hunger and homelessness in America's cities. The Conference's annual surveys and reports are the subjects of national news reports, and their contribution to raising national awareness of these problems is widely recognized. Conference members appreciate the fact that, in recent years, this effort has been strengthened substantially by a partnership with Sodexo, a world leader in food and facilities management.

This year, to supplement and expand upon these annual reports, the Conference and Sodexo determined that a report on programs and practices targeting childhood hunger in cities across the nation would be helpful in moving toward the goal articulated by President Obama of ending childhood hunger in America by 2015. The President aims to reach this goal through his anti-poverty plan and through major commitments that build upon federal food assistance programs. Mayors recognize that the job losses resulting from the current deep economic recession have exacerbated family and childhood hunger problems in cities throughout the nation and will continue to do so for years to come, and that the current pressure on governments and other public and private agencies to provide food to families in need can only grow.

Responding to the food needs of a growing population at risk of hunger when both the public revenues and private donations needed to do so are dwindling promises to be a painful problem for America's cities in the years ahead. The Conference of Mayors will continue to pursue public policies that support more adequate federal programs to reduce hunger in America, and will continue to raise national awareness of the severity of the hunger problem.

We also will continue to facilitate the exchange of information among mayors on the most effective programs they can employ and strategies they can use to combat hunger in their cities. We offer this publication in support of that goal.



Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
November 2009

INTRODUCTION

The federal government currently provides nutrition assistance to income-eligible children and their families through U.S. Department of Agriculture programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the Food Stamp Program), the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and several commodity assistance programs.

In Fiscal Year 2008, USDA spent \$60.7 billion on food assistance programs, an 11 percent increase over the previous year. This represented the largest percentage increase in food assistance spending in 16 years and the eighth consecutive year in which food assistance expenditures exceeded the previous historical record amount.

Clearly, the need continues to dwarf the response: Despite USDA spending and that of countless other public and private agencies and organizations of all sizes across the nation, childhood hunger in America continues at an unacceptable level. In 2007, the most recent year for which data are available, USDA reported that 16.9 percent of all children (12.4 million) had low or very low food security; nearly one percent of all children (691,000) had very low food security. In the same year, 15.8 percent of households with children (6.2 million) had low or very low food security; 0.8 percent of households (323,000) had very low food security. In African American and Hispanic households, rates of food insecurity were higher.

Results of a long-term study of 4,800 households published in the November issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* found that 90 percent of African American children (and about 49 percent of all children) will, by 20 years of age, reside in a household that receives food stamps. The study's conclusion, in summary: "American children are at a high risk of encountering a spell during which their families are in poverty and food insecure as indicated through their use of food stamps. Such events have the potential to seriously jeopardize a child's overall health."

By USDA definition, individuals experiencing low food security can avoid disrupting their eating patterns by using a variety of coping strategies such as eating less varied diets, participating in federal food assistance programs, or getting emergency food from community pantries. But those experiencing very low food security don't fare as well: Their regular eating patterns will be disrupted and their food intake reduced at times during the year because they have insufficient money or other resources for food.

The Mayors' Report

This spring, The U.S. Conference of Mayors (www.usmayors.org), with the support of its partner in anti-hunger efforts, Sodexo (www.sodexoUSA.com), invited mayors to describe the programs or initiatives that have demonstrated effectiveness in combating childhood hunger in their cities – the best practices that could guide other mayors in selecting or developing approaches to lowering a level of childhood hunger at which, by government definition, nearly 700,000 children in America cannot get enough food. Mayors were invited to describe single city-wide anti-hunger initiatives or one or more specific projects that target children in their schools, neighborhoods, or families.

This report illustrates the wide variety of approaches being taken in 24 cities of all sizes in all regions of the country. The 41 initiatives described range from mayors' efforts to organize anti-hunger efforts city-wide, to examples of how cities are making national programs fit their unique local situations, to examples of how individual institutions, such as schools and hospitals, are creating innovative solutions to their cities' childhood hunger problems.

Federal and Private National Programs

Most of the anti-hunger efforts described in this report rely on the collaboration of a wide range of community agencies and organizations, public and private, for their success. With few exceptions, they involve the implementation of programs supported by federal funds – principally, the USDA's Summer Food Services Program – and/or programs promoted by private national organizations such as Feeding America (formerly America's Second Harvest).

- Use of USDA's summer program is described in the report by Allentown, Dubuque, Honolulu, Lauderdale Lakes, Pocatello, San Francisco, and Seattle.
- Feeding America's national Backpack Program (called the Backpack Buddies program in some cities and Food 4 Kids in others) is described by Charleston, Dallas, Louisville, Oklahoma City, and Santa Fe.
- Feeding America's national Kids Cafe program, which provides free meals and snacks at community locations and schools, is described by Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, and Richmond.

Backpack Programs

It's clear that providing schoolchildren who are at risk of hunger with backpacks filled with nutritious food to be consumed over weekends and holidays when they do not have access to free or reduced-price school breakfast and lunch programs is central to many cities' efforts to combat childhood hunger. (Feeding America indicates that 2,200 of their programs serve more than 90,000 children each year.) One city's program administrator summed up statements offered by many others, saying that "kids who go to bed hungry and worry about where their next meal will come from cannot concentrate in school and will fall victim to relying on welfare programs in adulthood." Put another way by a school principal, "When hunger ends, learning begins."

As this report shows, there are variations in the way a backpack program is implemented in individual schools across the cities, but all adhere to a basic model in which: the students needing food are identified by school staff in a position to know the students' and families' needs; the backpacks given to students are nondescript, to avoid any stigma being attached to their use; and the food provided is "kid-friendly" and requires little or no preparation.

While Feeding America backpack programs are described in this report by several cities, other models of backpack and take-home food programs benefiting children are described by Baltimore, Chicago, Dubuque, Evansville, Lansing, Louisville, Pocatello, and Stockton.

Food Banks and Other Innovative Programs

Not surprisingly, food banks play significant roles in a wide range of programs described by more than half of the cities in this report; they are the primary operators of programs described

by Baltimore, Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Dubuque, Evansville, Louisville, Oklahoma City, Pocatello, Santa Fe, and Stockton.

Beyond the national models being adapted by many cities are unique, innovative, and effective programs targeting specific needs, often in specific communities. For this report, examples of such programs have been provided by:

- Boston, where the Healthy Baby/Healthy Child (HBHC) Program targets communities disproportionately affected by infant mortality and other health disparities, and two pilot “farm-to-school initiatives” encouraged students to make healthy food choices during the school year;
- Columbus, where the Capital Kids after-school program provides participants with a nutritious snack and a safe place to learn and play when school is out;
- Honolulu, where the Partners in Care homeless coalition prints and distributes an Oahu Homeless Help Card that lists phone numbers of groups that provide no-cost food and meals and other resources;
- New Haven, where the City returned to a self-operated school food service program that has produced a 73 percent increase in the number of meals containing fresh fruits and vegetables or unprocessed foods;
- Philadelphia, where the Mayor’s Task Force on Hunger is increasing the impact of existing public-private and federal food assistance partnerships, and the hospital-based Philadelphia Grow Project is targeting children with nutrition-related health problems and their families, providing them comprehensive, long-term remediation;
- San Francisco, where the San Francisco Food Security Task Force is pursuing a City-wide plan to ensure all residents can obtain a nutritionally adequate and culturally acceptable diet, and to increase residents’ participation in federal food assistance programs;
- Santa Barbara, where the Harding School Cafeteria Project, a sustainable, school-based program, provides healthy meals, nutrition education, and accessibility to fresh and organic produce, and has achieved an 83 percent waste diversion rate;
- Seattle, where “Baby Cupboards” at food banks are stocked with infant formula, diapers, baby food, and clothing, and “Baby Boost” information fairs at community centers and food banks offer low-income parents information on breastfeeding, the WIC program, and child development and community resources for families;
- Spokane, where the Women’s and Children’s Free Restaurant is providing well-balanced meals and high-quality, high-nutrition perishable grocery items at no cost to low-income food-insecure women and their children;
- Stockton, where the Mobile Farmers Market Program, a farmers market on wheels, distributes healthy, nutritional items, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables, and nutrition education free of charge to low-income families with children and seniors.

Societal Costs of Childhood Hunger

While the origins and designs of all of the initiatives described in this report vary across the cities, the program operators' views of the societal costs of childhood hunger are consistent: In school, children experiencing hunger score lower on tests, are more likely to be absent due to illness, and are more likely to have to repeat grades.

One program operator captured the views of many others in a description of hunger's contribution to "an inescapable cycle of poverty" spanning generations: "When a child is unable to concentrate because they haven't eaten in days and misses a week of school because they could not fight off a simple cold, they cannot succeed in school. Lacking a solid education, they cannot find high-paying jobs. Ultimately, they are forced to remain in poverty, eventually placing their own children in the same situation."

Following in this report are descriptions of anti-hunger programs in 24 cities that share the goal of breaking this cycle of poverty.

CHILDHOOD ANTI-HUNGER PROGRAMS IN 24 CITIES

ALLENTOWN, PA

Summer Playground Program

- ***Delivers free lunches to low-income children on summer playgrounds***
- ***Combats obesity by combining healthy eating and physical activity***

The City of Allentown's Summer Playground Program, celebrating its 96th year in 2009, provides recreational and educational opportunities for up to 1,200 urban youth between seven and 15 years of age at 20 playground sites throughout the City. Each site is supervised by paid playground instructors from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, for eight weeks each summer.

Three years ago, in an effort to improve summer nutrition for low-income children who receive free or discounted lunches during the school year, the City began offering a free lunch as part of its playground program. Provided by the Allentown School District through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Service Program, the lunch alleviates hunger for children who might not otherwise eat on days when school is not in session.

The link between obesity and malnutrition has been well documented, with studies showing nutrient shortages among obese children – children who are “overweight yet undernourished.” One 2007 study found that children gain more weight over the summer; the Body Mass Index of those in the study increased, on average, more than twice as much during summer breaks, with Hispanic and African-American students experiencing even larger increases. The Allentown program combats obesity by promoting healthy eating among its participants – balanced nutritional choices and proper serving sizes – in conjunction with opportunities for physical activity.

In Allentown, approximately 25 percent of the 11,843 youth who were eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year received free lunches during the 2006 summer; this is well above the national rate for summer meal programs. A site, which may be a camp, activity center, school, church, or playground, is eligible for the USDA summer program if it is located in a geographic area in which at least 50 percent of the children are low-income.

Program officials believe that, because summer recreation program directors may not be aware that federal funds are available to provide meals to low-income children, better outreach methods are needed to recruit new sponsors for the summer meal service and to increase the number of sites within communities that offer free meals during the summer. They also believe that raising family awareness about existing program sites would help to overcome barriers to participation.

CONTACT: Tina Amato, Nutrition and Physical Activity Manager, City of Allentown, (610) 437-7581 or amato@allentowncity.org.

BALTIMORE, MD

School Pantry Program

- ***Distributes large quantities of food to City and County schools***
- ***Requires parents and guardians receiving groceries to participate in school volunteer activities***
- ***School sites connect to food assistance partners in community to improve program staffing, service to families***

According to a 2007 U.S. Census Bureau report, of the 179,420 people living at or below the federal poverty line in Baltimore City and Baltimore County – the two areas served by the Maryland Food Bank's School Pantry Program – 32 percent are children.

The goal of the School Pantry Program is to feed hungry children and, at the same time, actively engage parents and guardians in their children's education. The design of the program is straightforward: Low-income families are given bags of groceries in exchange for parents' or guardians' participation in school-based volunteer activities. The program has been expanded to also provide emergency food services to students and their families.

The program was created 18 years ago when a Baltimore City school principal noticed a parent digging through a dumpster near the school cafeteria. Originally developed by the Center for Poverty Solutions and the Maryland State Department of Education, the program was adopted by the Maryland Food Bank in 2005 when the Center for Poverty Solutions closed. Forty-eight pantry sites operated in the City during the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years, and 60 pantries operated during the 2007-08 school year.

In Fiscal Year 2009, the School Pantry Program distributed more than 300,000 pounds of food at 72 schools in Baltimore City and County. The program served nearly 8,000 low-income families, and understaffed schools benefited from more than 66,000 parent volunteer hours. In Fiscal Year 2010, the Food Bank will expand the program to 25 additional schools. To strengthen the infrastructure of the program, sites will be connected with network partners – soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and other food assistance agencies – in their area. Network partners will be able to provide staffing support for the pantry, ensuring that families have reliable access to food. More importantly, say program operators, these network partners can provide referrals for additional services, such as government subsidies, utility assistance, or resources for free or low-cost clothing, furniture, books, and other needed items.

CONTACT: Charmayne D. Turner, Family & Community Engagement Specialist, Baltimore City Public Schools, (410) 361-9203 or CTurner@bcps.k12.md.us.

BOSTON, MA

Healthy Baby/Healthy Child Food Pantry

- ***Contributes to goals of infant survival, positive birth outcomes, family unity***
- ***Provides emergency food to families in form of groceries, vouchers, holiday baskets***

Boston's community-based Healthy Baby/Healthy Child (HBHC) Program targets communities disproportionately affected by infant mortality and other health disparities. It is designed to promote infant survival, positive birth outcomes, and family unity through home visiting to pregnant and parenting families with a child under age three. All services are free, voluntary and confidential. Public health nurses, public health advocates and social workers help prepare parents via a strength-based model for healthy deliveries and successful parenting within the scope of their own culture and language. Clients are linked to a range of services and health care facilities. The program collaborates with community-based organizations, neighborhood health centers, hospitals, early intervention programs, certified home health care agencies, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition programs, and other social service agencies to ensure that clients receive holistic surround care services.

The Healthy Baby/Healthy Child Food Pantry provides critical emergency food assistance to families engaged in the programs offered by HBHC. The pantry served 9,504 people in the past year, including 200 households newly enrolled in 2008; this included 4,488 children up to age 17. The average box or bag from the pantry provided a family with enough food for approximately five meals. Each month, 25 households received grocery vouchers valued at \$30. Another 750 households received holiday baskets during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

CONTACT: Heavenly Mitchell, Director, Healthy Baby/Healthy Child Program, Boston Public Health Commission, (617) 534-5832 or hmitchell@bphc.org.

Boston Public Schools Farm-to-School Initiatives

- ***Serves fresh local produce in school cafeterias on monthly schedule***
- ***Combines fresh food offerings with farm visits, nutrition education, hands-on activities to encourage healthy food choices***

Beginning in 2008, Boston Public Schools (BPS) piloted two farm-to-school initiatives to encourage students to make healthier food choices by introducing them to fresh locally-grown fruits and vegetables in the cafeteria. For the past two years the Mission Hill School has partnered with The Farm School in Athol, Massachusetts, to bring fresh locally-grown produce into the cafeteria during the fall harvest season. Students have also visited The Farm School to see how the food on their lunch trays was grown and harvested.

BPS Food and Nutrition Service Department (FNS) has piloted a farm-to-school initiative that is putting Massachusetts-grown fruits and vegetables on the school lunch menus once each month at 10 schools across the district. In September 2009, BPS kicked off the continuation of this initiative by celebrating Massachusetts Harvest for Students Week. At participating schools, zucchini, corn on the cob, and apples from Czajkowski Farms in Hadley, Massachusetts were served on the lunch line.

BPS is continuing this farm-to-school initiative by featuring locally-grown Harvest of the Month specials on the lunch menu at participating schools, and is continuing to try different methods to encourage students to make healthier food choices. At Edwards Middle School last year, students participated in an extended-day nutrition class in which they cooked and taste-tested recipes using some of the locally-grown produce. The results of their taste test determined how the produce was prepared the next day for the rest of the school. Teachers report that students from that nutrition class were the biggest advocates for trying the vegetable special in the cafeteria the next day.

BPS reports that 4,660 students in the 10 pilot schools - eight percent of total BPS enrollment - are learning to link healthy school lunch choices to locally grown fruits and vegetables through the farm-to-school pilot programs.

In January BPS received a USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) grant for four elementary schools. The grant, which provides funding for fresh fruit and vegetable snacks for students during the school day, in addition to what they are already receiving through school lunch, has allowed BPS to introduce young students to the seasonality of New England produce – locally-grown strawberries last June, and an abundance of local apple varieties and pears this fall. One week this fall, students received three different varieties of locally-grown apples and learned about the diversity of tastes, colors, and textures of different apples. This program has also introduced students to some less familiar fruits that are not grown locally, such as kiwis, pineapples, and tangerines.

BPS plans to expand these programs by five to 10 percent, depending upon grant funding opportunities.

CONTACT: Helen Mont-Ferguson, Director, Food and Nutrition Services, Boston Public Schools, (617) 635-9144 or hmontfer@boston.k12.ma.us.

CHARLESTON, SC

Lowcountry Food Bank

- ***Combines healthy meals and academic assistance through after-school Kids Café***
- ***Provides healthy snacks through weekend Backpack Buddies program in 18 schools***

The mission of the Lowcountry Food Bank is to feed the poor and hungry of the 10 coastal counties of South Carolina by soliciting and distributing healthy food and grocery products to nonprofit agencies serving the poor, and to educate the public about the problems of, and solutions to, domestic hunger. The Lowcountry Food Bank was founded in 1983 as a clearinghouse for food items donated through the Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina and Trident United Way. The Food Bank also offers resources such as nutrition education and information on safe food handling practices and maintenance.

A Food Bank initiative designed to significantly affect childhood hunger in coastal South Carolina, the Kids Café program, was launched in 2000. This after-school program providing low-income students with hot, healthy meals and academic assistance is now operating in 15 sites in coastal South Carolina. In 2007, the Food Bank provided more than 104,661 hot, nutritious meals – nearly 134,000 pounds of food – through this program.

The Lowcountry Food Bank is in the process of establishing a new partnership with the South Carolina Department of Social Services Family Nutrition Programs. During the school year, the Department's Afterschool Snack Program will provide reimbursements for meals served at eligible Kids Café sites.

In 2006 the Food Bank started the Backpack Buddies program to provide healthy snacks to children suffering from inadequate weekend nutrition. Currently, there are 18 Backpack Buddies sites.

Hunger and malnutrition affect nearly one in four children in Charleston. Nearly 2,500 children are served each week through the Kids Café and Backpack Buddies programs. For the past 10 years the Embassy Suites Charleston Area Convention Center has sponsored an annual Chef's Feast to raise money to support childhood feeding programs, including Kids Café and Backpack Buddies.

CONTACT: Jacquie Kennedy, Executive Director, The Mayor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, (843) 965-4190 or kennedyj@ci.charleston.sc.us.

CHICAGO, IL

Nourish for Knowledge

- ***Distributes take-home food on Fridays at Community Schools serving low-income neighborhoods***
- ***Inclusion of nutrition and fitness information in food packages results in healthier meals, improved school attendance***

The Chicago Department of Family Support Service, in conjunction with the Greater Chicago Food Depository, has developed several programs to alleviate adult and childhood hunger. One of these, Nourish for Knowledge, is an innovative partnership between the not-for-profit Food Depository and the Chicago Public Schools that distributes a free take-home bag of food each Friday afternoon to students at Community Schools – schools which serve low-income neighborhoods and offer after-school programming for children and families.

Nourish for Knowledge works to ensure that children who typically receive free or reduced-price school meals have some food during the weekend. Each take-home bag includes approximately 15 nutritious foods such as granola bars, cereal bowl packs, fresh fruit, fruit bars, mixed nuts, and shelf-stable milk. The assortment of items are balanced nutritionally and presented in child-friendly packaging. More than 5,500 children across Chicago are currently in the program.

Since its inception in 2005, the program has expanded from an initial 14 after-school sites to its current total of 32 sites, and program operators say it has the potential to expand into additional school locations. The program is receiving \$549,147 in funding from 32 private partners.

Nourish for Knowledge aids families as well as individual students: Multilingual information flyers are included in each bag to encourage awareness among parents and guardians about positive nutrition and fitness practices. Resource Coordinators in the Community Schools involved in the program report that the distribution of the healthy food and nutrition information has had several positive effects on the children in the program, including healthier food in the lunches they bring to school, healthier meals at home, and improved attendance, especially on days when food packages are distributed.

Kids Cafe

- ***Unemployed/underemployed adults in food service training program prepare meals for 43 Kids Cafes across City and Cook County***

In Chicago, the Kids Cafe program, a national initiative of Feeding America, is administered by the Greater Chicago Food Depository. Since 1993, the Food Depository's Kids Cafes have tackled the issues of childhood hunger by partnering with afterschool programs to provide hot meals, tutoring, and other educational programs for children in an environment created to help them feel secure and eager to learn. The Food Depository has partnered with established youth programs including Boys and Girls Clubs, community centers, and social service organizations to launch 43 Kids Cafes serving more than 2,000 children scattered throughout Cook County communities and Chicago neighborhoods every day.

Meals are prepared by students in Chicago's Community Kitchens, the Food Depository's food service training program for unemployed and underemployed adults. Each Kids Cafe provides

a wholesome, appealing meal for children after school – for many, the only hot meal they may have all day. The staff and volunteers of the Kids Cafes create a warm, safe and nurturing environment for children, developing a highly effective atmosphere for learning. While educational opportunities at the Kids Cafes vary according to the resources available at each facility, all provide nutrition education, mentoring, tutoring and homework assistance, and most have computer training, music, arts and crafts, and other special programs. Several agencies have even established gardens where the youngsters grow fresh vegetables. Many parents help with the programs.

CONTACT FOR BOTH PROGRAMS: Maria Millham, Program Manager, Greater Chicago Food Depository, (773) 843-2741 or mmillham@gcfd.org.

COLUMBUS, OH

Capital Kids

- ***Provides nutritious snack at start of each after-school and summer session at recreation centers***

The Capital Kids after-school program provides participants with a safe place to learn and play when school is out. The comprehensive program was designed in 2000 with pilot sites at recreation centers in four neighborhoods in which all participant households are below the median income of Franklin County (\$43,119) and the unemployment rate is higher than the County rate overall. Program officials say it incorporates trained staff, state-of-the-art technology, high expectations, and high academic performance standards.

Two hundred students are served in both the school year and summer sessions. The program includes: academic assistance, including help with homework, science projects, literacy tutoring, and computer math; enrichment activities such as cooking, field trips, drama, and art; prevention programs in anger management, substance abuse, and violence, and peer mediation; recreation and socialization through basketball, board games, outdoor play, and group activities; and strong family involvement, including family fun nights, resource referrals, parent/staff conferences, and newsletters. Third-party evaluations indicate that the program is getting high marks from all involved – stakeholder groups, parents and guardians, tutors, and school staff.

One of the major components of Capital Kids involves serving a nutritious snack at the start of each day's activities. The priority given to nutrition is reflected in the fact that the Columbus Department of Health, the Children's Hunger Alliance, and the MidOhio Foodbank are among the several City government and community groups that are partners in the program.

CONTACT: Alan D. McKnight, Director, Columbus Recreation and Parks, (614) 645-8432 or admcknight@columbus.gov.

DALLAS, TX

North Texas Food Bank

- ***Partners with 126 local agencies to serve City's food-insecure children through wide range of programs***

Dallas is one of the cities served by the North Texas Food Bank (NTFB), a nonprofit hunger relief organization that distributes donated, purchased, and prepared foods through a network of feeding programs in 13 North Texas counties, including Dallas County.

In 2007, the City of Dallas had an estimated population of 1.2 million and an overall poverty rate of 21 percent. Twenty-seven percent of the City's 1.2 million residents are under 18 years of age; 32 percent of these (107,000) are below the poverty level. The NTFB serves food-insecure children in the City of Dallas through its partnership with 126 local nonprofit member agencies. Programs benefiting children include:

Food Pantries – The NTFB is increasing both the amount and percentage of food purchased to ensure that pantries have a reliable supply of nutritious staple items to offer food-insecure families. A large majority of all of the children who benefit from NTFB programs are served through the community-based pantries. The household income eligibility guideline is 185 percent of poverty and below.

Food 4 Kids – This program provides backpacks of kid-friendly, self-serve food to those elementary school children most at risk of going hungry over the weekend. Evaluation measures changes in physical and behavioral indicators of food insecurity and inadequate nutrition.

Kids Cafes – Hot, nutritionally-complete evening meals are provided to children who often participate in school-based breakfast and lunch programs but may not always receive a third meal at home during the school week.

Food Stamp Outreach – Food Bank outreach workers travel to member agency service locations to identify, educate, and help enroll eligible families in the Food Stamp program.

Children also benefit from feeding programs in shelters, supplemental programs, and summer feeding programs. The budget for feeding kids in Fiscal Year 2009 was \$5.9 million. Funding sources include individual donors, corporations, foundations, other nonprofit organizations (for example, faith organizations), federal government grants, and shared maintenance revenue contributed by member agencies, based on pounds of food received for distribution.

CONTACT: Jan Pruitt, President and CEO, North Texas Food Bank, (214) 347-9603 or jan@ntfb.org.

DUBUQUE, IA

Dubuque Summer Food Service Program

- ***Through Boys and Girls Club partnership, delivers free lunches to low-income children on summer playgrounds***

The USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is administered by the Boys and Girls Club of Dubuque and the St. Mark Community Center. It targets children in the lower-income areas of Dubuque, including those receiving free or reduced-price school lunches. The City determined that its existing summer recreation playground program sites, Comisky Park and Prescott School, served the largest percentage of youth from families of low- and moderate-income in the City. Through a City partnership with the Boys and Girls Club, the SFSP was expanded to provide meals at these playground sites. During the summer of 2007 the program served 1,059 at-risk youth. In 2008, the playground at Lincoln School was added; that summer, 2,305 at-risk youth were served.

Program costs are modest: The Boys and Girls Club prepare the nutritious meals and deliver them to the playground sites at no charge to the City. The City's Leisure Services Department purchased several large, insulated coolers and containers for transportation of meals and milk, at a cost of \$300. This year it will begin reimbursing the Boys and Girls Club for transportation expenses.

Dubuque officials believe that expanding the number of SFSP sites and serving more meals to low-income youth in other cities would be possible with the addition of new partners such as playground programs. Since Dubuque's playground programs were already staffed and operating, minimal effort was needed to provide meals at these sites. Officials report that many of the children served view the playground program and its lunch as the highlight of their summer.

CONTACT: Jerelyn O'Connor, Neighborhood Development Specialist, Office of the City Manager, (563) 589-4326 or joconnor@cityofdubuque.org.

Backpack Program

- ***Joins John Deere, food bank, school system in partnership to provide backpacks to low-income elementary students***

Approximately 250 children are being served in Dubuque's Backpack Program, which targets children in the lower-income areas of the City, including those receiving free or reduced-price school lunches. The program provides nutritious, kid-friendly food to children every Friday afternoon during the school year. The goal is to discretely provide children with food to help them get through the weekend when school breakfasts and lunches are not available.

In Dubuque, the program is a collaborative effort involving John Deere Dubuque Works, the Dubuque Community School District, and the St. Stephen's Food Bank. (It is modeled after the John Deere Backpack Program in the Quad Cities and Waterloo, Iowa.)

Beginning this school year, a three-year \$132,000 John Deere Foundation grant to the Dubuque Community School District supports the program. Food packs are delivered to the St. Stephen's Food Bank; from there, the School District's transportation department delivers them

to the five elementary schools participating in the program. Transportation costs this year are \$52,000 but are expected to drop to \$40,000 in future years.

CONTACT: Kris Hall, Director of Student Equity, Dubuque Community School District, (563) 552-3019 or khall@dubuque.k12.ia.us.

Fill the Wagon

- ***Provides local food pantry with food collected at bank branches***

Each quarter, using wagons placed at various Dubuque Bank & Trust branches, bank employees contribute to low- and moderate-income families. Each quarter's effort has a theme; once each year that theme is collection of food to be donated to the Dubuque Food Pantry for its distribution to families in need. Partnering in this effort is Every Child Every Promise, a Dubuque-based initiative that is fashioned after the national America's Promise program, whose mission is to improve outcomes for the area's youth.

CONTACT: Nancy Keedy, Executive Director, Every Child Every Promise, (563) 588-2700 or nancy@everychild-everypromise.org.

EVANSVILLE, IN

Weekend Backpack - Food for Kids Program

- ***Provides weekly backpacks during school year and through summer months***
- ***Includes in packs exercise and hygiene items, books and nutrition education materials***

More than 11,000 students in the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation are eligible for a free school lunch; for many, that school lunch may be the only balanced meal of the day. Because the weekends are also cause for concern – these children come from homes in which food, particularly nutritious food, may be in short supply – the schools and the Tri-State Food Bank have joined with community leaders to form the Weekend Backpack - Food for Kids Program.

Each week, the Food Bank provides a backpack containing six nutritious meals and two snacks to more than 600 children from low-income families in the Evansville area. (To supplement the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Service Program, the Food Bank also provides weekend backpacks during the summer months.) The backpacks, which are free of logos or messages in order to avoid any type of stigma, are distributed on Fridays by school social workers and several other agencies that run after-school programs. In some cases, social workers deliver them directly to the child's home. The packs are purchased by the Food Bank and filled with both donated goods and food that has been purchased in order to ensure that meals are nutritious and kid-friendly; examples are shelf-stable two percent milk and 100 percent juice. Some of the meals require microwaving, but most are ready to eat. The backpack can include cereal and items with pop-top lids such as soup, beef stew, and franks and beans.

Other items are added to the packs as opportunities present themselves. Physical therapy students at the University of Evansville, for example, participate in "Backpacks in Motion." They obtain donations of items such as jump ropes and Frisbees and, over a three-week period each year, add them to the backpacks. Periodically, donated books and nutrition education materials also have been added. A local dental clinic currently plans to provide toothbrushes and oral hygiene information.

The backpack program is limited by the amount of funding available to the Food Bank. For more than 15 years the City of Evansville has supported the Tri-State Food Bank with Community Development Block Grant funds. Community fund drives and individual contributions also help raise money for the program. Still, the shortage of funds is the biggest barrier to ensuring that "no child is left hungry." Actual costs vary depending on the amount of donated food received but, on average, \$150 will fill the backpack of one child for 52 weeks; the cost for the 600 children being served is \$90,000 per year.

Many in the Evansville community volunteer their time each week to clean, sanitize, and fill the backpacks. Partners include organizations such as Feeding America, and local schools and youth groups. The local news media help with program awareness and outreach. Evaluation of the program is provided by the school social workers who distribute the backpacks to the children. They report that the children's behavior has improved and that they are coming to school ready to learn. The EVSC is developing a database to provide statistics on grades, attendance, and other information to evaluate programs provided by community organizations.

Officials expect that, when fully implemented, the database will provide a wealth of resources to help identify gaps in service and outreach activities.

CONTACT: Mary Blair, Executive Director, Tri-State Food Bank, (812) 425-0775 or mblair@tristatefoodbank.org.

HONOLULU, HI

Summer Fun Food Service Program

- ***At Parks and Recreation sites throughout City, serves free meals during summer months to low-income children***

Each summer, as part of the City and County of Honolulu's Summer Fun Program, the Department of Parks and Recreation provides over 63,000 free hot meals to children living in poor economic areas. Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Summer Food Service Program for Children, nutritious meals are served, free of charge, to children at approved feeding sites. There are 28 approved locations – sites where the Summer Fun Program operates in close proximity to a public school that participates in the USDA food program during the regular school year. The Parks and Recreation summer program gives the targeted children access to the same nutritional meals they would receive during the regular school year under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

Partners in Care Coalition

- ***Publishes information on no-cost food, meals, other resources for homeless individuals and families***
- ***Raises community awareness of hunger and homelessness, services available to those in need***

Honolulu collaborates with Partners in Care, a homeless coalition comprised of homeless service providers, local and state governments, homeless consumers, and other community representatives, to print and distribute an Oahu Homeless Help Card that lists phone numbers of groups that provide no-cost food and meals and other resources. A local non-profit organization, Street Beat, publishes a newspaper for houseless individuals and families that includes a comprehensive list of no-cost food and meals available in the City and County. Honolulu commemorates National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week annually during the third week of November. Partners in Care organizes various events during the week to raise community awareness of hunger and homelessness, and highlights agencies and services that are working to address these issues. Activities during the week include a rally, candlelight vigil, free dinner at the State Capitol, Partners in Care t-shirt distribution, and a homelessness conference.

Aloha United Way 211

- ***Uses online database and phone line to provide information on sources of no-cost food and meals for individuals and families in need***

The Aloha United Way 211 online database and toll-free phone line provide contact information for organizations such as the Hawaii Food Bank and Aloha Harvest that obtain food from companies for distribution to non-profit agencies with pantries, shelters, or off-site feeding programs. Aloha United Way 211 also provides an extensive list of faith-based organizations that provide no-cost meals and food distribution for struggling individuals and families with children.

Partnership with Hawaii Foodbank

Each year, Mayor Mufi Hannemann leads all City employees in Honolulu's drive to collect food for the local foodbank.

CONTACT FOR ALL PROGRAMS: Deborah Kim Morikawa, Director, Department of Community Services, (808) 768-7760 or dmorikawa@honolulu.gov.

LANSING, MI

Feed the Children Spring Break Program

- ***During spring break, delivers free lunches to children in need at community centers, other sites on daily basis***
- ***Uses school district's automated phone system to notify families of times and locations for food distribution***

In the City of Lansing, according to recent data, children are missing an average of 8.2 meals a week out of the recommended 21 meals. In the absence of food available through the free or reduced-price lunches provided by the public school system, the number of meals missed increases to 13.2. One of the programs implemented by Lansing's Human Relations and Community Services (HRCS) Department to alleviate hunger in this population is the annual Feed the Children Spring Break Program.

During this year's spring break for the school system's 14,600 students (April 6-10), HRCS delivered 2,000 free, nutritious sack lunches daily to 16 distribution sites throughout the City. HRCS staff used City vehicles to deliver boxes of lunches to community centers, public housing, churches, and other sites. The use of sites such as these allow for the program to be integrated into existing daily activities at these locations, and for the use of their staff and volunteers.

The main staple of the non-perishable lunches – tuna salad, chicken salad, beef or chicken sticks – varied from day to day, but each day's lunch included a piece of fresh fruit, crackers, a juice box, applesauce, and a bag of fruit snacks. In some instances, these lunches were packaged with additional free resources, such as bread baskets, for the students' families.

The lunches were made available through an existing contractual relationship with the Lansing School District's food vendor. Funding for the 10,000 lunches purchased – \$20,000 – was provided by HRCS using its human services funds. (Each year the Department receives 1.25 percent of the City's General Fund for human services programming in the Lansing and Greater Lansing area.)

Communicating the availability of this program to families poses a challenge, as the City does not have access to phone numbers of families with children matriculating in the Lansing schools. At the City's request, the School District agreed to use its automated phone system to announce the times and locations of the spring break food distribution. Local newspapers also helped promote the event and interviewed several parents at program locations on their opinions of the program.

CONTACT: Dr. Joan Jackson Johnson, Director, Human Relations and Community Services Department, (517) 483-4477 or jjjohnso@lansingmi.gov.

LAUDERDALE LAKES, FL

Angel Tree Holiday Program

- ***Helps low-income families access full range of food assistance and other needed resources***
- ***Uses donations from City staff and community for food baskets for families and gifts for children***

The annual Lauderdale Lakes Angel Tree Holiday Program, held each December in the City's multipurpose community center, brings several local social service agencies together to help low-income families access food vouchers, workforce counseling, child care assistance, and other public assistance programs. Local schools assist in referring families to the event. Those needing to receive food assistance on a continuing basis are helped by the staff of the Department of Children and Family Services to apply for food stamps; staff of the Women, Infants, and Children program assist with food vouchers. Since the 2008 event was held, staff report, several of the families helped with applications have continued to follow up with the Department of Social Services when assistance is needed.

The program targets children 12 years of age and younger; in 2008, the goal of serving more than 200 children and families was met. As part of the program, City employees and residents "adopt" families for the day and donate non-perishable items to create food baskets for the families. Local food banks and supermarkets – some of the public and private partners whose participation makes the program possible – also donate non-perishable food items for the baskets. And each child who participates receives holiday gifts.

The challenge of assembling the donations of money, food, and gifts needed to meet the program's goal is met by City staff members who reach out to other staff, public and private organizations, and individuals in the community. Last year, donations totaling \$10,000 were received, and another \$1,000 was contributed from the City's General Fund.

CONTACT: Treasa Brown, Director, Social Services and Alzheimer's Care, (954) 535-2800 or treasab@lauderdalelakes.org.

Summer Challenge Camp

- ***Uses school food service programs to supply daily breakfast, lunch, and snacks to low-income children in City's summer camps***

The 200 children from low-income families participating in the Lauderdale Lakes 2009 Summer Challenge Camp program received healthy hot meals and snacks five days each week. Through the USDA Summer Food Services Program, a local school provided hot nutritious breakfasts and lunches; healthy snacks were also provided each afternoon to the six- to 13-year-old campers.

The City expanded the USDA Summer Food Service Program this year to include a local charter school that provided 100 hot lunches and afternoon snacks to its summer camp participants.

For the summer camps operated prior to 2007, lunch was ordered from local fast food restaurants. In 2007 the City enrolled in the USDA summer program; that year, only cold food

was available, and there were problems with the vendor. The program improved for all concerned the following year when the City shifted to the schools to obtain hot meals.

The Lauderdale Lakes 2009 summer camp partners include the Children Services Council of Broward County, the School Board of Broward County, Lauderdale Lakes Middle School, and Eagle Academy Charter. The program's 2009 costs, \$11,866, were met by the Summer Food Services Program.

CONTACT: Jonathan Allen, Interim Director, Parks and Recreation, (954) 535-2791 or jonathana@lauderdalelakes.org.

LOUISVILLE, KY

Backpack Buddy Program

- ***Educates school staff on warning signs of hunger in children***
- ***Results in positive outcomes for students, including improved attendance***

Launched in 2004 by Louisville's Dare to Care Food Bank, the Backpack Buddy Program targets children living in low-income food-insecure homes who are likely to experience hunger on the weekends. While these children take advantage of free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch provided at their respective schools during the week, for many the weekends represent a "gap" in their food security and nutrition. Dare to Care Food Bank has partnered with schools in Jefferson, Bullitt, and Carol Counties in Kentucky and Clark County in Indiana to provide backpacks full of kid-friendly and nutritious food to at-risk children on Friday afternoons.

The Backpack Buddy Program has grown from an initial four locations to 19 elementary schools. In the 2009-2010 school year the program expects to serve a total of 1,100 at-risk children identified by teachers and school counselors as being at risk for hunger and food insecurity. Schools are selected for the program based on criteria that include: proximity to other services offered for youth by Dare to Care Food Bank, the percentage of children receiving free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch at the school, and the capacity of the school's administration to facilitate the program. Once a school is selected, Dare to Care Food Bank educates pertinent school staff on the warning signs of hunger in children – asking others for food, taking food from others, and complaining of frequent headaches and stomachaches, for example. Once a child is identified as a potential program participant, parental permission is obtained and a year-end program evaluation survey is given to the parents.

Dare to Care Food Bank employs a registered dietician responsible for selection and purchase of the program's food. The backpacks distributed on Friday afternoons contain foods that are nutritious, child-friendly, and uniform – foods such as cereals, instant oatmeal, 100 percent fruit juice, fruit cups, granola bars, crackers, microwavable chili or pasta, and shelf-stable milk. The weekly distribution process continues throughout the school year, with extra food included on longer breaks – holidays and spring break, for example – during the year. The program has been designed to protect the anonymity of the children. The backpacks are free of logos or other program identification, and children are able to pick them up on Friday afternoons and return them on Monday mornings without a lot of attention or hassle.

Louisville's Backpack Buddy Program is considered to be a major success. Teachers have reported that many of the children in the program have become more responsible, have had better attendance on Fridays, are more alert on Mondays, and have a greater sense of self-pride. In 2007 the program was selected from among more than 120 such programs across the nation to receive the "Circle of Excellence" Backpack Program of the Year Award.

CONTACT: Annette Ball, Director of Youth Services and Advocacy, Dare to Care Food Bank, (502) 966-3821, ext. 104, or annette@daretocare.org.

Blessings in a Backpack

- ***Purchases food from local grocers using funds from corporations, associations, foundations, individuals***
- ***Reports better school performance, improved health for elementary school participants***

In 2005 Kentucky Harvest Founder Stan Curtis formed a new nonprofit organization to provide weekend meals to children in need in Louisville. This organization and the program it operates, which came to be known as Blessings in a Backpack, is currently serving thousands of children in 104 schools across the U.S and in Canada.

Blessings in a Backpack, a partnership of private sector funders and the public schools in which it operates, is designed to feed elementary school children whose families qualify for the federal free and reduced-price meal program and who may not have adequate food options on weekends. Every Friday afternoon, students receive an unmarked backpack with nutritious food staples that require little or no preparation – items such as macaroni and cheese, juice, fruit bars and soup. The empty backpacks are returned to the schools on Monday morning. The program reports that the children participating have exhibited better test scores, better reading skills, more positive behavior, improved health, and better school attendance.

In Louisville, the program operates in 11 schools, serving 2,140 students. The food is purchased from local grocers by the program's sponsors – a consortium of corporations, associations, foundations, and individuals – and is delivered to the schools by volunteers or by the grocers themselves. The backpacks, also donated for the program in large quantities by organizations such as Meijer Groceries and Jazzercise, are prepared by school personnel.

Operating costs for the Louisville program total about \$160,000 per year. With the cooperation of its food suppliers, the program has managed to hold food costs for the 38-week school year to \$80 per student. Every dollar contributed by program sponsors is applied to food purchases.

CONTACT: Stan Curtis, Founder, Kentucky Harvest, (800) 872-4366 or stan@blessingsinabackpack.com.

NEW HAVEN, CT

Healthy Food in Schools

- ***Return to self-operated school food service coupled with commitment to fresh, healthy food for schoolchildren***
- ***Advocacy for fresh, healthy food in schools led by working group of community members, school personnel, food service workers, parents, students***
- ***Producing significant increase in number, nutritional value of meals served each day in schools***

One year ago, a typical school lunch in New Haven consisted of chicken nuggets, tater tots and juice. Today, children are enjoying whole grain breads, roasted “on the bone” chicken, fresh fruits and vegetables – including some locally grown – and more foods cooked from scratch. With community consensus, the City has significantly improved its school food service program, resulting in more unprocessed, fresh, and healthy food for students.

For years the District Wellness Committee has been credited with keeping New Haven “ahead of the curve” in nutrition. The City was the first in the State to remove junk food and soda from school vending machines, replacing it with healthier fare such as baked chips, 100 percent fruit juices, and bottled waters. These policy changes primed New Haven’s schools for the introduction of fresh, healthy food. In fact, a recent study found that, when paired with a ban on junk food, new initiatives introducing fresh fruits and vegetables were significantly more successful.

In April 2008, the Mayor and the Board of Education returned the City to a self-operated school food service program. Working with a diverse group of community leaders, including labor unions and the New Haven Food Policy Council, the Board of Education recruited a resourceful chef who brought with him a commitment to serving fresh, healthy food to schoolchildren, experience with farm-to-school programs and with cooking food economically from scratch on an institutional scale, and strong networking and labor management skills.

To support the transition to a self-operated food service program, the District Wellness Committee and the New Haven Food Policy Council collaborated to create the Working Group on School Food, which serves as a place for community members, administrators, teachers, food service workers, parents, and students to come together to advocate for fresh, healthy, minimally-processed food in schools.

In the 2008-09 school year, over 70 percent of New Haven Public School students qualified for free or reduced-price meals; this qualifies New Haven as a Provision 2 district, enabling most schools to offer universal free breakfast and lunch to students. For many of New Haven’s neediest children, these meals are the only ones they can rely on receiving each day.

Since the beginning of the current school year, New Haven’s School Food Service Program has recorded significant progress in several areas: an average of 1,560 more meals per day have been served; there has been a 73 percent increase in the number of meals containing fresh fruits and vegetables or unprocessed foods, 10 percent of which are sourced locally; sugared cereals, pop tarts, and cookies for breakfast have been eliminated; and whole grain breads and breading, roasted chicken, baked French fries, chicken and vegetable stir fry, corn on the cob, local peaches, and apples have been added.

Officials say, however, that challenges remain. Topping their list is the low federal reimbursement rate for the National School Food Program which, on average, after covering payroll and overhead, provides only 96 cents per meal for food, an amount that makes it difficult to serve healthful meals. In addition, federal subsidies in the Farm Bill often make highly processed, less healthy foods cheaper to purchase than fresh fruits and vegetables. New Haven is advocating for the changes needed at the federal level to reduce these problems.

CONTACT: Michelle Wade, Director of Communications, New Haven Public Schools, (203) 946-8450 or michelle.wade@new-haven.k12.ct.us.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

Food 4 Kids

- ***Empowers school personnel to identify students exhibiting symptoms of chronic hunger and refer them for assistance***
- ***Funds program exclusively with contributions from individuals and private organizations***

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's Food 4 Kids backpack program is designed to supplement school breakfast and lunch programs by providing elementary-age children with nutrient-rich foods over weekends and school holidays. Were it not for these backpacks, officials say, many of these children would have little or nothing to eat between Friday's school lunch and Monday's school breakfast. Food 4 Kids provides chronically hungry students with a backpack of shelf-stable, kid-friendly food items each Friday and over school holidays. By placing the food in a nondescript backpack, students avoid the stigma often associated with assistance programs. A typical backpack includes 11 nutritious food items such as: peanut butter, crackers, fruit cups, seeds and nuts, small boxes of cereal, juice boxes and shelf-stable milk cartons. Because all of the food items are consumable without preparation, children are able to easily provide food for themselves and, in some cases, their younger siblings. The children return the empty backpacks on Monday morning so that they can be refilled for the following weekend.

Food 4 Kids empowers school personnel to identify students exhibiting symptoms of chronic hunger and refer them for assistance. Teachers, principals, cafeteria managers and other school personnel are often the first to recognize the signs of chronic hunger. A teacher, counselor or school staff member can refer a child identified as chronically hungry to Food 4 Kids without the permission of parents or the recommendation of a social worker. The Food Bank's program is one of the largest in the nation; in the 2008-09 school year it served nearly 8,000 children in 263 elementary schools located in 38 counties at a cost of \$200 per child. Early in the fall 2009 semester, 24 new schools already have joined the program. The program is funded by individuals, corporations, civic and religious groups, and foundations; no state or federal funding is involved.

CONTACT: Jennifer Gooden, Vice President of Community Initiatives, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, (405) 604-7104 or jgooden@regionalfoodbank.org.

PHILADELPHIA, PA

The Mayor's Task Force on Hunger

- ***Aligns with State vision and mission to reduce hunger in City***
- ***Brings together and coordinates existing service organizations to strengthen food assistance and maximize impact of federal programs***

Hunger was Philadelphia's focus issue during National Public Health Week, April 5-11. One in five Philadelphians – 183,000 adults and 77,600 children – are skipping meals due to lack of money, experiencing the most severe form of food insecurity. Over 300,000 people suffer hunger-related episodes.

Recognizing that it is impossible for local or state governments or non-government organizations acting alone to reduce hunger, public and private emergency food providers in Philadelphia convened in November 2008 to quantify the impact of the current economic crisis on the emergency food cupboard. A 12-person task force consisting of leaders of the City's NGOs, hunger agencies, and three City government departments was challenged to develop short-term action plans to increase food supply and to provide accurate information on the state of the emergency in the charitable food community. The group, which was designated The Mayor's Task Force on Hunger, reached unanimous agreement on the need for innovative and coordinated efforts. It aligned itself with the goals and work plan of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Inter-Agency Council on Food and Nutrition, to facilitate communication and reporting on progress toward shared goals of the City and State.

In its November meeting the Task Force adopted the vision and mission statements of the State's Interagency Council as initial goals, to be refined and defined more specifically in 2010.

Vision: Every Philadelphian has affordable access to nutritious locally-grown food, or knowledge of and access to services to reach that level of security.

Mission: Agencies share and communicate a common vision and priorities to proactively reduce barriers to access, increase efficiencies in service delivery, and maximize resources from the local, state, and federal levels. Goals are to 1) provide leadership, policy consistency, and resource sufficiency throughout Philadelphia to improve food security for all; 2) improve efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery by all agencies through cooperation and innovation; and 3) improve information flow among agencies and between agencies and constituents. Key policies are to commit to end hunger; maximize the impact of federal nutrition programs; strengthen public-private food assistance partnerships; and enhance nutrition for low-income Philadelphians. The Task Force's immediate action plan includes the following goals.

Strengthen Public-Private Food Assistance Partnerships – There are several early partnerships and outcomes for the Task Force on Hunger.

- Share, Philabundance, the City's two major emergency food providers, crafted a proposal for a \$6 million increase to benefit state-funded food programs through the State Food Purchase Program, and organized the State Advocacy community to support this initiative.
- Share, Philabundance, and the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger agreed to provide links and databases for the City's 311 Customer Service Center to ease and

expedite assistance to hungry people. Philabundance took the lead in February with the introduction of their 1-800-319-FOOD emergency number.

- Philabundance is now coordinating with City Services to provide emergency “food boxes” to hungry persons when cupboards or kitchens are not available or accessible.
- In the spring and summer the Food Trust and City Harvest expanded their efforts to bring fresh food to underserved communities through corner store, farmers’ market, and supermarket networks.
- City Harvest will apply for continued funding for its highly creative Prison/Community Gardens program, relying on the support given by the Mayor’s Task Force on Hunger.

Maximize the Impact of Federal Nutrition Programs

- Sustain and expand the highly successful BenePhilly initiatives. BenePhilly’s initial efforts (September through December 2008) focused on enrolling thousands of low-income Philadelphians eligible for, but not receiving, valuable federal and state benefits.
- Incorporate policy recommendations received from the advocacy community, as appropriate, into the Philadelphia Hunger Relief Plan. In February and March, Philadelphia’s hunger advocacy community developed a comprehensive list of recommendations for policy changes aimed at improving the health and well-being of food-insecure persons in the City.
- Urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture to make Philadelphia’s Universal Feeding Pilot Program (the “Paperwork Reduction Pilot”) permanent, to ensure that low-income students continue to receive free meals at school.
- Establish goals for the School District to promote increased utilization of school breakfast, lunch, and after-school meal programs.
- Enhance Nutrition for Low-Income Philadelphians
- Publicize and expand the Food Trust School Nutrition Program. A five-year study published in 2008 in the Journal of Pediatrics showed that in the 72 schools (43,000 students) where the Program’s food nutrition programs were employed, childhood overweight was reduced by 50 percent.
- Supplement food stamp dollars with incentives for fresh produce purchases. New York City does this with “Healthy Bucks” which benefit food stamp recipients, local farmers, and local food stores collectively. With foundation funding being garnered by the Food Trust to pilot this initiative, evaluate its possible implementation this summer.

Commit To End Hunger

- Create a strategic outline and plan for hunger relief in the City. Initiate the coordination and research needed for new thinking and the introduction of best practice strategies.
- Establish and implement a methodology to more accurately capture and measure food insecurity rates and the economic costs of hunger in the City.
- Include poor residents – the City’s witnesses to hunger – in this undertaking.

Barriers to be overcome, say Philadelphia officials, include lack of confidence in the area that hunger can be significantly reduced; the need for greater knowledge of the extent and scope of the current problem and its systemic causes; the need for better information on the many effective City programs that need financial and personnel support; and financial constraints that can limit progress.

CONTACT: Diane Loucks, Facilitator, The Mayor’s Task Force on Hunger, (215) 686-2181 or diane.loucks@phila.gov.

Philadelphia GROW Project

- ***Provides infants and toddlers with nutrition-related health problems and their families with comprehensive social service and health care plan***
- ***Integrates evaluation, treatment, counseling, education, and advocacy to reduce costs and bureaucratic burden on low-income families***

The estimated 7,000 infants and toddlers living in Philadelphia households who are at risk for hunger comprise the target population for the Philadelphia GROW Project, a partnership of Drexel University, St. Christopher’s Hospital, the Claneil Foundation, Merck, and the Pew Charitable Trusts. Funding is provided by the foundations and other private and public sources. The Project was founded in 2005 to help low-income children and their families achieve normal weight gain, good nutrition, and proper development through service, research, and advocacy.

The GROW Clinic

When children are diagnosed by their doctors as failing to thrive – meaning their weight is lower than average, they have health problems related to a lack of good nutrition, and/or there are developmental issues associated with improper diet – they are referred to the GROW Clinic at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children. At the Clinic, a comprehensive plan is put in place for both the child and the family – a plan covering social services, health care, and any other needs. Families are supported and followed for at least five years by a team that includes doctors and other health care professionals, social workers, community advocates, and nutritionists. During this period, the child’s (and family’s) health improves, normal weight is achieved, progress is made on developmental and learning issues, and unhealthy patterns within the family are changed for the long term.

Under the leadership of Drexel’s Dr. Mariana Chilton, the GROW Clinic has worked with over 375 families with infants and toddlers, using a unique, integrated approach that includes healthcare evaluation and treatment, psychosocial treatment and social services assessment, developmental assessment, behavioral counseling, social work services, nutrition education, and advocacy. Evaluation is also done through Drexel University. A project such as this, officials say, provides incentives for agencies to meet the challenge of working together to

coordinate services, reduce costs, and reduce the bureaucratic burden on low-income families seeking access to programs.

Children's HealthWatch

The Philadelphia GROW Project is part of the Children's HealthWatch Program, a national research and advocacy effort launched by Boston Medical Center in May 1998 (www.childrenshealthwatch.org). The purpose of Children's HealthWatch is to assess how public policy is related to the food security, growth, and health of vulnerable, low-income children ages zero to three. Since January 2005, the GROW Project has interviewed more than 3,200 caregivers and made substantial contributions to the largest and most current dataset in the nation on the food security and development of very young children living in poverty.

Witnesses to Hunger

The advocacy arm of the GROW Project aims to inform local, state, and national legislators about food insecurity, hunger, and child development. Witnesses to Hunger, a project involving mothers of young children who are food insecure or low-income, is at the forefront of the GROW Project's advocacy efforts. The goal is for policy makers to learn from the experiences of the mothers through the photographs and videos that they have taken, and by hearing from the mothers directly. This participatory form of advocacy is designed to ensure that those who are directly affected by government assistance programs have a voice in the way these programs are designed and carried out.

CONTACT: Dr. Mariana Chilton, Principal Investigator, Philadelphia GROW Project, Drexel University School of Public Health, (215) 762-4110 or mmc33@drexel.edu.

Child and Adult Care Food Program Provider Incentives

- ***Directs funding to shelters that serve meals prepared according to program's nutrition guidelines***
- ***Trains and provides technical assistance to service providers in areas of nutrition, food service, food safety regulation***
- ***Increases number of families benefiting from healthy meals, nutrition education***

Philadelphia's Office of Supportive Housing (OSH) recognizes that bad eating habits are the main barrier to improving child nutrition and combating childhood hunger. The experience of Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) providers across the nation suggests that promoting both nutrition and the food program does increase participation by families and children and can lead to healthier long term habits.

OSH administers an incentive program that provides unrestricted funding to seven non-profit shelter operators that serve well balanced, nutritious meals that are prepared according to CACFP guidelines. This program targets children under 18 years of age who are served in emergency housing facilities under the jurisdiction of the City of Philadelphia and overseen by staff employed by OSH. During the course of a year, more than 3,000 children spend a night in the City's emergency shelter system.

The Health Promotion Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania, a non-profit contractor to the City, provides training and technical assistance to the OSH and its contractors in the areas of nutrition, food service, and food safety regulation. The other partners in the program are the seven organizations that operate emergency shelters: the Traveler's Aid Society, Darlene Morris Love and Care, Episcopal Community Services, Mt. Airy Bethesda, Trevor's Place, Lutheran

Settlement House, and Resources for Human Development. The Council creates nutritious menus and provides cook training for OSH Family Shelter providers, as well as broader nutrition education and CACFP monitoring. The program's current annual budget is \$100,000. Program officials say that, while it is difficult to assess the impact on child nutrition of an incentive program such as this, implementation of the incentive has increased provider participation in CACFP, expanding the number of families benefiting from healthy meals and nutrition education.

CONTACT: Kevin Breazeale, Assistant Director of Operations, Office of Supportive Housing, (215) 686-7184 or Kevin.breazeale@phila.gov.

POCATELLO, ID

School District 25 Summer Feeding Program

- ***Through school-City partnership, delivers meals during summer to low-income children at City parks***
- ***Stresses keeping operation simple, publicizing program***

In Pocatello and neighboring Chubbuck, School District 25 serves free lunches Monday through Friday for 49 days during the summer months in City parks located within the boundaries of schools in which more than 50 percent of the students qualify for meals during the school year through the National School Lunch Program. The District and City coordinate the use of the parks, pavilions, and tables required; insurance is provided by the District. The meals are transported to the parks in insulated bags using school food service trucks. The program is publicized through flyers sent to the home of every student, and press releases sent to area newspapers and television stations.

The Summer Feeding Program started in 2001 with one central location in the City of Pocatello; that year, 10,724 meals were served. Today there are seven locations – six in Pocatello parks, one in a Chubbuck park – that last year served 124,421 meals. In addition to the eligible students, the program serves persons 19 years of age and over who have mental or physical disabilities. Funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Idaho's Child Nutrition Department.

District officials say the keys to a successful effort are keeping the operation – menu, delivery, serving lines, and paperwork – simple, and getting information on the program out to the public. Partnerships with the United Way's "Success by Six" early childhood program, the University of Idaho Extension Program, and the Portneuf District Library also have contributed to the success of the effort, they say.

CONTACT: Betty J. Espindola, Food Services Coordinator, School District 25, (208) 235-2354 or espindbe@d25.k12.id.us

Idaho Foodbank Weekend Backpack Program

- ***Program's success spurs significant growth, need for resources***
- ***Community, corporations, foundations respond to meet greater need***

Pocatello is one of three cities in Idaho in which The Idaho Foodbank has located a distribution center through which donated and purchased food and supportive services are provided to hungry people. With Idaho having the sixth worst childhood hunger problem in the nation, a major Foodbank initiative is the Weekend Backpack Program, which provides area schoolchildren at risk of hunger with nutritious, easy to prepare food for weekend consumption at home.

Volunteers at Foodbank centers fill backpacks with more than five pounds of food – six kid-friendly meals, developed by a dietician, that include such things as beef stew, shelf-stable milk, cereal, juice, peanut butter, raisins, and canned fruit. Working with schools in low-income neighborhoods – in Pocatello, those identified by School District 25 – the Foodbank provides the backpacks to children identified as chronically hungry by their teachers, counselors, or

principals at the beginning of the school year. Families are asked if they would like to participate in the program; the children of those that do pick up the loaded backpacks from their counselors on Friday, or on the last day before a holiday or vacation period, and return them empty on the following Monday. An important goal is to provide easy access to the food by the children being served.

Program staff members note that parents have been honest in their assessments of their need for the weekend food: When they no longer need it, they say so, and ask the schools to send the backpacks home with other children in need.

The backpack program has been enthusiastically accepted by both recipients and donors, the result being that it has grown so quickly and to such an extent that funding for it has become one of the biggest challenges. The cost of food for each backpack refill is \$6.42. With school in session each year for 39 weeks, the per-child cost for the school term is \$250. For the 350 children currently being served in School District 25, the cost is \$87,633. (Statewide, the cost for the 1,129 children served is \$290,000.) The community, corporations, and foundations have responded generously, however, and the Foodbank has been able to continue to provide the nearly 350 backpacks being distributed by the District – a significant increase over the 100 per week estimated to be needed following the pilot phase of the program in 2006.

CONTACT: Roy Lacey, Interim President and CEO, The Idaho Foodbank, (208) 233-8811 or rlacey@idahofoodbank.org.

RICHMOND, VA

Kids Cafe

- ***Contributes to school attendance rate of 95 percent, grade point averages of 2.0 or better, 88 percent of students reading at grade level***
- ***Receives significant funding from major corporations***

With more than 1,600 locations nationwide, Kids Cafe is one of the country's largest free meal service programs for children at risk for hunger. In existence since 1993, Kids Cafe operates in partnership with existing after-school and summer programs that provide mentoring, nutrition education, homework help, sports, and other support. It combines hot, healthy meals with the services of Boys and Girls Clubs, community centers, the YMCA, the Salvation Army, and similar organizations.

In the State of Virginia, 17 percent of children live below the poverty level. In Richmond, however, nearly 38 percent of children fall below the poverty level, and in nearby Petersburg, 40 percent are in poverty. This translates into tens of thousands of children going to bed hungry every night, say Richmond officials, and into an even worse situation in the summer months, when low-income children do not receive their free or reduced-price meals at school. Officials recognize that even mild under-nutrition can contribute to chronic health problems and affect the cognitive abilities of children.

In the Richmond area, the Kids Cafe provides meals to 25,000 children who are at risk of hunger at approximately 50 sites. For the City's Kids Cafe sites, the outcomes for children five to 15 years of age are impressive: The children maintain an average school attendance of 95 percent; they improve to or maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or better; and 88 percent of third graders in the program read on grade level by the end of the school year.

Funding for Richmond's program comes primarily from individuals, businesses, and foundations. Churches, associations, schools, and social groups also contribute. Capital One Services has provided significant financial and in-kind support, sponsoring seven locations for a total annual cost of \$90,300, and providing the funds for a new Boys and Girls Club building. Kraft Foods, Con Agra, Food Lion, and the CarMax Foundation each provide \$10,000 to sponsor individual locations.

CONTACT: Warren Hammonds, Program Manager, Central Virginia Food Bank, (804) 549-5664 or whammonds@feedmore.org.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

San Francisco Food Security Task Force

- ***Hunger research leads to USDA grant to implement range of services***
- ***Reports show increases in school lunch enrollment, children benefiting from food stamps, summer lunch sites, health programming***

When it was established by City ordinance in 2005, the San Francisco Food Security Task Force (FSTF) was charged with creating a City-wide plan to ensure all residents can obtain a nutritionally adequate and culturally acceptable diet. It was also instructed to address ways to increase participation in federal programs such as Food Stamps. According to the San Francisco Food Bank, approximately 20 percent of San Franciscans (150,000 residents) are food insecure.

The FSTF membership consists of City agencies, community-based organizations, and USDA. Government agencies include Public Health (for WIC); Human Services (for Food Stamps); the School District; Children, Youth and Their Families; Community Development; and Parks and Recreation. Community organizations include the San Francisco Food Bank, St. Anthony Foundation, San Francisco Coalition on Homeless, and Bayview YMCA.

During the first year, the Task Force focused on increasing usage of federal nutrition programs including Food Stamps, the National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program. A strategic plan, along with legislative and programmatic recommendations, was developed.

The Task Force greatly benefited from the research conducted by an Emerson National Hunger Fellow from the Congressional Hunger Center. This research, along with the group's strategic planning, led to a USDA grant award of \$1 million which funded implementation strategies to improve customer service. These include: a call center to more effectively handle eligibility and recertification inquiries and appointment scheduling; Web-based screening and applications, to allow clients to apply on-line and without the need to come to the food stamp office; and kiosks and community partnerships, to enlist the help of organizations already serving the food stamp-eligible population and reaching out to populations that have been traditionally underserved.

The Task Force, recently authorized for a third year of operation, has continued to be guided by the strategic planning, partnerships, and advocacy developed in its first year. Since many families are eligible for multiple programs, the Task Force also has focused on sharing outreach and recruitment strategies across nutrition programs and partnerships with community organizations.

Program operators report increased enrollment in the National School Lunch Program, an increase in the number of households with minors receiving food stamps, and additional summer lunch sites and expanded health programming. A pilot emergency home-delivery meal program and a program to deliver groceries to homebound older adults have also been created.

Since its inception, the Task Force has been provided part-time staff by the City's Department of Public Health; it is currently identifying ways to ensure continued staffing, and is developing recommendations to institutionalize City-wide coordination of food security and hunger efforts. To increase awareness and support for its work, the Task Force regularly publishes reports documenting trends in usage of federal and community-based food programs.

Summer Food Service Program

- ***Partners with over 100 community-based organizations for summer lunch sites, snack programs, staff to serve meals and complete paperwork***
- ***During summer, provides nearly 10,000 lunches and snacks per day at community and recreation centers, housing developments, faith-based sites, schools***
- ***During school year, provides nearly 2,000 snacks per day at these sites***
- ***Uses several communication outlets to advertise program, direct families to sites***

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), a USDA program administered by the California Department of Education, is designed to aid the over 55,000 children enrolled in San Francisco's public schools who face the threat of hunger and food insecurity during the summer when they don't have access to school meals. Fifty-five percent of the students are low-income. Summer meals are made available to any child under the age of 18 years regardless of ability to pay. The City's Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF), the local sponsor of the program, contracts with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) to prepare and deliver the lunches, and with the San Francisco Food Bank (SFFB) to provide snack foods. One hundred community-based organizations partner with DCYF to provide space for the lunch and snack programs and staff to serve the meals and complete the paperwork.

San Francisco is third in California in the percentage of low-income students reached with this program; 54 percent of students eating free and reduced-price meals during the school year access the summer meals. During the summer of 2008 DCYF served an average of 5,324 lunches and 4,654 snacks per day at community centers, recreation centers, housing developments, faith-based organizations, and schools located in low-income neighborhoods. Additionally, the School District serves lunches at all summer school sites, bringing the total number of lunches served in the City to over 8,000 per day.

In 2009, along with the healthy lunches, the program helped children develop healthy habits by:

- Collaborating with the William J. Clinton Foundation and American Heart Association on their Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Staff visited San Francisco summer lunch sites to teach children about the heart and how to keep it healthy.
- Featuring local sustainably-produced fruit, in collaboration with San Francisco Food Systems, the School District, and Department of Public Health.
- Training all sites in recycling and composting practices and providing resources for site implementation, in collaboration with the local garbage company and the City's Department of the Environment.
- Participating in the Soda Free Summer incentive program.

Thousands of flyers listing the program sites were distributed to schools, libraries, food pantries, and recreation centers; notices were sent to public housing developments and were included in Food Stamp and WIC mailings; and neighborhood newspapers and local radio stations ran stories about how to access the meals. Families are able to find the most updated addresses and lunch service hours by calling the San Francisco Services Call Center at 3-1-1 or the United Way Helpline at 2-1-1. Both lines are staffed by personnel who speak a number of different languages.

Assuring compliance with USDA regulations at all sites is a challenge, program operators report, as is the lack of consistency of staff from year to year, due to the fact that the jobs provided are temporary and part-time, and new staff runs the program each year. They also report that the funding available is inadequate to fully support the program.

Salad Bars in Public Schools

- ***Responds to need to increase size of school lunch portions, add more fresh produce to lunches***
- ***13-school evaluation shows large percentage of students using salad bars, increase in overall participation in school lunch program***

The San Francisco Unified School District's Student Nutrition Services (SNS) operates the largest public food service program in San Francisco, serving over 22,000 lunches daily to students in all schools. This program primarily serves children from low-income households, many of whom rely on school meals as their primary source of nutrition.

In the 2007-08 school year, salad bars were added to the standard school lunch in over a third of the City's 102 public schools, including all middle and high schools. The program was created in response to increasing hunger, especially among middle and high school students who found school lunch portions too small. Adding more fresh produce to the school lunch had been a longstanding goal, but finding the funds needed to purchase additional produce and equipment was a significant challenge.

The program was made possible through funding from the Mayor's Office and the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families. Approximately half of the initial \$500,000 allocated purchased refrigerators and mobile salad bars; the balance funded additional fresh produce. Each year the Department allocates \$234,000 to the salad bar program for the purchase of additional fruits and vegetables.

DCYF and the Department of Public Health led an assessment of the salad bars which included lunchroom observations on two separate occasions at 13 schools. Observed were: the number of students choosing salad, how much they were taking, and how much was being thrown away. Data was collected on 431 students across the 13 schools. The evaluation also included interviews with cafeteria staff, school principals, and focus groups at some of the middle and high schools, and a survey sent to all parents at elementary and middle schools having salad bars, to which 1,953 parents responded.

The evaluation showed the program's success in reducing hunger. About half of all students took items from the salad bar, over two-thirds of these students took at least an additional serving of produce, and one-third took two servings. Most students ate all of the salad that they took, and overall participation in the school lunch program increased across the schools.

In most cities, the National School Lunch Program is the largest public food service program; nationwide, it serves over 30 million children daily. Unfortunately, say San Francisco officials, many school lunch programs suffer from decades of inadequate capital investment, operating with insufficient and/or aging kitchen equipment, and coping with rising operational costs due to increases in food, transportation, and labor expenses. Although the federal investment in school lunches is significant, the needs of local operations often exceed federal reimbursements, forcing programs to reduce spending on food. Enabling school lunch

programs to more effectively combat childhood hunger requires long term investment and partnerships of school districts, local governments, community organizations, and businesses.

CONTACT: Amy Portello Nelson, Assistant Child Nutrition Coordinator, Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, (415) 554-3506 or anelson@dcyf.org.

SANTA BARBARA, CA

Harding School Cafeteria Project

- ***Obtains fresh and organic produce from local growers, limits use of commodity and processed foods***
- ***Provides nutrition education to students and parents***
- ***Hosts a Farmers Market and maintains a school garden as an outdoor laboratory***
- ***Composts everything generated in cafeteria, achieves 83 percent waste diversion rate school-wide***

The Harding School Cafeteria Project is a sustainable, school-based nutrition and recycling program designed to promote the development of environmental citizenship. Of the more than 580 preschool through sixth grade students attending the Harding School, 91.5 percent are economically disadvantaged (based on free and reduced-price lunch data), 94.7 percent are Hispanic, and 72.3 percent are English learners. The project's four service areas are meals, nutrition education, accessibility to fresh and organic produce, and waste diversion.

Meals in the cafeteria are made from scratch every day with the highest-quality ingredients available, including fresh and organic produce purchased from local growers. The focus is on limiting the use of commodity and processed foods. Breakfast service, free to all children, is offered before school and at recess. Each day, the cafeteria serves over 400 lunches and 400 breakfasts to children and over 50 meals to adults. Since the inception of the project in August 2007, breakfast service has increased by 200 percent and adult meals increased from an average of two meals per day to the current 50.

Nutrition education includes learning experiences for children and adults. Classroom teachers incorporate nutrition education into their instructional programs. All students participate in an annual Nutrition Decathlon, an event that engages students in hands-on physical education activities that incorporate fruits and vegetables. Parents participating in the school's English as a Second Language class receive 10 lessons on nutrition. Harding School also regularly communicates the importance of healthy food choices through its wellness policies, which include serving only white milk, banning candy and sodas, and limiting parties to lunch and recess periods, with a focus on healthy treats as an alternative to traditional party foods.

Harding School hosts a Farmers Market which is open to the public, making fresh and organic produce available to families and neighbors on a weekly basis. A school garden serves as an outdoor laboratory to expand learning beyond the science lab. A recycling program includes recycling and composting throughout the entire school. The zero-waste cafeteria makes a significant contribution to the school's waste diversion efforts by composting everything it generates, including food scraps, paper goods, even milk and juice cartons. Through this effort the school has achieved an impressive 83 percent waste diversion rate.

The Cafeteria Project is the result of ongoing collaboration among Harding School, Santa Barbara School Districts, the City of Santa Barbara, the Santa Barbara Certified Farmers Market Association, Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, local businesses, the Harding School Foundation, and other private foundations. These partners, who provide programmatic, technical, and financial support, came together through the Harding School Environment Committee, which includes the principal, teachers, parents, a school district representative, a school board member, representatives from the City Environmental Services

Department and Parks and Recreation, and a City Council member. The school's principal, who initiated the committee, credits it with overcoming the public education community's perception that low-performing schools serving children from economically disadvantaged families should maintain a strict academic focus on English and language arts and mathematics – a focus devoid of other important goals, including improving the overall health of children.

Reimbursements from the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) support all operational costs of the self-sustaining Cafeteria Project. The ending balance in the cafeteria budget following its first year of operation was over \$32,000, an amount that will support subsequent-year costs associated with recycling and kitchen upgrades such as a dishwasher and walk-in refrigerator. Initial start-up costs associated with kitchen upgrades were funded by local businesses and private foundations. The City supported the initial year of the school-wide recycling program and the zero-waste cafeteria – \$33,000 for materials and collections services – but these costs will be included in the cafeteria budget in 2009 and beyond. Ongoing student and adult nutrition education is provided by local agencies.

CONTACT: Sally Kingston, Principal, Harding School, (805) 965-8994 or skingston@sbsdk12.org.

SANTA FE, NM

Food 4 Kids

- ***Joins food bank, public elementary schools in backpack program for 2,000 children***
- ***Receives funding from foundations, individuals, businesses, religious organizations, special events***
- ***Contributes to improvement in students' school performance, positive relations with classmates***

Created in 2003, Food 4 Kids gives hungry children access to nutritious food in the evenings and on weekends when their families may be unable to provide meals at home by offering backpacks filled with child-friendly foods. The program is operated by The Food Depot, Northern New Mexico's food bank, in Santa Fe's public elementary schools in which 50 percent or more of the students qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches. The Food Depot anticipates that 2,000 children will participate in the program this school year.

At the beginning of the school year, each student selected for the program by school staff (teachers, nurses, or counselors) is given a backpack to carry food home. The food bank delivers food to participating schools on a bi-weekly basis throughout the school year. Each week school personnel fill each backpack with foods that do not require preparation by adults – raisins, nuts, cereal bars, fruit juice, tuna packs, granola bars and fruit cups, for example. There is nothing to link the backpacks themselves with the program, so no child is stigmatized by their use. The program also provides snacks to third through sixth graders during testing weeks and after-school programs at several schools. Each school has a coordinator who helps select the children for the program at the school and oversees the weekly filling of the backpacks. The coordinator in each school may be the school nurse or a counselor, teacher, or aide.

Program operators say the program overall is challenged by increasing food and fuel costs and decreasing funding. Challenges within individual schools include lack of time available by school personnel to operate the program and lack of facilities to store the food.

The annual budget for this program is \$155,172. Funds are used to purchase food, backpacks, and staff time devoted to receiving, processing, and delivering food and backpack supplies to each school. Currently, the program is privately funded by foundations, individuals, businesses, religious organizations, and special event revenue; it received funds from the City for three years.

Yearly evaluations as well as presentations by participating teachers indicate that hungry children who receive food through the program perform better in school and get along better with their classmates. These children show gains in the educational and social skills likely to help them become productive members of their communities.

CONTACT: Zac Warden, Program Manager, The Food Depot, (505) 471-1633, ext. 11, or zwarden@thefooddepot.org.

SEATTLE, WA

Summer Food Service Program

- ***Joins school system, City, nonprofits in award-winning program operating at more than 100 sites***
- ***Uses college students to staff program, federal work-study program to pay 70 percent of staffing costs***

Breakfast and lunch are provided daily for an average of 5,000 low-income children one through 18 years of age at more than 100 program sites. The program is staffed at a low cost by a diverse team of college students through partnerships with local universities. Seventy percent of staffing costs are covered by the federal work-study program. Partners include the Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Parks and Recreation and other City departments, and nonprofit providers and food banks. Program costs in 2009 are \$661,719 – \$525,746 in funding from the U.S Department of Agriculture through the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), \$132,973 in City funds, and \$3,000 in private donations. In 2006, the program received the USDA's "Summer Sunshine Award for Community Partnerships" and has consistently received positive reviews in OSPI audits.

Child Care Nutrition Program

- ***Educates family child care providers and families on planning healthy meals, combating childhood obesity, using sustainable food practices, reducing children's TV watching, increasing access to benefits***

Meal reimbursements, nutrition education, and menu planning and monitoring are provided for more than 200 family child care providers serving 3,500 children ranging from infants through age 11. Program staff members bring education directly to providers and families in the course of their daily lives. Topics include planning for healthy meals, combating childhood obesity, promoting sustainable food practices with fresh local produce, reducing children's TV watching, and increasing access to benefits. Partners include providers, the University of Washington, the Washington State Department of Early Learning, and Seattle and King County Public Health Departments. Funding includes \$800,000 in USDA funds passed through OSPI, and \$187,000 in City funds. The program has consistently received positive reviews from USDA.

Food Security for Children

- ***Provides formula and diapers, baby food and clothing at 20 food banks***
- ***Uses community centers and food banks to provide information on baby care, resources available for low-income families***

"Baby Cupboards" at 20 Seattle food banks are stocked with infant formula, diapers, baby food, and clothing. "Baby Boost" information fairs at community centers and food banks offer low-income parents information on breastfeeding, WIC (supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children), and child development and community resources for families. Partners include Solid Ground (a local nonprofit), food banks, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and culturally specific organizations. The City provides \$35,000 to Solid Ground and \$1.8 million annually to food banks.

PeoplePoint: Bridge to Benefits

- ***Provides low-income individuals and families with information and application assistance for food, energy, health, child care, preschool assistance***
- ***Refers individuals for help with employment, food, banking, tax preparation***

This program provides one-stop eligibility information and application assistance for the Washington State Basic Food Program (food stamps), energy assistance, health insurance, child care, and free preschool. Referrals for employment help, food banks, the summer food service program, banking services, and assistance with tax credits/preparation are also provided. PeoplePoint serves Seattle residents with incomes at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty level. In 2008, PeoplePoint helped 5,861 individuals and families enroll in programs, resulting in about \$8.6 million in benefits over one year. Partners include Seattle and King County Public Health Departments, the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, United Way, Seattle Family Centers, and community nonprofits. Services are delivered by two PeoplePoint staff in partnership with 12 program intake representatives. The City provides \$316,000 per year in funding.

CONTACT: Bea Kelleigh, Seattle Human Services Department, (206) 386-1143 or bea.kelleigh@seattle.gov.

SPOKANE, WA

Women's and Children's Free Restaurant

- ***Serves low-income diners with dignity and respect in safe, supportive environment***
- ***On Fridays, adds packaged take-out meals for weekends and a Fresh Market for no-cost food shopping***
- ***Teaches diners how to put nutrition information to practical use***

The Women's and Children's Free Restaurant (WCFR) provides well-balanced meals and high-quality, high-nutrition perishable grocery items to low-income food-insecure women and their children. Many of the women are unemployed, homeless, disabled, and mentally ill; many are among the working poor. While the restaurant's diners live primarily in the City's West Central neighborhood, many others use public transportation to travel from other neighborhoods in Spokane County.

WCFR is located in one of the lowest-income legislative districts in the State of Washington: 91 percent of the children access the free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch programs at their schools. Among the most prevalent profiles are those of single mothers unable to afford nutritious food for their young children, and mothers who cannot afford enough healthy food to satisfy their children's hunger.

The restaurant has served free, healthy meals twice weekly since it was founded in 1988. Its operators believe that how food is served is as important as the food itself; their goal is to serve diners with dignity and respect in a safe, supportive environment.

In 2004, a Friday Take-Out/Fresh Market Program was initiated; this provides a healthy lunch on Fridays and a packaged take-out meal for weekend dining. The Friday program includes a Fresh Market where women have the opportunity to "shop" at no charge from a large selection of fresh produce, bread, eggs, and perishable dairy products.

A Healthy Habits Program was introduced in 2007 to teach diners about nutrition and offers ways to put this information to practical use. The restaurant operators believe that one of the most effective ways to combat childhood hunger is to teach mothers about healthy and affordable food options.

WCFR tracks the number of meals served in-house and provided to other agencies – a measure of both the need for its services and the growth of its program. In 2008 the restaurant prepared 32,686 meals and served 2,740 individuals. But operators insist that the most important measure of the success of the program is obtained through direct interaction with diners, as "they are the ones who know what is or isn't working for them."

Collaborating with WCFR in serving its community are St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Feed Spokane, Hope House, the Intercollegiate School of Nursing, the Inland Northwest Culinary Academy, Shalom Ministries, the Caritas Center, Crosswalk, and a Washington State University School of Nursing Dietetic Intern. Budgeted expenses for 2009 are about \$226,000. Most funding is provided by individuals and businesses; some is obtained through private foundation grant programs. In 2008, grant revenue was 20 percent of gross receipts.

The restaurant's biggest challenge, operators say, has been meeting the personnel and financial demands of its growth. Its response to the challenge has been to hire experienced staff for key positions and to focus on its visibility within the community.

CONTACT: Ann Harder, Board President, Women's and Children's Free Restaurant, (509) 994.8938 or annharder@hotmail.com.

STOCKTON, CA

Mobile Farmers Market Program

- ***Combines delivery of free fresh fruits and vegetables with nutrition education for low-income families and seniors***
- ***Serves 47 sites through partnership with food pantries, community and senior centers***
- ***Monitoring shows families and children benefiting from access to fresh produce, delicious recipes***

The Emergency Food Bank of Stockton/San Joaquin, guided by recommendations from San Joaquin County's Hunger Task Force, launched its Mobile Farmers Market/"Nutrition on the Move" Program in an effort to give a growing underserved population no-cost access to the fresh fruits and vegetables that are lacking in many diets. The program is essentially a farmers market on wheels, distributing healthy, nutritional items, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables, and nutrition education free of charge. The goal is to enable the low-income families and seniors who are the Food Bank's clients to understand the long term health benefits of including five or more fruits and vegetables in their daily diet – an understanding that should help families increase produce consumption, meet the dietary requirements of five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day, and improve the overall well-being of family members, including the young children and seniors who are the primary targets of the program.

Currently, about 1,200 families (4,000 persons) and 300 seniors are being reached by the program on a monthly basis. Each family or senior receives a six-to-eight-pound bag of fresh produce or fruit, a cooking or food-preparation demonstration, recipes to match the produce, and a copy of Lettuce Talk, a quarterly newsletter full of cooking and food-procurement tips. Partnering in the effort are the area food pantries and community and senior centers that provide the 47 sites visited each month and help in attracting clients.

The program was launched with a donated van and a part-time nutrition educator. A grant from the Kaiser Permanente Foundation a year ago funded a second van and a second nutrition educator, greatly expanding the program. Almost all of the produce and food items are donated – the result of constant solicitation of members of the County's agriculturally rich community.

Annual costs are roughly 75 percent of the salaries of the two 30-hour-per-week nutrition educators, the operating costs of the two mobile vans, and about \$20,000 in purchases of high quality nutrition products that are not donated; this totals about \$75,000. Approximately half of this is grant-based funding, 40 percent is food bank community support, and 10 percent is sponsored or in-kind donations.

Emergency Food Bank officials report that, because of the reasonable costs associated with this mobile delivery program, many other food banks in California have started similar programs.

Participating families complete pre- and post-surveys on their nutrition knowledge, ability to make sensible nutrition choices, and similar items. Program operators say this monitoring is showing that many families and children are experiencing "huge turn-arounds" as a result of steady access to fresh produce and delicious recipes.

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