

# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Involving Students in the Fight Against Hunger

# Who We Are

## **Maria Rose Belding**

- Senior at Pella High School in Pella, IA
- Published novelist
- 2012 GYI delegate and 2013 Wallace-Carver Fellow



## **Tariro Makoni**

- Senior at Our Redeemer's School in Minot, ND
- Founder of "A Hoping Friend"
- 2012 GYI delegate and 2013 Borlaug-Ruan Intern

# What We Do – World Food Prize

**Maria – Wallace Carver Fellowship**



**Tariro – Borlaug Ruan Internship**



# What We Do – M.E.A.N.S.



# What We Do – *Fighting For Food*



## Fighting For Food

By: Maria "Rose" Belding

"What happens when we leave?"

The question hung in the open silence. We had no idea how to answer.

"We" is myself and my fellow hunger advocate Tairro Makoni. Parked at the end of the food drives we help run at our respective high schools upon our return.

Food drives are a rite of passage for student councils and NHS chapter campaigns. In our communities, we've had both of the extremes. After lots of trial and error, motivating students and bringing in massive amounts of food. What we've learned is that a successful food drive.

Especially worrying were the lack of food drive resources for us to leave



## Managing Donations

Your drive is now in full swing. Congrats! Most of your work is done. Now you just need to be doing a few things to ensure you don't end up overwhelmed later.

First and foremost, go through all your donations for expired goods. It takes a lot of work if you wait to do this all at once, but if you find team members willing to give up a day or two's study hall, you can sort each day and it won't take too long. You can also offer the same incentives for students in or outside your team who are willing to do the same. This makes sure that you aren't inadvertently punishing food insecure students who cannot bring in food, because they need it themselves. This puts everybody on a level playing field, and you'll be glad for the help.

It's really important to go through all of the goods and toss the expired stuff. Trust us - you'll find some. It's embarrassing to your school to give blatantly bad goods, especially when it's really obvious that someone knew something was expired and donated it anyway. Additionally, a relatively high percentage of donations - around 5 to 10% in our experience - are expired, and you don't want these gross goods reflecting poorly on your school. You don't want to be remembered as the people who gave the soup from 1995. (This has actually happened multiple times. We know. Ew.)

Sometimes dates are hard to find, so trust your gut. If you can't touch the can without feeling somewhat grossed out and you can't find a date, toss it. It is against the law for food shelves to give clients expired goods, and you're saving them a ton of work by giving up a little bit of your time to sift for them. They will really appreciate this!

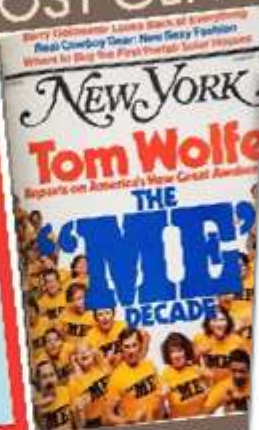
Also be keeping track of how much you're taking in. You don't need a number down to the can, but a good estimate and data collection can help you the next year you run a drive. Each can or boxed good is considered to be around one pound, so if you can fit about 10 cans or boxed goods into a grocery sack, count each sack as 10 pounds. It adds up quickly and can also be really motivating to sit and realize how much food you'll be giving to families in need.

## Charting Your Progress

As your drive goes on, sometimes students can lose motivation to help. Combat this by publicly tracking how much you bring in. Put up a poster board and make a running graph of all the donations. Even a simple, 4<sup>th</sup>-grade-math style pictograph - one can on the chart equals one hundred pounds - can help both you and your students see the impact you're making and fight apathy toward the end of your drive.

# 20 Tips For Working With Teenagers

B. WE'RE NOT THE LOST GENERATION



We might be part of a group, but that doesn't make it. Give us a chance to prove that we are more than we are suggested.

By: Tariro Makoni and Maria "Rose" Belding

## 20 TIPS FOR WORKING WITH TEENAGERS

- 1. We're People, Too**
  - We can be an intimidating demographic, but you don't need to have immense amounts of savvy in social media or slang to communicate. To win us over you don't have to try so hard - just talk to us like real people.
- 2. You Don't Need to Reinvent the Wheel**
  - You don't need to create brand new groups of youth. Go after ones that already exist - like sports teams, youth groups, and student councils. Just be sure to keep things relevant: If they are interested in things like sports, then make all projects sports orientated, and then as the year progresses and they get more acclimated to these projects, one can successfully branch out from the "normal" environment.
- 3. We Already Sit In A Classroom for Eight Hours A Day**
  - Sitting and listening to a lecture is tough even for adults- even if one is genuinely interested in the topic at hand. Show, don't tell - we love hands-on, tangible activities that allow us to get up and move, think, communicate and share our ideas.
- 4. We Might Lack Confidence**
  - Shocking, right? Actually a lot of us assume we can't make a difference because we're told we are too young all the time- to drive, to date, to do lots of the things we'd really like to do. A lot of us assume service is just another thing that "will come in time", because we're "too young to understand". We're not, and tell us so. We'll appreciate your vote of confidence.
- 5. We Might Feel Overwhelmed By It, Too**
  - You know that feeling when you watch the news and feel totally helpless towards whatever crisis is currently rocking the world? Yep. We feel like that sometimes, too. If you give us the tools to change something, we'll feel like we actually can.

# Our Mentors - Community

## Tariro

- ❑ Erica Gade
  - ❑ English instructor
- ❑ Phil Minerich
  - ❑ VP of R & D, Hormel

## Maria

- ❑ Mark Solomon
  - ❑ Social Studies instructor
- ❑ Cory Berkenes
  - ❑ Iowa Food Bank Association

# Our Mentors – World Food Prize

**Keegan Kautzky**



**Lisa Fleming**



**Catherine Swoboda**





maria.belding@gmail.com  
tarirodmakoni@gmail.com

THANK YOU