Welcome to Cooking Matters in Arkansas!

There's a lot going on with the Cooking Matters team, and we hope you'll want to be part of it! Every other month we will send you our Cooking Matters in Arkansas newsletter. You'll find out about upcoming classes and event days as well as nutritious, cost-conscious recipes and other information we think you will find helpful. Don't forget to follow the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance facebook page to stay up to date on other hunger relief events!

We want to hear from you. If you have tips, events, photos, stories from the field, or a blog post you would like to share, we encourage you to send it to Mary or Hannah at mary@arhungeralliance.org or hannah@arhungeralliance.org and we will try to include it in an upcoming issue.

In this issue, you'll find:

**SNAP Outreach and Advocacy**

**Funding Opportunities**

*Cooking and Gardening with Kids*

*Priority Audience: Caregivers of Young Children Ages 0-5*
New Partner Trainings
5/9 Fort Smith
5/10 Fayetteville

Become a Cooking Matters Volunteer

Cooking Matters at the Store
5/4 Hot Springs
6/1 Pine Bluff

Cooking Matters Fun Fact: Sneaky Sugars!

Other Events:
6/13 Serving Up Solutions
Throughout May: Arkansas Advocates Regional Children’s Policy Summits

Blog Post:
My AmeriCorps Story

Partner Feature:
Economics Arkansas

Recipe Feature:
Yogurt Parfait

SNAP Outreach & Advocacy

Let us assist you! If you would like to have a SNAP outreach volunteer at your event to help participants who might need assistance filling out SNAP applications, we would be happy to attend! For more information contact the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance SNAP Outreach team at 501.399.9999.

Funding Opportunity: Cooking and Gardening with Kids!
The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and Access to Healthy Foods Research Group at the Arkansas Children’s Research Institute have an exciting funding opportunity to announce thanks to the Kohl’s Cares Foundation! Studies show that children are more likely to prefer fresh fruits and vegetables and have a greater willingness to try new foods when they receive hands-on gardening education along with nutrition education. To that end, $750 stipends are available to support the implementation of *Growing My Plate*, an addendum for integrating garden activities into the six-session *Cooking Matters for Kids or Teens* curricula. These funds can be used to purchase necessary kitchen equipment, recipe ingredients, gardening supplies and materials, and additional recipe ingredients to send home with students.
In order to participate, you must receive Cooking Matters training from the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, provide a budget report, administer pre- and post-test surveys to students, and return all requested paperwork within one week of your course completing. All courses must be complete by 8/1/19.

If interested, please contact Cooking Matters Director Alex Handfinger (alex@arhungeralliance.org or call 501-399-9999) to discuss this opportunity. Please have considered the following: possible collaboration with other community organizations, target time frame, recruitment of students, access to a garden, and access to kitchen facility (by no means is a full kitchen necessary; hot plates can do the trick too!). We look forward to hearing from you!

**Priority Audience Funds**

Do you work with caregivers of children age 0-5? If so, we can now provide you with a $600 stipend per course that is targeted to this group! Research has shown that this is the group that CM can have the most impact with, since they are the most open to behavior change and their children will carry these new eating and shopping habits into adulthood. Stipends can be utilized for any costs associated with implementing the course, including groceries, equipment, childcare, transportation, and teacher stipends. Funds are available only as long as they last, so contact CM Director Alex at alex@arhungeralliance.org or (501)399-9999 ASAP if interested!

**Cooking Matters New Partner Trainings**

New people around the state are embracing the Cooking Matters curriculum that helps reduce a person’s chances of remaining food insecure by up to 50 percent. We partner with local organizations across the state to offer classes for parents, children, teens, families, and seniors. If you or your organization are interested in bringing six-session Cooking Matters classes to your community, please contact Cooking Matters Director Alex Handfinger at (501)399-9999 or alex@arhungeralliance.org.

Our team will train you, provide teaching materials, and may even help you get started with some of the kitchen equipment and utensils you’ll need! Regional trainings are scheduled on an as-requested basis, so if you don’t see one near you yet, contact Alex to get one scheduled!
Ft. Smith, AR
Thursday, May 9
1pm-4pm

Northwest Arkansas
Friday, May 10
1pm-4pm

Register by Tuesday 5/7 with alex@arhungeralliance.org

Become a Cooking Matters Volunteer

Interested in becoming a volunteer? Start by filling out the Cooking Matters volunteer application form, and we will be in touch soon!

Cooking Matters at the Store

If you are interested in learning healthy tips and budgeting tricks for more healthful eating, Cooking Matters at the Store tours are a good place to start. Join us if you would like to volunteer or if you’ll be in the area!

Arkansas Children’s Hospital offers the following Store Tours on an on-demand basis:

Arkansas Children’s Hospital (ACH)
Every 2nd & 4th Wednesday at Walmart
2700 S. Shackleford Road, Little Rock
11:00am-12:30pm

Tours only occur if someone has pre-registered. Please call ACH Community Outreach at 501-364-5437 to sign up.

Cooking Matters at the Farmer’s Market Events

We’re currently looking for volunteers for both events in Hot Springs and Pine Bluff. Volunteers are needed to recruit participants and share nutrition talking points at the stations.
Volunteers will need to RSVP and complete a short training before the tour. We are also seeking an interpreter for our Hot Springs event. There is a stipend available for interpreters. Please let us know if you can help out, and please share with your network. Thank you so much!

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<tr>
<th>Hot Springs</th>
<th>Downtown Hot Springs Farmers Market</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>121 Orange Street</td>
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<td>Saturday, May 4</td>
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<td>9:00am - 12:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<th>Pine Bluff</th>
<th>Saracen Landing Farmers Market</th>
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<td></td>
<td>200 Lake Saracen Drive</td>
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<td>Saturday, June 1</td>
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Please email Cooking Matters at the Store Field Manager Sam Stadter at sstadter@arhungeralliance.org if you would like more information, flyers, or to volunteer with an event.

**Cooking Matters Fun Fact**

Did You Know?

Take a guess! Out of Cheerios, Cinnamon Toast Crunch, and Raisin Bran, which has the highest sugar content?

How did you do?

The correct answer is Raisin Bran with 18 grams of sugar per 1 cup serving.

The best way to determine what is going into your food, or in this case grams of sugar in cereals, is to use the nutrition label located on the back of packages!
Serving Up Solutions

Serving Up Solutions is the annual fundraising event to support the Alliance’s programs, as well as to fund grants to hunger relief organizations in the districts of legislators who participate in the event. Members of the Arkansas Legislative Hunger Caucus don their special aprons and serve a delicious 4-course dinner to donors, hunger advocates and guests, all to support the mission of eliminating food insecurity in Arkansas. This year’s event co-chairs will be Dustin and Bobbi McDaniel. Click here to purchase individual tickets or tables. For information contact Mary Bea Gross at mbgross@arhungeralliance.org or call 501.399.9999.

Arkansas Advocates
Children’s Policy Summits

How have children and their families fared during the 92nd General Assembly? Join the Kids Count Coalition in May to find out. You’ll hear from a panel of advocates about great bills YOU helped become law, and we’ll talk about the not-so-good legislation that we’ve been debating these last few months. And most importantly, we’ll outline the work still ahead of us. We’ll hear from lawmakers as they reflect on how the session went, and we’ll honor those who strongly advocated for kids with our Legislative Leadership Awards. Attendance is free, but registration is required.

Helena, May 2nd, 11am-12pm
Little Rock, May 8th, 11am-1:45pm
Jonesboro, May 10th, 11am-12pm
Bentonville, May 15th, 11am-1:30pm
El Dorado, May 21st, 11am-12pm
My AmeriCorps Story

By: Mary McGuire, Cooking Matters AmeriCorps Direct Member

I joined the Cooking Matters program as an AmeriCorps Direct Member because I wanted to take part in community-based nutrition education that would provide a lasting impact. I love the way this program simultaneously offers solutions to hunger, poverty, and chronic disease through giving participants the opportunity to practice and share skills to have more power over the food and nutrition choices that affect their everyday lives. Little did I know how much the program would impact me!

My most satisfying experience in a Cooking Matters class came after working with a group of educators of young children at an early childhood center. This group of women has been teaching for years, and here I was teaching for the first time. This is when I realized I was going to be learning much more than just how to teach a nutrition class.

This group of teachers was the perfect one to help me get over my initial fears, and as a group we grew closer and closer each week. This camaraderie developed naturally as we shared stories, recipes, cooked, and tried new foods together. The ladies shared photos of meals prepared at home that we learned in class, as well as nutritious substitutions to their own recipes. When it was time to end the class, the ladies requested one more session, so we had one last dinner and graduation together. When I asked what they liked most about their time together, they agreed that after working together all day in the same space, it was fun and relaxing to get to bond over preparing and sharing a meal. That’s the magic of sharing food together, it transformed work relationships into friendships!

What has most impacted me about my experience as an AmeriCorps Direct Member is witnessing all of the people committed to taking steps to relieve hunger, poverty, and prevent chronic disease. Fortunately, I got to feel what it is like to be involved with groups of caring people taking positive steps in their lives for themselves and others.

Partner Feature:
Economics Arkansas

By Alex Handfinger, Cooking Matters Director

Those of you that have ever visited our office know that we work in a train station, and this station just happens to full of some of our favorite statewide non-profits. One is Economics Arkansas, who has
been training Arkansas teachers how to integrate principles of economics and personal finance into the classroom curriculum since 1962! Since personal finance and budgeting is an integral part of our Cooking Matters series, we are thrilled to announce an upcoming partnership: "Healthy Meals on a Budget."

The Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas approved a grant for a series of six day-long workshops that will offer a condensed version of Cooking Matters for Childcare Professionals for teachers across the state. Participants will learn key principles of healthy meal preparations along with Economics Arkansas activities around decision-making, budgeting, and financial goal setting. The idea is to empower teachers with the skills and knowledge to prepare healthy meals on a budget and give them the tools and resources to bring our full-length Cooking Matters workshops back to their schools and communities. Participants will receive 6 hours of ADE approved professional development, ready-to-use resources, lunch, and a $50 stipend. Workshops will be held at:

- June 4, Arch Ford Education Cooperative, Plumerville, 8:30 am - 3:00 pm
- June 5, Don W. Reynolds Library Serving Baxter County, Mountain Home, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm
- June 6, Manila Middle School, Manila, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
- June 19, Coretta Scott King Center, Pine Bluff, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
- June 20, TBD, Central Arkansas, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
- July 19, Pinnacle View Middle School, Little Rock, 9:00 am-3:30pm

Registration is live! The workshops filled up really fast and only a few spots left in Mountain Home and Pine Bluff. K-12 teachers can visit [www.economicsarkansas.org](http://www.economicsarkansas.org), event calendar to register today. We are excited to partner with Economics Arkansas and the Blue & You Foundation for this innovative concept!
Yogurt Parfait

Serving Size
Serves 6, 1 parfait serving

Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh or thawed frozen fruit, such as bananas, strawberries, peaches, or mangoes
- 3 cups nonfat plain yogurt
- 1 1/2 cups granola
Optional Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons sliced almonds

Materials

- 6 cups or bowls
- Cutting board
- Measuring cups
- Sharp knife
- Measuring spoons

Instructions

1. If using fresh fruit, rinse, peel, and/or trim as needed. If using thawed frozen fruit, drain any excess juices. Cut fruit into 1/4-inch thick slices. There should be about 3 cups total.
2. Layer 1/4 cup yogurt into each of 6 cups or bowls. Top with 1/4 cup sliced fruit and 2 Tablespoons granola.
3. Repeat layers one more time, ending with a layer of granola.
4. If using, top with sliced almonds.

Chef's Notes

- Layer parfait just before serving to keep granola crunchy. Or make the parfait overnight but leave out the granola, adding before serving.
- Use any high-fiber cereal you like instead of granola.
- Try topping with rinsed, chopped fresh mint leaves for extra flavor and color.
- To save money, use fresh fruits that are in season. When seasonal fruits are hard to find, use thawed frozen fruit.
- Use leftover fruit in fruit smoothies or wash and freeze to use later.
- Use homemade granola.
For this recipe and more visit the Cooking Matters website.

Cooking Matters is a program of Share Our Strength and the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
501-399-9999 | arhungeralliance.org

Cooking Matters is sponsored nationally by

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STAY CONNECTED:

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