



ARAMARK Building Community:

Putting our professional strengths to work to enrich the lives of American Families.

A case summary of why and how ARAMARK created its first-ever signature community program.

The mission of the ARAMARK community involvement initiative, *ARAMARK Building Community (ABC)*, is to enrich the lives of individuals and families in need by partnering with local community centers to help people of all generations learn, earn and thrive.

ARAMARK recognizes the important role community centers play in addressing the comprehensive needs of family members of all generations. That is why ARAMARK is partnering with leading community center networks to provide a range of resources including grants, employee volunteers and in-kind contributions.

For more than 75 years, ARAMARK and its employees have been active in their communities and generously shared time and funds to support local non-profits. However, because these efforts had been primarily grassroots driven, the company's charitable support became scattered among nearly 2,000 local causes and organizations of every type. The lack of a strategic focus made it difficult to tell a clear story of what ARAMARK cared about in the community, and challenging to measure the impact of their charity.

In 2007, a small team of Philadelphia headquarters-based ARAMARK employees embarked on a multi-year initiative to create a company-wide community involvement strategy that would also help connect, engage and integrate ARAMARK's 260,000 employees and raise awareness and recognition of the company in local communities. Drawing from the company's most successful

charity projects to date; interviews with employees throughout the organization; and research on the signature community involvement programs of other companies, the team developed a strategy for the company to focus its grants, in-kind contributions, and employee volunteers. They wanted the company's assets to work harder for the community and the business.

One of the many strategic questions the team considered was, "How can an ARAMARK community program utilize our greatest resources – the skills and expertise of our employees – to make a difference?" It became apparent that the company could best help the community by offering to share its assets in the areas of workforce readiness; health and nutrition; and basic needs such as food, clothing and access to healthy environments.

With the issue focus areas identified, the next step was to find partner organizations that simultaneously served so many diverse issues and that could utilize the unique assets ARAMARK could provide. Research efforts revealed a strong match: local, independent community centers.

These community gems can be found in nearly every city, in the U.S. and abroad, and provide a wide range of critical support services to individuals and families living in underserved communities. Inside their well-used buildings and recreation facilities, community centers provide charter schools, meal programs, after-school



enrichment activities, senior services, early childhood care, career counseling, adult education, athletic programs, and much, much more. In common with ARAMARK, community centers offer a range of services and their employees share a passion to positively impact people's lives, every day. It was discovered the largest areas of need for community centers are ARAMARK's greatest strengths: expertise within nutrition and wellness; workforce readiness, and basic services and facilities management.

"By focusing our efforts on working with community centers, we realized we would be able to use what we're best at to make a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of individuals and families in each city," stated Bev Dribin, Vice President of Community Relations, a member of the team that created ABC.

Through input and approval from executives throughout the company, *ARAMARK Building Community (ABC)*, the company's first signature community program was branded and approved for a pilot rollout phase. The program's mission and call to action was to enrich the lives of individuals and families in need by partnering with local community centers that help people of all generations learn, earn and thrive. By dedicating grants, in-kind contributions, and its skills in professional services – hospitality, food, facilities and uniform services – ARAMARK activated its commitment to help meet the goals and priorities of neighborhood institutions assisting families in need.

Exploring the best ways that ARAMARK and local community centers could work together to develop programs that could eventually be rolled-out across the nation, three pilot markets were identified: Houston, Chicago, and Philadelphia. ARAMARK employees from each city forged relationships with a local community center network, and relied on the experts – the community centers themselves – to direct them on how company strengths could best be put to use.



"Our first priority was to understand typical community center needs, particularly in our focus areas – workforce readiness, basic human services and health and wellness – to identify some opportunities for collaboration in our first year. The folks at NCI (Neighborhood Centers Inc.) were very willing to jump in with us and figure out together how we would combine forces for the community." Holly Montalbano, Vice President of External Affairs, Houston

During the pilots four types of standard activities within each key focus area were developed:

Center Enhancement Days- where hundreds of ARAMARK employee volunteers help local community centers provide an uplifting and safe environment by focusing on making improvements to the facilities, such as painting murals, landscaping playgrounds, and turning underutilized space into a children's reading room

Health & Wellness Events- opportunity to educate family members to enhance community health awareness by sharing ARAMARK expertise in nutrition, wellness and food preparation

Career Fairs- helping to increase the impact of the community center's efforts by facilitating workshops on career opportunities, ARAMARK employees coach job seekers on skills and resumes, in addition to other fun and motivational activities including career fairs

Basic Needs Drives- in response to neighborhood needs, ARAMARK employees help their community center to collect items like food, toys, blankets and clothing

Through the *ARAMARK Building Community* pilots, the initiative was shown to be focused enough for local employees and business



National Partnerships Help to Fulfill the Mission: ARAMARK has established partnerships with two national non-profit organizations which make it possible to implement ABC throughout the country: Families International, Inc., a network of independent community centers which provides knowledge and access to the to community centers and helps facilitate local grant making; and the City Year Care Force™, the youth volunteer organization which brings a turnkey approach to conducting large scale volunteerism events.

Making an Impact

Within its first year, *ARAMARK Building Community* began to meet short-term business and social objectives.

The initiative brought together more than 5,000 ARAMARK employees through more than 20 *ARAMARK Building Community* events in 12 metropolitan areas. A post-service project poll reported 92 percent of employees participating in *ARAMARK Building Community* were proud of ARAMARK and its community commitment, and 90 percent stated that they would be interested in participating again. Both are positive indicators that the initiative is generating a greater sense of loyalty and pride among employees.

The program generated the internal enthusiasm the company was looking for, and other regions and employee groups quickly began asking when and how they could get involved. A legion of ARAMARK dietitians and culinary experts, 750 people strong, took the lead in developing turnkey activities and materials to be used at health and wellness events. They created models for healthy cooking demonstrations including recipes and brochures on a wide range of nutrition topics. Teams of these dietitians are now working with the community centers to develop local nutrition programs.

ARAMARK Building Community was not only gaining traction internally, but also began to be recognized externally. In its first year, the company received supportive local media coverage, including articles in the Houston Business Journal, the Detroit News and the San Francisco Chronicle. In addition, the program received awards and commendations from mayors and other elected officials in Detroit, Houston and Providence. Most importantly, in the first year alone, *ARAMARK Building Community* reached nearly half a million individuals in 12 cities and increased the capacity of 20 local community centers to perform their essential missions

“At ARAMARK, our daily business operations revolve around enriching the lives of families. That is what community centers do; they are a safe place, a hub in communities for people who really need assistance and support to better themselves. Working together, ARAMARK and local community centers truly make a difference in people’s lives.” – Local ARAMARK Star Team Leader

units to work within, but also flexible enough to allow for creativity. Local teams had the ability to apply their particular strengths toward the needs of their community center partners. This winning combination- providing local autonomy while offering guidance and support, was instrumental to success within the ARAMARK entrepreneurial culture.

ARAMARK Building Community was introduced to all “Star Teams”, groups of ARAMARK employees within a geographic region, as well as nationwide during a Community Involvement Training Summit. Through the development of a how-to “toolkit” and new web portal that enabled tracking volunteer participation while capturing success stories from the field, the program was ready to go national.

“Through *ARAMARK Building Community*, we link our unique expertise to help youth and adults build critical, employable work skills and connect them to career opportunities....support families with nutrition and wellness awareness and education....provide basic needs such as food and clothing....and help our partners run cleaner, safer and more efficient facilities.” – Local Star Team Leader

In April 2008, *ARAMARK Building Community* was formally launched internally and externally. ARAMARK also announced that over the subsequent three years, the company would dedicate more than \$5 million in cash grants, volunteer hours, and product donations toward improving neighborhood centers in more than 25 markets.

Throughout 2009, ARAMARK Building Community is growing and evolving. The program will expand into 25 U.S. cities plus the United Kingdom and Canada. The hope is that on any given day at local community centers, one might find ARAMARK nutritionists teaching cooking classes for community center members and educating them on how to live a healthier lifestyle; stadium facilities managers refurbishing a weed-covered, inner-city ball field; our environmental experts advising on energy savings; uniform services managers executing a clothing drive; or our human resources experts discussing college opportunities with at-risk students. All of this occurring as local officials, clients, and other citizens join the efforts to support our neighborhoods by empowering their community centers.

“We are starting to bring together people and organizations from all sectors of society – other companies, non-profits, and government agencies, to make real change in the lives of our neighbors served by community centers,” says Rick Martella, ARAMARK Vice President of Corporate Affairs. “We have just begun to harness the power of our connections. Over the years to come, we will find new ways to align the needs of our communities with the creation of value for our business and our people. There’s great potential ahead.”



“Everywhere I go; employees approach me to say this is a great program. What a wonderful way for employees – and even external stakeholders – to learn about who we are and what we do.” Andrew Kerin, Group President, Global Food, Hospitality and Facilities Services.

ARAMARK Reach

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| 1 | individual initiative needed to make a difference |
| 15 | national and state parks |
| 19 | countries with ARAMARK operations |
| 30 | ballparks, arenas & stadiums |
| 40 | convention and civic centers |
| 60 | conference centers |
| 100's | suppliers & business partners |
| 180 | oil rigs, mines and other remote locations |
| 350 | sports & entertainment facilities |
| 700 | correctional facilities |
| 1,000's | corporations |
| 1,800 | K-12, colleges & universities |
| 2,500 | hospitals and senior living communities |
| 70,000 | public safety agencies |
| 120,000 | refreshment services locations |
| 250,000 | ARAMARK employees worldwide |
| 3,500,000 | uniform & career apparel customers |
| 11,000,000 | national and state park visitors |
| 30,000,000 | convention & civic center visitors |
| 60,000,000 | healthcare patients & senior living residents |
| 70,000,000 | fans |
| Unlimited | potential to positively impact someone's life |

ARAMARK is a leader in professional services, providing award-winning food services, facilities management, and uniform and career apparel to health care institutions, universities and school districts, stadiums and arenas, and businesses around the world. In FORTUNE magazine's 2009 list of "World's Most Admired Companies," ARAMARK was ranked number one in its industry, consistently ranking since 1998 as one of the top three most admired companies in its industry as evaluated by peers and analysts. ARAMARK seeks to responsibly address issues that matter to its clients, customers, employees and communities by focusing on employee advocacy, environmental stewardship, health and wellness, and community involvement. Headquartered in Philadelphia, ARAMARK has approximately 260,000 employees serving clients in 22 countries. Learn more at the company's Web site, www.aramark.com.