

SWIPE STARVATION

The City of Manhattan, K-State and Numana, Inc. team up to aid starving people

By Nellie Hill

Standing shoulder to shoulder, volunteers in plastic aprons and hairnets pour nutrient-rich food into packages that will soon be flown more than 7,000 miles to starving people in the Horn of Africa. There is a spirit of generosity evident throughout the afternoon of Oct. 30, 2011 as college students and community members package 72,000 meals.

There are nearly 900 million hungry people in the world. Four hundred million of these people are considered starving. Hunger is a worldwide issue that seems too large and overwhelming to tackle. The Manhattan community, K-State and Numana, Inc. have found a way to let every person make a difference in the fight against hunger.

Swiping Up Meals

This past fall, the SWIPE Out Hunger campaign reached a pinnacle with a food packaging event at the Riley County Fairgrounds. More than 500 volunteers packaged the meals purchased with \$15,000 collected through fundraising. The Salvation Army flew these meals to the starving people in the Horn of Africa.

Members of Alpha Zeta coordinated and led the packaging event. Alex Moran, Alpha Zeta secretary, described the packaging event as fun and upbeat with excitement in the air. There was also a deep sense of service as volunteers packaged meals.

"I felt privileged to be a part of something that is so much bigger than myself," Moran says.

Another Alpha Zeta member, Jordan Hildebrand, echoes Moran.

"It makes me feel great. If you've been away from community service, you forget how it makes you feel. It makes your whole week," Hildebrand says.

Volunteers gave up a part of their Sunday afternoon to package meals, and everyone in attendance seemed to be glad to do it. Student leaders in the College of Agriculture made it a priority to be a part of the SWIPE Out Hunger event.

"It feels pretty good to know that on a normal Sunday afternoon, which could be spent laying on the couch, we are out helping feed people," says Kurt Lockwood, agricultural education student.

Alpha Zeta members and members of other College of Agriculture clubs

Through a partnership with the Salvation Army, Numana, Inc. has shipped food aid all around the world. This packaging event was no different. After the meals were packaged, volunteers loaded the boxes of food onto trucks to begin their transport to the Horn of Africa.

SWIPE is a statewide packaging event held across Kansas, not just in Manhattan. Sixteen other colleges from across the state have participated in donating at least 20,000 meals to the people of the Horn of Africa. Some of these schools include the University of Kansas, Fort Hays State University and Butler Community College. In total,

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—Alex Moran, animal sciences and industry student

worked side-by-side to package the food. An assembly line was used, with each person having a specific task. Rice, soybeans for protein, and chicken flavoring provide 21 vitamins to help build the immune system, according to the Numana, Inc. website. It was a common sight to see a K-State student scoop rice into the small plastic packages, followed by a Manhattan community member adding a scoop of beans. Each volunteer had a hand in helping to relieve hunger.

"We're coming together as a community and campus to do what we can to pay it forward and help others. Everyone is welcome, people of all ages, kids and adults," says Sandy Klein, College of Agriculture events coordinator.

4,000 volunteers packaged 597,424 meals as part of SWIPE Out Hunger.

SWIPE Comes to K-State

This is the first year of SWIPE Out Hunger, and Kansas is the first state to participate. Numana, Inc. was founded in El Dorado, so it seemed like a natural choice to Caleb McNary, director of communications and advocacy for Numana, Inc., to team up with K-State. With the idea in mind, McNary approached Gary Pierzynski, interim dean of the College of Agriculture.

"Caleb mentioned the packaging event as one of Numana's activities and

right away I thought this would be a great thing to have on campus. The College of Agriculture volunteered to organize the event for the university and community,” Pierzynski says.

College of Agriculture student honorary Alpha Zeta took on the challenge of organizing the SWIPE Out Hunger campaign. When classes started in late August, Alpha Zeta began encouraging people to volunteer or give financially. A booth was set up in the K-State Student Union to raise awareness and funds.

Three fundraising events were planned for the campaign. During two Wednesdays in October, Panda Express donated 20 percent of each sale to SWIPE Out Hunger. On Oct. 12, Orange Leaf hosted a fun night for SWIPE. From 4 p.m. to 10 p.m., patrons could have 10 percent of their frozen yogurt purchase go toward the campaign.

Private donors from across campus and the state also helped the SWIPE Out Hunger campaign reach its goal of \$15,000. Clubs in several K-State colleges, alumni and friends of the university gave generously to buy the food for the packaged meals.

The Story of SWIPE

In late September, McNary and Miss Kansas Carissa Kelley visited K-State to speak about vision and world change. The K-State Student Union hosted the speakers, who empowered the audience by emphasizing that each personal vision has the power to make a difference.

“You are going to change the world, but you probably don’t know it yet,” McNary says.

McNary pushed listeners to give in whatever way they could to SWIPE Out Hunger. He said those who were

not financially able should volunteer time and those who lack the time should give what they could from their pocket.

Caleb’s father, Rick McNary, is the founder of Numana, Inc. The number of starving people in the world alarmed him so he turned his idea of helping starving people into an organization.

Numana, Inc. is the powerhouse and support system behind SWIPE Out Hunger. The nonprofit hunger relief organization was founded in August 2008. Since then, the organization has helped package more than 20 million meals for countries with intense food insecurity.


The mission of Numana, Inc. is “to empower people to save the starving.” Food packaging events such as SWIPE Out Hunger have been held across the country in high schools, churches and various universities.

Packaging events facilitated by Numana, Inc. have an upbeat tempo, fun atmosphere and are hands-on. It is an

actionable solution to hunger that anyone of any age or background can take part in.

Numana, Inc. continues to grow, as do the number of packaging events. These events are held on a weekly basis, mostly on the weekends. Numana, Inc. keeps a calendar on its website for people to see where the events are located.

The change dug out of a pants pocket at the end of the day is enough to buy a meal for someone who is starving; just 30 cents purchases one nutritious meal. This means that to feed a family of six one meal it costs \$1.80. The Manhattan community, K-State and Numana, Inc. have shown that small gestures made by many can make a huge difference in the fight against hunger.

An audio-slide story of the SWIPE Out Hunger event can be found at www.ksre.ksu.edu/swipe. 



Above: SWIPE Out Hunger is the first program of its kind, established by Numana Inc.

Top right: Members of the Rodeo Club pour nutritious ingredients into packages to be sent to the Horn of Africa.

Bottom right: Volunteers in groups of 10 lined stations set up in Pottorf Hall on the Riley County Fairgrounds.

PHOTOS BY NELLIE HILL