Welcome from Chairman Jim Lemke

Dear Friends:

Thank you! Because of your commitment and support, it’s been a tremendously exciting year for the United Fresh Start Foundation.

This year, the Foundation helped bring salad bars to more than 500 schools, hosted over 60 leading school foodservice directors for education and networking at the United Fresh convention, and engaged with hundreds of industry leaders and partners to advance our mission of increasing children’s access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The Foundation is truly making an impact, and I’m proud of what we’ve all been able to accomplish together.

To share some of the highlights and accomplishments of our work over the past year, I’m pleased to debut the first edition of our new United Fresh Start Foundation Newsletter. This newsletter will be a way for us to showcase how the Foundation is working to increase access to fresh produce for children and families. Equally as important, this newsletter will also be a way for us to show our appreciation to donors, and to say thank you for your investment.

The United Fresh Start Foundation’s mission is something we are all passionate about. By increasing children’s access to a variety of fresh produce from an early age, and helping them form healthy eating habits that last into adulthood, we are creating a generation that is Growing Up Fresh!

I encourage you to share this newsletter with others. The Foundation has made great strides in 2016, and we look forward to another successful year ahead.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support!

With much appreciation,

Jim Lemke
President, Robinson Fresh
Chairman, United Fresh Start Foundation
Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, energy, and financial support to the United Fresh Start Foundation in 2016. Included below are some highlights of our programs and activities over the past year.

In February, the Foundation joined The Silicon Valley Leadership Group Foundation at the 3rd annual Lam Research “Heart & Soles 5K Run/Walk”, an event which helped fund 70 salad bars for schools in San Jose and surrounding communities.

For the second year in a row, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan continued its work with the Foundation to support salad bars for Michigan schools. This year, they donated salad bars to 20 schools in Flint to combat the lead water crisis. Increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables can mitigate adverse health effects of exposure to lead.

Working with the Foundation and his produce partners, Jeff Cady, Director of Produce and Floral for Tops Markets, helped bring salad bars to 5 Buffalo-area Schools. In March, the Foundation connected Tops Markets with the local school district, and helped coordinate a salad bar media event with students, school administrators and local elected officials.

In the Spring, Frieda’s Specialty Produce made a generous donation to the Foundation, and also supported three salad bars for their local school district in Los Alamitos, CA.

In March, the Foundation connected Tops Markets with the local school district, and helped coordinate a salad bar media event with students, school administrators and local elected officials.

United Fresh President & CEO Tom Stenzel and Andrew Marshall, Director of Foundation Programs, joined Silicon Valley health and technology leaders at the Alum Rock Elementary School District in east San Jose, CA. They observed students using newly donated salad bars and discussed how the school receives, stores and serves fresh produce.
In April, the Foundation, collaborating with the CDC and the Institute for Child Nutrition, worked with leading school foodservice directors to develop an educational presentation for schools, “How to Successfully Implement Salad Bars in Your School Cafeteria”.

In May, Becky Wilson and representatives from The Tom Lange Company visited the Peoria Public Schools (Peoria, IL) for an “A-Z Salad Bar Celebration”, an event highlighting fresh fruits and veggies, each corresponding with a different letter of the alphabet.

In August, the Foundation hosted the 2016 Tip Murphy Legacy Golf Tournament in Cincinnati, OH. This year’s event, with a record 15 retailers in attendance, raised over $30,000 for the Foundation’s programs and activities, including salad bar donations to five schools in California, Indiana, and Virginia.

In June at the United Fresh convention, the Foundation organized two educational workshops addressing strategies to increase children’s access to fresh fruits and veggies. One session, “Selling to Schools: Understanding the Needs of the Largest ‘Restaurant’ in Town” enabled attendees to hear from three school foodservice directors, each of whom service less than five schools, but still serve meals and snacks to thousands of kids each day.

The other workshop addressed innovative programs to increase access to fresh produce for children and families participating in the SNAP program (formerly Food Stamps). At the workshop, “Supermarket Innovators: Increasing Fresh Produce Sales to SNAP Families”, attendees heard how Kroger and Balls Markets are implementing innovative incentive programs to boost produce sales to SNAP families.

This Summer, Roundy’s Supermarkets and Produce for Kids teamed up with the Foundation to engage shoppers to support salad bars for Midwest schools.

Brian Kocher, United Fresh Past Chairman and CEO of Castellini Company LLC, kicked-off the 2016 Tournament.

Greg Samels, Del Monte Fresh Produce; Greg Kurkjian, IFCO; Kristyn Lawson, Good Foods Group; and Jeff Dugan, SpartanNash enjoy a day of networking on the links, while supporting The Foundation.
In September, the Foundation arranged for Chicago members to visit schools in the East Aurora School District (Aurora, IL) to see students participating in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable “Snack” Program, tour the high school’s garden and see the district’s newly donated salad bars.

This fall, together with Bayer, Stemilt Growers and Wenatchee Public Schools, the Foundation organized a salad bar ribbon-cutting ceremony and apple variety taste test for students at Sunnyslope Elementary in Wenatchee, WA.

Margo Schmitt, grants coordinator for the East Aurora Schools; Steve Serck, JAB Produce; Rob Strube, Strube Celery & Vegetable Company; Mark Harrison, Del Monte Fresh Produce N.A.; Alison Chiaro, FarmLogix; Sue Hunter Strube Celery & Vegetable Company; PJ Stevens, Potandon Produce; and Rachael Lynch, Potatoes USA.
In October, the Foundation participated in two exclusive events in the White House Kitchen Garden with First Lady Michelle Obama.

First, Lorelei DiSogra, Vice President of Nutrition, and Andrew Marshall, Director of Foundation Programs & Partnerships, joined leading child nutrition advocates to celebrate the accomplishments of the Let’s Move! initiative, over the past six years. At the event, the First Lady also announced improvements to the White House Kitchen Garden and that its presence would continue on the South Lawn of the White House beyond the Obama Administration.

The following day, the Foundation assisted with the final harvest of the White House Kitchen Garden. The Foundation arranged for two students, A’Layia Howard and Xavier Purchas, from Freeman Elementary School in Flint, Michigan to travel to Washington, D.C. to assist the First Lady with the harvest. Freeman Elementary received a salad bar earlier this year. A’Layia and Xavier were selected to represent Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools, and to tell the First Lady about how the salad bar is helping them to choose more fresh produce at school lunch.
Making a Difference

3 Million Students Benefitting from Increased Access to Fresh Produce

By January 2017, the United Fresh Start Foundation and Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools partners will have donated salad bars to 5,000 schools. These donations - - from produce companies, healthcare organizations, non-profits and allied businesses - - are making a big difference. Together, we are helping to provide increased access to fresh fruits and veggies for 3 million kids in all 50 states every day at school. That’s HUGE!

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), students with access to a salad bar at school are three times more likely to consume fruits and vegetables. Also, a recent survey of school foodservice professionals cites salad bars as the top strategy for encouraging students to try more fruits and veggies at school.

Schools are using the salad bars every day as part of the National School Lunch Program, and many are also using them to offer more fruit choices at school breakfast. With new school nutrition standards that require serving a greater amount and variety of fruits and veggies each day, and with students required to have at least ½ cup of fruits and veggies on their plate, salad bars are the perfect solution for encouraging students to select fresh, healthy options.

“Salad bars have helped many schools serve more fresh produce, but almost as important, the salad bars are also a conversation starter,” said Andrew Marshall, Director of Foundation Programs & Partnerships. “The presence of a salad bar can be the catalyst for a focus on health and wellness at school. Over the years, we have heard countless anecdotes of students writing about their new salad bar in a school newsletter, Principals telling parents about the new salad bar at parent-teacher conferences, and schools inviting the local media to see how the salad bar is improving their lunch program, which in turn, inspires nearby schools to implement salad bars with more fruits and veggies, as well.”

Currently, there are more than 500 schools on the Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools national waiting list.

If you or your company are interested in supporting salad bars for schools in 2017, contact Andrew Marshall, Director of Foundation Programs & Partnerships, (202) 303-3407, amarshall@unitedfresh.org.

Salad bars highlight fresh fruits and vegetables in the school lunch line and enable schools to serve a colorful variety. They empower students to make their own healthy choices, and they provide students with continued exposure to fresh produce, increasing the chances they try something new and encourage their friends to do the same.

“SALAD BARS ARE GAME CHANGERS…. Our elementary students are thrilled with the opportunity to make their own selections…. Please continue to fund salad bars for school districts, they are awesome!”
- Judy Baker, Foodservice Director
  Moffat County School District (Colorado)

unitedfreshstart.org | Increasing children’s access to fresh fruits and vegetables
Did you know that everyday more than 30 million children participate in the National School Lunch Program? Considering that schools also serve breakfast, snacks and after school meals, school districts are often called, “the largest restaurant in town,” serving thousands of kids each day and having tremendous influence over their future food preferences.

Three years ago, the United Fresh Start Foundation started the Produce Forum for School Success, a two-day education and networking program for school foodservice leaders at the United Fresh annual convention. The program is designed to help school buyers advance their knowledge of the fresh produce industry, connect school and industry leaders, and promote best practices to help increase children’s access to fresh produce.

At the 2016 convention in Chicago, the Foundation hosted more than 50 leading K-12 school foodservice directors from some of the nation’s largest and most influential school districts. As a part of the program, the participants walked the trade show floor, participated in education sessions with USDA officials and engaged with colleagues to share creative ideas and best practices with regard to sourcing and serving fresh produce. They also took part in the Fresh Festival for School Foodservice, a networking reception that featured 30 produce exhibitors. School foodservice directors sampled new fruit and veggie products, learned about new and innovative packing for fresh meals, and engaged with produce companies interested in serving school customers.

“The United Fresh convention provided a great opportunity to interact with the fresh produce industry and see new healthy snack and meal solutions,” said
Making a Difference

Penny Parham, Food and Nutrition Director at the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. “We are always looking for ways to encourage our students to enjoy their fresh fruits and veggies, whether that’s part of a salad bar, grab n’ go meal or snack.”

“I valued the networking opportunities and being able to share the work we are doing to encourage students to select fresh fruits and veggies” added Amy Droegemeier, Director of Student Nutrition De Soto Unified School District No. 232 in Kansas. “It’s always good to see and taste new products and think about opportunities to incorporate more fresh produce choices on my menu.”

Special thanks to the sponsors of the 2016 Produce Forum: Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Grimmway Farms, Potatoes USA, and Taylor Farms Tennessee.

For information about the 2017 Produce Forum for School Success, or how to exhibit at the Fresh Festival for School Foodservice, contact Andrew Marshall, (202) 303-3407, amarshall@unitedfresh.org.

Members of the Urban School Food Alliance with USDA Deputy Under Secretary, Dr. Katie Wilson.

Stephen O’Brien, Director of Food and Menu Management, NYC Public Schools, and Bertand Weber, Foodservice Director, Minneapolis Public Schools, meet with exhibitors on the trade show floor.
Potato Industry Marches Toward 300 Salad Bars for Schools

Potatoes are leading the pack! Working with the United Fresh Start Foundation, Potatoes USA and the potato industry have now donated salad bars to over 245 schools. This is the largest donation from any one sector of the produce industry.

Since 2015, Potatoes USA has engaged state potato commissions, individual farms and industry members to support salad bars for schools.

“This program is a great way to boost connections with K-12 school foodservice directors and increase the variety of ways potatoes are served in school meals,” said Rachael Lynch RD, MS, Global Marketing Manager for Potatoes USA, and a member of the Foundation’s School Foodservice Committee. “We are so proud to support this program, and for every salad bar contribution by the potato industry, Potatoes USA matches the donation, doubling the impact of our program.”

The United Fresh Start Foundation is working closely with the team at Potatoes USA to administer this partnership. The Foundation coordinates outreach to schools, confirms delivery and order details, and facilitates connections between the potato industry and school foodservice leaders.

“We are incredibly appreciative to Potatoes USA for their support,” said Andrew Marshall, Director of Foundation Programs & Partnerships. “In addition to building awareness and support for salad bars in schools, the partnership with Potatoes USA has helped us expand connections with school nutrition leaders in a number of states such as Colorado, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Wisconsin, Maine and Michigan.”

The United Fresh Start Foundation and Potatoes USA will continue this partnership in 2017.
Foundation Supports “Fresh Attitude Week” with Events in Chicago, NYC

In May, the United Fresh Start Foundation collaborated with the Urban School Food Alliance and a delegation from French produce industry associations, Interfel and Aprifel, to promote “Fresh Attitude Week” in the six largest U.S. school districts.

The Urban School Food Alliance is a non-profit coalition representing foodservice administrators from New York City Public Schools, Los Angeles Unified School District, Chicago Public Schools, Dallas Independent School District, Miami-Dade County Schools and the Orange County (Orlando) Public Schools.

To celebrate “Fresh Attitude Week,” each participating school district served a greater variety of fresh produce in their school meals, as well as hosted farm to school promotions, nutrition education programs and other fun activities to promote fresh fruits and veggies to students.

As part of this promotion, the Foundation worked with Strube Celery & Vegetable Company and JAB Produce to arrange a tour of the Chicago Produce Terminal Market for members of Chicago’s Public Schools’ foodservice team and the French delegation. The Foundation also helped organize speakers for a roundtable discussion with the companies that supply fresh produce to Chicago Public Schools. The following day, United Fresh President and CEO Tom Stenzel joined foodservice administrators from New York and the French delegation to visit schools and to judge a competition where school cafeteria chefs developed healthy recipes featuring innovative uses of fresh produce.

“Fresh Attitude Week” was started in France more than 10 years ago as a week-long promotion of fresh fruits and veggies at school. This celebration has since expanded to schools in Italy, and in 2015 and 2016, “Fresh Attitude Week” was promoted in the U.S. by the Urban School Food Alliance.

We’re looking forward to Fresh Attitude Week in May 2017!
Making a Difference

Midwest Salad Bar Donors Celebrate 3 Years of Support

It all started back in 2014 during the United Fresh Convention in Chicago – industry members from the Midwest rallied around the Foundation’s “Let’s Move Salad Bars to MIDWEST Schools” campaign. The Midwest salad bar campaign engaged produce industry members in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin to support for salad bars for their local schools.

In Illinois, JAB Produce, Strube Celery & Vegetable Company and The Tom Lange Company were consummate leaders that supported salad bars for local schools. They also visited their salad bar recipient schools to learn about different school activities focused on agriculture and cultivating healthy lifestyles. In Ohio, the Foundation worked with D.R. Walcher Farms, Holthouse Farms, DNO Produce and others to support salad bars for schools in their communities. In Indiana, Caito Foods Service, Frey Farms and Grimmway Farms were top supporters. In Michigan, North Bay Produce supported salad bars for 30 schools, arranging for growers to visit school cafeterias and observe students choosing fresh produce with their meals. In Minnesota, Robinson Fresh and H. Brooks & Company engaged colleagues, friends and family in supporting salad bars for the Minneapolis Public Schools. And in Wisconsin, United Board Member Steve Jarzombek, Roundy’s, was a vocal advocate for the campaign, along with Alsum Farms & Produce, supporting salad bars for Wisconsin schools and engaging colleagues in the potato industry to join the cause.

Thank you to all the Midwest produce members who helped generate excitement and support for increasing children’s access to more fresh produce choices at school.

Students throughout the Midwest now have greater access to fresh produce at school, thanks to the “Let’s Move Salad Bars to MIDWEST Schools” campaign.

Ken Holthouse, D.R. Walcher Farms, and Kirk Holthouse, Holthouse Farms, visit Willard High School to see how their salad bar donations are benefitting local students.

Lori Taylor, The Produce Mom, and Hilary Martin Long, Frey Farms, on the set of WISH-TV in Indianapolis, highlighting the benefits of school salad bars.
Tour de Fresh 2016: Growing Industry and Individual Support for Salad Bars, One Cyclist at a Time

Thanks to the California Giant Foundation and many others, Tour de Fresh, the four-day cycling event that raises funds for the Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools initiative, is one of the produce industry’s top supporters of salad bars for schools.

Over the past three years, Tour organizers have worked closely with the United Fresh Start Foundation and now over 140 schools in 24 states and Washington, DC are serving more fresh produce, thanks to salad bars made possible by Tour de Fresh cyclists and their supporters.

The 2016 event took place in July, engaging more than 50 produce industry cyclists to ride 200 miles down the California coast, from Napa to Monterey. Each rider selected a school on the Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools waiting list, and throughout the year engaged work colleagues, family, friends and others to support their salad bar goal.

United Fresh’s Jeff Oberman, Vice President of Trade Relations, participated as a cyclist this year, raising funds to support a salad bar for Cody High School in Detroit, MI.

This Fall, organizers also arranged the first Tour de Fresh regional event, “Tour de Fresh – Texas”, which engaged the produce industry, community partners and the Mayor and citizens of Fort Worth, Texas to support salad bars for five schools in the Fort Worth Independent School District. Throughout these events, the Foundation helped coordinate outreach and implementation of the salad bars and educated schools about the event. The Foundation also helped arrange for several riders to visit schools that received their salad bars, allowing riders to see how their donations are benefiting students and encouraging them to select more fresh produce because of their new salad bars.

School foodservice directors who received salad bars from the Tour de Fresh, have also taken steps to get involved in the excitement. Several have posted pictures and thank you messages on the Tour de Fresh Facebook page and others shared the Tour de Fresh video with school colleagues, parents and community partners.

The United Fresh Start Foundation wishes to extend a big “Thank You” to everyone involved with this year’s Tour de Fresh events!
Foundation Taps Experienced Development Director to Help Expand its Reach

On September 23, Steven L. Titlebaum, CFRE joined the United Fresh Start Foundation as the new Director of Development. Bringing a strong passion for his work and an immediate connection to the Foundation’s mission, Steven hit the ground running.

“I’m excited to help raise awareness about the great work of our Foundation,” said Steven. “Part of raising awareness is sharing our story and the helping others understand how their investment is being put to work. I encourage you to share this newsletter with others and help spread the word! The more people know about what we do, the more we can increase support -- and ultimately increase our investment in our country’s greatest asset….our children.”

Steven has more than 20 years of nonprofit work experience, including 15 of direct fundraising with experience in annual and alumni giving, corporate and special event sponsorships, major and planned gifts and has been a part of concluding two capital campaigns. Most recently, Steven was the Director of Development at Gallaudet University, the world’s only university with programs specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard of hearing students. He was brought in to rejuvenate the university’s major giving program. This was his second time working for the university. In his early years, in addition to leading the major gifts and planned giving team, he was also adjunct faculty, teaching an introductory fundraising course in American Sign Language. Before his time at Gallaudet, Steven was the Director of Resource Development for Capital Caring, where he managed corporate giving.

Steven believes strongly in giving back to his community. He has served as a “Big Brother” for over nine years, and currently serves on the Board of Directors for Discovering Deaf Worlds and DAWN, formerly Deaf Abused Women’s Network. Previously, he has served on the board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals DC Chapter, remains active on several committees and frequently presents at conferences on a variety of fundraising topics.

“I believe that fundraising is a team sport,” Steven added. “It takes our staff, our volunteer leaders and our supporters to make it successful. Please reach out to me if you would like to get more involved with the work of the Foundation.”

Steven has a Bachelor’s degree from Pennsylvania State University and a Master’s degree in Human Services Administration from Spertus College in Chicago. He is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and is an avid Steelers fan.

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Meet Steven in New Orleans!

Click here to purchase your ticket.