



2012 Summer Food Service Program Desert Oasis Awards

Running the Summer Food Service Program is not an easy task. The planning, organizing, marketing, creativity, and flexibility involved, combined with the ultimate goal of feeding hungry children, is a noble undertaking. That is why, through the Desert Oasis Awards, we recognize those outstanding organizations that have demonstrated amazing efforts to run a truly successful feeding program for the children in their communities.

Perfectly Partnered

The honor of SFSP Perfectly Partnered goes to **Humboldt Unified School District**. Using local resources is a big part of operating the SFSP and is essential in helping the program reach its full potential. The nutrition staff at Humboldt organized a partnership with the Dairy Council of Arizona and the Greater Valley Area Health Education Center to reach out to the community to simultaneously retain as well as increase local participation. Incentives such as free jump ropes, appetizing varieties of fresh fruits and vegetables, prizes and special treats were made available throughout the summer to all participating children.

Spectacular Staff

At the heart of any successful program are the hardworking people who make it happen. The amazing staff at **Chandler Unified District** earned the SFSP Spectacular Staff award due to their efforts in setting up tables and equipment daily at local outdoor pools. Milk and several entrée options were offered to the children during each of the five days per week of operation. As proof of how programs such as the SFSP help bring communities together, participating families showed their appreciation by helping with clean up at the completion of meal service and making cards and signs to thank the food service staff for their hard work.

Great Growth

It is the hope that each year a Summer Food Service Program operates, organizations learn how to expand meal services to reach as many hungry children as possible, and **St. Mary's Food Bank** did just that. By focusing on SFSP site recruitment, the addition of breakfast service, and expanding their schedule to include Saturdays, St. Mary's Food Bank increased their serving sites from 46 in 2011, to 60 in 2012, earning them the Great Growth award. Overall they were able to serve 4,735 meals each day for a total of 107,700 meals over the entire summer service!

Magnificent Menus, Outstanding Outreach, and Best All Around

The district food service department at **Casa Grande Elementary School District** set out to do more than just provide wholesome meals to families in need, and by focusing on the entire SFSP experience they earned not just one, but three awards: Magnificent Menus, Outstanding Outreach, and Best All Around. At a popular city celebration event, the staff advertised their participation in the SFSP by handing out menus and flyers, drawing families in by offering face painting, balloon animals, crafts, and give-aways. Menus were carefully planned to offer fresh fruits and vegetables in addition to a fun snack each day, while themes were incorporated into the meal service such as sports and Hawaiian day.