

Putting the Pieces Together:

A Component Design for a Community Food Security Center New Orleans Model



Drafted for the Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana



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Community Food Security in New Orleans

Community Food Security is a concept that has drawn much attention in the world of Emergency Food recently. The idea of Community Food Security is debated and, though many have similar ideas, a set definition has not generally been agreed upon. However, the very concept of Food Security, which is at the core of Community Food Security, is terminology now even being used by the government instead of hunger. For all practical purposes, and ours herein, the idea of Food Security can be held to be that same idea articulated by Franklin D. Roosevelt when he identified the *Freedom From Want* amongst his four freedoms to which all people are entitled. Hunger has been addressed in America in a manner that is somewhat reminiscent of a band-aid: failing to address the disease itself but instead covering the cuts it creates.

Original titles of programs such as Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program showcase the former popular view of the problem as one that would come to pass, that would be overcome shortly. However, as that inevitability of success has faded the program is now known as The Emergency Food Assistance Program retaining the acronym TEFAP. Awareness set in, a time ago, that the problem of hunger was a sustained issue and not a temporary setback or difficulty for American society. Still, the solution remained the same in what has been described aptly as a safety net, addressing hunger up until this point in a manner which sustains the individual as opposed to removing it from their lives. Such a solution makes it seem as though the problem is viewed through a certain tunnel vision that cures an immediate need while failing to eradicate the source of that need. A symptom is treated while the disease is left unchecked.

That disease is poverty, which is a malignant cancer for any society. Unaddressed poverty creates a cycle which is almost inescapable producing hunger, homelessness, and increased crimes rates while supporting substance abuse, mental disease, and a number of other issues. Attempts to resolve just one issue created by poverty such as homelessness or hunger cannot provide a complete solution that will attack the very problem efficiently. Thereby, such a solution is doomed to continuous repetition.

The idea of Community Food Security seeks to take on this problem as a whole and find a whole solution. It is a more holistic approach focused on more than one facet of a manifold problem. Community Food Security remains focused on hunger, but attempts to go more to the



source and attack it at its cause utilizing what means are available. Moreover, it tries to do so in a sustainable fashion, not providing a temporary quick fix.

A number of food banks and similar organizations have engaged in projects to create or have created their own Community Food Security Centers or Campuses, with the Tucson Food Bank's campus being one of the most prominent examples. In the report, "Serving Up Justice" the World Hunger Year organization makes a powerful argument for such capacity building and change being the future of food banking. Certainly in light of the mission of America's Second Harvest, to end hunger, new approaches are warranted, because, the simple distribution of food is arguably only perpetuating hunger. Through distribution a food bank can provide aid and help to sustain an individual, which is needed. However, through a Community Food Security Center they can more holistically affect their lives to help them rise from hunger instead of providing satiation for a time.

This concept of Community Food Security is particularly powerful in the Greater New Orleans area at this time. Still reeling from the effects of Hurricanes Katrina & Rita there have been great demographic changes in terms of the general population numbers, homelessness, poverty, and immigration. During this recovery time many are seeking profit and there is a lot of outside influence in the city with names as large as Donald Trump stepping in to capitalize on the storm stunned population. Government money is flowing more slowly than molasses and everywhere individuals turn there appear to be more obstacles to rebuilding their lives. Community Food Security is about the community, ignoring outside interests that do not align with the community's, and pursuing good for the people whose stories are patches in the New Orleans quilt. Second Harvest can be a bigger part of rebuilding and healing together.

Ultimately the question comes to whether we are helping our community as we were intended to and are we doing enough. What a Community Food Security Center will seek to redress is poverty and its health effects. A general indicator of the health of a community is obesity. Louisiana and the United States as a whole faces sincere issues with obesity. 400,000 deaths are related to obesity per annum in the United States, which is second only to smoking-related deaths.¹ Louisiana has an obese population of 23.3% compared to 20.9% in the U.S. and is the 8th ranked state in terms of the levels of obesity.² Obesity is a genuine issue for the state.

Looking at demographics associated with obesity, the state's population is 32.5% African American compared with 12% of the U.S. and 62% of low SES, African American females were



obese.³ Studies have shown that African American populations are affected differently by the obesity, particularly in terms of heart disease among other health issues. Diabetes is also a significant risk to the entire population of Louisiana which nationwide costs billions in healthcare dollars which could be drastically cut through improvements in obesity levels in the U.S. Louisiana was ranked 7th for the highest cases of diabetes with 8.5% of the population suffering from the condition.⁴

Furthermore, Louisiana is one of the poorer states in the union with a 19% impoverished population, by very strict government standards, as opposed to 9% nationwide.⁵ A 1995 Louisiana Medicaid study indicated that 52% of Medicaid recipients performed no leisure activity and 61% of Medicaid recipients reported dietary fat intake greater than 30%.⁶ Medicaid participants also reported eating one or fewer servings of fruits and vegetables daily creating not only an exercise issue but a nutrition one.⁷

The obesity outlined above is significant as a general health indicator of a population and is associated with significantly increased risk of diabetes mellitus, hypertension, dyslipidemia, certain forms of cancer, sleep apnea, and osteoarthritis.⁸ As cited in the report Effectiveness of Interventions for Overweight and Obesity in Adults drafted in response to State legislation:

- *30% - 78% of cases of hypertension may be attributable to obesity*
- *High blood pressure is twice as common in adults who are obese*
- *Obesity is associated with elevated triglycerides (blood fat) and decreased HDL cholesterol ("good cholesterol").*
- *Diabetes prevalence increases with BMI and was 2%, 8% and 13% in those with BMI 25-29.9kg/m² (overweight), 30-34.9 kg/m² (class 1 obesity), and >35 kg/m² (class 2 and 3 obesity), respectively.*
- *A weight gain of 11 to 18 pounds increases a person's risk of developing Type 2 diabetes to twice that of individuals who have not gained weight.*
- *Over 80% of people with Type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese.⁹*

Moreover, the economic cost of obesity nationwide totaled \$99.2 billion¹⁰ in 1995 and has only increased. Nationwide it cost \$51.6 billion in direct medical costs, \$3.9 billion or 39.2 million days in lost work, 239 million restricted-activity days, and 62.6 million physician visits.¹¹



The economic cost of obesity in 2000 was \$117 billion and \$ 77 million per month is paid by Social Security for individuals with obesity claims.¹² Specifically in Louisiana, in 1995, 62% of Medicaid patients were classified as obese, 25% had a chronic disease and accounted for 48% of the total annual Medicaid expenditures.¹³ The same study found 16% of all Medicaid patients had diseases associated with a high fat diet and 36% of total Medicaid charges were spent on these patients.¹⁴

Louisiana is in the top 6 states in both total obesity related expenditures and Medicaid obesity related expenditures.¹⁵ An examination, performed in the study these numbers are being pulled from, of a January 2004 study of medical expenditures attributable to obesity allowed for estimation that Louisiana spends \$1.4 billion annually on obesity.¹⁶ The same report outlines a list of risk or predisposing factors for obesity that are shared by many individuals that Second Harvest food reaches. This list is:

- **Parental Overweight**
- *Lower Socioeconomic Status**
- *Smoking Cessation*
- *Low Level of Physical Activity*
- *High Carbohydrate Oxidation*
- *Childhood Overweight*
- *High Birth/infancy Weight*
- *Lack of Maternal Knowledge of child's sweet eating habits*
- *Recent Marriage*
- *Multiple Births*
- *Medication*
- *Menopause*
- *Ethnicity**
- *Female*

**Those of particular interest to Louisiana based upon demographics*

Second Harvest has tackled hunger in Louisiana head on for almost 30 years, however, to the question of whether we are doing enough, the Food Bank cannot solidly say yes. By distributing food without examining its' nutritional content we could be helping to perpetuate the



problem. Through a Community Food Security Center we can seek to address this problem and build capacity and collaboration to ensure the Food Banks continued feasibility and affect on hunger and poverty. Below is a conceptual design for the Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana outlining a rough sketch, in concept, of what an ideal Community Food Security Center could provide and house on its grounds and identifying some of the potential partners that could be involved therein. The possible components identified in this report are in addition to the traditional programs and activities of the Food Bank which would be housed on the premises as well.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition is a problem for our area stated above in the Community Food Security introduction. Nutrition education is already done by Second Harvest in some ways, particularly through the good efforts of Ms. Lisa Perron through programs such as the 9-a-day. It is understood that Hunger and nutrition correlate very strongly. One of the paradoxes in the eyes of many who view the problem of hunger is how a hungry person could be overweight. The answer is actually simple: access to food that isn't very nutritious is typically all that they have; as such food is cheap compared to what else is available. However, even when an individual is increasingly capable of buying healthier food knowledge of nutrition is typically something that they do not possess. Nutrition is not typically taught in schools, as a result, the nutritional information labeled on products could just as easily be written in hieroglyphics for the average consumer and make a similar amount of sense.

It is common knowledge that health and nutrition are interrelated powerfully. No matter how much an individual exercises if their diet is one that counteracts that their health can still worsen. A recent study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in April, reported on by Reuters posited that diet and exercise were equally good and helping take off weight.¹⁷ The conclusion of the study was that in terms of weight loss calories were all that mattered, whether consumed or worked off and nutrition remains key to priming the body for proper function.

Space for nutrition education can be beneficial to various programs already run by the Food Bank including the 9-a-day, Backpack, organizing food distribution, and generally in helping agencies serve their communities better. It also creates an expanded ability to pull in



interns, capstones, and other students to complete projects. Overall it expands the capability of Second Harvest while making us more effective at serving our community and advancing knowledge to them that is essential to a better quality of living. Classes can be offered out of the space, research can be performed out of it, general seminars for agencies and staff can be held within it and it can house offices for individuals whose projects/employment are related to it in Second Harvest.

Gym Facility

As mentioned above health is more than just nutrition, it is impacted by exercise efforts. This is particularly the case in terms of weight loss. Louisiana and the United States as a whole faces sincere issues with obesity. 400,000 deaths are related to obesity per annum in the United States, which is second only to smoking-related deaths.¹⁸ Louisiana has an obese population of 23.3% compared to 20.9% in the U.S. and is the 8th ranked state in terms of the levels of obesity and 6th in terms of expenditures on it.¹⁹ Obesity is a genuine issue for the state.

Nutrition and nutrition education are only part of the solution, exercise is the other half. However, this is a part that can be expensive to achieve if one does not wish to run or jog in their neighborhood or a park, if one is close by. The approximate lowest cost of a membership at the Elmwood fitness center only blocks away from the Food Bank is around \$100 with an additional \$10 a month spending requirement inside. Costs are similarly high across the entire New Orleans area. The development of a non-profit gym housed on the campus with a sliding scale cost represents an effective way to create the opportunity for individuals who would not normally be able to comfortably afford a gym membership. Moreover, through the use of the sliding scale, local fitness facilities should have no fear of being forced into competition with the non-profit gym for customers. The facility can also be made free for use by the staff of Second Harvest which can impact the health and morale of the office positively while simultaneously having the potential to cut healthcare costs for the Food Bank. Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, a potential presidential candidate, enacted a program in Arkansas for government workers encouraging and supporting exercise and successfully cut healthcare costs.

An general outline of an effective gym could utilize 5 or more treadmills, 2 weight machine stations, 2 sets of free weights, and bars for the utilization of them. Equipment can be received through donation as local facilities upgrade or purchased. Treadmills can be purchased



new for as cheap as \$129 from the fitness equipment supplier Shape Up Shop.²⁰ Machine stations allowing for multiple exercises can be purchased for around \$3,000 dollars each from the same company. 400 lb Olympic weight sets including a straight bar could be purchased for \$412.33.²¹ Various other Olympic style bars for the weights can be purchased for \$54.99-\$234.99.²² Weight benches can be purchased for \$310.70 each.²³ Dumbbell sets can be purchased without spending more than \$3,000 for top quality. A very good basic gym can be assembled for less than \$30,000 in equipment costs.

Community Kitchen

Community Kitchens are a project that is not relatively uncommon and has been shown to add significantly to the Community that is involved. By developing a Community Kitchen the Second Harvest Food Bank can simultaneously provide nutrition education, job training, and provide hot meals. Such a program can also possibly support programs that are already in effect such as Kid's Café, other after school snack/meal programs, conferences, etc. through non profit catering. It also has the potential to support the Second Helpings program in helping to recover unused food, alongside preparing and delivering it.

There have been many successful Community Kitchens across the country. The D.C. Central Kitchen is one such group. They have recently graduated their 66th class in Culinary Job Training.²⁴ Founded in July of 1988, the group began their first operations redistributing excess food from the Presidential inauguration. They function as, "... a central location to recover unused food, prepare and deliver meals to partner social service agencies, train and employ homeless men and women for the food service industry, and intellectually engage volunteers."²⁵ A 7 yr follow up study was completed on the Central Kitchen's job training program alone and found several milestone successes including:

-91% job placement rate upon graduation

-74% job retention rate after six months of employment

-98% of all graduates passing the ServSafe exam and becoming certified food handlers in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia²⁶.

Similar success could be achieved by Second Harvest through such a program and has been achieved across the nation. The D.C. Central Kitchen alongside several partners created the Kitchens In National Cooperation network to achieve just such a result. A Community Kitchen



can easily receive the support of the Kitchens INC network which acts as a central forum for best practices, news, programmatic ideas, and general support. The Kitchens INC network is involved with partnerships including the Meals on Wheels Association of America, the AIDS Nutrition Service Alliance(ANSA), America's Second Harvest, the American School Food Service Association, Altria, Daily Bread, and the I Do Foundation. Involvement in Kitchens INC allows for the potential utilization of shared money of 20 million a year for the development and strengthening of community kitchen programs provided by the federal government through the F.E.E.D. act that will last for 5 years if enacted.

The population of jobless, impoverished, homeless, and immigrant individuals in New Orleans has skyrocketed; so also has the demand for workers in various industries around the city. As grocery stores and other food providers return, in conjunction with the return of tourism and the increased demand for restaurant, hotel, and food services, the demand for food services employees will become even greater, providing a great opportunity for placement of individuals from the culinary training program. A Community Kitchen program more so than many on this listing has the potential for tremendous impact rather rapidly once up and running.

Farmer's Market

Taking advantage of newly offered space and location Second Harvest has the potential to support a farmer's market. Such a program would strengthen the Food Bank's ties within the community, particularly the farming community, which is a segment traditionally not as touched by food banks while providing fresh local produce. The impact of fresh produce in terms of nutrition is well understood and is something the Food Bank has already begun engaging in through programs such as the 9-a-day. Providing support in the term of space for a farmer's market would further that work and help to bring more affordable fresh produce into the lives of many in New Orleans who could otherwise be without while supporting our local agriculture, helping our farmers sustain themselves.

A farmer's market could be achieved and supported through partnership with Market Umbrella (www.marketumbrella.org) and the New Orleans Food and Farm Network(<http://noffn.org>), presumably with little pull on Food Bank resources aside from the allocation of space. Many potential models are available and Market Umbrella's is New Orleans specific. Farmer's markets can be made capable of accepting food stamps and other benefits



such as those through the Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program and WIC Farmer's Market nutrition program funded by the federal government as well. This program could be a very good support to a Community Kitchen, the 9-a-day, and non profit grocery working in collaboration to decrease costs of fresh produce while creating local supply on one end while providing the demand essential for farmers to realize profits and stay in business.

Non Profit Grocery

The idea of a non profit grocery is an innovative one that is currently being pioneered in several places across the U.S. One particular location is in the Community Food Bank in Tucson, Arizona. This piece is an aspect of their Community Food Security Center. Their program is entitled the Value Food Store Mobile Market. The program description is:

The Value Foods Store Mobile Market is open to the public and staffed by an employee and volunteers. We primarily travel to rural areas where people have limited access to transportation, low cost meals, dairy, dry goods, and fresh produce. We load up our Mobile Market truck filled with nutritious food and set up shop!

This "on the road store" carries items with a savings of 30% to 70% over a local grocery store. The Market accepts cash and Food Stamps (no debit, credit cards or checks).. This helps our overhead costs which in turn will help your food dollars go further.²⁷

Their non profit grocery currently travels to three locations for 3-4 hours at a time bi-weekly. A common fear with such a program is that local grocery stores will not be pleased with the competition and resist it and cut support to the local food bank; however, no evidence has ever been proffered for the belief. The non profit grocery provides an outlet for their excess goods and is a source of positive publicity while making healthier food which is traditionally more expensive cheaper and more accessible. Moreover, individuals living in rural areas make up a very small portion of grocery stores', which are predominately urban, business.

This program also serves as a more effective way of achieving food distribution in some areas combating problems that we have had before in more rural parishes where receiving emergency food can be seen as degrading. Through a Mobile Market an individual is not given a box of food but rather is given choices which is a characteristic of non-emergency food and



brings a certain additional dignity. It also provides the opportunity for additional job training outside of culinary training provided in a more traditional Community Kitchen.

Government and Other Service Referral

There are many government programs that are available to help individuals who need them. There exist tools to evaluate eligibility for these programs and with some programs it is possible to achieve certification to register individuals for them. It is not a nutritional program, but many groups, including the Atlanta Food Bank under Bill Bolling, have initiated an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) clinic. Providing clients with referrals to outside programs and services is the simplest and most cost effective method through which we could expand our services to our community. Providing information on clinics, government offices, shelters, and so forth is simple and requires organizing the information. Going further and registering individuals is a matter of becoming certified. This allows the government to expand their service outside of their offices without increasing their cost making the partnership beneficial to them and with certain levels of registry in some programs it achieves additional benefits for the local area and the state. This also allows the opportunity to train individuals that we serve to perform this task offering job training outside of culinary service that can lead to government employment which is traditionally very stable and provides excellent benefits.

Though the simple provision of information seems to be hardly a service at all it can make all the difference in the world to those who are unaware of it. An individual without access to the internet or other informational resources has no way of finding what they need, and even with that access they must know where to look. Agencies in Louisiana such as the Assist Agency (www.assistagency.org) which serves Vermillion, Jefferson Davis, Acadia, and Evangeline Parishes have had wide success operating a referral program. Attached as an appendix is a listing of appropriate federal programs, with descriptions, that are available to individuals in the United States that is pulled from the World Hunger Year (WHY) report “Serving Up Justice” compiled by Caroline Fanning and Lani M’cleod. The Louisiana and local contact when available and appropriate are included along with necessary notes. An organization in the forefront of research concerning Community Food Security, a self proclaimed leading advocate for innovative, community-based solutions to hunger and poverty, WHY’s contact information is:



WHY (World Hunger Year)

505 Eighth Ave., Suite 2100

New York, NY 10018-6582

Tel: 212-629-8850

Fax: 212-465-9274

www.worldhungeryear.org

Government services are not the only referrals that it is possible to make. There are various opportunities within the community that are available and may come and go at any time and would require some simple amounts of research to keep updated. Opportunities and partnerships in referral such as with local professional schools and programs like dental, medical, psychology and other health related programs are something that could be mutually beneficial as they need patients to perform tooth cleaning and other testing on. The LSU Health Sciences Center School of Dentistry has partnered with the New Orleans Dental Alliance, New Orleans Dental Association, the American Dental Association, and Crest to reduce children's cavities during February, they have been providing oral health education for an average of 1,200 inner-city children during February for the past seven years.²⁸ This year they have been providing limited free oral health screening as well. Opportunities such as these have the potential to be capitalized on by a referral office to increase the quality of life of the individuals the Community Food Security Center could serve.

Legal Aid

Many of those who receive emergency food can not afford any type of legal advice or independent counsel. The Food Bank in Tucson, Arizona has found themselves capable of providing legal aid through partnership with Southern Arizona Legal Aid's Public Benefits Legal Clinic. The description of the program states that it provides, "...free legal services to qualified, low-income individuals and families who have problems with Food Stamps, TANF Cash Assistance, AHCCCS Medical Assistance, Medicare and Social Security disability programs. Under the supervision of an attorney from Southern Arizona Legal Aid, law students from the University of Arizona College of Law provide legal advice, brief services, referrals and representation in public benefit cases."²⁹



A similar setup should be possible for Second Harvest through, mainly, Tulane and Loyola Universities. Tulane prides itself on being, “the first law school in the United States to institute a 30-hour community service requirement for graduation.” They state further that “During the second and/or third year of law school, each student contributes a total of 30 hours toward a pro bono case supervised by a practicing attorney.”³⁰ Loyola has an even more expansive program.

The Gillis Long Poverty Law Center, run out of Loyola, which is dedicated primarily to public service has a more demanding pro-bono program. Law students at the school are given the option to engage in this program to satisfy the Law and Poverty requirement of the school for graduation. 50 hours are required to complete the program and are done by students at any point in their law schooling. Loyola describes the work of the program stating:

*The Pro Bono Program places students at approved sites where students can gain practical legal experience while performing legal work such as conducting client interviews, legal research and writing, and, in some cases, representing clients before the courts where it is permitted by law. Areas of practice include such fields as domestic law, homeless law, mental health law, juvenile law, social security issues, the death penalty, elder law, consumer law, and AIDS issues. The Gillis Long Student Pro Bono Program seeks to provide students with the opportunity to gain practical legal experience to aid their development as professionals, create a greater awareness of the obligation to provide legal services to the disadvantaged, foster development of the bar, and provide quality legal services to our community.*³¹

The program coordinator can be reached at (504)861-5597.

The Gillis Long Center also houses a Journal of Public Interest Law which is focused on, “...issues faced by the poor, children, the elderly, and all others who are unable to afford legal representation.”³² Work within the CFSC could possibly provide raw data and other information to be used in the journal which would then add to the research and intellectual front of the Center.

The Gillis Pro Bono program is not a legal assistance program however; it places students with legal assistance organizations which can be partnered with and housed in the Center. Finding an appropriate partner or partners will be key.

From the Lake to the River foundation is an organization that could be very ideal. Their mission is to provide assistance to victims of the disaster in terms of research and to recruit law



students, faculty, and lawyers to provide direct legal assistance. The nature of the organization is a partnership that was born originally out of Tulane but is its own foundation now. The development of the CFSC would create a prime opportunity for a partnership allowing them to expand services and gain a location as it seems that they do not have one.

Utilization of Space

The additional office and other available space in a center can be utilized for various partnerships to build up the services that the location can offer to individuals in need. Such activities as job fairs, community cook outs, fundraisers, after school programs and so forth can occur through leasing out the space or offering it for no cost at all. The Food Bank can allow advocacy groups space to meet and organize. A food policy council can be housed on the campus. We can partner with organizations that could house non profit daycare or any other agency and bring groups together. We can create something of a one stop shop, a non profit center, where individuals in need can fulfill multiple needs or a group of identified essential needs. Space can be rented out on a sliding scale, bringing in income, or given at discretion.

Ultimately the space that we allow others to use or house becomes a way of using the scale of the Food Bank to augment organizations and bring them together. Smaller organizations can achieve with Second Harvest what they could not do alone, and we can reinforce our strength and provide a better overall service to our community.

Research Endowment

This idea has not been pursued by other Community Food Security Centers, however, it has potential to be a valuable piece of any. Developing a small endowment whose interest garnered would fund research and development would increase recognition of the Food Bank, augment advocacy efforts, and generally augment the programs of Second Harvest. With an endowment as small as \$200,000 developed over a period of years with a return rate of 5% which is minimal and a target which the Food Bank could be expected to earn on investment at minimum, the endowment would generate \$10,000 a year for use in funding research. These funds could be used to conduct community food systems analysis and assessment, to fund projects studying the effects of the food we distribute, conduct nutritional studies of our inventory, and virtually any other subject that the Food Bank could visualize. It would create a



pool of funds that would be available every year without fund raising for research and development and could be augmented at any time and changed at the will of the Food Bank.

This endowment through providing funds that could be awarded to graduate students completing research for the Food Bank can further the relationship of Second Harvest with the Universities in our locality and service area. Through creating an intellectual center within the Community Food Security Center we can make sure that projects are having impact and more further legitimizing the programs, projects, and undertakings of the Food Bank. Moreover it gives us the ability to target issues and aspects of our work that have not received attention and direct research to provide the facts and academic legitimacy to bring them to the forefront.

The Case for Partnership

The essential nature of Community Food Security Centers that already exist and the one we intend to create is found in collaboration. It is an exciting opportunity for organizations to come together and enhance their impact. Robert Egger, the founder of the D.C. Central Kitchen, and organizer of the non profit congress repeatedly addresses the potential power of the non profit sector claiming that if every non-profit in America combined their resources the resulting economy would be the world's 5th or 6th largest. The collaborative efforts of a Community Food Security Center allow for resources to come together and expand their use.

By bringing together organizations that may do some similar things they can cut out the duplication of services saving resources in terms of money and people. Moreover, through cutting that duplication individual organizations can work on specialization. Groups can further develop services they offer and become more effective and achieve a greater impact. Whereas, through combined efforts all of the groups involved in our Community Food Security center could achieve a much greater net impact. Through our combined efforts together we can develop deeper relationships with our organizations, government, and clientele.

A greater impact is achieved through the focusing of services in a central location as well. Bringing together a gym, daycare, nutrition education, community kitchen, farmer's market, service registration and referral, and other services in combination with our current Food Bank services we add to the convenience and efficiency of taking advantage of them. We can expand the number of people we help and multiply the number of ways while multiplying impact.



Hunger is a gigantic problem on its own, but, is arguably only a symptom of poverty. Seeking to simply solve hunger can never work, because we will never focus on the root cause; however, through partnership we can bring groups together addressing multiple aspects of poverty and hope to help people break free from the cycle of poverty. Through partnership we can hope to effect poverty which Gandhi aptly called the worst kind of violence.

The Case for Capacity Building

The word non-profit can sometimes be simultaneously viewed as the greatest asset and hindrance of our sector. Focus on the work of non-profits as being dedicated to public good and not for profit is the essential nature of the business; however, it often yields the result of non-profit bodies moving from business mentalities and not being focused on some of the things that make private businesses successful. The group Venture Philanthropy Partners(VPP) concerned with this funded a study³³ by McKinsey and Partners, a leader in consulting internationally. Coming from the business world the VPP investors had worked on capacity building intensely in their pasts. As cited in the report Amazon.com built warehouse facilities and hired employees, spending millions before even going online, but funding for building and maintaining infrastructure for non-profits is hardly ever provided. Groups put in hundreds of thousands of dollars for things such as Kid's Café's and Backpack programs, but hardly any group commits money for operating costs or to help build additional warehousing. For the groups that are supposed to be solving complex social problems and working to eliminate poverty funding hardly goes to capacity. VPP was founded itself to provide a solution to that problem. However, many concerned with the "traditional missions" of organizations see no need for expansion or further development if the organization is doing what it was doing at founding and feel it should remain that way.

The role of non-profit organizations in society is changing though and more responsibility is being placed upon them as federal entitlement programs are attacked and the government leaves more people than ever without a safety net under them and as general needs in society grow. Poverty is gaining in size every year, the health of the nation is deteriorating, hunger is becoming a bigger issue, crime is increasing, and homelessness is rising. As a result it has become more critical than ever for non-profit organizations such as Second Harvest to



operate more efficiently and have a wider and more powerful impact. There is a greater need than ever to move from organizations with strong programs to high performing organizations.

The Community Food Security Center represents this. It is an investment in the capacity of the Food Bank and will provide new tools to operate as a high performing organization and help others to do so as well. It ensure the future feasibility of the Food Bank as an organization working towards solving hunger as opposed to a crutch helping individuals live with it. The expanded space will offer the Food Bank new opportunities and capabilities in terms of fundraising, programs, and impact.



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- ¹⁷ Fox, Maggie. "Diet, Exercise Take Off Equal Pounds, Study Finds." Reuters. 26 January 2007.
http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20070126/us_nm/diet_exercise_dc_2
- ¹⁸ Brantley, Phillip J. et al. Effectiveness of Interventions for Overweight and Obesity in Adults. Pennington Biomedical Research Center: Baton Rouge 2004.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ http://www.shapeupshop.com/cardio/treadmill_weslo_cardiostride.htm
- ²¹ http://www.opentip.com/products/Lb_olympic_weight_set_weight_lifting_preceset_ACCHCOS-69306.html
- ²² <http://www.grant-ent.com/phystraining/weights.htm>
- ²³ <http://www.grant-ent.com/phystraining/01814811.htm>
- ²⁴ D.C. Central Kitchen, www.dccentralkitchen.org
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ <http://www.communityfoodbank.com/community-food-security-center/mobile-market>
- ²⁸ "Dental School Gives Kids a Smile" LSU Health Sciences Center School of Dentistry
<http://www.lsusd.lsuhscc.edu/about/news3.htm>
- ²⁹ The Community Food Bank of Tucson, Arizona. "Food Security Website"
<http://www.communityfoodbank.com/dynamic/legalaid.aspx>
- ³⁰ Tulane School of Law "Admissions FAQ" <http://www.law.tulane.edu/admissions/faq.cfm>
- ³¹ Loyola School of Law , Gillis Long Programs site <http://law.loyno.edu/gillislong/programs.html>
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Jonas, Gary F. "Effective Capacity Building in Nonprofit Organizations." McKinsey Group, prepared for Venture Philanthropy Partners: VA, 2001.



Food Stamps

The food stamp program provides low-income individuals with a monthly food allowance. All states administer the program through Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards, which work like debit cards. While the food stamp program is separate from the Temporary assistance to Needy Families (welfare) program, it often provides critical support to people transitioning from welfare. Of all of the government's nutrition programs, it is the most extensive and widely-known. You can also view the USDA's online prescreening tool for food stamp eligibility at www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov.

An additional plus of Food Stamp program enrollment comes into play in the case of an emergency. Should there be another hurricane, a tornado, or any type of disaster emergency food stamps can be loaded into the benefits on the card automatically from D.C. negating the delays caused as individuals tried to enroll for the first time following the hurricanes. The local food stamp offices in the New Orleans area, minus the Jefferson East Bank location which is closed, are:

Jefferson- Westbank

2150 Westbank Expressway, Suite 201
Harvey, LA 70058
(504)361-6196

Orleans – Algiers

3510 General Meyer Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70114

P.O. Box 740069

New Orleans, LA 70174-0069
(504)361-6007

Orleans – Midtown

Government Services Appendix

1661 Canal Street
P.O. Box 51870
New Orleans, LA 70151-1870
(504)599-1861

Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

The WIC program provides supplemental food vouchers and/or EBT cards, nutrition information, and medical referrals to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, as well as to children up to age five. To qualify, applicants must be at nutritional risk.

The state WIC office for Louisiana has this information listed online:

Debra R. Luthy, WIC Director

Chief, Nutrition Service

Louisiana Office of Public Health

1450 L and A Road

Metairie, LA 70001

(225)763-3975

Fax(225)763-5747

<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/?ID=269>

WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

Participants in the WIC program are automatically eligible to participate in the FMNP, which provides coupons redeemable at approved farms, farmers' markets, and roadside produce stands. FMNP also collaborates with the WIC program to provide nutrition education. For more information, visit the USDA website at

www.fns.usda.gov/wic/FMNP/FMNPfaqs.htm.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

Government Services Appendix

As discussed on page 21, TEFAP generally distributes USDA commodities to low-income individuals through EFPs. In certain cases, however, individuals can receive the commodities directly.

The state TEFAP contact is:

Micke St. Romain, Director

Department of Agriculture & Forestry

P.O. Box 3481

Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3481

(225)922-1255

Fax(225)925-6012

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

Similar to WIC, CSFP addresses the nutritional needs of low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, as well as children up to age six (WIC only serves children as old as five). Women and children participating in WIC cannot participate in CSFP. CSFP also serves low-income seniors. The program is only available within certain counties of certain states.

The CSFP contact for Louisiana is:

Andrew Fox, CSFP Manager

Nutrition Section

Louisiana Office of Public Health

P.O. Box 60630

New Orleans, LA 70160

(504)568-7709

afox@dhh.la.gov

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

Government Services Appendix

Similar to the WIC FMNP, the SFMNP facilitates senior access to fresh produce through coupons redeemable at approved farms, farmers' markets, and roadside produce stands.

The state SFMNP contact is:

Bryce Malone

Dept. of Agriculture & Forestry

5825 Florida Boulevard

Baton Rouge, LA 70806

(225)922-1277

Fax(225)922-1289

bmalone@ldaf.state.la.us

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Though not a USDA nutrition program, the EITC is nevertheless important for low-income workers. It is a tax credit that can amount to refunds as high as \$5,000. These refunds can be put towards tuition, a car, or any other item difficult to incorporate into a monthly budget. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is an IRS program that offers free tax preparation for low-income workers. The IRS also offers Publication 596, which explains the eligibility requirements of the EITC. For more information, visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov, or call 1-800-829-1040. Additional resource:

The National Community Tax Coalition

A project of the Center for Economic Progress (www.centerforprogress.org), the coalition leads a national, grassroots movement to connect working families with tax benefits. For more information, contact:

The National Community Tax Coalition

29 E. Madison, Suite 910

Chicago, IL 60602

(312) 252-0280

www.tax-coalition.org

Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)

Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) help low-income families build assets and enter the financial mainstream. Drawing from a variety of public and private sources, they provide matching funds to families saving to buy their first home, pay for post-secondary education, or start a small business. For more information, contact:

The CFED

777 N Capitol Street NE, Suite 800

Washington DC 20002

(202) 408-9788

www.idanetwork.org

While steady participation in government programs is preferable to an often erratic dependency on EFPs, it is important to understand that government programs alone do not provide a final solution. Rather, they are part of a broader approach that involves private social services, education initiatives, grassroots organizing, and policy change.