



MEDIA RELEASE

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Hunger Alliance Receives Grant to Support Healthy Active Arkansas Plan

Nutrition Education Critical in Curbing Hunger & Obesity

LITTLE ROCK, AR (February 22, 2017) - The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance was one of four organizations awarded Blue & You Foundation grants to support Governor Hutchinson's strategy outlined in the Healthy Active Arkansas Plan to fight obesity and improve the health of Arkansans. Hunger often leads to obesity because inexpensive food is loaded with fat and sugar. Helping people learn the skills they need to make healthier food choices on meager food budgets is a proven, proactive way to combat obesity. The Alliance received \$88,682 to continue programs that help families struggling with hunger put well-balanced, healthy food on their tables.



From left: Temeka Williams, Alliance operations director; Curtis Barnett, CEO of Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield; Patrick O'Sullivan, executive director of the Blue & You Foundation; Kathy Webb, Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance executive director; Caitlin Richard, Alliance membership & events manager; and Lynne Phillips, Alliance development director.

Grant dollars will help support programs such as Cooking Matters, Cooking Matters at the Store, SNAP Outreach, and Double Up Food Bucks that teach low income Arkansans how to shop for and prepare nutritious meals on limited budgets while providing

incentives to purchase more fresh produce. The grant will also facilitate the Power of Produce (POP), a pilot program through the mobile farmers market that will provide fun opportunities and incentives for children to engage in the local food system and be exposed to new and different produce that will help establish healthy, life-long eating habits.

"Thank you to everyone at Blue & You," said Kathy Webb, Alliance executive director. "This grant makes a difference in the lives of many Arkansans who suffer from food insecurity. Our Arkansas Hunger and Nutrition Initiative, launched last year through a Blue & You Foundation grant, reached more than 10,000 Arkansans in 2016. We can't wait to see the numbers and the stories for 2017,"

About the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance

Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, lead partner in Arkansas for the No Kid Hungry campaign, is a non-profit collaborative network of more than 400 hunger relief organizations across Arkansas. Our founding members include the Arkansas Foodbank in Little Rock, the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas in Jonesboro, Harvest Regional Food Bank in Texarkana, Food Bank of North Central Arkansas in Norfolk, Northwest Arkansas Food Bank in Bethel Heights and River Valley Regional Food Bank in Fort Smith. The Alliance mission is to reduce hunger and improve access to nutritious food by providing tools and resources, empowerment, advocacy, education and research. We invite you to visit www.ARhungeralliance.org for details on hunger relief programs, donor and volunteer opportunities.

About Cooking Matters and Cooking Matters at the Store

These unique nutrition education programs, developed by Share Our Strength, a national non-profit dedicated to ending childhood hunger, teach low income adults, teens and families the skills they need to plan, shop for and prepare economical, healthy meals on a budget. Participation in a Cooking Matters course decreases an individual's chance of remaining food insecure by 50 percent.

About SNAP Outreach

SNAP Outreach staff and volunteers assist low income Arkansans who qualify for nutrition assistance to complete their applications for SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) benefits. These food assistance benefits help Arkansas seniors, veterans, children and families who are struggling to afford food. SNAP benefits provide economic stimulus to local communities. Each dollar in SNAP benefits is the equivalent of \$1.79 in economic input.

