



Rock and Wrap It Up! Helps Fight Hunger



What do the New York Giants, the Las Vegas Motor Speedway, and the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City have in common? They all rock—and wrap it up. Each of these groups has made a commitment to help fight poverty through the Rock and Wrap It Up! (RWU) program. RWU is a 501(c)(3) national anti-poverty think tank that arranges the collection and local donation of leftover food and other basic necessities, such as toiletries, from rock concerts, sporting events, hotels, corporate meetings, political rallies, and school cafeterias.

RWU began collecting leftover food in 1991 and was launched nationwide by MTV in 1994. Since its inception, the organization has:

- *Donated to over 41,000 shelters and places of need*
- *Collaborated with 150 bands, 200 schools and universities, and 30 sports franchises*
- *Collected more than 100 millions pounds of food*
- *Fed more than 200 million people*

Giant-sized Donations Feed Thousands

Each year, nearly 800,000 football fans pack Meadowlands Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey. In addition to running a full-scale concession program, the New York Giants corporate staff is also responsible for feeding the officials, players, front office staff, and assorted behind-the-scenes employees. Allison Stangeby, Community Director of the New York Giants, looked at all the leftover food one day, and realized that she should do something with it. "If anyone ever got word that we were just dumping out nearly 1,000 meals, it would be embarrassing." With such large food orders, however, it was impossible to correctly estimate the amount of food needed.

Fortunately, the RWU Program was able to help. For the past six years, representatives from the RWU Program have boxed up all the leftover meals in the locker rooms and corporate offices following Giants games—which over the span of a football season totals nearly 10,000 meals—and delivered them to the Bowery Mission, a New York City charity.

"They just made everything so easy. It was so very simple and straightforward. It just makes sense," says Stangeby. She became such a fan of the process and program that she recommended it to the New York Jets, Yankees, Mets, Rangers, and Islanders, as well as the New Jersey Devils and Nets. They are all now participating in the RWU program. Stangeby continues to promote the program to other area teams and universities as well. "There's no drama," she says, "Rock and Wrap It Up! couldn't be easier."



How RWU Helps

As a general rule, caterers prepare 10 to 15 percent more food than they need for an event, making for a lot of leftovers. RWU makes it simple and satisfying to donate the leftovers to charities, food banks and soup kitchens nearby. RWU provides language for bands, political figures, and sports teams to include in their contracts or permits with caterers. The language requires all leftover food to be donated to local soup kitchens: "All edible leftover food to go to local soup kitchens or shelters and Rock and Wrap It Up! will arrange for the recovery." At the end of an event, RWU volunteers organize the safe recovery and delivery of edible leftover food. Feeding America's affiliated food banks also participate in the recovery opportunities.

The Ultimate Return on Investment

There is no cost to partnering with Rock and Wrap It Up! Food donations help reduce or avoid disposal costs, and RWU volunteers help to save labor costs. Plus, RWU offers valuable resources and assistance in developing and expanding a partner's hunger relief program. For example, RWU has provided teachers with lesson plans about nutrition and the reality of hunger.

Unpaid volunteers are the gears that keep the RWU machine running smoothly. More than 5,000 volunteers have worked with RWU in 500 cities since 1991, supplying over 100 million pounds of food to more than 200 million people. Each year, RWU's six employees operate with a budget of less than \$450,000.

Rock Stars Wanted

Here are some ways that you or your business can become a rock star partner:

- At your next catered event, donate the leftover edible food to your local community shelter or soup kitchen to feed others and keep food from going to waste.
- Visit the Rock and Wrap It Up! Web site (www.win4hunger.org) to learn how to volunteer, find agencies to give food to, donate, or sign on as a partner. You can also call Rock and Wrap It Up! at 877-691-FOOD.
- Visit the Web site for Feeding America (<http://feedingamerica.org>), the nation's food bank network, to donate, volunteer, and locate a food bank near you.



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