

## What is all the Fuss about Peanut Butter and Jelly?

A popular tzedek project to do on campus is the PB Jam. Students gather together to make large quantities of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to donate to homeless shelters. Sometimes done in the dining hall or on tables on the main drag, it is a highly visible project and gets many students involved. Before you decide to do one however, it is important to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What are the needs of your community?
  - Talk to your local community center and find out what is needed—it may not be peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.
  - Maybe the local homeless shelter needs canned goods.
  - Maybe the women's shelter needs toiletries.
  - Maybe the local children's hospital needs books.
2. How can you best address those needs?
  - If your community does need peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, what are the other factors?
  - How many do they need?
  - When is the best time of day to deliver them?
  - Is there a certain time of year they need them most?
3. How can you make this a meaningful experience?
  - Make sure students are able to learn something by providing them with information about the homeless shelter and giving them hunger facts.
  - Make table tents.
  - Have a speaker that night that talks about hunger issues.
  - Tie it to a larger initiative or make it part of a series.

**Here are some suggestions for planning and running a successful and meaningful sandwich drive for the hungry.**

**Compiled by Jennifer Ackerman, Social Justice Coordinator  
Hillel at the Ohio State University**

### **1) Create Partnerships:**

PB JAM drives are a great way for Hillel to collaborate with other campus organizations. Send out an introductory letter to organizations inviting them to participate. Letters can go to just about any student organization including: Greek houses, residence halls, class honorariums, clubs, service societies, preprofessional clubs (prevet, premed, prenursing, prelaw, pre dental societies), multicultural associations. Any student organization that has student volunteers is a potential partner!

## **2) Get Donations! Don't buy a thing!**

Start three months before the date of the drive and send out letters to corporations seeking donations. You can try getting once grocery store to be the "corporate sponsor" of the day. Gimmicks like their logo on all promotional items and t-shirts may entice donations. If corporate sponsorship from one supplier fails, don't get frustrated, just change the plan around. Ask vendors for one item. Get all the bread from a local baker, the peanut butter from different store, and the garbage bags from your own cleaning supplier. When seeking donations, if asking the large grocery stores doesn't work, try a smaller vendor. Trader Joe's was new to the area and donated all of the peanut butter and jelly for our drive. Some places would prefer to give store gift certificates. Those are also useful. It seems like common sense but, when asking for donations, be friendly. You are asking for something from them and anything they can give you is something you didn't have before you asked!

## **3) Sample Timeline:**

Week 1:

Set up internal planning committee

Start calling food pantries to see how many sandwiches are needed in the community

Research grants for funding

Week 2:

Send letter to all student organizations (the invite)

Reserve Tables, chairs, space on campus, etc.

Week 3:

Start researching donations (letter to grocery stores) asking for specific amounts of supplies

Contact T-shirt and sticker companies for donations

Research renting golf carts and walkie-talkies for the day of the drive

Send letter to local congregations for financial contributions

Week 4:

Send students to campus organization meetings

Send students to Greek chapter meetings

Get organizations to commit to hosting a table the day of the event

Follow-up on t-shirts (should have final design)

Week 5:

Donations should be complete

1<sup>st</sup> organizational meeting for participating PB Jam organizations hosting tables (tell them the details of the day along with their responsibilities)

Week 6:

Begin the publicity piece (campus paper, local paper, school website)

Pick up t-shirts

Finalize golf cart and walkie-talkies

Finalize delivery sites for sandwiches

Week 7:

Have food delivered to Hillel building

Organize the supplies into table portions

Tables and chairs should be delivered

Walkie-talkie and golf cart delivery

Type out directions to the various food pantries that are accepting sandwiches

2<sup>nd</sup> organizational meeting for hosts (get them to sign up for delivery)

Day of Drive:

Have a person with a walkie-talkie on a golf cart to transport extra supplies to the tables

Pass out fact sheets at the tables about hunger in the world

Have directions and delivery information ready for when the sandwiches are made

Send volunteers throughout the day to deliver

#### **4) More Than Just Making a Sandwich!**

While the act of making a sandwich for another person is a good start, the action is more complete with an educational piece. Posters and handouts with facts about hunger nationally and internationally should be passed out to every student that makes a sandwich. On the handout have more information on how to help alleviate poverty. If your Hillel serves lunch a soup kitchen weekly, put that on there too!

Another important piece is to only make the amount of sandwiches that have been previously requested by the shelters, after school programs, or pantries.

Do NOT make more sandwiches than are needed by the community!

Have volunteers help in the delivery. That's how they will see the impact of their work!