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## Pioneers Announce Dish It Up: Feeding Families Healthy Food

### ***Pioneers Encourage Local Residents Across the U.S. and Canada to Donate Healthy Food with Goal of Providing More Than One Million Meals***

DENVER--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Pioneers, the largest industry-related volunteer organization in the world, announced today the launch of Dish It Up: Feeding Families Healthy Food, a massive volunteer initiative spanning the U.S. and Canada with a goal of feeding a healthy meal to one million people who struggle to put food on the table. Dish It Up is part of Pioneers 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

Pioneers across North America will kick off ***Pioneers Dish It Up*** on September 11<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. National Day of Service and Remembrance. Numerous volunteer efforts focused on addressing hunger will run through September 25<sup>th</sup>. Pioneers is a network of more than 620,000 volunteers who are current or former employees of companies such as AT&T, Bell Aliant, CenturyLink, SaskTel, Verizon, FairPoint Communications, Frontier and Telcordia who volunteer more than 12 million hours each year in their local communities.

During this time, Pioneers volunteers will be collecting healthy, nutritious, non-perishable food donations, as well as transporting food to food banks, filling backpacks with healthy snacks or easy to prepare “weekend” food for children and serving food at local shelters or soup kitchens.

“The United States has 49 million people who do not have access to enough food, and in Canada over 800,000 individuals access food banks on a monthly basis,” said Carey Wirtzfeld, president of Pioneers. “We’ve been engaged in amazing volunteer efforts for 100 years and this year, as a tribute to our Centennial, we decided to address the issue of hunger in the US and Canada.”

With the support of partners such as Liberty Mutual and Feeding America, as well as local retailers, Pioneers have a goal of providing one million healthy meals to individuals across North America through a variety of community service activities. Volunteer efforts will occur in hundreds of cities across 45 states.

“The hunger issue isn’t going away,” said Doug Montgomery, Feeding America. “In 2010, food pantries and soup kitchens served more than 37 million Americans – this is an increase of 46% from 2006. Events like Pioneers Dish It Up are meeting a tremendous need, by not only focusing on filling food banks, but by raising awareness about the importance of bringing healthy food into our communities.”

Individuals or organizations are encouraged to donate healthy food to the drive by going to [www.pioneersvolunteer.org/centennial/DishItUp](http://www.pioneersvolunteer.org/centennial/DishItUp) for a list of food collection and drop-off sites in their community.

Examples of healthy food that Pioneers are collecting include:

- Whole wheat pastas
- Brown rice
- Canned fruit (packed in own juice)
- Canned vegetables
- Canned meats (tuna, salmon, ham, chicken or turkey)
- Canned or dry beans (such as black, kidney, pinto, navy, garbanzo)
- Peanut butter (plastic jars, please)

Pioneers are also accepting financial contributions for this project at [www.pioneersvolunteer.org/donations](http://www.pioneersvolunteer.org/donations). Each dollar can provide eight meals for people in need.

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## ABOUT PIONEERS

Founded in 1911 as the Telephone Pioneers of America, Pioneers has grown to be the largest industry-related volunteer organization in the world. A non-profit network of more than 620,000 volunteers, Pioneers is committed to effect immediate, tangible change in local communities in partnership with its sponsors such as AT&T, Bell Aliant, CenturyLink, SaskTel, Verizon Foundation, FairPoint Communications, Frontier and Telcordia, as well as through its non-sponsored New Outlook and Canadian Pioneers groups. Committed to serving communities in the United States, Canada and around the world, Pioneers is headquartered in Denver, Colorado. For more information visit [www.pioneersvolunteer.org](http://www.pioneersvolunteer.org) or call 1-800-976-1914.

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January 19, 2011

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