

United for Better Days: United Against Food Deserts



June – July 2018

VOLUNTEER PROJECT SUMMARY

Between June 5 and July 7, nine United Ways held *United Against Food Deserts* volunteer events in partnership with Kellogg's to help combat the growing issue of food insecurity. During these events, 366 Kellogg and community volunteers worked tirelessly to make a lasting impact on their local communities by immersing themselves in community garden projects. Activities included building picnic tables, planting vegetables and berry bushes, installing new fencing, constructing a produce wash station, cutting grass, pulling weeds, and building raised garden beds, among other projects.

United Against Food Deserts would not have been possible without the support of Kellogg's. Because of them, approximately 3,000 individuals living in food deserts now have access to nutritious food.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Kellogg's approached United Way Worldwide with a desire to help those struggling with access to food, focusing their efforts on nine communities: Battle Creek, MI, Boston, MA, Chicago, IL, Harrisburg, PA, Lancaster, PA, Omaha, NE, San Antonio, TX, Shreveport, LA and Zanesville, OH. With the support of Kellogg's seven brands - Eggo, Froot Loops, Frosted Flakes, Frosted Mini Wheats, MorningStar Farms, Raisin Bran and Rice Krispies - United Way Worldwide developed *United Against Food Deserts*, an initiative to help communities combat food deserts. UWW reached out to United Ways located in the nine markets asking that they manage the community garden projects on the local level.

While Kellogg's and United Way's partnership began on June 5th, World Environment Day, community garden projects didn't officially begin until June 9th and ran until July 7th. The length of projects varied for each market, ranging between 3 and 8 hours. Each local United Way was supported by one of the seven Kellogg's brands, in which they received funding to purchase supplies, as well as employee volunteers for the day of the event. Kellogg's also donated T-shirts for volunteers to wear that featured each brand's logo, in addition to reusable grocery tote bags which included nutritional information along with coupons, both of which were distributed to individuals living in the community. The local United Ways were tasked with recruiting community volunteers as well as managing day-of logistics which included providing volunteers with cereal donated by each brand, communicating with the media, and coordinating the arrival of Tony the Tiger and the MorningStar Farms food truck in select markets.



The work that was accomplished benefited multiple schools, gardens and nonprofits. Beneficiaries include:

Battle Creek, MI: Leila Arboretum Society

Boston, MA: Mill City Grows

Chicago, IL: Centers for New Horizons

Harrisburg, PA: St. Paul's United Church of Christ

Lancaster, PA: Brightside Opportunities Center

Omaha, NE: City Sprouts

San Antonio, TX: Palo Alto College

Shreveport, LA: Oak Park Microsociety Elementary and Fair Park Preparatory Academy

Zanesville, OH: Restoration Park



CORPORATE VOLUNTEER IMPACT REPORT



IMPACT

Over the course of 4 weeks, 366 volunteers worked diligently to ensure these community gardens are producing a substantial amount of fruits and vegetables. One garden in Harrisburg, PA expanded immensely through the efforts of the volunteers, bringing the expected harvest from 1,000 pounds up to 1,500. Fresh vegetables include lettuce, radishes, cucumbers, tomatoes and peppers, with pumpkins and eggplants being the latest two additions.

Volunteers, beneficiaries and United Way staff members felt an immediate impact and shared the following remarks regarding the success of the event.



Schools and nonprofits felt supported

"The schools are both very excited about the impact this project will have in the upcoming school year. The harvest will be used in science lessons and be sent home with families in need."

Jennifer Horton, Community Engagement Coordinator at United Way of Northwest Louisiana, Shreveport, LA

"The event was a blessing for the Palo Alto College Garden. Students are gone during the Summer, so maintenance is difficult to keep up with. The volunteers did a great job cutting grass, pulling weeds, solarizing rows, filling raised beds with soil, constructing a produce wash station, condensing compost piles, working on the fence perimeter, and communication board. Now that this work has been done, PAC will have a jump start on the fall growing season!"

Brandyn Rodriguez, Vice President Community Relations and Volunteer Initiatives for the United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County, San Antonio, TX

"Basic needs is a really core, fundamental value for our United Way. We believe everyone should have those needs met. Food is at the top of the list. Knowing that we can help our community have access to those fresh fruits and vegetables they need for healthy living really aligns with our mission."

Rae Lynn Cox, Vice President of Communications and Marketing for the United Way of the Capital Region, Harrisburg, PA

Building relationships in the community.

"Through the picnic tables, we (Leila Arboretum and the other community gardens) will be able to encourage community gardeners to take a break and get to know one another. This will increase the value and feeling of neighborhood within the community."

Kathy Antaya, Program Coordinator at Leila Arboretum, Battle Creek, MI

"Volunteers had a great time and were surprised that City Sprouts even existed. They were thinking that it would be a large flat piece of ground where they would need to start planting. They were pleased to see all of the mature plants and trees that are currently growing and bearing fruit. It gave them an entirely new impression of the organizations that exist in our community to help others gain access to simple healthy fruits and vegetables."

Dani Ohlman, Director, Volunteer Engagement, United Way of the Midlands, Omaha, NE



CORPORATE VOLUNTEER IMPACT REPORT



COMMUNICATIONS

In addition to work on the ground in local communities, United Way led a communications campaign through earned, shared, and owned channels which kicked off on World Environment Day, June 5th. Through close collaboration with communications and marketing teams across United Way and Kellogg, we provided a toolkit for each community's use to promote the events and impact of our partnership. United Way Worldwide amplified the local efforts and propelled our partnership even further.

Publications via United Way Worldwide/ @UnitedWay Press Release

<https://www.unitedway.org/the-latest/press/uw-day-of-action-rallies-tens-of-thousands-of-volunteers>

Blog

<https://www.unitedway.org/blog/using-your-green-thumb-for-a-good-cause>

Facebook

[Post 1](#), [Post 2](#), [Post 3](#)

Impressions 11,300 Reach 8,813
Reactions 62, Shares 16

Twitter

[Post 1](#), [Post 2](#),

Impressions 9,742 Retweets 38
Likes 23 Clicks 23

LinkedIn

[Post 1](#), [Post 2](#), [Post 3](#)

Impressions 15,300 Shares 46
Likes 235 Clicks 206

Hashtag tracking metrics for #UnitedAgainstHunger
Total uses 194

Media Hits and Social Media via Local United Ways

Battle Creek, MI

<http://wbckfm.com/kellogg-united-way-team-up-against-food-deserts/>

Total Impressions: Facebook/Instagram/Twitter 17,048
Total Engagement: 390

Chicago, IL

Twitter: 5,759 reach; 502 impressions; 1 like; Facebook: 292 impressions, 212 reach, 7 engagement; INSTAGRAM: 18 engagement; LINKEDIN: 360 impressions, 5 likes, 1 share, 4 clicks

Harrisburg, PA

https://cumberlandlink.com/news/local/united-way-volunteers-help-expand-community-garden-s-produce-production/article_5b65ba96-896d-5c9d-8d41-80a875b5b788.html#tracking-source=home-top-story

Total Impressions/Reach: Facebook 11,104, Twitter 1,151

Lancaster, PA

<http://fox43.com/2018/06/09/volunteers-build-community-garden-in-lancaster/>

Total Impressions/Reach: Twitter 4,000 Facebook 1037

Omaha, NE

<http://www.wowt.com/content/news/Omaha-gets-new-fruit-bushes-484645481.html>

<http://fox42kptm.com/news/local/local-nonprofit-gets-a-helping-hand>

Total Impressions/Reach: Facebook 429, Instagram 391

San Antonio, TX

Total Impressions/Reach: Facebook 407, Engagement 10

Shreveport, LA

[Kellogg's® Rice Krispies® and United Way NWLA aim to help Shreveport food desert](#)

Total Impressions/Reach: Facebook 1,218

Zanesville, OH

<https://www.whiznews.com/2018/07/putnam-hop/>
<https://ycitynews.com/2226/events/united-way-kelloggs-hosting-community-garden-project/>

Total Impressions/Reach: Facebook 2659, Live video views 1293, Twitter: 287





Stronger relationships between Kellogg's and the community.

"Kellogg's Frosted Flakes approached us and wanted to do something about the issue of food insecurity. We naturally went to St. Paul's United Church of Christ. They have a community garden that they've been looking to expand for years. We were absolutely thrilled."

Heidi Neuhaus, Director, The Volunteer Center at United Way of the Capital Region, Harrisburg, PA

"Since we have been working in the park over the last two years we have seen more families utilizing the park and gardening here. The work done today by United Way and Kellogg will provide even more incentive for families to come down to the park and play and get involved in the community garden project. It makes my neighborhood better and I want to see that continue."

Local resident, Restoration Park, Zanesville, OH

"Kids shouldn't be hungry. It was really fun helping with the garden so families get good food. I also liked seeing Tony the Tiger - he was awesome!"

Quintin, 10 years old, St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Harrisburg, PA

CONCLUSION

Right now, one in five children in the U.S. (approximately 15 million) face hunger every day. Many of these children live in food deserts. In fact, about 2.3 million people (or 2.2% of all U.S. households) live more than one mile away from a supermarket and do not own a car. Thanks to Kellogg's and the support of 366 volunteers, nearly 3,000 individuals now have access to beautifully restored community gardens that are producing fresh fruits and vegetables.



For more information contact:
Mei Cobb
Volunteer and Employee Engagement
mei.cobb@unitedway.org

