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McGaw YMCA Receives \$65,000 in Grants from Jewel-Osco Foundation to Boost Efforts in Addressing Hunger in Evanston

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McGaw YMCA staff prepare to offer free summer meals to Evanston youth at the corner of Grove Avenue and Maple Street.

EVANSTON, IL. — McGaw YMCA, a leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community, has received a significant boost with \$65,000 in grants from the Jewel-Osco Foundation's Nourishing Neighbors charitable program to help address hunger during the summer months and after school hours when school-aged children face higher rates of food insecurity.

The grants, totaling \$50,000 and \$15,000 respectively, will bolster the YMCA's year-round Food Program, providing nutritious meals to Evanston youth during the summer and throughout the school year. Additionally, the funding will enhance support for eligible



individuals, connecting them with federal meal initiatives such as SNAP and WIC.

Recognizing the McGaw YMCA's commitment to addressing hunger in Evanston, the first grant of \$50,000 aims to enhance SNAP/WIC participation and provide fresh produce and additional food for breakfasts and other meals offered to over 400 children and their families, supplementing what existing federal programs do not cover. In addition, seniors and adult men residing in the McGaw YMCA Men's Residence supportive housing program will benefit from this initiative.

The second Nourishing Neighbors grant of \$15,000, awarded as part of the "Fight Hunger, Serve Hope" initiative from the Jewel-Osco Foundation's private label brand O Organics, will enhance the McGaw Y Food Program's summer meal offerings, provide nutritious afterschool snacks, and increase the number of meals and weekend backpack food programs offered during the 2024-25 school year.

Nicole Woodard, McGaw YMCA's Chief Operating Officer, expressed gratitude, stating, "We're excited to partner with Jewel-Osco to help expand our reach and provide even more nutritious meals to children and families facing food insecurity in Evanston—a key mission priority aimed at strengthening our community's health and well-being."

Nourishing Neighbors is a charitable program of the Jewel-Osco Foundation. The program aims to eradicate hunger in America by keeping food banks stocked and supporting meal distribution programs at schools. In 2023, along with the Albertsons Companies Foundation, the company contributed over \$200 million in food and financial support, including over \$40 million through the Nourishing Neighbors Program, to ensure children, adults, seniors and families facing hungry have access to the food they need to thrive.

Since 2020, the McGaw Y's Food Program has provided more than 360,000 meals to address hunger in Evanston. McGaw YMCA is one of more than 150 local community organizations that received Nourishing Neighbors grants to conduct outreach and provide SNAP and WIC enrollment support for neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

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