

LOCAL STUDENTS UNITE COMMUNITY AROUND

FIGHTING HUNGER

WITH 5K RUN & WALK



Written by Rachael Eichner

This past July, a group of inspiring local high school students organized a successful 5k Run and Walk that raised awareness and funds to fight hunger for local children and families. These students are members of the Bellevue LifeSpring Youth Council — a group of student volunteers who dedicate time throughout the year to support Bellevue LifeSpring’s mission to foster stability and self-sufficiency for Bellevue’s children and families.

The Bellevue LifeSpring Youth Council never fails to devise fun and creative ways to make a difference. In the past, they organized a drive-in movie night and a winter ball fundraiser and collected coins to help fight hunger. The recent 5k Run



and Walk at Marymoor Park was their second 5k event. The first was held back in 2019 but was put on hold for two years due to the pandemic.

“We have done other events in the past targeted to teens, but we wanted to have an event open to all members of our community,” shared Youth Council Co-Chair and Newport high school student Ava Chen. “Our goal for the 5k was for it to be a fun event that brings the community together while helping to feed families in Bellevue.”

Over 130 community members from West Bellevue neighborhoods and beyond participated this past July, along with many local businesses. The event was a big success, raising a total of \$7,000! These funds will help provide grocery store food vouchers for local students from low-income households and their families.

“It was heartwarming to see community members coming together and supporting our neighbors in need,” shared Bellevue LifeSpring Executive Director Jennifer Fischer. “The fact is, every school in the Bellevue School District has students who are experiencing food insecurity. It’s inspiring to see our Youth Council members take the initiative to support their peers.”

On the day of the event, you could feel the excitement in the air. Participants were excited to be taking part in an activity that not only benefited their health but also benefited the health of their neighbors and local children.

Bellevue Orange Theory instructors conducted an invigorating warm-up, and local juice shop Pressed provided fresh juices to help fuel the participants. Local businesses Coca-Cola, Fabletics, John Reed Fitness, KidsQuest Children’s Museum, Mercurys Coffee Co., MOD Pizza, Novasys, and Viome also showed their support of Bellevue children and contributed to the event.

Youth Council Co-Chairs, Avanya Kohli and Ava Chen led the way in coordinating this year’s 5k. Avanya, a Bellevue High School Student, shared, “I feel accomplished that all the hard work we put in for months and all the preparation behind the scenes finally came to life on the day of the event. Seeing the Bellevue LifeSpring Youth Council, volunteers, and participants come together to make this event successful really showed the meaning of community support.”

Ava shared, “It was great to see so many people come out to support Bellevue LifeSpring. We are thankful for all the volunteers, sponsors, and participants who made the 5k possible. It took a lot of work to put together the event, but it is a rewarding feeling to know that all of our efforts go toward helping Bellevue families.”

There are 3,952 students in the Bellevue School District who are experiencing food insecurity. To learn how you can help support these students this school year, visit www.BellevueLifeSpring.org.

Are you a local high school student, or do you know a high school student interested in joining the Bellevue LifeSpring Youth Council? Fill out the form on www.BellevueLifeSpring.org/Join, and Bellevue LifeSpring will be back in touch with the next steps!

