



THE
CAMPUS
KITCHENS
PROJECTSM

Press Release

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National Hunger Relief Organization Partners with Gonzaga University in Westward Expansion

The Campus Kitchens Project is a unique combination of business, university, and community organizations to feed the hungry and develop community leaders.

SPOKANE-Tuesday, September 13, marks the Kick-Off Celebration for the Campus Kitchen at Gonzaga University, an organization focused on hunger relief and leadership development. Students, staff, and faculty of Gonzaga University will join forces to cook and deliver meals for the hungry, homeless, youth, and elderly in Spokane. The program is a unique partnership between Gonzaga's Center for Community Action and Service Learning, Sodexo's university dining services, and The Campus Kitchens Project, working together with local non-profit service organizations to feed the hungry in Spokane. Gonzaga is now the sixth university nationwide, and the only one west of the Mississippi River, involved in The Campus Kitchens Project which started in 2001. With its focus on meals for those in need and student leadership development, The Campus Kitchens Project is a perfect fit with the mission of Gonzaga University.

Sue Weitz, Gonzaga vice president for Student Life, said the university is honored to host a Campus Kitchen, "The Campus Kitchens Project is a perfect fit for Gonzaga's mission." Weitz said. "Being one of six universities and the only university this side of the Mississippi to host The Campus Kitchens Project is an honor for us. Fighting hunger, creating opportunities [for those] in need and giving our students the ability to serve help us to truly live out our mission statement. Students and volunteers have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and at the same time practice being 'men and women for others.' "

The Campus Kitchen at Gonzaga University is fueled by the energy of student volunteers and surplus food from Sodexo's dining operations. Volunteers will be trained in proper food safety and sanitation, and will then work in the kitchen, deliver meals, develop menus, and learn about non-profit management. In addition, Sodexo and Gonzaga employees will work alongside students on an ongoing basis to prepare the food in the on-campus kitchens. At full capacity, the program estimates they will be able to distribute more than 300 meals a week to those in need in Spokane with the assistance of established service agencies across the area. Other Sodexo food providers, local restaurants, and Second Harvest Inland Northwest will help keep the kitchen stocked, so food in the community is used resourcefully and not wasted.

The Campus Kitchen at Gonzaga University officially started operations on August 25. Already, volunteers have delivered meals to the O'Malley Senior Apartments, the American Indian Community Center, YWCA, and Spokane Neighborhood Action Program (SNAP). In October, the Campus Kitchen will expand to serve Gonzaga University's Campus Kids – a tutoring program for elementary students in the Gonzaga neighborhood that has become a model for service learning. Additional programming will

include nutrition education activities, a Culinary Job Training program, and service learning partnerships.

The Campus Kitchens Project is an innovative network of community-based kitchens located on college campuses that use food as a tool to strengthen bodies, empower minds, and build communities. Since its inception in 2001, The Campus Kitchens Project has utilized more than 49,000 volunteer hours to prepare and serve over 278,000 meals. In addition, The Campus Kitchens Project also supports a Culinary Job Training program that has graduated 43 adults, some of whom have succeeded in obtaining jobs in campus dining operations. Other Campus Kitchen locations include: St. Louis University (St. Louis, Mo.), Dillard University (New Orleans), Northwestern University (Evanston, Ill), Marquette University (Milwaukee), and Augsburg College (Minneapolis, Minn).

“The new Campus Kitchen at Gonzaga University is a great addition to the national initiative to use existing school-based kitchens, eager young minds, dedicated instructors and school administrators, and our partners at Sodexo. We look to our first program in the western United States as a leader in our larger effort to engage students in the fight against hunger and homelessness,” said Robert Egger, president and CEO of The Campus Kitchens Project.

The Sodexo Foundation, which is the founding corporate sponsor of The Campus Kitchens Program, is also excited to support this new expansion.

"The mission of the Sodexo Foundation is to encourage and support innovative programs designed to eliminate the root causes of hunger in America. As a program, The Campus Kitchens Project has far exceeded our expectations in terms of bringing college communities together to end hunger on a local level," said Steve Brady, president of the Sodexo Foundation. "We are very proud to support such an innovative initiative."

The Campus Kitchen at Gonzaga University Kick-Off Celebration will include a culinary demonstration, informational presentation on Campus Kitchen operations, reactions from new volunteers, and remarks by Sodexo representatives and Gonzaga President Fr. Robert Spitzer S. J. The event will occur Tuesday, September 13, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Globe Room of Cataldo Hall on the Gonzaga University campus. The public is invited to attend.

Founded in 1887 by Jesuit Father Joseph Cataldo as a frontier boarding school for boys, Gonzaga University has established its unique identity. Named for the Jesuit Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, the patron of youth, the 118-year-old institution has grown and matured into one of the West's premier universities – fiscally conservative and financially strong, fully accredited, and dedicated to excellent teaching and providing a caring community atmosphere for students. Gonzaga's educational philosophy is based on the centuries-old Ignatian model that aims to educate the whole person – mind, body and spirit – an integration of science and art, faith and reason, action and contemplation.

The Sodexo Foundation (www.helpstophunger.org) is an independent charitable organization that is leading the fight against hunger by supporting initiatives that focus on eliminating the root causes of hunger in the US. Administrative costs for the foundation are paid by Sodexo USA to ensure that all money raised is directed to those in need. The Foundation was established in 1999 by Sodexo, the largest food and facilities management company in North America. The company also operates Gonzaga University's campus dining program.