

# Boilers in Action

**Ace Campus Food Pantry** (200 N Russel St, Lafayette, Indiana 47901)

## Laundry Mix! Pancake Mix! & Menstrual Kits! Oh My!

Lara Santiago-Sacarello: Student Director, Boilers In Action, Roger C. Stewart Leadership and Professional Development Department



Roger C. Stewart Leadership and Professional Development Department

### MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OF SERVICE

Martin Luther King Jr day of service aims to commemorate King's enduring legacy while fostering an ongoing commitment to building a more equitable society. Specifically on Purdue's campus it gives students a chance to participate in projects that contributes to either places on campus or in the Greater Lafayette Area. This past MLK day Purdue's Boilers in Action put on many projects in collaboration with Ace Food Pantry on campus, LTHC Homeless Services, and Food Finders in Lafayette. The event began with videos of the Lunch counter protests that had happen with the goal of desegregating southern restaurants. The volunteers were then led in discussion by their site leaders before being broken off into groups to complete their projects. At the conclusion of the projects site leaders led the volunteers in discussion about their projects, the purpose, and how everyone was left feeling after the day.



### PANCAKE MIX

Food injustice manifests in various forms, often stemming from socioeconomic disparities and unequal access to resources. Making pancake mix might not seem connected, but it is. When volunteers mix flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt, they're not just making pancakes—they're helping address food inequality. By putting the mix in containers and labeling them carefully, they're providing a solution for people who might not have much time to cook or struggle to afford ingredients. Talking about how often we eat breakfast and why pre-made mixes are helpful can help us understand why making pancake mix is about more than just breakfast—it's about making sure everyone has equal access to good food.



### PROJECTS AND THEIR IMPACT

With collaboration of Ace Food Pantry three projects were completed, pancake mix, laundry mix, and menstrual kits. In order to be intentional with the mixes and kits we put together we asked what the pantry would like/ needed to have done. This is where the three projects came from.

### LAUNDRY MIX

Crafting laundry detergent may not seem like much, but it can hold a significant importance in a person's sense of well-being by ensuring clean clothes. When volunteers mix ingredients like baking soda, super soda, borax, and Zote laundry flakes, they're creating a product that not only aids in maintaining cleanliness but also plays a role in how people feel about themselves. Clean clothes are vital because they contribute to our overall well-being and hygiene. After carefully portioning the mixture into jars and labeling them, volunteers delved into discussions about the significance of clean clothes for both physical and mental health, how detergent aids in personal hygiene, and their personal experiences with laundry. Making laundry detergent extends beyond the mere act itself—it's about recognizing its impact on people's lives and ensuring everyone has access to basic necessities.

### MENSTRUAL KITS

The making of the menstrual kits were to help to provide ACE clients with free menstrual products. These kits, provided free of charge, ensure individuals facing financial constraints have the necessary supplies for their menstrual cycles, promoting dignity and hygiene. With each kit containing enough products to cover a cycle, clients can obtain them monthly from the pantry. By offering a mix of tampons, pads, or a combination of both, the pantry caters to individual preferences and needs. During and after the kit assembly the volunteers engaged in discussions emphasizing the importance of menstrual supplies in feminine hygiene and the adverse effects of inadequate access, including discomfort and compromised hygiene. Furthermore, volunteers address the social stigma surrounding menstruation and brainstorm strategies to destigmatize the topic, fostering a more supportive and inclusive environment for all menstruators.

### REFLECTION

The Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service at Purdue University serves as a powerful tribute to King's enduring legacy, while also nurturing an ongoing commitment to constructing a more equitable society. This year's observance on campus particularly focused on the principles of mutual aid and food justice. Through thought-provoking documentary videos, we delved into the historic lunch-counter protests, highlighting the courageous actions of activists striving to desegregate Southern restaurants. These videos sparked meaningful discussions aimed at deepening our understanding of the ongoing struggle for social justice. Recognizing the prevalence of food and financial insecurities among college students, our collaboration with the ACE Food Pantry was essential. Together, volunteers embarked on various projects, including the creation of essential items such as pancake mixes, laundry mixes, and menstrual kits. These crafted mixes and kits now stand as tangible symbols of our dedication to addressing immediate needs within our community. The pancake mixes symbolize our commitment to combating food inequality, ensuring everyone has access to nutritious meals. Similarly, the laundry mixes represent our belief in the importance of maintaining cleanliness and personal hygiene, regardless of one's financial situation. Lastly, the menstrual kits embody our determination to eradicate period poverty and promote dignity for all menstruators. Through these initiatives, we strive to foster a community rooted in compassion, solidarity, and equality.

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