

- **PRESS**
- **Press Releases**

## **The Campus Kitchens Project and AARP Foundation expand commitment to fight senior hunger**

Three year, \$625,000 commitment will scale promising solutions to hunger and isolation

**Washington, D.C.** – With a rising senior population that already includes nearly 9 million older Americans at risk of hunger, The Campus Kitchens Project and AARP Foundation today announced a renewal of their senior hunger outreach program that meets the challenge of reducing food insecurity and isolation among seniors. The program is made possible by a three year, \$625,000 investment from AARP Foundation and is part of the Foundation's strategy to develop innovative, sustainable solutions to increase food security for older Americans.

In the last decade, hunger among older adults over the age of 50 has grown by 80 percent. Further, 80 million baby boomers are reaching retirement age, growing the population of Americans subject to food insecurity. The Campus Kitchens Project seeks to address this issue through many of its 36 student-run kitchens on university and high school campuses across the country, which transform unused food from dining halls, grocery stores, restaurants and farmer's markets into free meals for those in need.

"The issue of hunger in the older adult population is simply growing too fast for the traditional charity approach to keep up," said Laura Toscano, director of The Campus Kitchens Project. "But in every community there is a school, and in every school there is leftover food going to waste and a dining hall that sits dark in the evenings. By engaging student volunteers to mobilize these existing assets in our communities and to go beyond the meal to address the underlying root causes of hunger through innovative programs, The Campus Kitchens Project is providing a sustainable solution to the problem of senior hunger."

Based on the proven success of last year's relationship where ten Campus Kitchens served nearly 46,000 meals to 1,800 older adults, the contribution by AARP Foundation will allow ten Campus Kitchens to increase their meal production and serve 500 more seniors each month. In addition, the investment will allow The Campus Kitchens Project to open 20 new senior-focused Campus Kitchens over the next three years.

As part of the grant, The Campus Kitchens Project will work with student volunteers to evaluate the most effective senior-focused programs and issue a book of best practice programs for addressing the intersection between older adult hunger and isolation.

"Far too many older Americans are struggling each day to put food on the table, which is one reason we teamed up again with Campus Kitchens to bolster existing efforts to feed the hungry and foster the development of innovative mid- and long-term solutions," said AARP Foundation President Lisa Marsh Ryerson. "Even more, engaging youth in such an important charge as senior hunger helps to create intergenerational connections while cultivating future leaders on this crucial issue."

The ten Campus Kitchens selected to focus specifically on issues surrounding senior hunger are:

- **Elon University** – Elon, NC
- **Gettysburg College** – Gettysburg, PA
- **Gonzaga University** – Spokane, WA
- **Kent State University** – Kent, OH
- **Lee University** – Cleveland, TN
- **St. Lawrence University** – Canton, NY
- **The University of Massachusetts Boston** – Boston, MA
- **University of Georgia** – Athens, GA
- **The Campus Kitchen at Washington, DC** – Washington, DC
- **Washington and Lee University** – Lexington, VA

For more information on The Campus Kitchens Project, their AARP Foundation-funded senior hunger outreach program and other work being done by student volunteers, visit [www.campuskitchens.org](http://www.campuskitchens.org).

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**About The Campus Kitchens Project**

Founded in 2001, The Campus Kitchens Project is a national organization that empowers student volunteers to fight hunger in their community. On 36 university and high school campuses across the country, students transform unused food from dining halls, grocery stores, restaurants, and farmers' markets into meals that are delivered to local agencies serving those in need. By taking the initiative to run a community kitchen, students develop entrepreneurial and leadership skills, along with a commitment to serve their community, that they will carry with them into future careers. Each Campus Kitchen goes beyond meals by using food as a tool to promote poverty solutions, implement garden initiatives, participate in nutrition education, and convene food policy events.

Thanks to the support of J. W. Marriott, Sodexo Foundation, AARP Foundation, Ameriprise Financial and other funding partners, CKP continues to grow. To learn more about The Campus Kitchens Project, visit [www.campuskitchens.org](http://www.campuskitchens.org).

### **About AARP Foundation**

AARP Foundation is working to win back opportunity for struggling Americans 50+ by being a force for change on the most serious issues they face today: housing, hunger, income and isolation. By coordinating responses to these issues on all four fronts at once, and supporting them with vigorous legal advocacy, the Foundation serves the unique needs of those 50+ while working with local organizations nationwide to reach more people, strengthen communities, work more efficiently and make resources go further. AARP Foundation is AARP's affiliated charity. Learn more at [www.aarpfoundation.org](http://www.aarpfoundation.org).

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