



## **Danone Institute North America Awards \$160,000 to Five Teams to Advance Stronger and More Sustainable Food Systems**

Representing various universities and nonprofits, winners of the "*One Planet. One Health*" Initiative grant program will address systemic food systems issues

**WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. – October 7, 2021** – Danone Institute North America, a not-for-profit established by Danone North America, today announced the five winning teams of the "*One Planet. One Health*" Initiative – a grant program that promotes resilient and sustainable local food systems. Each of the five teams will receive \$30,000 USD in grant funds to develop and execute their community-based projects that will impact five distinct communities in the United States and Canada: Edmonton, Alberta; Lincoln City, Oregon; Nanaimo, British Columbia; New York City; and San Luis Obispo County, California.

First introduced in 2019, the "*One Planet. One Health*" Initiative grant program supports local projects that strengthen regional food systems and reflects Danone's belief that the health of people and the health of the planet are interconnected. Selected from applicants across the United States and Canada, the 2021 grantees were awarded for their innovation and impact, and how they address the evolving food challenges that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The social and economic effects of the pandemic have magnified the fragility and inequity in our food systems, and the 2021 grantees are building community-based programs that can mitigate the impacts on vulnerable communities," said Leslie Lytle, PhD, President of Danone Institute North America and adjunct professor at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and at the University of Minnesota. "We are inspired by their commitment to create a healthier world through food and look forward to helping them advance their programs in the months ahead with the "*One Planet. One Health*" Initiative grant."

In addition to the \$30,000 in grant funding, the five teams will participate in trainings and workshops with Danone Institute North America leaders and partners throughout the next two years to support the development and implementation of their projects. In Spring 2022, one team will also be awarded an additional \$10,000 for the strongest communications plan, as judged by the Danone Institute North America Board.

**The 2021 "*One Planet. One Health*" Initiative grant winners and projects are:**

**PROJECT #1: Building a post-pandemic sustainable food system: Starting in Edmonton**  
**(Team Member Organizations: University of Manitoba; Edmonton's Food Bank; Baranowski & Sons Nutrition)**

Food Banks Canada reported that there were over 1 million visits to food banks across the country in March 2019. Additionally, COVID-19 has had a tremendous impact on commercial and not-for-profit food supply chains. This project merges supply chain, sustainability, and nutrition perspectives to study the food supply chain during and after the pandemic. The purpose is to facilitate urgent movement

toward more sustainable food supply chains – supply chains that provide nutritionally-balanced and culturally-appropriate food while working to reduce carbon footprints, along with costs of food distribution.

### **PROJECT #2: Juntos en el Jardín (Together in the Garden)**

***(Team Member Organizations: Oregon State University; Northwest Coastal Housing; Olalla Center)***

This project aims to build on a foundational effort established at the Lincoln County Commons to create an inclusive, culturally competent, and sustainable food gardening system in the Lincoln City, Ore. area. Key objectives include prioritizing strategies to engage Latinx/a/o, Indigenous Guatemalan, and limited-income communities in all project phases; rejuvenating existing community gardening locations and creating new spaces that expand access; providing free vegetable grow kits to individuals who live far from community garden plots; strengthening the regional community food garden network with culturally relevant resources; and developing and supporting sustainable methods to ensure this project achieves a lasting impact. Additionally, this project will establish a voice texting system as an essential strategy to lessen communication barriers for Latinx/a/o and Indigenous Guatemalan populations.

### **PROJECT #3: Delivering on sustainable food systems: Evaluating a good food box program in Nanaimo, British Columbia**

***(Team Member Organizations: University of Victoria; University of Waterloo; Growing Opportunities Farm Community Coop; Nanaimo Foodshare Society)***

Food box programs, which typically comprise subsidized weekly delivery of fruits and vegetables from local producers, have emerged across Canada as an innovative way to promote increased access to healthy food for low-income and/or food insecure families. Leveraging a planetary health approach and rooted in an academic-community partnership, this pilot study will conduct a program evaluation of the Good Food Box (GFB) initiative administered by Nanaimo Foodshare, serving a small city of approximately 80,000 people on the east coast of Vancouver Island, on the unceded territories of the Snuneymuxw (snoo-NAI-muk) First Nation. The project will utilize formative surveys and in-depth interviews to help evaluate the impacts of GFB on household food security, dietary patterns, health, and food literacy; evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of the GFB model, including barriers and facilitators of use; and assess the potential of the GFB to contribute to economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the local food system.

### **PROJECT #4: Hyperlocal Health: Building an equitable food system from within**

***(Team Members Include Individuals from: Hunter College CUNY; Green Bronx Machine; Harvest Home Farmer's Market)***

There is a lack of information regarding existing healthy food resources in New York City, an issue exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The team will begin its Hyperlocal Health project in Manhattan's East Harlem, using social media, communication networks, and key stakeholder engagement to connect those in need with existing healthy food resources such as community-based organizations, hospitals, medical facilities, restaurants, store-owners and supermarkets. Additionally, Hyperlocal Health will take advantage of an evidence-based approach to using social media marketing to pinpoint and target vulnerable community members. The program will create a sustainable and replicable model that can be used throughout New York City and beyond, advancing health equity in communities of diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

### **PROJECT #5: Farmers Market Navigators Program for a Healthy Planet and Healthy People in San Luis Obispo County**

***(Team Member Organizations: University of California Cooperative Extension; North County Farmers Market Association; Center for Family Strengthening; Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo County)***

The program aims to reduce diet-related health disparities among low-income San Luis Obispo County residents and promote a prosperous and sustainable local food system by increasing customers at farmers markets and improving access to and consumption of locally grown produce. The team plans to develop, implement, and evaluate a Farmers Market Navigator program in Paso Robles that utilizes leaders from underserved communities to help address the language, cultural, discriminatory, and knowledge barriers that low-income shoppers face at farmers market venues. It will utilize the expertise of the local Promotores Collaborative to focus on outreach and access among clientele in low-income and Latinx/a/o communities. By increasing the demand for local products at farmers markets that accept CalFresh and offer market incentives such as Market Match, the project aims to increase food security and promote a healthy diet for low-income individuals.

For more information about Danone Institute North America and the five 2021 grantees, please visit <http://www.danoneinstitutena.org/>

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#### **About Danone Institute North America**

Launched in 1997, the Danone Institute North America fosters transdisciplinary, community-based work to promote sustainable foods systems in the US and Canada. It is a separately incorporated, 501c3 non-profit foundation dedicated to non-commercial activities. The Danone Institute North America is one of several Danone Institutes created worldwide by Danone, the ultimate parent company of Danone North America Public Benefit Corporation.

The Board of Directors is made up of both independent experts in nutrition science and business leaders of Danone North America Public Benefit Corporation. The nutrition scientists establish program direction, determine recipients of funding and are closely involved in all Danone Institute North America programs. Danone North America managers offer communication support, program development and management expertise.