

got breakfast?

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CONTACT:
Adam Herbsman, Tel: 212.780.0200 ext. 615
Cell: 917.968.6794, Adam@GroupGordon.com

Jill Lambert, Tel: 212.780.0200 ext. 612
Cell: 310.403.8592, jill@GroupGordon.com

Senators Bob Dole and George McGovern Team Up To Launch New Campaign To Combat Child Hunger In Nation's Schools

*Federal Government, Non-Profit and Private Sectors Come
Together to Kick Off Initiative*

*Campaign Launched on Heels of Brand New Report Showing \$382 Million
in Federal Funds Remain Unused*

Campaign Expects To Raise \$1 Million for Hunger Relief

Washington, DC – Everyone knows that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Starting the day with a healthy breakfast helps kids concentrate, solve problems, be creative and learn. What most people don't realize is that millions of children in need do not get breakfast at school, even though they are eligible to receive it.

They are entitled to breakfast through the School Breakfast Program – yet they start the school day hungry. Indeed, a brand new report from the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) says that states failed to access \$382 million in federal funding that could have been used to provide breakfast to children who qualified for free or reduced price breakfasts.

To address this growing problem, two one-time presidential nominees, former Senators Bob Dole (R-KS) and George McGovern (D-SD) joined forces today with key leaders in the Federal government, non-profit and private sectors to launch the "got breakfast?" campaign to promote the adoption of healthy breakfast and milk programs in our nation's school systems.

"The holiday season is a good time to remember those in need. Many children who don't get breakfast at school don't get breakfast at home either," Senator Dole said at the news conference. "The Federal government already has appropriated money for breakfast at school - but not enough schools take advantage of it. Our goal with "got breakfast?" is to help the neediest children start the day with a good breakfast so they are ready to learn."

"Millions of children who qualify for breakfast at school do not receive it," Senator McGovern said. "Each morning only nine million children get breakfast at school out of the 29 million who are eligible. The 'got breakfast?' campaign aims to turn a healthy breakfast for every child from a dream into a reality."

Ending Hunger Among Children

Senators Dole and McGovern unveiled the "got breakfast?" campaign in a news conference Tuesday in Washington, DC, with representatives of the initiative's partners, including Patricia Nicklin, Managing Director of Share Our Strength, Max Finberg, Director of the Alliance to End Hunger, Camellia Patey, Vice President of the National Dairy Council and Gary Davis, CEO of East Side Entrees. Also speaking at the event were Kate Coler, USDA's Deputy Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, James Weill, President of FRAC, Ruth Jonen, SFNS, President of the School Nutrition Association and Tim Mertz, Food Services Director of Henrico, Virginia, public schools.

One of the partners of "got breakfast?," East Side Entrees, will donate a portion of the proceeds from each meal that goes to children in severe need schools to Share Our Strength and other non-profits' efforts to end childhood hunger in the United States over the next 20 years. The donations are expected to reach \$1 million in 2006.

"Throughout our history we have made a point to give back to the communities that we serve. Now we are taking that charge to the next level," said Gary Davis, CEO of East Side Entrees. "We already have committed \$500,000 to fighting hunger and bringing awareness to this issue. In addition we will give a portion of the proceeds from every single meal that goes to a child in need to Share Our Strength and related non-profits. In total we expect to donate an additional \$1 million in 2006 to reduce hunger and improve nutrition among school-aged children."

"If we do our jobs right, 'got breakfast?' will have an enormous impact on helping hungry children all over the country get the nutrition they need to learn, grow and thrive," said Patricia Nicklin, Managing Director of Share Our Strength. "By next year's holiday season, we'll have made progress toward our goal - creating the first hunger-free generation."

"Standing with these two giants of American politics, it's clear that we need to strengthen the political will to make sure that no child goes hungry," said Max Finberg, Director of the Alliance to End Hunger. "The only way we will end childhood hunger is by developing partnerships and campaigns like this one."

Child Essay Contest

Senators Dole and McGovern, who spearheaded the issue of school nutrition in Congress, also announced a "got breakfast?" essay contest. Children across the country will be asked to submit a short essay on why breakfast is the most important meal of the day and why getting breakfast at school is important.

Pictures of the four winners and portions of their essays will be on new "got breakfast?" posters distributed to schools nationwide. In addition, each winner will receive a new laptop, and everyone in their school will get Breakfast Breaks for a week. More information can be found at www.GotBreakfast.org.

"The national School Breakfast Program assures that children start the school day with a nutritious breakfast including milk," said Tom Gallagher, CEO of the National Dairy Council. "Dairy farmers are honored to do their part to help serve children."

"We encourage all schools to participate in the School Breakfast Program. Providing a nutritious breakfast sets the stage for learning before students enter the classroom," said USDA Deputy Under Secretary Kate Coler. "Ensuring that all eligible children have access to a healthy meal to start their day remains a top priority for all of us at USDA."

"Our research shows that for every 100 low-income children who eat school lunch every day, only 44 eat a school breakfast," said Jim Weill, President of FRAC. "Kids need breakfast to start the day right, and the 'got breakfast?' campaign is an important addition to the growing efforts to get schools to offer breakfast and inspire children to come and eat it."

“Every morning school nutrition professionals see first hand the real need for school breakfast,” said Ruth Jonen, SFNS, President of the School Nutrition Association. “Research conducted by the University of Minnesota and Massachusetts General Hospital concludes that students who eat school breakfast are more alert, have improved memory and problem-solving skills and perform better on standardized tests.”

"Serving breakfast to schoolchildren is a win-win for both the kids and the schools," says Tim Mertz, Food Service Director for the Henrico, VA, school district. "Kids get to start their day off right with a nutritious breakfast, and schools have an opportunity to increase revenue."

About “got breakfast?”

Everybody knows that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. What most people don't know is that more than half of kids in need don't get breakfast at school each morning. "got breakfast?" is a program brought to you by Share Our Strength, the Alliance to End Hunger, the National Dairy Council and East Side Entrees to ensure that ALL school kids start the day off right. For more information go to www.GotBreakfast.org.

About Share Our Strength

Share Our Strength, one of the nation's leading anti-hunger organizations, is committed to building the first hunger-free generation in America. Nearly 14 million children face hunger in our country and through innovative fund-raising opportunities - from holding volunteer-led special events to developing unique corporate partnerships - Share Our Strength is working towards ensuring these children have access to nutritious food that enables them to learn, grow and thrive. Since its founding in 1984, Share Our Strength has raised more than \$188 million supporting more than 1,100 anti-hunger, anti-poverty organizations worldwide. For more information please visit www.strength.org.

About the Alliance to End Hunger

The mission of the Alliance to End Hunger is to engage diverse institutions more deeply in an effort to win the shifts in U.S. public opinion, institutions and policy that could dramatically reduce hunger in the United States and internationally. The Alliance includes religious bodies, businesses, universities, civil rights groups and labor unions and others.

About the National Dairy Council

The National Dairy Council® (NDC), the nutrition marketing arm of Dairy Management Inc.™ has been the leader in dairy nutrition research, education and communication since 1915. NDC provides timely, scientifically sound nutrition information to the media, physicians, dietitians, nurses, educators, consumers and others concerned about fostering a healthier society.

About East Side Entrees

East Side Entrees, headquartered in Woodbury, NY, is a major supplier of nutritious food products to school systems throughout America. Breakfast Breaks are the world's first Grab & Go school breakfast solution for school foodservice programs and were developed by East Side Entrees. For more information go to www.BreakfastBreaks.com.

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