



NEWS RELEASE

Ten Young Leaders Tackling Food Insecurity Named Hormel Foods 2026 Food Heroes

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In its fifth year, the program recognizes student leaders working to build a more transparent, secure and sustainable food system

- **Collective Impact:** The 2026 10 Under 20 Food Heroes have distributed thousands of meals, expanded food access to hundreds of families, and mobilized thousands of volunteers.
- **Celebrating Young Leaders:** The Food Heroes will attend a ceremony held at the Hormel Foods headquarters in Austin, Minn., where they will meet with company executives and participate in a panel sharing their work contributing to a safer, more transparent and sustainable food system.
- **The 2026 Cohort:** The 2026 class of Food Heroes features students from across the U.S., with initiatives that include working towards food-access for those with allergies, sustainability work with fungi and addressing the growing need for food options in underserved communities.

AUSTIN, Minn., Aug. 11, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Hormel Foods Corporation (NYSE: HRL), a Fortune 500 global branded food company, today announced its fifth cohort of 10 Under 20 Food Heroes. The award recognizes 10 young leaders developing solutions to fight food insecurity.

Collectively, this year's Food Heroes have distributed thousands of meals, rescued tens of thousands of pounds of food, mobilized thousands of volunteers and built innovative programs that are expanding access to nutritious food, supporting underserved communities and driving change across the country.

Explore the inspiring stories of the 2026 Hormel Foods 10 Under 20 Food Heroes and learn more about the

program at 10under20foodheroes.com.

"As a global food company, the work being done by our Food Heroes aligns closely with our mission to nourish people and strengthen communities," said Henry Hsia, vice president of retail marketing at Hormel Foods. "This program is an investment in the future of our food system and the next generation of leaders who are improving it."

The Food Heroes will travel to the Hormel Foods global headquarters in Austin, Minn. where honorees will participate in an award ceremony and panel discussion about their work. To help foster continued growth, each recipient will receive a \$2,500 grant from the Hormel Foods Charitable Trust supporting their efforts to expand and continue to grow their leadership skills.

The 2026 cohort of 10 Under 20 Food Heroes includes:

Alex Cai, 17, Houston, Texas.

As President of The Food Lounge and one of its founders, Alex Cai helps to lead the organization's continued growth and impact in the fight against food insecurity. Since its founding in 2021, The Food Lounge has expanded to more than 10 chapters nationwide with over 500 active members, serving more than 83,000 hot meals, raising more than \$110,000 for hunger relief efforts, and reaching more than 800,000 individuals. Under Alex's leadership, the organization remains committed to empowering students through service, strengthening community partnerships, and creating meaningful opportunities to make a lasting difference in the lives of those facing hunger.

Amelia Cho, 17, McLean, Va.

Amelia Cho is the founder and executive director of Mindful Meals, a nonprofit organization that addresses the growing need for more nutritious food options in underserved communities. Mindful Meals works to expand access to fresh, nutritious food while promoting the connection between healthy living and stronger communities. Amelia's leadership and advocacy have helped advance the organization's mission through partnerships with local farmers, community organizations, and volunteers to increase nutrition awareness, support equitable food access, and inspire meaningful action toward a more food-secure future for all. Represented by Minkyu Choi at the award ceremony.

Gloria Chi, 14, Bloomington, Ind.

Fungi For Future was founded by Gloria Chi as an innovative sustainability initiative that transforms used coffee grounds from local cafés in Bloomington, Ind, into mushroom-growing substrate, creating fresh, locally grown food for communities in need while reducing waste. With an initial \$1,500 investment, she has repurposed more than 122 pounds of coffee grounds, equivalent to nearly 3,900 cups of coffee, advancing sustainable food production and responsible consumption. Gloria also amplifies climate solutions as the creator and host of Grow With Glo, a

podcast featured on WFHB Community Radio that reaches more than 15,000 listeners and highlights the work of environmental innovators and social entrepreneurs driving positive change.

Jack Ford & Ranvir Gill, both 18, Philadelphia, Pa.

Jack Ford and Ranvir Gill are executive team members of Food4Philly, a nonprofit created to combat food insecurity through student-led action. Through fundraising initiatives, volunteer service projects, and community partnerships, they have built a mission-driven organization dedicated to expanding food access and creating meaningful impact. The organization also launched the Food4Philly Impact Fund, a student-managed investment portfolio designed to support the organization's long-term growth and sustainability while advancing its commitment to fighting hunger. Represented by Anantvir Othie at the award ceremony.

Jared Saiontz, 19, Chappaqua, N.Y.

After recognizing that individuals with food allergies often lacked safe food options at local pantries, Jared founded Pack the Pantry to make food assistance more accessible and inclusive. Through his nonprofit, he developed allergen safety protocols, including multilingual educational materials identifying the top nine allergens, and has helped more than 630 food pantries adopt these practices. A passionate advocate for equity and inclusion, Jared continues to raise awareness and resources to ensure everyone has safe access to the food they need.

Jingam Park, 19, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Founded and led by Jingam Park, Voluntas Juvenium is committed to making community service accessible to students from all backgrounds while empowering the next generation of changemakers. Under his leadership, the organization has grown into a global network of more than 1,700 members across 17 countries, contributing over 20,000 volunteer hours to initiatives ranging from food banks to community outreach programs. Through Voluntas Juvenium, Jingam is helping cultivate leadership, empathy, and civic engagement among young people while creating meaningful impact in communities around the world.

Nael Lewis-Shakur, 15, Bel Air, Md.

As a leader on We Canceve's all-youth board, Nael has expanded the organization's efforts to provide nutritious food and support to vulnerable children. He spearheaded the largest Snack Attack drive in the program's history, mobilizing more than 120 volunteers to pack over 600 snack bags for children living in temporary shelters. He also enhanced We Canceve's Eggstra Special Easter initiative by ensuring more than 500 children received healthy food options alongside traditional holiday treats and educational materials. Through his leadership, Nael continues to promote nutrition, service, and community engagement while helping meet the needs of children and families facing hardship.

Prakhya Koya, 18, Washington, D.C.

Prakhya Koya founded Leap4u with the belief that no one should go hungry and no food should go to waste.

Leap4u has four programs: Zero Hunger, Zero Waste, Zero Poverty, and Mental Health all focused on providing food and transforming it into hope for communities, ensuring that every individual has access to a nutritious meal. To date, Prakhya has rescued over 30,000 pounds of food and provided more than 70,000 meals to people experiencing homelessness and poverty. Her work has also encouraged community engagement, accumulating over 2,000 volunteer hours.

Rohin Menon, 19, Plainfield, Ill.

What started as a family co-founded nonprofit, The Birthday Giving Program brings joy, dignity, and recognition to children, adults, seniors, and veterans facing adversity. Serving more than 150 nonprofit organizations across 41 states, Washington, D.C., and Sierra Leone, the program partners with homeless shelters, food pantries, churches, nursing homes, hospitals, and other community agencies to provide birthday celebration bags and gifts for individuals who might otherwise go uncelebrated. By filling a critical gap left by limited nonprofit budgets, The Birthday Giving Program ensures that thousands of people each year feel valued, remembered, and celebrated on their special day.

Shruti Shivakumar, 18, Edison, N.J.

After personally experiencing food insecurity, Shruti Shivakumar founded Nourish America, a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring every child has access not just to food, but to healthy, nutritious, and allergy-safe meals tailored to their needs. Through a growing nationwide network of partner organizations, the nonprofit addresses the lasting impacts of economic hardship, inflation, and food insecurity by expanding access to high-quality food for vulnerable families. Driven by a commitment to helping children and communities thrive, Nourish America focuses on creating sustainable solutions that deliver both immediate relief and long-term impact.

About Hormel Foods

Hormel Foods Corporation, based in Austin, Minnesota, is a global branded food company with over \$12 billion in annual revenue. Its brands include PLANTERS®, SKIPPY®, SPAM®, HORMEL® NATURAL CHOICE®, APPLEGATE®, WHOLLY®, HORMEL® BLACK LABEL®, COLUMBUS®, JENNIE-O® and more than 30 other beloved brands. The Company is a member of the S&P 500 Index and the S&P 500 Dividend Aristocrats, was named one of the best companies to work for by U.S. News & World Report and one of America's most responsible companies by Newsweek, was recognized by TIME magazine as one of the World's Best Companies and has received numerous other awards and accolades for its corporate responsibility and community service efforts. For more information, visit hormelfoods.com.

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