



Student Leaders Address Growing Hunger Problem on Canadian Campuses

Meal Exchange, June 06, 2006

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The Student Food Network launches to support the increasing number of campus food banks on Canadian universities and colleges.

PR9.NET June 06, 2006 - Toronto, ON - Food banks are popping up on campuses across the country. Growing food bank use among students is a grim reminder that tuition hikes and mounting economic pressures are weighing heavily on Canadian students.

This dim reality is met by the passion of students to create real social change in the communities where they live and learn. The Student Food Network (SFN) was founded by students for students to address the growing need to connect campus food centres to each other and a network of resources. This youth-led initiative connects campus food bank coordinators across the country in a common mission of eradicating student hunger by understanding the issues of student financial, physical and emotional health surrounding inaccessibility to adequate nutrition. Through student coordination and peer aid, the SFN will offer long-term support and education to both the student population and general public.

Mara Kardas-Nelson, a 20 year-old International Relations student from the University of British Columbia and active community leader is continuing the development of this initiative and says, "The Student Food Network is important in its role to both connect campus food banks across Canada and help aid students who are dealing with hunger. I believe that student hunger has to be fought through student mobilization, and the SFN is a perfect tool to do this. I've been a long time believer in peer education, particularly with AIDS activism and health education, and am excited to use the same tools in the fight against student food security. The SFN provides the opportunity for all students, from all walks of life, to join together to ensure that the public is aware of issues of student hunger and that these issues are met with action and support."

Over 100 student leaders and community supporters gathered on Tuesday, June 6th in Toronto to launch this innovative student-initiative. Attending the launch, Melissa Melo, a 23 year-old recent graduate from the University of Guelph-Humber says, "The Student Food Network is a brilliant way to increase the ability of campus food banks to serve students. It will also act as a key resource for students to start thinking about why food banks must exist on our campuses at all."

For additional information on the Student Food Network go to: www.studentfood.ca

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About The Student Food Network

The Student Food Network was founded in collaboration with Meal Exchange, a national student-driven, registered charity that helps young Canadians realize their potential to improve the future of their communities by addressing local hunger, with generous support from studentcare.net/works (www.studentcare.net/works), a leading provider of student health and dental programs in Canada.

About Meal Exchange

Meal Exchange (www.mealexchange.com) is a national student-founded, student-driven, registered charity that helps young Canadians realize their potential to improve the future of their communities by providing them with meaningful opportunities to reduce hunger today. Meal Exchange offers students in a national network of 40 universities and colleges, three fun, simple and creative programmes including Trick or Eat, Skip-A-Meal, and Clear the Shelves! Meal Exchange supports new ideas initiated by youth through our Social Incubator, which includes two new youth-led projects: Portraits of Hunger and The Student Food Network.

Website: <http://www.mealexchange.com>

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