

NEWS RELEASE



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Whole Kids Foundation Funds 30 New Bee Grants for Schools & Non-Profits with Inaugural Give Bees a Chance Fundraising Campaign

Grants support children's education and awareness about the vital role that bees play in our food system

AUSTIN, Texas (July 30, 2018)—Whole Kids Foundation announced today that it raised more than \$60,000 to fund 30 new educational bee programs through the first Give Bees a Chance campaign during June's National Pollinator Month. Grant recipients cover 23 states, providing educational opportunities around science, ecology, nutrition and agriculture for 15,574 students.

A central element of the campaign, five top chefs from across the country joined forces with Whole Kids Foundation to host fundraising dinners in their respective cities. Participating chefs included Rick Bayless, winner of Top Chef Masters and Culinary Hall of Fame inductee, with Evan Robinson, 12-year-old finalist on MasterChef Junior Season 5, Chicago; Tom Douglas, James Beard Award winner and expert in Pacific Northwest cuisine, Seattle; Kevin Fink, a 2016 Food & Wine Best New Chef winner and owner of Emmer & Rye, a Bon Appétit 2016 50 Best New Restaurants in America winner, Austin; Roberto Santibañez, chef and owner of Mi Vida in Washington D.C. and Fonda restaurants in NYC, with Susana Trilling, cookbook author, PBS-TV host, and a renowned authority on Oaxacan cuisine, Washington DC; and Stephen Stryjewski, winner of the 2012 James Beard Foundation Best Chef South and owner of Cochon, a Beard finalist for Best New Restaurant in 2007 and recently named one of the 20 most important restaurants in America by Bon Appétit, New Orleans.

"Pollinators are the secret superhero of the culinary world. Without them our world would be a much different place. They help reproduce just about every berry, nut, fruit and vegetable that we eat. Honey bees are the pollinator rockstars," said Stryjewski. "Without them our food would be bland and boring. We need to teach our children about the importance of pollinators in our food system."

Whole Foods Market, which established Whole Kids Foundation in 2011, added its support and helped engage its followers in the campaign with an Instagram "whiteout" and mysteriously "deleted" its archive of Instagram images, leaving just a few clues behind such as the bee emoji instead of a bio. The move showcased how important pollinators are for many of our favorite foods and that, without pollinators, these foods wouldn't be available.

The initiative sparked a massive amount of conversation on social media and coverage by news media. Later, the brand shared fun videos showcasing favorite foods that rely on pollinators, educational facts about bees and encouraged their audience of 2.6 million Instagram followers to consider donating to the campaign online.

Whole Foods Market covers all the foundation's operational costs to allow 100 percent of every dollar donated to directly support Whole Kids Foundation programs, including the Bee Grant program.

“We are so grateful to each of our chef partners, to our guests in each city who joined us at these incredible events, and to Wholesum Harvest and Cascadian Farm, our generous supplier partners who donated to this year’s Give Bees a Chance campaign,” said Nona Evans, president and executive director of Whole Kids Foundation. “We’ve had an overwhelming response from schools that want to participate in our Bee Grant program. These funds will provide schools with an important tool to teach kids respect for bees and other pollinators and about their vital role in nature and food production.”

Whole Kids Foundation’s Bee Grant program allows schools and non-profits to receive support for educational bee programs. All grant recipients receive consultation on safety and use of the hive from [The Bee Cause Project](#) and each recipient must have a ‘bee mentor,’ or a certified beekeeper that provides consultation and support. Application window for the 2019 Bee Grant program is September 1 – October 15, 2018.

Over the past three years, 270 hives have been awarded by Whole Kids Foundation, at a cost of \$488,000 and impacting 226,317 students in the U.S. and Canada. The hives also support the health of bee populations, as an unprecedented amount of honey bees are perishing each year due to colony collapse disorder (CCD). The phenomenon occurs when the majority of worker bees in a colony disappear due to loss of habitat, immune system decline and attack of pest, mites and diseases.

For more information on the Whole Kids Foundation Bee Grant program and how to apply this fall, visit wholekidsfoundation.org/schools/honey-bee-grant.

Whole Kids Foundation offers free resources for all schools, including curriculum, at <https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/resources/honey-bees-resources>. People can also sign up for the Whole Kids Foundation newsletter to get up-to-date information on all of the foundation’s initiatives.

About Whole Kids Foundation®

Whole Kids Foundation, a Whole Foods Market foundation, is based in Austin, Texas, and operates as an independent, nonprofit organization. By empowering schools and inspiring families, the Foundation aims to help children reach optimal health through the strength of a healthy body fueled by nutritious food. For more information on the Foundation’s programs including school gardens, salad bars and nutrition education for teachers, visit wholekidsfoundation.org.

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