



FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

Contact:

Erica Teti-Zilinskas

202.847.0228

eteti@dcentralkitchen.org

Student volunteers from 10 universities developing innovative solutions to hunger and isolation among older Americans

AARP Foundation and The Campus Kitchens Project team up to create book of best practices on addressing the root causes of hunger

February 18, 2015 – Washington, D.C. – The Campus Kitchens Project, a national organization that empowers student volunteers to fight hunger, today announced that 10 colleges and universities have been selected to receive grants supporting their focus on the growing problem of older adult hunger. In addition to providing more meals to older adults, student-led Campus Kitchen chapters at these universities will create replicable programs that have the power to fix the root causes of hunger specific to the older adult population, from transportation and mobility issues, to lack of access to fresh produce, to isolation. This is part of a three-year, \$625,000 investment in The Campus Kitchens Project from AARP Foundation and is part of the Foundation’s strategy to develop innovative, sustainable solutions to increase food security for older Americans.

“Far too many older Americans are struggling each day to put food on the table, which is why we teamed up with The Campus Kitchens Project to tackle hunger and foster long-term solutions,” said AARP Foundation President Lisa Marsh Ryerson. “Even more, engaging students is a creative and innovative way to help vulnerable older adults in this country, it also helps to build intergenerational connections while cultivating future leaders on this crucial issue.”

At each of the 42 Campus Kitchens nationwide, students lead efforts to combat food waste and hunger by collecting surplus food from on-campus dining halls, community gardens, restaurants, and grocery stores and transforming it into healthy meals. In the last academic year, Campus Kitchens across the country rescued more than 823,549 pounds of food and served 293,963 meals to 12,006 clients.

With a rising senior population that already includes nearly 9 million older Americans at risk of hunger, the 10 Campus Kitchens working on this initiative were selected for their promising new and innovative solutions to older adult hunger in their communities that go beyond the traditional model of providing meals.

“One of the values we reinforce with our Campus Kitchen chapters is that we’ll never end hunger with food alone,” said director of The Campus Kitchens Project, Laura Toscano. “Our student volunteers have the opportunity to use the existing resources on campus to not only deliver meals, but to create and test new programmatic and infrastructure-based solutions to the root causes of hunger. We’re teaching the students we work with to go beyond the idea of traditional charity and look for those levers of change that will change the underlying systemic problems.”

From the Lunch Buddy program at University of Georgia, to the Mobile Market at Washington and Lee University, this year student volunteers at these 10 universities will evaluate the most effective and replicable programs for addressing older adult hunger and isolation.

The 10 Campus Kitchens selected to focus specifically on issues surrounding senior hunger are:

- **Augsburg College** – Minneapolis, MN
- **Baylor University** – Waco, TX
- **Gonzaga University** – Spokane, WA
- **Lee University** – Cleveland, TN
- **Marquette University** – Milwaukee, WI
- **University of Massachusetts Boston** – Boston, MA
- **University of Georgia** – Athens, GA
- **University of Kentucky** – Lexington, KY
- **University of Wisconsin-Green Bay** – Green Bay, WI
- **Washington and Lee University** – Lexington, VA

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 42 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. To learn more about our work or bring The Campus Kitchens Project to your school, visit 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.

###