Rise & Shine Food Co-op

United States
Joan Jaquis

Organization type: nonprofit/ngo/citizen sector

Budget: $1 million - $5 million

Website: http://www.bgcpbc.org

- At risk youth
- Food
Project Summary

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

The teen-inspired, teen-managed nonprofit business Rise & Shine Food Co-op addresses food insecurity as identified by a parent survey. The program provides families with high quality, low cost fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, bread and nonperishable foods twice a month while providing teens with valuable "real life" work experience and skills that will help them successfully transition into adulthood.

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

The problem our innovation addresses is food insecurity. Statistics show that low-income families are less apt to purchase more expensive healthy food and poor families are more prone to the diseases associated with poor nutrition. Club teens surveyed families to learn what their toughest challenge was. More than 84% stated that it was food insecurity – parents were finding it difficult to feed their families. Club teens were surveyed to determine what programs would keep them coming to the Club. They responded: money and job skills. The Rise & Shine Program address all of these issues: Club teens are provided the information and skills to help them become successful employees. Club teens are earning a salary and receiving "real life" employment experience, and families are receiving low-cost healthy foods twice a month and are learning to make healthy choices, in turn, developing healthier communities.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

This program’s innovation is evidenced by the fact that it was inspired by Boys & Girls Club teens as a result of an eight-month rigorous entrepreneur/business class. The teens’ final project was to develop a business plan for a business that would not only help their community, but could be managed by them at the Club. The teens decided to open a nonprofit business because they wanted to give back to their community. The community surveyed community families and learned that food insecurity was their number one issue. Over 84% of parents were finding it hard to feed their families. To address this problem, the teens decided to open a family food co-op and provide fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, bread and nonperishable food twice a month. The teens named their business Rise & Shine after their business’ core values: Respect, Integrity, Service Excellence, and Enduring Relationships. Today 24 Club teens manage three Rise & Shine food co-op distribution sites across Palm Beach County. They are responsible for many aspects of the business such as management, finance, marketing, promotion, customer service and developing menus. More than 2,000 families have received needed food. The teens were featured on NBC’s Nightly news “Making a Difference,” and have garnered support from local community and nonprofit organizations and the Mayors of West Palm Beach, Delray Beach and Belle Glade, the distribution locations.

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

The Rise & Shine Co-op opened on May 30, 2009 at the Florence De George Club in West Palm Beach. Fifty families were served with 12 teens managing the program. Since then we have opened two additional distribution centers - in Belle Glade and Delray Beach. Each new center employs six teens. We have increased our participation and currently serve approximately 270 families a month. Seventy-five additional teens attend our second entrepreneur/business class. Our current Rise & Shine teens have learned a tremendous amount as a direct result of their "real life" working experience. The teens have developed self-confidence, are learning to be excellent spokespersons, have developed a wonderful sense of customer service, and are learning how to run a business. The teens will have a resume most adults don’t have. The lessons learned through participating in this program are countless. Additionally, families suffering with food insecurity are not only receiving low cost foods twice a month, through the teens’ desire to build healthy communities, families are learning to cook with and enjoy healthy food. The teens have spread the word about their business and the Boys & Girls Clubs. They won first place, competing against 3,000 teens, in the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship’s Business Plan Regional Competition; conducted interviews on local and national newspaper and television; and presented their Business Plan at the Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s National Conference. Participating families are receiving healthy food alternatives which are impacting the community’s overall health.

About You

Organization:
Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County, Inc.
Visit website

About You

First Name
Joan
Last Name
Jaquis
Website
http://www.bgcpbc.org
The information you provide here will be used to fill in any parts of your profile that have been left blank, such as interests, organization information, and website. No contact information will be made public. Please uncheck here if you do not want this to happen.

Your idea

Country your work focuses on
Website URL
http://www.bgcpbc.org

Innovation

Do you have a patent for this idea?

Impact

Actions
To make our innovation a success, we are hiring a program director with experience in marketing and retail and youth development. The director will work directly with the teens to develop a stronger marketing campaign, expand and develop new community alliances and partnerships, and provide the day-to-day supervision of the program.

To help our families learn to make healthy choices and increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables, we show them how to prepare healthy foods by providing recipes at every distribution, featuring the items families are taking home that day. We will also conduct regular cooking demonstrations so that families can learn to cook and taste healthy recipes as well as our clients’ favorite cultural dishes.

We are an official EBT (food stamp) site, which enables us to reach hundreds of additional customers. Not garnering enough co-op participation and not receiving enough financial aid will negatively impact the program.

Results

Our expected results are the increased participation of families at the distributions, challenging our teens academically and building their business savvy which will create true business entrepreneurs while achieving customer satisfaction.

What will it take for your project to be successful over the next three years? Please address each year separately, if possible.

Year 1 – We will sell 125 units at each distribution site each month and/or generate enough donations to reach a break even point.

Year 2 – To break even without other charitable donations, we need to sell 250 units each month, at each distribution site – the Florence De George Club in West Palm Beach, the Naoma Donnelley Haggin Club in Delray Beach and the Boys & Girls Club’s Teen Center in Belle Glade. We believe our expanded marketing and the EBT card program will help us reach this point by year two.

Year 3 – By Year 3, the organization will be able to provide statistical information in regard to the eating habits and healthy life choices of the participants, which will help to attract more funders for this life-changing program. Ultimately, by Year 3, we will have begun to make a systemic community change, changed community members’ eating habits, helped reduce the number of youth and adults who are overweight and/or obese, and positively impacted whole communities.

What would prevent your project from being a success?

Our project would not be successful if we did not receive enough funding to sustain the program at a break even level. As this program is highly needed not only for providing food, but more importantly, for providing healthy food, it has tremendous appeal to a number of donors.

The national economy is impacting our program as our families often must decide between the cost of healthy food and paying rent and utilities. Our community families are at or below poverty and have limited disposable income. Even though we now take EBT cards (food stamps), which has resulted in an increase in our participation, the take home value for participants is at least twice their investment and we have developed two payment types to accommodate all types of families, the families we serve are still finding it difficult to participate on regular basis.

How many people will your project serve annually?

101-1000
What is the average monthly household income in your target community, in US Dollars?
More than $4000

Does your project seek to have an impact on public policy?

Sustainability

What stage is your project in?
Operating for 1-5 years

Is your initiative connected to an established organization?
Yes

If yes, provide organization name.
Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County, Inc.

How long has this organization been operating?
More than 5 years

Does your organization have a Board of Directors or an Advisory Board?
Yes

Does your organization have a non-monetary partnerships with NGOs?
Yes

Does your organization have a non-monetary partnerships with businesses?
Yes

Does your organization have a non-monetary partnerships with government?
Yes

Please tell us more about how these partnerships are critical to the success of your innovation.
The Boys & Girls Clubs Rise & Shine Food Co-op has established partnerships with a host of nonprofit and community organization, the mayors in each of the cities where we have distribution centers, and our Club families and staff. These partnerships are crucial to our success. First, having the buy-in of our Club families and staff places an unofficial “stamp of approval” on the program. The support of our local mayors and community organizations provide the advocacy and credibility we need and assists us in reaching the appropriate audience for our business.

What are the three most important actions needed to grow your initiative or organization?
1. Hiring a full-time program director to work directly with Club Rise & Shine teens to develop and implement a wide-reaching marketing plan/customer contacts
2. Continuing to provide the highest quality product to our customers
3. Developing a larger and stronger base of community advocates

The Story

What was the defining moment that you led to this innovation?
The defining moment was when the Rise & Shine teens made the decision as a class to start a nonprofit business. As a group, they wanted to give back to their community. This altruism, coming from youth whose own families live at or near poverty, is remarkable. The teens then surveyed families in their community and discovered that many of them were going hungry. This fact not only surprised the teens, it enraged them and they decided that they could make a difference. The teens’ resolve to do something to address this problem led them to develop a business plan for a family food co-op – an opportunity for families in their community to receive low cost healthy foods, fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, bread, and nonperishable items twice a month. They developed core values for their business – Respect, Integrity, Service Excellence and Enduring Relationships. To keep these “top of mind,” the teens used the acronym to name their business Rise & Shine.

Tell us about the social innovator behind this idea.
There was no single innovator for this program; it was the combined effort by a group of teens from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County. Together, the teens participated in a rigorous eight-month entrepreneur/business class. Together the teens decided to create a nonprofit business. Together the teens wrote a business plan, surveyed their community’s parents, conducted market research, developed their business’ core values and prepared to launch a program that would not only benefit families in need in their community, but could be used as a national model for all Clubs throughout the Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s Movement.

How did you first hear about Changemakers?
Through another organization or company

If through another, please provide the name of the organization or company
Through the eCivis grants network.