



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Closing the Hunger Gap Network Launches Mini-Grant Program to Invest in Grassroots-Led Narrative Change

Six mini-grants awarded to fuel hunger solutions by changing the dominant narrative

New York (April 23, 2020) - Closing the Hunger Gap - a national network working to expand hunger relief efforts beyond food distribution towards strategies that promote social justice and address the root causes of hunger - announced today its first ever grant program to support grassroots-led narrative change work. The pilot program awarded six mini-grants of \$5,000 each to grassroots organizations and collectives across the country working to shift the dominant narrative that food charity will end hunger to one that calls for social justice and address the root causes of hunger.

“It is critical that we find ways to uplift and fund the community-based and grassroots-led efforts across our country to engage in shaping a new narrative around the true solutions to hunger. We will never be able to end the decades old scourge of hunger unless we reframe the problem as inequity, injustice, poverty and racism, as opposed to simply one of food access, and attack those root causes head on,” said Natalie Jayroe, President and CEO of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana and member of Closing the Hunger Gap’s Narrative Change Strategic Working Group.

The Closing the Hunger Gap Mini-grants for Narrative Change Program was launched to fund and support narrative change processes, campaigns and projects undertaken by grassroots, community-based and frontline organizations or collectives. This year’s awardees include: **Community to Community Development** in Bellingham, WA; **Delta Fresh Foods Initiative Inc.** in Bolivar Country, MS; **Des Moines Area Religious Council** in Des Moines, IA; **The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council** in Pittsburgh, PA; **The SouthWest Organizing Project** in Albuquerque, NM; and **The Wombyn's Wellness Garden** in Portland, OR.

Each community-led project addresses one or more aspects of the dominant narrative around hunger and poverty and works to transform that narrative to better reflect the vision, realities and solutions to hunger that each community is building. These projects bring to light the idea of moving people from what is now the commonly accepted model of food charity as the solution to hunger, to a model of social justice that addresses the root causes of hunger. The funding will create opportunities to give communities a space for conversation and storytelling in the attempt to elevate alternative ideas and solutions to ending hunger. These projects range from an arts-based approach to shifting how farmworkers are viewed and valued, to storytelling, advocacy and community organizing led-by those most impacted by hunger and poverty, to training for urban Native women and community in growing Indigenous heritage produce and preserving medicinal/culinary herbs, seed saving and more.

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“We are beyond grateful to be receiving the Narrative Change grant funds! Being able to provide adequate harvesting and preserving systems for the urban Native community we serve is essential. Making the process from seed to table tangible and accessible with weekly gatherings,” said Roberta Eaglehorse-Ortiz (Oglala Lakota/Yomba Shoshone) of The Wombyns Wellness Garden, LLC. “Not only do we hope to offer a great experience with food sovereignty movements, but we also hope to spark a love for farming for families and help them reclaim their connection with agriculture.”

To learn more about Closing the Hunger Gap, visit <https://thehungergap.org/>.

Media Contact:

Debbie DePoala, WhyHunger
Debbie@WhyHunger.org
212-629-0853

About Closing the Hunger Gap

Closing the Hunger Gap is a network of organizations and individuals working to expand hunger relief efforts beyond food distribution towards strategies that promote social justice and address the root causes of hunger. We envision a time when all people can determine their own futures; when nutritious food is recognized as a human right; and when there is a political will to end hunger and its root causes. We envision ourselves as part of a growing, national network of collaborators and learners that engage with and support movements led by the people most impacted by hunger and poverty Learn more at [.https://thehungergap.org/](https://thehungergap.org/)

Learn more about the grantees at:

Community to Community Development

<http://www.foodjustice.org/>

Facebook: @Community2Community

Delta Fresh Foods Initiative Inc.

<http://www.deltafreshfoods.org/>

Facebook: @deltafreshfoods

Des Moines Area Religious Council

<https://www.dmarcunited.org/>

Facebook: @DesMoinesARC, Twitter: @DMARCunited

The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council

<https://www.pittsburghfoodpolicy.org/>

Facebook: @PittsburghFoodPolicyCouncil, Twitter: @BurghFoodPolicy

The SouthWest Organizing Project

<http://abqpeaceandjustice.org/>

Facebook: @abqpeaceandjustice, Twitter: @ABQPeaceJustice

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The Wombyn's Wellness Garden

<https://www.wombynewellnessgarden.com/>

Facebook: @Wombyn's Wellness Garden-OITBC

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