

Addressing Hunger in the High School Classroom



Lake Park Audubon Senior High Student, Sam Bestge

Partnerships Working Towards Solutions

PartnerSHIP 4 Health has extraordinary opportunities to meet and impact people along the path towards preventative health.

One such partner is Sam Bestge who will be a senior at Lake Park Audubon high school in the fall of 2022. He has been serving on their school district wellness committee since the seventh grade. He has brought insight, enthusiasm and most importantly, the student perspective to our healthy school focus. His yearly service project, *Sam's Meals for Many*, provides healthy meals for families over Christmas break.

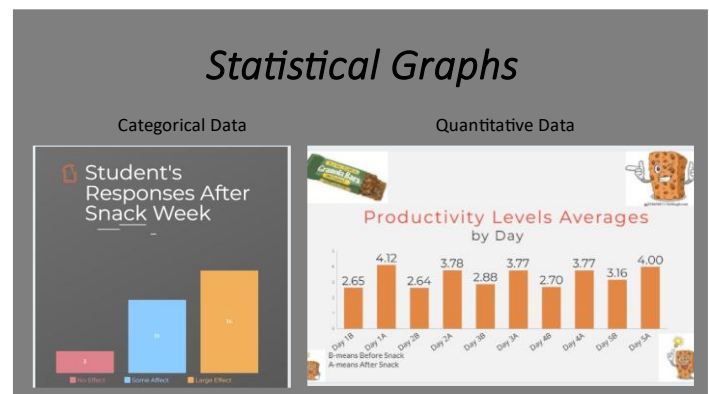
At the March 2022 wellness committee meeting, Sam asked if PartnerSHIP 4 Health would consider funding his college statistics research project, a pilot snack program. For one week, Sam Bestge and his team provided students grades 10-12 with a mid-morning snack. Their goal was to determine if there was an increase in productivity, focus, and learning ability after eating the healthy snack.

With funds from PartnerSHIP 4 Health, the school food service department purchased Nature Valley Crunchy Granola Bar, Oats n' Honey and Nature Valley Protein Bar, Peanut Butter Dark Chocolate. Then a team of five students (Sam Bestge, Trent Bjerke, Ezekiel Noel, Rylan Swenson and Carter Minske) set out to do their analysis of the statistical data from their study. Why did they choose this project? Their past experiences with hunger during later morning classes.

The Problem

Words from their presentation: "Problem solved- The problem is that students are hungry before lunch hour comes around, and then the only thing we can think about is eating. The problem we believe has been solved through the snack. Students really did think the snack helped. On average, it went up close to 1 whole Likert scale level up. We have sufficient evidence to suggest with great confidence that providing snacks improves productivity. When students are not focused on hunger, students tend to be more focused on their work."

From Melanie Vickmark, Lake Park Audubon High School Math Teacher: "Students in this College Statistics course were tasked with identifying a problem they see in society today and creating a research-supported solution to this problem. These young statisticians then designed and conducted a statistical study aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of these potential solutions. When done well, such statistical studies can provide compelling results that necessitate a change."



The Solution

The food service department will use the results to inform and encourage the district to consider a second chance breakfast for students.

CONTACT INFORMATION: Learn more about PartnerSHIP 4 Health (local public health in Becker, Clay, Otter Tail and Wilkin counties) at <http://partnership4health.org701>

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