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Contact:  
Lynette Loomis  
Greater Rochester Health Foundation  
585-258-1717 (office)  
585-730-0278 (cell)  
lloomis@thegrhf.org

Webster Kids Contribute to Local Food Cupboard

Can little kids contribute to their community? “Absolutely,” say Patricia AbuGharbieh and Maureen Askin, who have been selected as Healthy Heroes by Greater Rochester Health Foundation (GRHF). These two volunteers for the Webster Health & Education Network (WHEN) took 87 youngsters on a berry-picking adventure after which 75 containers of fresh berries were donated to a local food cupboard.

“Our annual berry picking project involves G & S Orchard, and Webster Parks and Recreation K-3 aged campers picking blueberries: one pint for home, and a second as their gift to the Webster Community Chest food cupboard. Beyond nutritional gains, a morning of active play, and nurturing a connection to community, we hoped that campers might discover new fruits, and derive a sense of accomplishment from the 'fruits of their labor.' As we all know, telling kids to 'eat 5' only goes so far. They need to experience growing, picking, and taste-testing right off the bush “say AbuGharbieh and Askin.

According to John Urban, president and CEO of GRHF, “Both of these women are health professionals who have taken their skills in nursing and respiratory therapy beyond a clinical setting and used their knowledge of health to make it fun for children to learn about nutrition. The day-long outing reinforced the concept of ‘eating your colors’ and ‘having a rainbow on your plate’ in hands-on activities to which very young children could relate.”

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation wants to recognize people who are helping kids stay healthy. These are individuals or groups that have gone above and beyond their normal duties to successfully impact children's nutrition and/or physical activity. Healthy Heroes are awarded $500 that is to be donated to the organization of their choice in the spirit of improving the health of children through increased physical activity and improved nutrition. People interested in nominating Healthy Heroes may visit www.beahealthyhero.org.

The mission of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation is to improve the health status of all residents of the Greater Rochester community, including people whose unique healthcare needs have not been met because of race, ethnicity or income. Three major areas of focus for the Foundation are prevention, health system improvement and neighborhood health status improvement. Within the prevention realm, helping children maintain a healthy weight is a major focus of the Foundation.