Jennifer Hood

Professor Michael Kimball

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Five Myths About Hunger

Robert Egger is the Founder and President of CForward, an advocacy organization and national network of people who work in, volunteer at, or donate to nonprofit organizations. He is also the Founder and President of two community kitchens that professionally recover fresh food to fuel a culinary arts job training program. Robert’s success in the nonprofit sector has earned him worldwide recognition for his humanitarian efforts. His article, “Five Myths About Hunger in America” published by the *Washington Post* on November 21, 2010, takes a hard look at the myths about who’s hungry in America. His experience and knowledge of hunger, sustainability, nonprofit political engagement, and social enterprise spans over 25 years while his ability to speak to many different types of people makes him a highly sought after speaker making him a credible source worth listening to. By raising awareness, we can ensure that neither food nor people go to waste.

Personally, I have never been faced with hunger in my own life but have had the opportunity to volunteer at local shelters over the past 30 years. I’ve seen the impact hunger has on our community. In his article, Robert writes, “Hunger is supposed to happen in other places” but the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports 17.4 million families are “food insecure”. This means during any given month, 15% of U.S. households are forced to miss meals or seek assistance in finding a way to feed their family because they are out of money and simply cannot afford to buy food. While this article may speak to those in a position to help by donating time or money to the cause, it also speaks to a larger audience of concerned citizens to find a solution to this growing problem. Using language that can be easily understood, Robert uses staggering statistics and verifiable facts to appeal to his audience.

With 42.4 million people in America receiving support, we are in dire need to find a way to keep us healthy and our economy striving which plays into the emotions of the reader. Malnourishment and wasted food coincide with how hunger affects our social and economic stability as a country. The costs associated with poor nutrition drags our country into debt. Hunger isn’t about food. It’s about jobs and wages.

By turning otherwise wasted produce into nutritionally sound meals, Robert has found a way to feed the hungry while providing jobs for the unemployed. He’s discovered how to empower at-risk men and women to develop meaningful skills while providing an essential service to their community. This is a true win-win situation for our citizens, economy, and country as a whole. By educating the reader, we are given a call to action to become part of the solution. It takes a community to not only fix a problem but to recognize that there is one to begin with. We are more apt to give back to our own communities by assisting those in need around us.

This article is full of incredible statistics and solid evidence that our county is in trouble. Close to 17 million children do not get enough to eat. Hungry children can’t learn and are more likely to drop out of school, which leads to difficulty in obtaining gainful employment. The opportunity to turn to crime is increased which costs taxpayers more than $40,000 a year, per inmate. Meanwhile, more than 9 million young adults are obese because of the lack of healthy food options. Diet-related diseases cause an additional strain on our economy, which leaves us vulnerable. The pool of candidates to choose from for our military is also shrinking because 27% percent of Americans between the ages of 17 and 24 weigh too much to enlist. Is this cause for alarm? Is our national security in jeopardy?

To see a malnourished African child on television breaks my heart but the reality is 1 in 6 Americans are hungry. This includes children, single moms, struggling families, and senior citizens. Hunger affects us all but with programs such as Feeding America and our own local food bank; we are able to give back to the people that live in our own communities. Whether it’s a donation of food, money, or volunteering our time, we can all make a difference.

Robert Egger is a man on a mission to spread the word about hunger in America. He has devoted his life to finding a solution while providing helpful skills to those that need it most. He has demonstrated that it’s not just about sustenance, it’s about helping people stay strong, vital, and engaged.