



# **FRAC: Afterschool and Summer Advocacy Efforts**

## **Model Programs**

### **Anti-Hunger Organization Works with Foundations on the Federal Nutrition Programs** **D.C. Hunger Solutions, Washington, DC**

Anti-hunger advocates and foundations can be powerful allies in expanding the reach of afterschool and summer nutrition programs. D.C. Hunger Solutions (DCHS), a project of the Food Research and Action Center, saw this first hand when they worked extensively with the Children Youth Investment Trust Corporation, a foundation that provides grants to afterschool programs, and Washington Grantmakers, a coalition of foundations in the D.C. area aimed at helping children and youth, to increase participation in federal nutrition programs. Staff from D.C. Hunger Solutions presented information on the afterschool and summer nutrition programs at the foundations' mandatory grantee meetings and regularly met with individual grantees and program officers to highlight the importance of the nutrition programs and explain how they could help foundations and direct service providers maximize their limited resources. Working with foundations is important because they can be powerful agents of change and almost every community has a foundation or network of funders that can work with their grantees to promote and expand afterschool and summer nutrition programs.

DCHS encourages the use of federal nutrition programs by highlighting their economic benefits and framing them as "funding opportunities" when talking to funders and grantees. Foundations like to see how using federal dollars to serve snacks or meals allows their money to be put to use in other ways such as hiring additional staff, purchasing more program supplies or offering more fieldtrips for students. Due to the hard work of D.C. Hunger Solutions, the Children Youth Investment Trust Corporation and Washington Grantmakers now require their summer program grantees to apply for the Summer Food Service Program. Moreover, neither foundation will fund a line item for food that could be paid for by the federal nutrition programs.

Currently, DCHS works with other area funders to distribute materials about the federal nutrition programs to their grantees. One foundation now posts information on their website explaining how organizations can access the afterschool and summer nutrition programs. D.C. Hunger Solutions has also provided funders with summaries of each program that regularly appear in foundation newsletters and materials distributed to grantees.

Connecting local organizations to federal nutrition programs makes sense and benefits everyone involved. Foundations are interested in learning about these programs and how they help maximize the impact of foundation dollars.

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### **Local Foundation Sponsors Afterschool Snack Program for Grantees** **Family League of Baltimore City, Baltimore, MD**

The Family League of Baltimore City, a foundation that provides funding to local afterschool programs, plays a pivotal role in increasing participation in afterschool nutrition programs in the Baltimore area by sponsoring the afterschool snack program for its grantees.

The Family League became approved to sponsor an afterschool snack program through the Child and Adult Care Food Program 3 years ago and now works with 15 afterschool programs in the Baltimore area to provide healthy snacks to more than 800 children. Many of these programs do not have the administrative capacity to participate on their own.

"Utilizing the At-Risk Snack Program helps each of our afterschool programs maximize their dollars, and allows the funding they would have normally spent on food to be used for additional programming for the students," explains Jennifer Blount, Contract Manager at the Family League.

"We enjoy offering this service to our grantees because we see the positive impact it has had on our students and the overall quality of our programs", said Blount. "The afterschool snack program has also introduced nutrition models to our staff and students that may not have otherwise been present at our programs."

The Family League strongly encourages all its grantees to use the federal nutrition programs and will not fund a line item for snacks if they qualify for federal nutrition programs that can meet their needs. The Family League handles all of the paperwork for the afterschool snack program and uses internet-based software to track participation rates and calculate the reimbursements. Staff at all participating sites are responsible for entering their site data online and Blount uses the software to keep track of the monthly claims. "The technology has been beneficial in allowing us to hold each site accountable for entering their meal counts and it helps us stay organized so that every site gets their appropriate reimbursement," she noted.

Blount's experience with the afterschool snack program has made her an advocate for the federal nutrition programs. "The afterschool snack program helps our organizations and the children and families they serve. I encourage every afterschool program that qualifies to use it."

For more information, contact:

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#### **Advocacy Organization Partners with Harley-Davidson on Summer Food Hunger Task Force and Harley-Davidson, WI**

Harley-Davidson and the Hunger Task Force, a food bank and advocacy organization, joined forces in 2004 to create the "Fueling Young Minds" initiative, aimed at revitalizing the Summer Food Service Program in Milwaukee. This partnership began when it became clear that very few low-income children were participating in the free summer meals program, a troubling fact given that the Census Bureau ranks Milwaukee fourth in the nation for childhood poverty, and 75 percent of the Milwaukee Public Schools' 95,000 students are considered low-income under federal guidelines. Lack of coordination among meal providers and very limited outreach were primary reasons for the program's poor participation rates.

To develop and execute a comprehensive outreach plan, Harley-Davidson provided money specifically allotted for awareness and outreach along with funding for child supervision and additional staffing. Thanks to Harley-Davidson, outreach efforts now begin at the end of the school year, when Milwaukee Public Schools students receive "backpack" flyers and specially printed milk cartons advertising the summer meals program, and families receive automated phone calls from Congresswoman Gwen Moore or the school superintendent encouraging them to send their children to summer meal sites.

Kickoff ceremonies are also used to publicize summer food sites and involve neighborhood kids and their families, teachers, school staff, and local dignitaries. For kickoff events in some parts of the city, a group of Harley-Davidson motorcycles drive from site to site, drawing attention to the neighborhood meal programs and passing out Harley-Davidson souvenirs to children. Additionally, advertising is purchased in local media, colorful signage is displayed at each meal site, and Hunger Task Force volunteers go door to door in target neighborhoods informing families that free summer meals are readily available. This extensive media and PR work could not be done each year without Harley-Davidson's support.

Another goal of the revamped program was to reintroduce a sense of normalcy to meal patterns for low-income children. Toward that end, Fueling Young Minds opened more safe and secure public school cafeterias to the children, offered meals throughout the entire summer (not just June and July), and leveraged other federal monies to keep a dozen schools open for a full three meals of the day, two of which were paid for through the Summer Food Service Program and the third sponsored by Harley-Davidson.

In coordinating existing meal providers and bringing in new providers, some of Hunger Task Force's goals were to improve the quality and quantity of service, to ensure an equitable distribution of meals throughout areas of greatest need, and to reduce duplication of efforts by participating agencies. During the summer of 2006, Fueling Young Minds expanded its geographical service area by getting meals to kids in four of Milwaukee's neighboring communities.

"Since 2004, Fueling Young Minds has had a measurable effect on reducing summer hunger by providing meals to kids throughout the Milwaukee area," said Mary Anne Martiny, Manager, Harley-Davidson Foundation. "This unique program has reduced summer hunger and given Milwaukee's poorest children the nutrition they need to have positive, productive summers. Fueling Young Minds is a program of which Milwaukee can be proud."



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Other collaborators in Fueling Young Minds include Milwaukee Public Schools; the West Allis, West Milwaukee, South Milwaukee and Cudahy school districts; Milwaukee Recreation Department; Salvation Army; Social Development Commission; and Impact 211, Milwaukee's local social services referral line. Since 2003, the year before Harley-Davidson and Hunger Task Force took the lead on the summer meals collaboration, the total number of sites has increased 36 percent, the total number of schools open for meals has jumped 154 percent, and the total number of meals served each summer has spiked 112 percent. In 2005, for example, Fueling Young Minds served nearly 540,000 meals, and in July 2006 the program celebrated a milestone by serving its one millionth meal.

The USDA, which awarded Fueling Young Minds its Summer Sunshine Award in 2005, is studying Milwaukee's program as a model for merging public and private leadership in serving summer meals to poor kids.

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### **Model Programs**

#### **Expanded Outreach Efforts Increase Participation in Rural Pilot Project** **Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center, PA**

Hunger Action, an anti-hunger advocacy group in Pennsylvania, partnered with the Department of Education to recruit new Summer Food Service Program sponsors in rural communities around the state through the new Rural Pilot Project.

The Rural Pilot began in June of 2004 when Congress created special rules for Pennsylvania, enabling the state to operate summer feeding sites at locations where low-income children constituted 40 percent (instead of the usual 50 percent) of the population. The pilot is currently set to expire after two years.

In an effort to utilize the Rural Pilot's new rules to increase summer food participation, staff members at Hunger Action created a database of community groups and churches that were involved with charitable food in thirty-six counties and sent information about the summer food program to each organization. Sue Mitchem, Communications Coordinator at Hunger Action, then set up meetings, along with the Department of Education, with over 200 community groups, county and school officials around the state to educate people about the program, explain the new guidelines for rural areas under the pilot project and recruit new sponsors.

Hunger Action's recruiting work was based on establishing relationships with school district staff, such as the school food service provider, and local food banks and community groups. They commended the community's current work to end childhood hunger, through efforts such as the establishment of a school breakfast program, and then highlighted how those efforts could be strengthened by serving summer food through the Rural Pilot project. Local contacts in each area were asked to help secure a space, such as school board meeting room or cafeteria, for a meeting about the summer food program, at which Mitchem gave an overview of the program and highlighted the USDA's new Summer Food Outreach video. To get an average of 20-30 community stakeholders at each meeting, volunteers at Hunger Action used the organization's database to call people in each county and encourage them to attend the meeting. Mitchem also asked her primary contacts in the area to suggest additional people to invite.

Due to the intensive outreach efforts of Hunger Action, along with the Department of Education, rural areas saw 22 new sponsors in the summer of 2005 and an increase of 98 sites over the previous year. Twenty sponsors provided meals in rural areas under the special 40 percent rules and operated 40 summer food sites. Hunger Action estimates 3,000 rural children received meals at those sites throughout the summer.

Next year, staff at Hunger Action will again be traveling to more than forty counties to promote the summer food program and revisit current sites to encourage expansion. Hunger Action also secured funding to offer \$15,000 in start up grants for new sponsors to help cover some of their operating costs such as heating and cooling equipment and picnic tables.

"The Rural Pilot has significantly helped us increase summer meals participation around the state, especially for children we previously had difficulty reaching in rural areas," Mitchem explained. "We hope to add even more sponsors through the pilot next year to ensure that each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties has at least one summer meals program."

For more information, contact:  
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#### **Food Bank Asks UPS and HTA to Help Transport Summer Meals to Rural Areas** **Food for People, Humboldt County Transit Authority and UPS, CA**

Finding innovative solutions is the key to success in Eureka, CA where Food for People, the food bank serving Humboldt County, sponsors the Summer Food Service Program and partners with the Humboldt County Transit Authority (HTA) and UPS to serve 200 children in rural areas.

This successful relationship started six years ago when Food for People approached HTA and explained that high transportation costs were making it too expensive for summer meals to be delivered to children in rural areas. HTA agreed to get involved.

To reach even more rural children, Food for People asked UPS to deliver meals to other rural sites. "UPS was already picking up gleaned produce from farmers along some of their delivery routes so the basis for the partnership was already there", Rishel explained.

Food for People prepares the lunches, places them in coolers, and then puts them on the public bus or a UPS truck for distribution.

#### **The HTA Partnership**

During the summer months, HTA's southbound bus drops off around 80 meals each day to children at three program sites. This saves summer food staff members about 60 miles of driving every day. The meal sites all offer programs or informal activities such as arts and crafts. Paperwork is returned weekly inside one of the empty coolers. Community volunteers or site staff usually return the coolers when they come into the city, but occasionally food bank staff members drive out to the sites and collect them. "The entire community seems to be behind this initiative", said Jennifer Rishel, Fund Development Director at Food for People. The regular passengers on the bus like the idea so much that they make a point of explaining the meal delivery system to new riders.

#### **The UPS Partnership**

Food for People now loads meals on to UPS delivery trucks, which then deliver the meals to two rural locations an hour outside the city. Thanks to this creative partnership, an additional 120 children receive nutritious lunches each day throughout the summer. UPS exchanges the coolers with lunches for the empties and completed paperwork from the day before. Food bank staff then pick up the empty coolers from the UPS hub the next day when they drop off meals for that day's delivery.

"Since no one is willing to sponsor summer food sites in these rural communities, it would have been impossible to get meals to children in these areas without the assistance of UPS", Rishel remarked. "We really appreciate our local UPS office and all the drivers who have been so supportive of the program over the past two years. The whole concept has promoted great relationships around the county."

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