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### **School District in Aurora, IL Celebrates Third Year of Food Recovery Verification**

COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND — June 4, 2018 marks the start of the third year East Aurora School District 131 has been Food Recovery Verified. Food Recovery Verified (FRV), a program of Food Recovery Network (FRN), is a third party that verifies that food businesses donate their surplus food at least once per month to hunger fighting non-profits.

As the first-ever school district to obtain verification, East Aurora School District 131 is paving the way for other school districts to implement food recovery programs and reduce food waste in their kitchens. Verifying an entire school district was monumental for FRN because it meant not only recognizing one kitchen for participating in food recovery, but all the kitchens across the District's 19 schools. FRN commends East Aurora School District 131 for working hard every day to donate surplus food from its schools to those in need in Aurora, IL.

FRN is a student-led organization with more than 230 chapters on university campuses across the United States. Many of the universities with FRN chapters were the first businesses to gain Food Recovery Verification. The FRV program has since expanded to include other businesses such as hotels, hospitals, corporate dining facilities, and primary and secondary schools. In 2017, FRN verified 113 businesses across 15 sectors in 32 states.

Simon Seibert, Sodexo General Manager at East Aurora School District 131, and Annette Johnson, President of Board of Education spearheaded the District's food recovery program in partnership with the East Aurora School District 131 Board of Education and applied for verification in May 2016. "Because we work and live in a high poverty area, we wanted to do whatever we could to help alleviate childhood hunger in our community," Seibert said. "These programs would not have been possible without Ms. Johnson's constant dedication and support."

All 19 schools in the District donate surplus food every day following Sodexo's food safety procedures through two different programs. First, any unconsumed, unopened, individual food items such as fresh fruit, milk, and juice are left by students on a "sharing table" for other students to claim. Any remaining items not picked up by students from the "sharing table" at the end of the breakfast and lunch periods are then donated to the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry, located at East Aurora High School. Second, any surplus hot, prepared foods that were left unserved are packaged, frozen and donated to Wayside Cross Ministries weekly for use in their kitchen for their clients.

Sodexo, East Aurora School District 131's dining provider, has supported the District's efforts to implement a food recovery program. "Through Our Better Tomorrow Plan, our global promise for sustainability with local execution, we're committed to protecting and restoring our environment, supporting local community development and promoting health and wellness," said Steve Dunmore, Sodexo, CEO Schools, North America. "We're enthusiastic and supportive of our school district partners such as East Aurora School District 131 to advance their food recovery initiatives. For more than 20 years, our Stop Hunger program has been encouraging all accounts to donate surplus food items to local anti-hunger partners across the country. Our collective goal is to influence the behaviors of our employees and consumers to reduce labor, water, food, energy and fuel waste. We model the behaviors that improve the quality of life for the entire community."

East Aurora School District 131's successful food recovery program has led to the creation of similar programs with Sodexo and the Northern Illinois Food Bank at additional school districts in the greater Chicago area. In addition to East Aurora School District 131, Sodexo at Geneva Community Unit School District 304 and Sodexo at Belvidere Community Unit School District 100 are also recognized through Food Recovery Verification. These school districts are setting a new standard for school districts across the country.

### **About Food Recovery Network**

Food Recovery Network (FRN) unites and supports college student leaders in the fight against food waste and hunger in America. Since 2011, FRN students have recovered more than 2.7 million pounds of surplus food, that would otherwise go to waste, from their campus cafeterias and local restaurants to donate to hungry Americans. Food Recovery Network has more than 235 college campus chapters in 44 states and the District of Columbia. Food Recovery Network also supports the Food Recovery Verified program that recognizes and rewards businesses and events for donating their surplus food to local nonprofit organizations. For more information about Food Recovery Verified, visit [www.foodrecoverynetwork.org/frv](http://www.foodrecoverynetwork.org/frv).

### **About Sodexo North America**

Sodexo North America is part of a global, Fortune 500 company with a presence in 80 countries. Sodexo is a leading provider of integrated food, facilities management and other services that enhance organizational performance, contribute to local communities and improve quality of life of 15 million customers in corporate, education, healthcare, senior living, sports and leisure, government and other environments daily. The company employs 133,000 people at 13,000 sites in all 50 U.S. states and Canada and indirectly supports tens of thousands of additional jobs through its annual purchases of \$9.2 billion in goods and services from small to large American businesses. In support of local communities across the U.S., the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation has contributed close to \$30 million over the past 20 years to help feed children in America impacted by hunger. To learn more about Sodexo, visit [SodexoInsights.com](http://SodexoInsights.com) and connect with us on [Facebook](#) and @SodexoUSA on Twitter.