

## 2002 Sunshine Award Winners

### Successful Outreach: Hart Partners, Inc. and the Food Bank of Northern Nevada

The summer of 2002 was the first year of SFSP participation for **Hart Partners, Inc.**, a community development corporation dedicated to improving the welfare of families and children through cooperative program planning. In addition to providing summer meals for children, Hart Partners also wanted to provide enrichment activities. The members decided on a Book Mobile Program, and set out to make this happen. The first step was a bus: Hart Partners was able to borrow the school district's band bus, which already had half of the seats removed. A volunteer then built bookshelves from donated materials to transform the bus into the Book Mobile. New books were donated by Wal-Mart and Scholastic Books, and used books were collected through donation boxes set up in area elementary schools. The Book Mobile went to two sites per day, the first from 9:30 a.m. until 12 noon and the second from 12:30 to 3 p.m. At the morning sites, children could come early, read and check out books and then have lunch. At the afternoon sites, they could eat lunch first and then stay to use the Book Mobile. Hart Partners used a variety of methods to increase awareness of its program: community articles, flyers, church bulletins, newspaper ads, a TV story, and signs placed on the lawns of all sites. The appearance of the Book Mobile itself was also effective outreach, as children at some sites would come running as soon as it appeared. The program also offered incentives and prizes for the number of books read, with a scooter awarded to the child who had read the most books at the end of the summer.

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**The Food Bank of Northern Nevada** did a very effective job of partnering with other organizations to feed hungry kids during the summer of 2002. Since the FBNN does not have the capability to prepare thousands of SFSP meals, the Washoe County School District was approached as a partner. The School District provides reasonably priced meals, delivery to sites, and use of food service equipment and facilities at several locations. At the site level, the FBNN serves as a sponsor and partners with organizations such as Boys & Girls Clubs, who then provide the staff and supervision for the meal service. The FBNN made an effort to use a variety of locations to reach as many children as possible, such as schools, recreation centers, and parks. To make sure that the neediest kids received meals, the FBNN targeted specific areas and set up feeding sites at seven parks, with meal service provided by refrigerated feeding trucks. However, these sites offered additional challenges, since many had no shaded areas or hand-washing facilities. To make these locations viable, the FBNN worked closely with the Washoe County Health Department to establish a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan to ensure that the children received meals that were both healthy and safe. The close working relationship with the Health Department has now turned into a partnership: the Health Department inspects sites, issues permits, and provides food safety training for the FBNN's staff. To supplement its SFSP efforts, the FBNN also wrote and received a Child Hunger Initiative Grant, and raised \$60,000 through contributions.

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## **Expansion – Seamless Summer Feeding Waiver: West Contra Costa Unified School District**

**The West Contra Costa Unified School District** has been a SFSP sponsor for 14 years. During the summer of 2002, it was able to expand its program by participating in the Seamless Summer Feeding Waiver. Because of the waiver, the staff was able to use time once spent on monitoring and paperwork to improve meal quality, expand meal service, market the program, and better utilize community volunteers. In the past, all of WCCUSD's sites had only served lunch. This summer, the program was expanded by adding breakfast at 14 sites and snacks at 10 sites. At the school locations, WCCUSD was able to serve hot meals based on the familiar school lunch menu, which resulted in higher attendance and better retention of children. Costs were held down at these sites by utilizing commodity items and excess inventory. To reach the neediest children, WCCUSD set up outdoor sites in two neighborhoods, which fed approximately 100 children per day. All of these efforts led to a 169% increase in the number of lunches served, and a 100% increase in average daily attendance.

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## **Expansion – 14 State Pilot Project: The Housing Authority of Maysville**

**The Housing Authority of Maysville's** summer program, called "Let's Do Lunch," has operated for eight years. In the summer of 2002, it was selected by the state of Kentucky to be part of the 14 State (Lugar) Pilot program. The Housing Authority did an extensive amount of outreach to recruit both new partners and new participants, including making personal contacts with other local agencies that serve its targeted population. As a sponsor, the Housing Authority successfully reached more needy kids by adding six new sites in a neighboring county that had no summer feeding program at all the summer before. The Housing Authority set up mobile delivery of meals to sites outside of Maysville using a van equipped with Cambro food carriers. The 2002 addition of an ice machine helped make safe transportation of the meals possible. With these efforts, the program saw an increase of over 28% in average daily meal counts from 2001. The success of the program caught the attention of the Mayor, who came and served lunch to the children for a day. The Housing Authority also overcame the challenge of using a residential galley kitchen nine feet wide to produce meals. Luckily, a larger, upgraded kitchen equipped with donated appliances will enable the Housing Authority to expand the program to reach even more hungry kids.

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## **Service to Special Populations: University of Toledo (National Youth Sports Program)**

**The University of Toledo's National Youth Sports Program (NYSP)** recently completed its 34<sup>th</sup> year of reaching out to high-risk African-American youth. For the past two years, the staff has offered two innovative programs to enhance SFSP attendance. The first, "Hometown Heroes," features prominent local citizens speaking to the children at lunch every day. The speakers talk about how they overcame obstacles to success and serve as positive role models for the children. The program has proven to be very popular with the participants, as one supervisor said, when the speaker begins, "the lunch room becomes silent, which in itself is amazing!" This innovative idea has done a wonderful job of actively involving the community with the program. The second program, "Marvelous Mondays/Fabulous Fridays, was implemented to keep attendance high on Mondays & Fridays, which in the past had seen a drop in the number of children attending. Both days feature drawings for prizes, which helps to keep attendance strong at both ends of the week. The prizes, such as bikes, CD players, and stereos, are donated by local businesses and friends of the program.

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## State Agency Achievement: Ohio Department of Education

In the summer of 2002, the **Ohio Department of Education** (ODE) had 138 sponsors with 1,030 sites, feeding approximately 50,000 children per day. To support the ODE's efforts with sponsors, the Governor of Ohio proclaimed the week of June 23<sup>rd</sup> as Summer Food Service Program Awareness Week, issuing a proclamation and press releases to publicize it. As a result, representatives from the ODE, the Children's Hunger Alliance, and several sponsors were interviewed on three television shows and five radio broadcasts. Three years ago, the DOE also helped to form the Ohio SFSP Advisory Board, comprised of leaders of local businesses, churches, community organizations, and non-profits. New for 2002 was the *Ohio SFSP Toolkit - Suggestions for Juggling Your Resources*. This comprehensive guidebook was developed as a partnership project of the Ohio SFSP Advisory Board, the Children's Hunger Alliance, and the ODE's Office of Child Nutrition Services, and was presented to sponsors during spring workshops. The book includes sections on working with the community and media, a directory of resources, numerous activity ideas for sites, and past success stories. The Ohio SFSP also has its own mascot, a cartoon fox named "Munch" who uses the slogans "Lunch with Munch," and "Outfox Hunger." Munch is featured throughout the *Ohio SFSP Toolkit*, and a costumed, life-size version of Munch also makes appearances at sites and events throughout the summer.

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