



*Pioneers
International
Centennial
Project* (official name
TBD)

Internal
Soft Launch
Guide

Be the spark of change!



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Dear Pioneers Leader(s),

It's hard to believe that 2011 is finally here – and it's time to begin the Pioneers Centennial activities! It seems we've been talking about and planning our special year for a long time and now here we are!

In response to chapter leadership feedback following the 2010 Annual Meeting in Atlanta, we have been working with Pioneer Leaders to create our first ever Pioneers International Centennial Project. As Pioneer Leaders, we hope that you will be involved in the largest focused North American-wide project in Pioneers history!

This guide is intended to give you the information you need to speak with your volunteers to gauge their interest in participating in the Pioneers International Centennial Project and provide ideas on how to be involved.

Following months of talking to Pioneers, developing criteria, vetting, and tweaking, the Pioneers organization has chosen to address the issue of food insecurity in local communities for our International Centennial Project. Pioneers have been feeding the hungry throughout our history through a variety of projects and programs – and this issue has never been more pressing than it is today.

The goal of the project is to create an opportunity that will mobilize and unite as many of our 620,000 Pioneers as possible over a two week period in September to help the ever-growing food insecure population across North America. We hope we can count on you and your volunteers to participate in this project.

Please take this chance to communicate the project information with your volunteers, gauge their interest then please go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M56S2WS> to fill out a commitment form. Please complete the commitment form on or before *Tuesday, March 15, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time.*

We also want to invite you to share your thoughts on the project name at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M5WH5QW> Please complete the name survey on or before *Monday, February 14, 2011 at 5:00 p. m. Mountain Time.*

Together we can make a difference in our communities and ***Be the Spark of Change!***

*Pioneers
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Project
Overview

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Introduction to *Pioneers International Centennial Project*

Background

As we began to plan our 100th year celebration, the idea of a North American-wide centennial project was raised and promoted by Pioneers volunteer leadership, members and organizational stakeholders as well as endorsed by the International Board of Directors.

The intent of an International Centennial Project is to have an organizational event large enough to engage as many volunteers as possible, resulting in sufficient impact to gain both international and local news attention.

The following criteria were developed to assist in the selection of the International Centennial Project – the project must:

- Be visual, media friendly, include a unique/relevant component
- Be easy, simple to communicate and execute
- Include multi-level participation (age, activity level)
- Have high community impact with measurable results
- Be replicable in urban, suburban and rural communities and adaptable to reflect local needs and abilities
- Be family friendly, with a weekend component
- Be inexpensive to implement

As additional in-depth research was conducted, including conversations with members and volunteers, it became apparent that

1. Pioneers overwhelmingly embraced the idea of a food drive/feeding people project and were eager to participate;
2. Pioneers volunteers were very supportive of incorporating a healthy food component; and
3. Pioneers expressed the desire for local flexibility and scalability in project implementation.

Pioneers Headquarters has since met with organizations in the business of addressing the large scale issue of food insecurity (i.e. *Feeding America*, local food banks and *Share Our Strength*) to explore potential national partnerships and to provide resources to assist in the implementation of our project. All are excited about the project, really like the “healthy” food slant and would like to work with us in some capacity.

The purpose of this guide is to give you the information needed to speak with your groups to gauge interest in participating in the Pioneers International Centennial Project and provide ideas on how you might become involved.



Units (Chapters, Councils, Clubs and/or Regions) who commit to participating in the International Centennial Project will receive an **“International Centennial Project Tool Kit”** in the second quarter which will outline the project and potential activities in more detail.

Pioneers Headquarters will share relevant International Centennial Project information with the full Pioneers membership to help recruit volunteers and build excitement around the project via email, Facebook, the Pioneers website and the Pioneers Projects and Programs Periodical (P4).

Project Need/Research

There are 49 million “food insecure” people in the United States. 1 of every 4 children is at risk of experiencing hunger. In Canada, over 800,000 individuals access food banks on a monthly basis.

Food banks have experienced severe shortages for the past few years as many people have reduced their charitable giving and more people have needed a helping hand.

While there are many people doing great things around this issue, our research brought to light some harsh realities about the food being provided to those in need. For example, many families have to eat canned, highly processed foods that are full of preservatives and lack nutritional value, as that is the only food available at their local food pantry. We all know that a healthy diet helps children grow, develop and do well in school and enables people of all ages to work productively and feel their best. What people eat can also help reduce the risk for chronic diseases and reduce the risk of obesity, high blood pressure and more.

Pioneers can help address this issue by collecting and donating nutritious food to the organizations that provide food, as well as by participating in other service projects that help feed those who are “food insecure”. This builds on our Pioneers history of food drives, work in soup kitchens and other food projects.



Project Description

Pioneers service projects come in all shapes and sizes. Some take place at the most local level – a food bank or school - while others are multi-state in scope. The Pioneers International Centennial Project aims to engage as many Pioneers as possible across the United States and Canada in a united mission with local adaptability and a focused timeframe in what will prove to be the largest community service project in our 100-year history.

The overreaching purpose of the International Centennial Project is to provide food to “food insecure” families across North America through a variety of flexible and scalable community service activities that fall under the umbrella of “feeding people.” You are encouraged to include a healthy slant to your project.

The International Centennial Project consists of two basic food projects. You may choose to participate in one or both. *See Participation Options for more information.*

1. Hosting a healthy food drive

This could include the collection of non-perishable, inexpensive, healthier eating alternatives such as beans, dried peas, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, peanut butter, herbs and spices, and the like. Pioneers Headquarters has teamed up with *Feeding America* to create a list of recommended foods to be donated as well as educational materials on nutrition.

2. Participating in a complementary service project/event(s) focused on feeding people

Examples of complementary service projects that fall under the umbrella of “feeding people” may include:

- Delivering food for *Meals on Wheels* or similar programs;
- Serving food in local soup kitchens/shelters;
- Cleaning, sorting and packing food at a local food bank;
- Providing underserved children with discreetly packed bags of nutritious, “kid-friendly” food for weekends;
- Teaching kids how to cook their own nutritious snacks or meals

The international initiative will be led by you locally. You can partner with a community food bank, church, or other organization to be recipients of your food drive and/or complementary service event.



To provide Units that are interested in distribution or community service project resources, Pioneers has partnered with *Feeding America*, the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity. *Feeding America* can assist in the distribution of food received from Pioneers Units to people in need via a local system of over 200 food banks and thousands of other local service agencies. In addition, *Feeding America* has additional project resources you may access such as educational materials on nutrition, a "healthy" food donation list (for food drives) and possible access to a Celebrity Chef(s). We are also working to secure a similar relationship with *Food Banks Canada*, *Feeding America's* sister organization in Canada.

Feeding America also offers volunteer programs in which you may choose to participate as part of the 2nd participation option - a service event that focuses on feeding people. For example:

- *The Backpack Program* – backpacks are filled with child-friendly, nonperishable and easily consumed food that children take home on a weekend or holiday vacation.
- *Kids Café* – Kids Café provides free meals and snacks to low-income children through a variety of community locations where children already congregate –such as Boys and Girls Clubs, churches or public schools.

We are also working to include micro-volunteering opportunities so people can use their mobile phones to participate in on-demand and on-the-spot mini volunteer projects – like quickly purchasing an item to donate to the food drive online, or to just get the word out via Facebook, twitter, websites, blogs, etc.

Project Date(s)

The International Centennial Project will kick off on September 11, 2011, the National Day of Service and Remembrance, with a focus on collecting nutritious, non-perishable food that will go directly to support local food banks and other food service agencies.

The main International Centennial Project is scheduled to be completed the weekend of **September 24-25, 2011**.

Budget/Cost

The cost of this project can vary based on how your unit determines it wants to participate.



Pioneers Headquarters will finance development of marketing and project collateral for branding and promotion of International Centennial Project activities. Your unit can receive these materials at little or no cost. The project may also provide opportunities for local sponsorships.

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Participation
Options

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Pioneers International Centennial Project Participation Options

1. General Pioneers Units

Participation in the International Centennial Project is flexible at the local level. You can choose to implement a food drive or any other service project, on any scale, as long as it falls under the umbrella of “feeding people”.

You could also host a social event open to the public that would focus on feeding people. Ideas such as hosting cooking demonstrations to show how to cook with foods listed on the “healthy” food drive list, distributing cookbooks which include recipes on using healthy foods and seed packets to grow healthy food are among some of the possible activities.

This will indeed be a grassroots campaign...with volunteers from your Unit meeting the needs of your community to address a common problem.

2. Key Market Participation

Pioneers Headquarters is currently working with *Feeding America* and our national public relations agency to determine a few cities that we will work with on specific public relations efforts. The cities will be chosen based on 1) Pioneers presence; 2) *Feeding America* community presence and 3) broad media coverage potential. Key markets will be asked to implement a more focused and structured service project consisting of both a healthy food drive and a service event that focuses on feeding people (see examples above). Headquarters will work with potential “key market” Chapters/Units to ensure that you are comfortable with this designation and the expectations.



Pioneers International Centennial Project Goals:

1. Increase member engagement/recruitment
2. Increase and demonstrate Pioneer/volunteer impact
3. Increase awareness of Pioneers brand

Measures of Success:

1. Increase in volunteer engagement
 - a. More volunteers and more volunteer hours
 - b. More community participation (non-Pioneers, company employees, event sponsors, community at large)
2. Increase in community impact (people, cash donations, in-kind donations)
3. Demonstrate value to sponsor companies
 - a. Documented media coverage
 - b. Documented employee engagement
 - c. Increase membership recruitment
 - d. Develop/enhance community relationships
 - e. Demonstrate Pioneers investment

Proposed International Centennial Project Activities for Participating Units

1. Organize a planning committee.
2. Assign a Project Lead for each project location.
3. Develop a project plan and line-item budget.
4. Use Volunteer Now! to manage the project and track all volunteer hours to demonstrate community impact.
5. Use Centennial branded collateral material developed and provided by Pioneers Headquarters to consistently brand and market the project.
6. Provide required benefits for national/international sponsorships.
7. Capture your project's story through video and photographs.
8. Execute and evaluate the project.



Services Available from Pioneers Headquarters

1. Branding and collateral merchandise development (this will be done for the project as a whole with limited localization opportunities).
2. Organizational technology support.
3. Public relations tool kit for all units and targeted efforts in key markets.
4. Volunteer participation from international project partners.
5. Membership recruitment campaign development support.

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Did You
Know?

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Did You Know? – Hunger Facts from Feeding America

Watch the “Hunger in America 2010” Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPvtIIIz6tk>

Watch the “Food Banks Canada HungerCount 2010” Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBi4RTapxEg>

- As the nation’s leading domestic hunger-relief charity, *Feeding America’s* network supplies food to more than 37 million Americans each year, including 14 million children and 3 million seniors.
- Through more than 61,000 face-to-face client interviews and more than 37,000 surveys of local charitable agencies, *Hunger in America 2010* captures detailed information about who is in need of emergency food assistance and their circumstances.
- More than 49 million people are food insecure—up from 36 million since the beginning of the recession in December 2007.
- There are 3,252,134 meals served by Canadian Food Banks each month.
- Those at greatest risk include households headed by single women, Hispanics or African Americans, incomes below poverty line, and households with children.
- 1 in 4 children is food insecure.
- *Feeding America* estimates that 48 percent of all clients served reside in rural/suburban areas.
- 14.2% of rural households are food insecure, an estimated 2.8 million households.
- Nearly 3 million elderly persons are served by *Feeding America* each year.
- One of the most common misconceptions is the assumption that if someone is hungry that means they do not have a job and are living on the streets. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2008, 19 million people lived in working-poor families.
- Anyone can experience hunger.

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Key
Messages

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Pioneers International Centennial Project Key Messages:

- Pioneers has teamed up with *Feeding America* for the Pioneers International Centennial Project to make a tremendous impact on the issue of food insecurity in North America and to engage as many of our 620,000 Pioneers as possible in a focused community service project.
- This initiative builds on Pioneers' long and strong history of addressing food insecurity issues in their local communities, while tackling a pressing need present in inner city, suburban, and rural communities.
- To maximize success, Pioneers Units will have the flexibility to choose a Centennial project that is relevant locally. The only criterion is that it has to fall under the umbrella of feeding people.
- In addition to food drives and volunteering to feed people, Pioneers Headquarters will be looking at creating programs for text-donations, online giving and micro-volunteer opportunities.
- Food insecurity is a critical issue at this time because people are donating less cash and fewer goods, but more people are in need. Heartbreaking choices are being made. Buy medicine for the kids or buy food? Pay the rent or buy food? Buy a bus pass or buy food? Turn on the heat or buy food?
- The Pioneers International Centennial Project will launch September 11, 2011 and wrap up the weekend of September 24 – 25, 2011.
- Backed by the Pioneers, this comprehensive volunteer initiative aims to get all Pioneers engaged in community service that is meaningful to them and their communities, to create change, and to stay engaged.

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Q & A

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Pioneers International Centennial Project Question and Answer

Q: What is the "Pioneers International Centennial Project"?

A: Pioneers and their families and friends all across North America will have the opportunity to answer the call of those in need by fighting the issue of food insecurity in their local community through healthy food drives and/or other service projects that "feed people." Participation in the International Centennial Project is flexible at the local level. Each Pioneers group/unit may choose to implement any type of service project they want, at any scale, as long as it falls under the umbrella of feeding people.

Q: Who are the "Key Markets" and how will they be treated differently from any other Pioneers Unit?

A: Pioneers Headquarters is currently working with *Feeding America* and our national public relations agency to identify the cities that may be targeted for specific public relations efforts. The cities will be chosen based on 1) Pioneers presence, willingness to participate and capacity; 2) *Feeding America/Food Banks Canada* community presence and 3) broad media coverage potential. These markets will be asked to implement a more focused and structured service project consisting of both a healthy food drive and a service event that focuses on feeding people.

Q: What is "Feeding America?"

A: *Feeding America* is the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity. Their mission is to feed America's hungry through a nationwide network of member food banks and engage our country in the fight to end hunger.

Each year, the *Feeding America* network provides food to more than 37 million low-income people facing hunger in the United States, including 14 million children and nearly 3 million seniors.

Their network of more than 200 food banks serves all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, securing and distributing more than 2.5 billion pounds of food and grocery products annually. Those member food banks support approximately 61,000 local charitable agencies and 70,000 programs, which provide food directly to individuals and families in need.

Q: What is "Food Banks Canada?"

A: *Food Banks Canada* is the Canadian counterpart to *Feeding America* and is the national charitable organization representing the food bank community across Canada. Its Members, Affiliate Member food banks, and their

respective agencies serve approximately 85% of people accessing emergency food programs across Canada.

Q: What does "food insecurity" mean?

A: Food Insecurity exists when people lack sustainable physical or economic access to enough safe, nutritious, and socially acceptable food for a healthy and productive life. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal, or temporary, and it may occur at the household, regional, or national level.

Q: What happens to families who suffer from food insecurity?

A: People who are food insecure experience intermittent hunger. Food-insecure families also buy cheap, non-nutritious food. Food insecurity may cause major health damage, especially to kids. Hunger is detrimental to good health for adults as well.

Q: How will volunteers know what food to donate to the food drive?

A: Pioneers Headquarters is teaming up with *Feeding America* to develop a recommended donation list for the healthy food drive. It will be distributed in the tool kit.

Q: What is micro-volunteering?

A: Micro-volunteering, is a term that describes a volunteer opportunity that can be done via an internet-connected device such as a mobile phone in small increments of time.

Q: Are Pioneers Units expected to continue local service relationships with *Feeding America* following the International Centennial Project?

A: Pioneers Units are welcome to continue local relationships with *Feeding America* and/or their agency partners following the International Centennial Project, but are certainly not required to do so.

Q: What are the naming options for the Pioneers International Centennial Project and how do I vote for a name or submit my own name suggestion?

A: There are currently two names on the survey with room for alternative suggestions. The two names are:

- Pioneers Dish it Up



- Pioneers - Hearty Food. Healthy Families.

We would love to hear your ideas! The survey can be accessed at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M5WH5QW>.

Q: What Pioneers agency/corporate partners have been invited to participate and what does their participation look like?

A: All Pioneers national program partners and affinity fund raising partners have been invited to participate in the Pioneers Centennial, including the International Centennial Project. Each of them is determining how they wish to participate. For example, as part of their sponsorship Liberty Mutual will be holding a contest to engage Pioneers members while building brand awareness. Pioneers Units in the U.S. with the highest percentage of members that request a quote from Liberty Mutual will receive funding for that Unit's participation in the International Centennial Project. Funding from Liberty's sponsorship will total \$15,000. *(The contest will only be available to U.S. members since Liberty Mutual is not in Canada.)*

The National Beep Baseball Association and the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped have been responsive in working with Pioneers Headquarters to attend the Boston event and invite their employees and volunteers to participate in Pioneers projects throughout the year, including the International Centennial Project.

Pioneers Headquarters will continue to reach out to our past and present program partners to develop engagement plans which will be shared with participating Units.

Q: What is the overall goal for the International Centennial Project – are we looking to feed a certain number of people or collect a certain amount of food?

A: The organizational goal has yet to be determined and will be chosen and communicated once we hear from you regarding your interest level.

Q: Why is the project scheduled for the September timeframe?

A: September is Hunger Action Month - Hunger Action Month is a multi-faceted effort to mobilize the public to end hunger in the United States. Dozens of local and national events are planned to raise awareness of the pervasiveness of hunger during this time.



Q: Is this an entirely new project with new criteria that Units will need to implement?

A: This project is not new to Pioneers, but rather incorporates a unique and relevant twist to an old, familiar project. It should be easy and simple to execute, which is very important as we have over 1,000 Pioneers Units across North America. The project is easily adaptable and covers a broad spectrum of opportunities - it focuses on families and children, engages the entire community as well as our vast age range of members, includes both physical and non-physical activities, is easily replicable from rural to inner-city areas, is high impact, has great potential for partners and sponsors, can encompass education, health and human services and environmental project opportunities, and can be done on the weekend to involve those who work. There is also the opportunity to supplement the "hands on" effort with virtual and micro-volunteering opportunities. In addition, there is a sustainable aspect to the project for those Pioneers Units that would like to continue supporting the food insecurity issue.

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Resources

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Pioneers International Centennial Project Resources

Item	Location:
<p>Pioneers International Centennial Project Soft Launch Guide</p>	<p>Review or print from the Pioneers website at: http://www.pioneersvolunteer.org/centennial/unitsparticipation.aspx</p>
<p>Feeding America Website Food Banks Canada Website</p>	<p>http://www.feedingamerica.org http://www.foodbankscanada.ca/main.cfm</p>
<p>“Hunger in America 2010” Video “Food Banks Canada HungerCount 2010”</p>	<p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPvtlllZ6tk http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBi4RTapxEg</p>
<p>Pioneers International Centennial Project Commitment Form</p>	<p>http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M56S2WS</p>
<p>Pioneers International Centennial Project Name Survey</p>	<p>http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M5WH5QW</p>