



## 2010-2011 HUNGER PARTNERSHIP

### NCSL Hunger Partnership Site Visit and Business Meeting

Boston, Massachusetts

May 5-6, 2011

### SITE VISIT: THE FOOD PROJECT



The Food Project develops youth leaders and improves access to food in the greater Boston area. TFP has a \$3.5 million operating budget, nearly one-fourth of which is covered by revenues from TFPs training and food revenues.

TFP's programs recognize that hunger is a food systems issue and seeks to address it by growing and selling food in low-income communities. Community members around The Food Project know that there is no major supermarket within a mile of their homes. TFP operates 13 community gardens in the greater Boston area and a Build-a-Garden program to help families learn to grow food on their own land in raised-bed gardens. In 2010, TFP built over 200 raised bed gardens. Though most of the programs are not fully self-financed through the sale of food,

programs have additional value as education and leadership development programs. The greenhouse will be self-sustaining in the future, as it uses both public funding streams and sells greenhouse produce to area restaurants.

Additionally, TFP operates a farmer's market where the youth sell produce from the garden. SNAP shoppers enjoy double value coupons in the form of Boston Bounty Bucks, where purchasing power is doubled for the first \$20 of fruit and vegetable purchases. The program has gradually been scaled up from just \$3,000 to over \$100,000 in farmer's market incentive payouts. The farmer's market is successful in introducing new foods to neighborhood shoppers, teaching people who have not seen or used certain foods before how to prepare and eat them at home. Additionally, demand from the farmer's market drives, to some extent, what is grown in the gardens. TFP also operates a Community-Supported Agriculture program, which sells approximately 600 shares.

Finally, TFP develops youth leaders. TFP hires paid summer youth workers ages 14 to 17. There is also an academic year program for youth, which requires that youth have participated in the summer program and an internship program, which seeks to further build leadership, public speaking and group facilitation skills. The youth at TFP spoke with legislators about their experiences in the program, their motivations for becoming and staying involved, and what the program has meant for them and their neighborhoods. Youth mentioned the relationships they built at TFP, the connections between the food they grow and their families' heritage and culture, and the pride they feel in contributing to their neighborhoods. Since the project was founded 19 years ago, 993 youth have participated in programs at TFP.

### PANEL: SNAP, WIC AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

**Dr. Deborah Frank**, Director, The Grow Clinic for Children, and Professor of Pediatrics, Boston University School of Medicine. Dr. Frank is a pediatrician, well-known researcher and advocate. She is the founder of Failure to Thrive in Boston, now known as the Grow Clinic for Children. Dr. Frank previously served on the advisory board for NCSL's hunger and nutrition partnership, funded by the UPS Foundation 2004-2007. See [www.childrenshealthwatch.org](http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org) for more information. A slide show of Dr. Frank's presentation is available from NCSL.

- Food insecurity is at its highest since 1995. 25 percent of children under six, or 9.6 million children, were food insecure in 2009. This is a significant portion of our future workforce.

- Hunger is a health and development issue. Children from food insecure households are 40 percent more likely to be at developmental risk, and many spend the remainder of their lives with disabilities. Children experiencing food insecurity have more behavioral issues in school. Food insecurity is also associated with suicidal ideation in teenagers.
- Hunger leads to sick babies and infant mortality. The ten states with the highest rates of food insecurity also have the highest infant mortality rates. This results from a toxic triangle of food, housing, and energy insecurity.
- Many children who are food insecure are also obese. This results from the following factors: a cycle of food deprivation and overeating, the need to minimize per calorie costs, the lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and the lack of opportunity for safe exercise in low-income neighborhoods.
- WIC, CACFP, LIHEAP and housing subsidies are shown to promote healthy height and weight among children. WIC, SNAP, LIHEAP and CACFP also reduce poor health and hospitalizations. WIC and SNAP for school aged children reduce developmental risk.
- Policymakers should think about food as medicine. SNAP is a great program, but the dose is too low. Cuts to programs and proposed block granting will reduce funds and reduce the ability of the program to respond to economic changes.
- SNAP is a strong economic stimulus. For every five dollars in SNAP spent, nine dollars is generated in the local economy. Every dollar generates 17 to 47 cents of new spending on food. One billion dollars in retail food demand by SNAP recipients generates close to 3,000 farm jobs. Cutting SNAP costs local economies and will cost taxpayers due to poorer health and educational outcomes in children.

**Audrey Rowe**, Administrator, Food and Nutrition Services, USDA. Prior to becoming Administrator, Audrey was the deputy for special nutrition programs. Audrey led the effort to pass the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, and is a former Social Services Commissioner for the State of Connecticut and the District of Columbia. For more information on Disaster SNAP, visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/disasters/disaster.htm>. For more information on the Administration's commitment to ending childhood hunger, visit [www.serve.gov/endlhunger](http://www.serve.gov/endlhunger) and [www.endchildhoodhunger.org](http://www.endchildhoodhunger.org).



- FNS assists states in crisis through Disaster SNAP or D-SNAP. FNS coordinates with local and voluntary agencies to provide food for shelters and emergency SNAP benefits. D-SNAP replaces school foods spoiled or ruined in disasters. States must apply for D-SNAP; if disaster strikes in your state, ask your state commissioner if the state has applied. FNS is being nimble and innovative and working with states to waive USDA rules to ensure that people are served.
- SNAP is an important countercyclical tool reaching 44 million people in the United States. The program becomes more important as fuel and food prices increase. Though the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFK) cut future SNAP benefits, the President has restored those funds in his 2012 budget proposal. FNS will be watching the block grant debate moving forward.
- SNAP needs to be streamlined. FNS is providing \$5 million for states to develop projects to simplify SNAP applications, eligibility systems, and find efficiencies in their systems.
- HHFK just reauthorized major child nutrition programs, including CACFP, SFSP, school meals, and WIC and provides some increased funding for changes. FNS just finished the initial comment period on a new meal pattern based on IOM recommendations to reduce sodium, lower fat, and add whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. FNS is aware there are implementation challenges, though some schools are already providing healthier menus. FNS will be looking to share what works.
- All states should know they are eligible to provide afterschool suppers. Some states are also expanding and enhancing breakfast and lunch.
- FNS is offering new funding opportunities, including Team Nutrition Training grants in the amount of \$5.5 million for schools to develop new menus and approaches to nutrition education, and \$2.5 million in noncompetitive grants to states. FNS is also offering SFSP demonstration grants and grants to Arizona, Kansas, and Ohio to implement pilot weekend backpack programs.
- Schools in high poverty areas can take advantage of new methods for offering universal school meals using SNAP data, localized poverty data, and pre-existing enrollment data. We are rolling out these methods over the next few years and will watch for increases in waste, fraud, and abuse.
- The Administration is committed to ending childhood hunger. FNS is signing on “Champions to End Hunger” across the country and is working to disseminate best practices.

- The President, the First Lady, and Secretary Vilsack are focused on facilitating a smooth implementation period for HHFK. We are here to help, to be creative, and to get out of the way of states so they can do their job.

## **Question and Answer**

***Why is food insecurity so prevalent in the South?*** The answer is a combination of poverty, food deserts, and low access to WIC, SNAP and child nutrition programs. Some believe in personal responsibility, but asking for personal responsibility from an infant, child, sick person, or senior is silly.

***What is the leading contributor to the rise in infant mortality?*** Factors include nutrition and decreased access to health care and prenatal care. We must feed women who are pregnant. Some policy solutions might include: helping people get transportation to care, increasing access to WIC and prenatal care, and promoting SNAP.

***How can schools prepare to implement changes to their menus?*** The final rule is to be released June 30. The National Food Service Management Institute at the University of Mississippi (<http://www.nfsmi.org/>) works with school districts, especially small and rural districts, to put together best practices.

***What can we do for schools struggling with the paid meal equity provision?*** We need to make sure that federal reimbursements aren't subsidizing paid meals and that families who can afford the cost of school meals pay. Undersecretary Concannon said he will pay close attention to this issue.

***What is FNS doing to improve summer feeding programs?*** FNS is looking at demonstration grants to test a program to allow families that normally benefit from school meals to be allotted additional SNAP benefits during the summer in the amount of \$10 per child. FNS is looking at home delivery of foods and backpack programs. In a few states, mobile programs bring food to children at multiple summer food sites and children spread out their blankets for the visit from the van. We are working to reduce rules around summer feeding. School year programs should continue seamlessly. This summer we will see many changes.

***Where should we look for emergency food relief; can state statutes help?*** The federal government must declare a disaster before working with states for a SNAP waiver. States should have information at the state legislative level around disaster preparation. States can move quickly whereas political issues can delay federal action. Once waivers are allowed, states must call the USDA for waivers.

## **HUNGER PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS MEETING**

Senator Renee Unterman made opening remarks, followed by updates from NCSL staff. Senator Don Balfour of Georgia, former NCSL President, briefly joined the meeting to underline the importance of anti-hunger efforts and commend the Hunger Partnership on its work. Partners engaged in an open dialogue on priorities for the Partnership, questions, and interests for future work.

### **NCSL Staff Updates**

NCSL staff provided updates on the activities and progress of the Hunger Partnership to date; forthcoming meetings in San Antonio and Tampa; an introduction to hunger and unemployment statistics; and examples of recent state laws addressing hunger.

Wednesday, August 10, during NCSL's Legislative Summit in San Antonio is shaping up to be "hunger day" with a walk for wellness; Breakfast on the Grotto sponsored by the American Beverage Association; and a path-breaking two-part issue forum onsite panel discussion with Undersecretary Kevin Concannon and a site visit to the San Antonio Food Bank. NCSL will be seeking advice from the Hunger Partners to help secure a high visibility spokesperson on hunger (such as Jeff Bridges) and help maximizing participation at the events.

A teleconference will be held in the fall to reflect on the San Antonio lessons and to prepare for the Tampa meeting.

An updated project summary is available. Partners received highlights of the kick-off meetings in Phoenix in December 2010 and convened a teleconference in March 2011. We have been collecting examples from the Phoenix meeting, and

Partner conference calls, as well one-on-one meetings, calls and emails with the Partners. Staff have been conducting outreach with federal officials and key advocacy organizations in D.C. and made presentations to the Hunger Alliance and FRAC hunger conferences in March. As for the research, staff is entering a heavy data collection and writing period in preparation for the San Antonio meeting when we plan to have most publications complete.

#### Publications for the Hunger Partnership:

- A summary of the federal child nutrition reauthorization. (IN PACKET)
- Create a checklist for state legislators to use to bring attention to hunger and to promote public-private partnerships in their communities to combat it.
- Update the “Toolkit” and “Bringing Legislators to the Table” with new research and examples.
- Write an NCSL LegisBrief highlighting public-private initiatives and state legislative models.

#### Roundtable Discussion

- In Georgia, there are many who are long-term unemployed over the age of 50 and cannot get a job. Georgia has one of the highest unemployment rates in nation. They can qualify but they are embarrassed to ask for help. They have master’s degrees but can’t get work.



- AARP’s focus is on those 50 years and older. Historically it has been difficult getting older Americans and people with disabilities eligible for SNAP to participate. Could we create a nexus with the Social Security Administration for new enrollees receiving electronic benefit cards? SSA knows individuals’ income and age and that they’re receiving social security. We should be able to find a way to attach them to SNAP as well. It could be a preloaded EBT card, like presumptive eligibility. It could be like disaster relief, limited one to two months, to avoid long term waste, fraud, and abuse.
- Is there common ground on building that efficiency with WIC and SNAP on single card? Could that be rolled out across all programs? We should maximize federal dollars by having states encourage people to take advantage of these programs.
- We should be able to find ways to encourage uptake for people who use programs that originate with the Treasury. South Carolina has a demonstration pilot co-locating workers for food stamps at the social security office. It has saved federal and state government dollars and attached more people to the program. Why spend money on eligibility determination; instead let’s try to integrate programs.
- The deadline for WIC EBT implementation in HHFKA is 2020. This is a long time from now; we can make efforts to push up implementation.
- Wednesday was a hunger day at the state capitol in Boston with Wal-Mart and NCSL President Richard Moore. FRAC shared their document about state options. One state option is that states can take information from the database for anyone who receives SSI and get them enrolled in SNAP. When this was implemented in Massachusetts, the state didn’t ask elderly to sign up but instead sent the pre-loaded benefit card and information out to elderly residents. Another outreach opportunity is that Medicare part D subsidies information is coming into the states. Three states have received grant money to take the information and figure out what additional 2-3 questions are needed for SNAP eligibility.
- The WIC community and retail community are grappling with the EBT issue. We wonder about the type of technology best suited to WIC.

#### New Proposals and Hot Button Issues

- Restaurant meals and possible expansions of the program
- Drug testing for SNAP users and other states’ experiences with implementation
- Photo IDs for SNAP users, costs of implementation, federal guidance and legal issues
- Examples of legislation, policy options and model programs in three or four target areas such as school breakfast, SNAP and WIC
- Strategies for talking about hunger focusing on the costs of inaction to garner more bipartisan support and make hunger relevant in budget strapped states

- Fraud, waste and abuse in SNAP program
- Food stamp modernization and other cost effective measures to improve SNAP
- Options for legislators to help educate the community, especially using social media
- How to build political leadership and engage a wide breadth of partners
- Catalyzing interest and reaching people who wouldn't otherwise connect to this issue

## PANEL: THE ROLE OF CORPORATE FOUNDATIONS IN HUNGER

**Ellen Goldberg Luger**, Executive Director, General Mills Foundation. Ellen has responsibilities for the leadership and management of the strategic vision for the Foundation and the Africa Women and Children's Hunger Project. Previously, Ellen practiced corporate law in New York City and Minneapolis, and served as vice-chair of the Minnesota Council on Foundations. A slide show of Ms. Luger's presentation is available from NCSL.

- General Mills has been around for more than a 100 years. It began as a flour mill on the Mississippi River and is now active in philanthropy in Minnesota and communities we've grown into all over the world, giving more than \$100 million in grants, product donations, and corporate contributions. 82% of employees volunteer locally.
- General Mills works with Feeding America in donating products and runs Box Tops for Education and Cheerios Spoonful of Stories. General Mills is one of the top five supporters of Feeding America. GM has a product donation action team, which is working to lift donation restrictions to save food from landfills. We also work with the Biggest Loser/Pound for Pound challenge and the Hamburger Helper campaign, raising a helping hand for small towns.
- In the realm of international giving, General Mills has partnered with global food banking network. GM also works to spread technologies that work at GM to other companies.
- General Mills also supports Hunger Free Minnesota, which works to close the 125 million 'missing meals' gap. Hunger Free Minnesota also works to increase participation in SNAP, access to the food distribution system, and the use of child hunger programs. We hope to replicate these efforts in other states. Lee Anderson is working on a team in Minnesota to implement legislative changes – 87 counties do different things for SNAP eligibility.
- GM works to promote healthy meals and serves on the President's Council on Fitness.
- GM promotes small grassroots efforts, since communities know what works. GM sponsors Join my Village to give women and girls a chance. By 2011 GM will have donated \$2 million to build schools, build teachers' homes, and help women start businesses.
- GM company works to provide healthy foods for WIC. 16 cereals meet WIC requirements, including Cheerios, as well as Progresso canned beans, and Jolly Green Giant products.



**Margaret McKenna**, President, Wal-Mart Foundation. The Walmart Foundation funds initiatives in education, workforce development, economic opportunity, environmental sustainability and health and wellness. Walmart and the Foundation recently made a \$2 billion, five-year commitment towards hunger relief. Margaret previously served as President of Lesley University, now one of the premier teacher training universities in America.

- Wal-Mart is the largest corporate foundation in the world and the largest donor of food, as Wal-Mart is the largest company in world. The power of foundation next to the company is nothing. When the company decides to do something, the world changes.
- Wal-Mart is well suited to address hunger because hunger is a problem we can solve. It is a logistics and distribution problem, not a hunger problem. Wal-Mart's strength is logistics and distribution.
- We know that addressing hunger in schools is important. Though I've been in education almost 30 years, I've never heard an educator talk about food or hunger. We feed students during their 5-10 days of testing in Massachusetts. The rest of time we do not feed the kids. Wal-Mart has been buying equipment for schools meals in D.C., Baltimore, and five other cities.
- Wal-Mart makes food donations--30% protein and 30% fresh food. We have donated 60 refrigerated trucks to food banks. We give grants to retrofit food banks to be more energy efficient. We support gleaning, community gardens,

school gardens, and local farmers. We also support nutrition education and try to address summer learning, in which each one has a nutrition component and provides healthy food.

- Wal-Mart works on senior hunger. We make the largest donations to Meals on Wheels. Wal-Mart is an AARP partner in their Drive to End Hunger.
- Wal-Mart is interested in the development of a young workforce. We train culinary workers for food kitchens. Wal-Mart is providing training to summer VISTAs to work this summer because federal money was cut. Though some of our programs provide ‘fish, not a fishing rod,’ we balance that with sustainability grants.
- The reason we have not solved the problem is because we have not learned to work together. The government does not have a lead person in hunger relief. Audrey’s role is great but Agriculture has a piece; so does HHS and DOE, and there is no interagency task force.
- Wal-Mart is formally announcing a corporate coalition in June in which 40 of Fortune 500 companies will sign up.
- We know from experience that people are hungry. 120 million people come to a Wal-Mart every week. On the night before SNAP benefits are loaded onto EBT cards, we have a line of people waiting at the registers because they are out of food.

## Question & Answer

*Are there opportunities for states or small groups to benefit from a matching standpoint? [Margaret]* There are three ways to get money from Wal-Mart. Each store has grants, of which they must spend 30% on hunger. Each state has a pool of money for grants of \$25,000 or more, of which 20% goes to hunger. To access those grants go online to Wal-Mart/state application online; the application cycle runs twice a year. Some states have millions of dollars (e.g. TX, CA, AL, and GA). In total, about \$40 million is available each year. A committee of associates in that state decides on grant winners. Finally, for some projects there is national funding. For example, Project Bread and various gleaning efforts get state funding as well as national funding. *[Ellen]* General Mills runs the Champions for Healthy Kids program, totaling \$500,000 per year. Interested groups should access the online application due January 15. Projects need a nutrition and fitness component.

*Hunger affects all of us, but it has a disproportionate impact on minority communities. How does your organization address that? [Margaret]* We are involved in urban markets and communities of color. Project Kitchen Table is about to be announced, which will involve African American- and Latino-serving churches and their hunger efforts. *[Ellen]* The mission of foundation to focus on communities not served. One way we have done this in D.C. is to engage in a partnership with the D.C. mayor.

*How can anti-hunger efforts harness the power of social media? [Ellen]* General Mills’ chief marketing officer helped GM learn how to take advantage of social media for our entire company. Within our team, corporate communications folks are advancing blogs, Twitter, and Facebook. GM engages people involved in social media to help with the cause. *[Margaret]* Wal-Mart engaged in a campaign last year that gave away \$1.5 million. Wal-Mart identified the cities with most food insecurity and offered to give grants to the top 100. The campaign gathered over 10 million votes for different cities. The campaign raised awareness in the communities, thereby raising additional money in those communities. To win monies, community groups put posters in windows, took out radio ads, and directed people to fightinghunger.com. Even mayors got involved.

## RESOURCES DISTRIBUTED IN BOSTON

- Boston Meeting Agenda
- Speaker Biographies
- 2010-2011 NCSL Foundation Hunger Partnership Membership Roster (updated)
- Hunger Partnership Project Summary (updated)
- Legislative Summit Program Preview for Wednesday, August 10
- NCSL comment on USDA proposed rule revising nutritional requirements for school meals
- NCSL Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act Information Alert
- Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act Regulation Timeline
- Selected Examples of 2010 and 2011 State Legislation on Hunger
- Data Sources for Anti-Hunger Efforts in States
- Federal Nutrition Program Chart