

# AGENCIES IN ACTION<sup>SM</sup>

## AGENCIES IN ACTION LAUNCHES WILD POSTING CAMPAIGN TO SPUR VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

### Familiar ad icons expropriated in call to action to support New York City Coalition Against Hunger

NEW YORK, NY - MARCH 2, 2009 -

The concept 'Got Milk?' takes on a whole new meaning in a series of wild postings that just went up on the streets around some of New York City's biggest ad agencies. The wild posting ads borrow the familiar typography, art direction and taglines of outdoor campaigns for such marketers as Apple, Nike and HSBC to drive home the message that many New Yorkers are still living with hunger, and that it's time to do something about it.

The turnarounds are simple but stark—for example, iPod's familiar silhouettes of dancing music lovers becomes outlines of homeless panhandlers with the headline iHungry, while Nike's Michael Jordan figure is flying through air, but not with a basketball in his hand but a plate, knife and fork and the headline, "Just feed them." Each layout is

accompanied by the call to action, "Let's put ad agencies to work for the hungry," along with the web site address [www.hungervolunteer.org](http://www.hungervolunteer.org) and the phone number for the New York City Coalition Against Hunger.

The effort is the work of **Agencies In Action**, a new non-profit organization designed to spur ad agencies in New York to devote the time and manpower of its staff to addressing social problems that continue to haunt New York.

This debut initiative, undertaken on behalf of the **NYCCAH**, is the first phase in what is intended to be a series of AIA-led volunteerism efforts, according to AIA Director Bill Oberlander. To kick off this campaign and celebrate the partnership of Agencies In Action and the NYC Coalition Against Hunger, AIA is hosting a reception on Thursday, March 12 at the New York offices of Cossette, the agency where Oberlander serves as Chief Creative Officer. The event takes place at 7:00 PM at 415 Madison Ave., Third Floor.

"Over one million New Yorkers are dealing with hunger every year, with not having enough food to eat in their homes," Oberlander explains. "We're asking agencies that commit to AIA

to organize a team of six staffers who will work three hours a month in their local soup kitchens. They'll assist in prepping meals, serving meals and cleaning up. If we can get twenty agencies to commit to doing this, we can cover at least one soup kitchen in the city every weekday of the month."

#### CURRENTLY, SIX NEW YORK AGENCIES HAVE ACCEPTED THE AIA CHALLENGE:

Arnold Worldwide, Cossette, DiMassimo Goldstein, Gotham, Kirshenbaum Bond & Partners and TBWA\Chiat\Day.

"Our parodying familiar ad imagery is a way to grab the attention of ad people and stop them in their tracks," Oberlander continues. "We want to attract attention in the tightly-knit New York ad community and drive volunteers to the NYCCAH website, where their technology can instantly direct them to closest soup kitchen in their neighborhoods." Oberlander is referring to the coalition's Hunger Map technology, which allows users to enter their current address and, with one click, find the location of the nearest soup kitchen or food pantry with the most immediate need for volunteer support.



AIA is working closely on the campaign with Joel Berg, Executive Director of the New York City Coalition Against Hunger. A longtime hunger activist, former member of the Clinton Administration and author of *All You Can Eat: How Hungry Is America?* (Seven Stories Press, 2008), Berg welcomes the support of AIA and its member agencies.

"We're looking for people to donate their skills and their time, not just

money or food," Berg says. "We want them to think more strategically about their volunteering—it's not about just doing public service ads. Our eventual goal is for the ad community to use their marketing savvy and their communications savvy to build increased public support for a broader governmental effort to end hunger."

The problem of hunger in America is pervasive and growing worse, Berg

points out. By his own statistics, over 36 million Americans can't afford enough food, 1.3 million of them in New York alone. The growth in the number of soup kitchens and food pantries in the US since the Reagan Era, when federal support for poor families was initially curtailed, has been steady and significant, he adds.

Berg believes, as do other hunger activists, that the only way to solve the hunger problem in America is by governmental action. "Fighting hunger one can of food at a time is good thing," he notes, "but it's not the solution."

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#### ABOUT AGENCIES IN ACTION:

AGENCIES IN ACTION ([www.adagenciesinaction.org](http://www.adagenciesinaction.org)) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to coalesce the New York City ad community around the cause of alleviating poverty in all its different manifestations. It's comprised of agencies and individuals who know that poverty can be fought in our local neighborhood through acts of volunteerism and compassion both large and small.