



American Heart Association and Aramark Launch Innovative Community Health Engagement Program to Improve Diet and Health in Underserved Communities

April 21, 2016

The pilot initiative is part of Healthy for Life® 20 By 20 Commitment; Will Test Program Model and Metrics to Scale Nationwide

DALLAS, April 21, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- The American Heart Association and Aramark are launching a new community engagement program in three key cities -- Philadelphia, Chicago and Houston -- as part of their [Healthy for Life® 20 By 20 initiative](#) to improve the diet and health of millions of Americans by 20 percent by the year 2020. The pilot program, taking place throughout the spring, will track and measure the impact of attitudes and behaviors of primarily single mothers or single heads of households responsible for food and meal decisions for their families.



"Less than two percent of all Americans meet the AHA's definition of ideal cardiovascular health due primarily to poor diet. By bringing this high impact program to underserved communities and educating people to make healthier food and lifestyle choices, we hope to watch alarming statistics like this one eventually fade away," said Penny Kris-Etherton, Ph.D., R.D., Professor of Nutrition at Penn State, an American Heart Association volunteer, and a world-renowned cardiovascular nutrition expert.

"We continue to make measurable progress with *Healthy for Life 20 By 20* and are excited to launch this next important phase of the initiative to help build a culture of health at the individual, community and national levels," said Eric J. Foss, Aramark Chairman, President and CEO. "Our goal is to use the learnings from this pilot program to impact the health and well-being of tens of thousands of families in underserved communities across the country."

The program is designed to help people make better food and lifestyle choices through culturally relevant and family-centric cooking, as well as curriculum based nutrition education focused on teaching easy ways to make healthy and affordable meals.

"The most exciting part of this pilot program is our opportunity to impact and measure the change in attitudes and behaviors with heads of households who make the food and meal decisions for their families," said Kim Stitzel, Senior Vice President of the Center for Health Metrics and Evaluation, American Heart Association. "We have created measurement criteria that will chart the knowledge and behaviors of participants, allowing us to then use this information to replicate the most successful aspects of the program and scale it nationwide."

The teaching methods include lesson plans, hands-on activities, take home resources and questions, group discussions and progress reports centered on successes and struggles. Participants will learn how to budget, shop and prepare healthy meals, and increase their level of comfort and knowledge of healthy ingredients, cooking skills and recipes.

Five long-time *Aramark Building Community* partners will play a vital role in the implementation and overall success of this 12-week pilot: Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc., Episcopal Community Services, and Federation of Neighborhood Centers in Philadelphia; Casa Central in Chicago; and Neighborhood Centers in Houston. Following the pilot period, successful solutions will be replicated for broader impact across the country in partnership with the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, a network of more than 500 community-based social service organizations.

The *Healthy for Life 20 By 20* initiative, which was launched last August, builds on existing work by both organizations and underscores the American Heart Association's focus on its healthy living and prevention goals for 2020. In addition to activating community engagement programs, the initiative continues to grow and expand through healthy menu commitments across Aramark's businesses, consumer health awareness and education initiatives, as well as thought leadership and research.

For more information, visit: www.aramark.com/healthyforlife.

About Aramark

Aramark (NYSE: ARMK) delivers experiences that enrich and nourish people's lives through innovative services in food, facilities management, and uniforms. United by a passion to serve, our 270,000 employees make a meaningful difference each day for millions of people in 21 countries around the world. Aramark is recognized as one of the *World's Most Admired Companies* by *FORTUNE*, rated number one among Diversified Outsourcing Companies, as well as among the World's Most Ethical Companies by the Ethisphere Institute. Learn more at www.aramark.com or connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke — the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit www.heart.org or any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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