

## Illinois

### Chicago Summer Food Work Group Partnership

In 2006, the Midwest Region initiated a partnership with the Illinois Hunger Coalition (IHC), the Illinois Board of Education (ISBE), and the major Chicago Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors to improve participation in the summer meals for Chicago.

MWRO, IHC, and ISBE agree to co-chair a work group to draw together major SFSP partners. The initial Chicago Summer Food Work Group was comprised of the ISBE, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, the Chicago Housing Authority, the Chicago Public Schools, and the Chicago Park District. In 2010, three new large sponsors joined the work group; the Greater Chicago Depository, Catholic Charities, and the Archdiocese of Chicago's Food Service Professionals. The group has met regularly to identify barriers to participation, pinpoint underserved areas, understand strengths and weakness of each sponsor and collaborate on findings new feeding sites and publicizing the program to parents, partner organizations, and the media. The SFSP has increased access to feeding sites and improved outreach expansion.

The Chicago Park District opted not to serve as an active role in the work group because their leadership decided to continue operating closed enrolled SFSP as part of their tuition based camp programs, rather than an open SFSP site. In 2008, the Chicago Housing Authority, a long time sponsor of the SFSP, was no longer able to sponsor the program because of top management decision to no longer provide social services to focus quality housing as its core mission. However, Chicago Housing Authority has remained committed to the success of the SFSP and has worked closely with the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services to channel its former summer feeding sites.

The Chicago Summer Food Work Group has generated significant results:

- Annually the group collaborates on a bilingual parent flyer advertising the SFSP and the various partnership organizations contact info. Flyer is distributed to all 400,000 Chicago Public School children before school ends for the summer. Flyer is also mailed to stakeholder organizations for posting on websites and dissemination to members and clients, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC), and the Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition. MWRO distributes the flyer at the Hispanic outreach events in Chicago.
- Chicago Board of Education top administrators have identified summer feeding as a priority and stressed to principals that opening their summer school meals program to walk-in students.
- New faith and community feeding sites have been recruited in underserved areas of the city.
- Second flyer prepared to target the parents designed by MWRO to distribute to Chicago summer school students in late July. This helps parents locate other feeding sites in August after summer school ends.
- Summer meals participating in Chicago has continued to increase since the work group's inception, along with the number of feeding sites and areas now covered by the SFSP.

- Summer Food Kick-Off event in Chicago Jul 1, 2010 is a great example of effective collaboration this work group has fostered. The major sponsors look forward to sharing information and collaborating to improve access to summer meals through the SFSP.

## Minnesota

### **Midwest Staff and the Minnesota Vikings Tackle Summer Hunger**

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the Midwest Regional staff recently celebrated the launch of this year's Summer Food Service Program in St. Paul, Minnesota; with help from Minnesota Vikings team members, area partners, and children from a local elementary school. MWRO team joined Vikings players in creating hunger themed sidewalk art and then helped Second Harvest Heartland volunteers distribute information about SFSP door-to-door. The Vikings Children's Fund Summer Lunch Program, with support from the Target Corporation, hopes to provide 500,000 additional meals to hungry children this summer by increasing visibility of the Summer Food Service Program and area meal sites. Last year, the Vikings Children's Fund Summer Lunch Program provided 200,000 meals. This year Target and the Vikings pledged \$300,000 to fund an innovative visibility campaign and mini-grants to help summer meals sponsors and feeding sites serve more children. Second Harvest Heartland administers the mini-grants statewide.

## Wisconsin

### **Hunger Task Force and Harley-Davidson "Fuel Young Minds" Summer Meals Program**

Since 2004, Harley Davidson Foundation and Milwaukee Hunger Task Force have partnered to feed well over a million meals to children in Milwaukee, Wisconsin during the summer. On June 7<sup>th</sup>, Midwest Regional Staff joined the Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee, Wisconsin to team up with the Harley-Davidson Foundation for its seventh summer of feeding hungry children. The partners kicked off their "Fueling Young Minds" Summer Meals Program in early June by posting bright orange "Summer Meals Here" signs, in Spanish and English, at all area feeding sites. The Summer Meals Program expects to serve 1.8 million meals and snacks at over 200 sites in the Milwaukee area, an extraordinary increase from the 400,000 meals served in 2004. Meals are distributed through collaboration with several community organizations, including Milwaukee Public Schools, the Salvation Army, and Boys & Girls Clubs. Harley-Davidson Foundation provided a generous grant of \$125,000 to support this year's program.

## Michigan

### **Summer Park Party Raises Awareness of Summer Food Program in Michigan**

The July 8th Maranda Summer Park Party was a big success, despite continual rain in Hastings, Michigan. The day started with an 80% chance of rain and, shortly before the Park Party opened, the clouds opened up. Luckily, the Park Party was held at the Barry County Fairgrounds where there are several buildings available for use. The SFSP sponsor, Grand Rapids Public Schools, set up in the Exhibition Hall and served more than 2,100 meals to children. Midwest SNP Director Julie Mikkelsen was interviewed by "Maranda" (a local TV personality) both in studio and live from the Park Party. The parties are an excellent outreach partnership in providing information, food, and activity to communities in Western Michigan.

### **Maranda Park Party & Summer Meals PSA.**

Midwest staff attended a Park Party sponsored by Western Michigan WOTV/WOOD-TV children's television personality Maranda. Children attending the Park Party receive free rides, entertainment, and free summer meals provided by the local school district. The event included TV coverage and interviews with Midwest Special Nutrition Program Director Julie Mikkelson. The day before the event, Mikkelson taped a PSA on the Summer Food Service Program with Maranda, which is expected to air at various times during the summer.

### **Indiana**

#### **Purdue Athletes Life Success Camp**

More than 500 young people from Tippecanoe County spent the summer of 2010 on the Purdue University campus taking part in the Purdue Athlete's Life Success (PALS) program. With the help of the USDA and Indiana Department of Education Summer Food Service Program, PALS offered a strong nutrition program to participants. While the federal and state partnership reimbursement didn't cover the entire food costs, organizers appreciated the significant help the SFSP provided.

"Although many view PALS as primarily a sports and physical activity program, we go well beyond that," says PALS co-director Kim Lehnen. "We feel we are giving our children a road map to success in many aspects of life, not to mention five weeks on a university campus using world class facilities."

Originally PALS was part of the National Youth Sport Program until NYSP was discontinued in 2006 due to a withdrawal of federal funding. Purdue joined NYSP in 2002 and received recognition as the best new program in the nation. At the time NYSP folded, there were over 200 active programs at American universities. As of summer 2010 there were only 15 programs remaining. PALS is one of those programs and the only program remaining in Indiana.

The summer 2010 PALS enrollment was an all time high of 550 youngsters. PALS is offered at no cost to income eligible children aged 8 to 14. For the first time ever PALS turned away potential participants. There were over 800 registrants.

In the summer of 2010 the curriculum included a wide variety of sports and fitness experiences such as swimming, beach volleyball, team handball, soccer, ultimate Frisbee, golf, and Sharbade. The children are also given instruction in computers and writing, music, dance, and financial literacy.

The Purdue Federal Credit Union is a central sponsor of PALS in partnership with the Drew Brees Dream Foundation. The program is also funded by local corporate foundations such as Alcoa and Duke Energy. Other local contributors are Bison Financial, Lafayette Bank and Trust, Lafayette Life Insurance, the Big Sky Foundation, and a variety of individual supporters.

In its nine years of existence the program has proven to enhance the learning experiences of those involved. Purdue researchers have tracked the ISTEP scores of those involved in PALS and find that over the years they have moved beyond their peers in the statewide competency test scores. Purdue researchers have also found significant associations between improvement in peer relations and self-perceptions such as self-esteem, motivation for physical activity, and hope.

More information can be found at the PALS website: <http://www.cla.purdue.edu/hk/pals/index.html>