

A Story of Compassion

USDA Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

Valley Kingdom Ministries

South Holland, Illinois

Jolonda is a smart and energetic 9 year old girl who lives in Calumet City, Illinois (a south suburb in Illinois). Jolonda comes from a loving family and church home and attends Carol Mosley Braun Elementary School. Active in the Children's Ministry at her church, she was also selected to represent her class in the Academic Olympics at her school.

Jolonda attends Valley Kingdom Ministries Summer Day Camp in the summer and is the third generation in her family to attend the camp. Her two older siblings also attended the camp when they were her age and one of her sisters is going to be a camp counselor this year. Coincidentally, Jolonda was also told about the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) through her camp counselor, Astin Hayes. Jolonda says she taught her about healthy eating and the right combinations of grains, fruits vegetable and proteins. She says that her favorite meal at the camp is spaghetti, cheese bread and salad.

Camp administrator Valerie Harvey says, "It is a blessing to know that not only will children have fun during the summer, but they will eat healthy meals as well."



How the Initiative is Helping

These organizations came onto the program a result of the combined outreach efforts of the Regional USDA Food and Nutrition Service office and the Illinois State Board of Education. The regional office has been working with the state on an ongoing basis to increase Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) participation.

In an effort to recruit new summer sponsors through the Faith Based and Community Initiative, the Regional Office developed a special Faith-Based and Community summer-edition promotional newsletter and marketed it to all Midwest partners and supporters of USDA food assistance programs. In addition to the newsletter the regional office also developed news releases and flyers that they shared with churches, community organizations, state agencies, food banks and parks and recreation associations. As a result of these combined outreach efforts USDA has seen an increase in interest and new sponsors for the Summer Food Service Program.



A Story of Compassion

USDA Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

About the Organization

Valley Kingdom Ministries Summer Day Camp (VKMI Summer Camp) has been a sponsor for the USDA Summer Food Service Program since 2004. Camp administrator Harvey says they are very happy to be able to provide the children of their church and community with fun activities during the summer and provide them with nutritious meals. "Everyone involved with the program at the federal and state levels are very helpful and accommodating. They will answer any questions you have about the program and walk you through the entire process," she says.

The camp offers a variety of arts and crafts as well as classes on modeling, etiquette, and health and nutrition. One of the most successful things the camp did last year was their "Youth Entrepreneurial" event. During this event the kids were tasked with coming up with a business and products for their business. The kids were very creative and came up with products such as pens and t-shirts and the smaller children even made cookies for their business. The camp then held a "Children's Expo" and invited their parents, friends, family and church members to attend and the children sold their products and promoted their businesses. The children decided to donate their proceeds from the expo to a ministry of their choosing at the church and the camp matched their donation.

These events taught the kids at the camp about operating their own business, money management, and most

importantly about being involved and giving back to the community.

Valley Kingdom Ministries became a sponsor of the USDA Summer Food Service Program in 2004 after learning

about the program from Royal Educational Services, a non-profit school-age educational organization that has been a summer sponsor since 2004.

Vitals

Address: 1102 East 154th Street
City: South Holland
State: Illinois
Zip: 60473
Contact: Valerie Harvey
Phone: (708) 331-1908
Served: 200 - 220 meals a day

