HELP US PLANT A HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCH

THE BEST GIFT OF ALL: HEALTH

Your gift means we can continue our important programs – and reach more children with inspiring nutrition education and better food!

A donor has offered us a $10,000 matching grant – your gift will be doubled!

Donate at healthyschoolfood.org
Or send check to NYCHSF at:
POB 737, Mamaroneck, NY 10543

NEW YORK COALITION FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD IS CERTIFIED BY INDEPENDENT CHARITIES OF AMERICA.

The Independent Charities Seal of Excellence is awarded to members that have, upon rigorous independent review, been able to certify, document, and demonstrate on an annual basis that they meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and cost effectiveness. These standards include those required by the US Government for inclusion in the Combined Federal Campaign, probably the most exclusive fund drive in the world. Of the 1,000,000 charities operating in the United States today, it is estimated that fewer than 5 percent meet or exceed these standards.

Dear Friends,

The health of our nation’s children and our planet is in crisis. With the unprecedented destruction of Hurricane Sandy, the largest and most ignored cause of global warming – animal agriculture - can no longer be denied. While these issues may seem overwhelming, the New York Coalition for Healthy School Food is taking positive action. Research clearly shows us that a plant-based diet is beneficial to our personal health and to the planet.

By educating children about the impact of their food choices on their health and the health of the planet, and by making healthful plant-based options available to children in their cafeterias, we are working to insure a healthier, safer, just, and sustainable future.

We hope you will join us in our mission and show support with a year-end gift. We have been offered a matching grant of $10,000 for donations made by year’s end. Your donation now will mean that your gift is doubled. Please help us make a difference - it matters!

For our children and the planet,
Joy Pierson, Board Co-Chair
Lisa Suriano, Board Co-Chair
OUR MISSION
NYCHSF introduces plant-based foods and nutrition education in schools to educate the whole school community.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT:
Esther Lee is a second year graduate student at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health. She is an intern with us this year applying her knowledge of program evaluation and health behavior theory to our Food UnEarthed Curriculum to further increase its efficacy and impact. Every week she is with Kelley, our Program Director, and Tashya, our teacher, in the schools observing and assisting in the classroom and cafeteria.

FAMILY DINNER NIGHT AT HARRIET TUBMAN LEARNING CENTER IN HARLEM
This past spring we held a Family Dinner Night at the Harriet Tubman Learning Center in Harlem. Dinner was provided, as a donation, by Candle Cafe West. About 150 students and parents attended the event, which consisted of a free dinner and hands on learning activities about plant-based proteins, sodium, and sugar in sodas and other beverages, and a non-dairy milk tasting. A cooking demo had the students mesmerized. There were prizes galore, many donated by companies that we met at the Green Festival. Most exciting was the fact that former NBA star and chef in training Shandon Anderson joined us and that was a huge thrill for the students, their families, and for us!

COOL SCHOOL FOOD RECIPES DISTRIBUTED TO 14,000 SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY!
Our recipes developed in New York City and Ithaca have now been distributed to over 14,000 schools around the country. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation contacted us looking for healthy recipes for schools – and we worked together to make the recipes standardized for their needs. We are thrilled that so many schools now have the opportunity to serve healthy plant-based entrees full of fiber and phytonutrients, that contain no cholesterol and are low-fat.

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION REQUESTS OUR RECIPES
We were contacted by the California State Department of Education this fall asking for our recipes for possible distribution to their schools. California has a state legislative resolution requesting plant-based entrees (we got the idea to write one for New York State because California had one, and that is how we got started as an organization).

DONATE ONLINE AT healthyschoolfood.org

NYCHSF FEATURED ON NATIONAL TV
On July 23rd, Jane Velez-Mitchell of CNN’s HLN Television featured New York Coalition for Healthy School Food, and our efforts to make school food more nutritious. Represented by our Advisory Board member, Alex Jamieson, viewers around the country learned about some of the new school food regulations as well as the work we are doing.

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Mehmet Oz, MD
Director, Cardiovascular Institute, Columbia University

PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Kelley Wind
TREASURER: Brad Goldberg
CONGRATULATIONS TO PS244 FOR RECEIVING SILVER CERTIFICATION

One of the schools the New York Coalition for Healthy School Food works with, The Active Learning Elementary School – PS 244Q, won a Silver Certification through the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, an initiative by the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association. This school serves plant-based entrees two – three times per week. We test new recipes there, and we honored the school food staff from the school at our Fall gala. According to Christian Alberto Ledesma, the Director of Wellness at the school, speaking about the national awards ceremony in Arkansas, “Everyone I spoke to was really impressed by what we’ve done at our school and it’s a testament to your work as a staff, the support of our parents, as well as a result of the hard work of our partner organizations NY Coalition for Healthy School Food and Fan4Kids.”

EVERY MIDDLE SCHOOL CAN TEACH STUDENTS TO COOK!

So often we think that students have no opportunity to learn about nutrition and how to cook in school – but in middle school, students do have that opportunity. Family & Consumer Sciences (FACS) – what many of us knew as “Home Economics” is a class that teaches nutrition and cooking, among other domestic skills. Years ago, teacher Pat Fritz reached out to us to see if we could work together with her to implement a healthy cooking program, and finally, with the help of Whole Foods Market, we were able to implement the program in 2011. We taught 250 students how to cook, and Program Manager Jennifer Greene created an Implementation Guide for FACS teachers. Pat, Jennifer, and Executive Director Amie Hamlin recently presented it at the New York State FACS bi-annual conference. The teachers were amazed and said they couldn’t wait to implement it in their own classrooms, and one of the organizers told us we should take the presentation to the FACS National Conference!

NATIONAL FARM TO CAFETERIA CONFERENCE IN BURLINGTON, VT

NYCHSF was chosen to present at a poster session at the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference in Burlington, Vermont this past summer. Farm to Cafeteria advocates from around the country stopped by to learn about what we are doing in Ithaca, NY. What makes our Farm to Cafeteria Program unique? Most Farm to Cafeteria programs promote fruits and vegetables – certainly a very worthy endeavor. Most all efforts to improve school meals include promoting fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Our program also promotes local and organic beans for a healthy plant-based protein option. This is important because most school meals still take advantage of processed or otherwise unhealthy foods like hotdogs, chicken nuggets, mozzarella sticks, or cheeseburgers – and the protein component of the meal is the component most in need of improvement.

FALL GALA

Every year our Fall Gala is an opportunity for supporters to come and learn more about what we are doing, and be treated to the best food that the New York City Metro area has to offer! Attendees are always amazed at our event. All food and beverages were generously donated, as was the lovely jazz by Bob Miles and Miles of Music. This year our co-hosts were Kathy Freston, Alex Jamieson, and Jane Velez-Mitchell. We had special help from event planner Dawn J. Strain, who went above and beyond by coming on a few weeks before the event and donated her services to help us pull the event together. Thank you to all who made the evening such a success. Pictured above, Board Co-chair Joy Pierson with host Jane Velez-Mitchell of CNN. Top right, Co-chair Joy Pierson, Executive Director Amie Hamlin, Hosts Alex Jamieson and Kathy Freston. Bottom right, NYC DOE Office of SchoolFood Director of Food and Food Support Stephen O’Brien checking out the menu of Pure Food and Wine.
Food UnEarthed: Uncovering the Truth About Food

How It Started:
Last spring Jocelyn Chiu and Courtney Piotrowski, teachers from PS 184 in the Chinatown section of New York City reached out to us to ask if we could teach nutrition – for maybe 6 or 7 weeks to two 5th grade classes. We will be forever grateful to them for reaching out. It was a goal of ours to create a curriculum, we had already chosen a name, topics, and goals: all we lacked was a teacher and the time and resources to create the lesson plans. Their request helped us to start moving forward on the project.

The Teacher:
We turned to our Junior Board member and volunteer extraordinaire, Tashya Knight. She is a certified elementary teacher. We knew she was just the right person – passionate about our cause and a dedicated teacher who was hoping to find a way to turn her career into one that focused completely on healthy eating and living. Together she and Executive Director Amie Hamlin wrote the first seven lesson plans, along with the help of a volunteer teacher and a teacher to be, Annemarie Caruso and Breana Coon, and taught them at PS 184 in Chinatown. We received very exciting feedback from the teachers – that many students recorded in their yearbook at the end of the year that our curriculum was their favorite elementary school memory!

In the summer, Tashya continued to help us develop the curriculum. She then proposed that she work part time for us and we agreed – it was a great idea. Now Tashya is on our staff and teaching!

“I have learned so much and have already lost an inch! Thank you so much for bringing food consciousness to our school.”
Kimberly Shelley, Assistant Principal, PS 91

“I’m learning too. We look forward to the program every week.”
Marlene Saunders, Teacher, PS 91

The Curriculum in 4 Schools This Year:
We brought three schools on this fall, reaching over 150 students each week. We are in the process of bringing on a fourth school in the Bronx in January. Our current schools are in East Harlem (Manhattan), Crown Heights (Brooklyn), and Bushwick (Brooklyn).

The Curriculum:
Our curriculum consists of 25 lesson plans that are taught weekly. We focus on teaching the benefits of whole plant foods, media literacy, food politics, food and the environment, and how to be a critical thinker, with the emphasis on being a detective and uncovering the truth about food. Each lesson is accompanied by a food component where students get to prepare and taste healthy plant foods. For example, green smoothies, make your own trail mix, the sweet beet and the big apple showdown, and good mood food – and these are just the first few. Others will include bean, tofu, and grain tastings and guacamole making. So far the feedback is really great. The class teachers are also impacted by our lessons. One teacher told us that she is now making green smoothies for her family every day.

The Students:
Our schools are all in very high need areas, and almost all students qualify for free meals. The students are really excited about us coming into their classrooms every week. They love trying new foods and learning about nutrition. They seem truly interested in what they are learning and it has resulted in much discussion that shows us the students truly are “Uncovering the truth about food”!

As a school with a focus on health and nutrition, the work of our partner organization, the NY Coalition for Healthy School Food, has been invaluable. Our kids have been introduced to wonderful plant-based meals that improve the quality of their lunch, better their health, and even help them academically. It is a pleasure to be able to show off the work we’ve done together in improving school lunches at places like the Healthy Schools Forum in Little Rock, Arkansas when receiving the Silver Award from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Not only has the NY Coalition for Healthy School Food done a great job of bringing nutrition-packed lunch to our school, their work as advocates makes them true champions in the fight to improve the health of the next generation.

~ Christian Alberto Ledesma, Science Teacher and Director of Health & Wellness at PS 244

Donate at healthyschoolfood.org
Or send check to NYCHSF at: POB 737, Mamaroneck, NY 10543
For more information, contact Amie Hamlin at 607-272-1154

Food HERO
Our Executive Director, Amie Hamlin, was featured as one of ten food heros in the September issue of Vegetarian Times magazine. “I was surprised and humbled to receive the call from the magazine. But it’s really a testament to the work of many, including my colleague, our Program Director, Kelley Wind, and our board of directors and many volunteers.”

Our Global Kitchen
NYCHSF is listed in the Educator’s Guide and on the website of the American Museum of Natural History for their Our Global Kitchen: Food Nature Culture exhibit.