

## Feeding a Hungry World

*A televised event bringing students and food aid experts to UMKC*

[Fadhel Kaboub](#) Apr . 12 . 2004

Four distinguished food aid experts will join Model United Nations students from the Kansas City area in a roundtable discussion about food aid and world hunger issues on April 19, 2004 at 1 PM in room 106 of the University Center at UMKC.

The discussion panel will be moderated by Nick Haines from Kansas City Public Television (KCPT), and will be broadcasted on KCPT later on during the week.

The discussion panel will include Judith Lewis, director of the U.S. Relations Office at the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP); Lauren Landis, director of Food for Peace at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bert Farrish, deputy administrator of commodity operations, Farm Service Agency at U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Charles Riemenschneider, director of the North America Liaison Office at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

This event is co-sponsored by the UMKC Model UN chapter, the United Nations Association - Greater Kansas City (UNA-GKC) chapter and KCPT. Many students from Model UN clubs in local colleges and high schools will also participate in the panel discussion.

The speakers "will provide background and expertise on world food aid needs, initiatives and procedures and discuss with Kansas Citians the future of these vital programs and efforts," said Jay Sjerven, President of the United Nations Association - Greater Kansas City (UNA-GKC) chapter.

Not many people realize that Kansas City is a key player in U.S. and world food aid campaigns. "It is here, at the U.S.D.A.'s K.C.-based commodity office, that the U.S. purchases the food commodities that are donated to the hungry of the world," said Mr. Sjerven.

Judith Lewis will also speak specifically on the WFP's school feeding initiatives on Monday, April 19, 7:30 p.m., at the All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church (4501 Walnut).

According to the WFP, more than 300 million of the world's children are malnourished. Of those hungry children, 130 million currently don't go to school. One-hundred-fifty million do go to school, but with empty stomachs. "That means they can't learn. They don't have the energy," said Judith Lewis.

"For 19 cents a day, or \$34 a year, a school child in a developing country can be provided with one nutritious meal each school day," said Mr. Sjerven.

Since its creation in 1963, the World Food Programme has invested \$27.8 billion and more than 43 million metric tonnes of food to combat hunger, promote economic and social development and provide relief assistance in emergencies throughout the world.

In 2002 alone, WFP statistics indicate that the programme has distributed food to 72 million of the poorest people in the world. 14 million people in development programmes, 44 million beneficiaries in emergency operations, and 14 million people in rehabilitation operations.

According to the WFP, the Rome-based organization intervened in 82 countries around the world

in 2002. A grand total of 130 relief operations in 75 countries, and 55 development projects and 33 country programmes in 55 countries.

The amount of food distributed in 2002 by the WFP totaled 3.7 million tons - 2,244 million tons for emergency operations, 580,979 tons for development projects, and 918,435 tons for protracted relief and recovery operations.

The WFP total expenditure in 2002 reached \$1.59 billion - 88 percent on relief aid, and 12 percent on development aid.

**For more information, visit . . .**

UMKC Model United Nations: [www.umkc.edu/studo/modelun](http://www.umkc.edu/studo/modelun)

United Nations Association - Greater Kansas City: [www.una-kc.org](http://www.una-kc.org)

United Nations World Food Programme: [www.wfp.org](http://www.wfp.org)

Kansas City Public Television: [www.kcpt.org](http://www.kcpt.org)

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