

Quality and Productivity Commission
30th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Heritage of Excellence”

2016 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: LUNCH @ THE LIBRARY: HEALTHY AND ENGAGED YOUTH

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: JUNE 2015
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before July 1, 2015)

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No

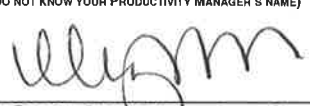
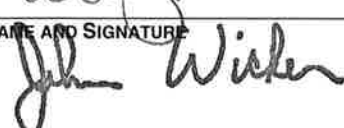
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

1 The free Summer Lunch and Snack Program in collaboration with the County of Los
 2 Angeles Public Library (Public Library) has been a perfect example of using innovation
 3 and collaboration to enrich the lives of youth in our communities. During the summer
 4 months, many children go hungry when free lunch is no longer available to them at their
 5 schools. This lack of nutrition affects their ability to be engaged and creates a backslide
 6 in learning. The Library joined efforts with the Department of Parks and Recreation
 7 (DPR) in 2015 to provide a solution to this problem. DPR provides six county libraries
 8 with meals while the Library provides a friendly, welcoming space and engaging
 9 activities. The benefits of this partnership are threefold: it gives children and teens
 10 access to a free nutritious meal that ensures their brains are fueled enough to
 11 participate in the Library’s free summer reading program; it allows children to return to
 12 school caught up and ready to learn; and it gives families the ability to stretch their
 13 limited food budgets, preventing food insecurity. It also has the added effect of turning
 14 families who had never been to the library before into regular patrons!
 15

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	X

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation 433 S. Vermont Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90020		TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-738-2955
PROGRAM MANAGER’S NAME Donna Fulbright		TELEPHONE NUMBER (310) 965-8630 EMAIL Dfulbright@parks.lacounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME)</small> Elizabeth Mendez 	DATE July 5, 2016	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-738-3040 EMAIL lmendez@parks.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE John Wicker 	DATE July 5, 2016	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-2953

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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made. Use Arial 12 point font

Challenge

Summer vacation presents a different reality for many impoverished children in Los Angeles County. In addition to having limited access to summer learning and enrichment programs, many low-income children struggle to meet basic needs with reduced access to healthy food as well as safe, friendly and engaging environments.

A 2012 report from the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) highlights the links between food insecurity, childhood obesity and the achievement gap. Without access to the nutrition provided by the National School Lunch Program, food insecurity increases during summer break. Low-income youth may fall further behind in academic skills—particularly reading—during the summer break, experiencing greater “summer learning loss” than their higher-income peers and widening the achievement gap. Nutrition education interventions that exclusively target the school environment may be less impactful because weight gain happens primarily outside of school. Adequate nutrition promotes brain development and improves cognitive functioning, whereas inadequate nutrition is associated with physical and mental health issues, emotional and behavioral problems, learning deficiencies, and lower grades. Parents who are financially stressed and anxious about how they are going to feed their families are less likely to be positive and supportive in their caregiving relationships, which adds an additional stressor to the family unit.

Solution

Summer Lunch at the Library was a pilot partnership between the Public Library and DPR, supported by the California Summer Meal Coalition and California Library Association. By combining resources, both Departments were able to provide free summer lunches to youth at the Norwalk and Carson libraries. For eight weeks, Monday through Friday, youth ages one through 18 who visited either library were served nutritious meals based on USDA food guidelines, which included sandwiches, hummus, veggies, fruits, healthy pizza, and more. Families were not required to provide proof of income; any child or teen who walked in was able to receive a free meal. However, in order to be eligible, the libraries and parks had to be located in a community where at least 50 percent of the children qualified for the school’s free and reduced lunch program. Healthy meals were just one important element of the program. Participating children and teens were encouraged to sign up for the Public Library’s Summer Reading Program and attend free enrichment programs. The

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Summer Reading Program is an annual activity in which children earn incentives such as free books in exchange for reading a certain amount. In addition, staff spoke to families about the myriad of resources available to help support their educational and recreational needs. It was important not only for children to be engaged but to give caregivers tools and resources for their own personal development. Other programming took place during Lunch @ the Library, such as the Fire Department reading to the children as they ate. The County Librarian attended and handed out free books to the youth so they could build their own home library, which is critical to creating the love of reading. The food that was left over at the end of the hour was offered to parents to take home to use as additional meals.

Benefits

Both DPR and Public Library have a commitment to providing educational and enriching programs for youth and families. Lunch @ the Library was the perfect opportunity for the two Departments to collaborate and share resources which resulted in a positive community impact.

Libraries are natural spaces for serving meals to children whose access to lunch disappears when school ends and summer begins. Libraries are community spaces in the heart of the neighborhood. They welcome all and they provide access, free of charge, to resources that support the community’s lifelong needs. During the 2015 Lunch @ the Library Program, 2,700 meals were served, and 200 youth participated in the Summer Reading Program. Nearly 100,000 meals were served in County Parks. Public library Summer Reading Programs encourage and enable children and teens to set reading goals, and engage them in activities that extend the reading experience. Youth who are not hungry are better readers and learners, and they are better prepared to begin the new school year without remedial intervention. Lunch @ the Library connected youth with librarians who can help guide their reading choices and become positive role models and adult influences in their lives. Library staff reported that the Lunch program allowed them to build relationships with the families so they felt more comfortable visiting the library outside of the Summer Lunch Program. Indeed, staff also reported that families who only visited the library for the Lunch Program are now regular library users.

People trust libraries and feel positively toward them, which contributed to the success of the Lunch @ the Library Program. The Pew Research Center has reported that Americans strongly value the role of public libraries in their communities, both for providing access to materials and resources and for promoting

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literacy and improving the overall quality of life; most Americans know where their local library is; and most Americans who have used a public library have had positive experiences there. Another benefit reported by parents who could not afford to send their young children to preschool was the opportunity for social interaction in a safe and friendly environment. Young children met and socialized with other children their age. Without the stress of food insecurity weighing on them, parents used this program as opportunity to have a positive bonding experience with their children.

However, while most Americans know where their local library is, many are unfamiliar with all the services libraries offer. Lunch @ the Library provides librarians with great opportunities to introduce families to their services and resources, as well as helping them feel and become healthier.

Another benefit reported by caregivers is that Lunch @ the Library helped stretch their food budget, which gave them peace of mind from food insecurity. At the end of the serving hour, families were allowed to take home any leftover food to supplement their home cooking. Parents reported that this supplemental food made the difference between putting dinner at the table or their families going hungry. During the summer, older teens brought their younger siblings to the library for the free lunch. These teens told staff they had been tasked with caring for their siblings during the summer and this program was the only way they could ensure they had a healthy lunch.

Since the program was so well-received, Lunch @ the Library is being expanded to six libraries in Summer 2016.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS): Use Arial 12 point font

Lunch @ the Library supports Strategic Plan Goal 2: Community Support and Responsiveness by providing enhanced services that respond to economic and social challenges. Hunger is a pervasive and serious problem affecting children and families in Los Angeles County. By thinking beyond our traditional services, Departments working together can offer solutions to make families stronger and live healthier and happier lives.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12 point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$ 10,000	\$10,000	\$ 0	\$ 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/>

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FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY

(For single department submissions, do not include this page)

DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS
 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
 7400 E. IMPERIAL HIGHWAY
 DOWNEY, CA 90242

PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
 DEBORAH ANDERSON

 EMAIL: DANDERSON@LIBRARY.LACOUNTY.GOV

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
 SKYE PATRICK

 EMAIL: SPATRICK@LIBRARY.LACOUNTY.GOV

DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS

PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____

DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS

PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____

DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS

PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____

DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS

PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

 EMAIL: _____