



For Immediate Release  
September 18, 2007

Karla Newendorp  
Christie Communications  
Tel.: (805) 962-1347  
[knewendorp@christiecomm.com](mailto:knewendorp@christiecomm.com)

Mary Morton  
Nourish America™ - Vitamin Relief USA  
Tel.: (805) 715-2693 or (805) 794-3388  
[mary@vitaminrelief.org](mailto:mary@vitaminrelief.org)

## Vitamin Relief USA, an Award-Winning National Charity, Expands Into New Name: 'Nourish America™'

### *Non-Profit Adds Healthy Beverages and Foods to Free Supplement Programs*

(Ojai, CA) - **Vitamin Relief USA**, a 501 (c) 3 organization that provides daily multivitamins to more than 26,000 needy children and their families across the United States, is pleased to announce the launch of **Nourish America™**, a new umbrella organization to expand Vitamin Relief USA's humanitarian services. Nourish America™ will officially debut at this year's Natural Products Expo East ( [www.expoeast.com](http://www.expoeast.com) ), scheduled for September 26-29 in Baltimore, MD, and at the Council for Responsible Nutrition's ( [www.crnusa.org](http://www.crnusa.org) ) Annual Symposium on Dietary Supplements, October 3-6 in Scottsdale, AZ.



Students at the Isla Vista Youth Project in California benefit from Nourish America's daily high-quality multi-vitamin/minerals.

According to the organization's leadership team, Nourish America™ will broaden the existing supplement programs of Vitamin Relief USA to include natural, functional and organic foods, beverage products and a variety of health education services. These educational programs will engage expert nutritionists and leaders in the health and wellness sectors to work directly within communities by providing informational resources, training toolkits, and nutrition education.

"Nourish America™ extends our reach and increases our ability to ensure that America's children, families, seniors and those at risk for malnutrition receive the daily essential nutrition they need — along with the education that helps empower them to care for themselves," said Michael Morton, Ph.D., Executive Director of Nourish America™. "This is an exciting time in our history, and we are thrilled by the expanding support we are receiving from new and old partners and suppliers. Together, we will continue to improve lives, everyday, across America."

During the past several decades, scientists have put substantial effort into developing and revising the Recommended Dietary Allowances, providing clear guidelines for maintaining health and wellbeing through proper nutrition. Yet, national nutritional surveys consistently reveal that a large percentage of the American population falls short of recommended intakes of numerous vitamins and minerals. In particular, studies by the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicate that diets of most children need substantial improvement to meet the dietary recommendations. In particular, poor, needy and homeless children are not getting all the essential nutrients they need for optimal development. As a result, they are at increased risk of impaired brain function, low immunity, stunted growth, behavioral disorders —and they are denied the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.

"It is now widely accepted that dietary supplementation and nutrient-dense foods offer a great number of important benefits, particularly to low-income families and individuals in the U.S. Participants receiving free daily supplements and other nutritional products through our programs have reported increased energy and physical wellbeing; improved immunity to seasonal illnesses; decreased incidence of depression and aggression; and better cognitive performance, resulting in greater success at school and at work," Dr. Morton commented.

“The need for Nourish America™ has never been more acute than it is right now,” stated Connie Whitaker, the organization’s President. “With one in five American children nutritionally at risk, it is critical that we take the steps necessary to ensure that all our children grow up well nourished and healthy. Improving the nutritional status in low-income children will create healthier and less dependent adults, reducing pressures on schools, correctional facilities, social welfare agencies and our health care system. This is a critical time for us to join together to support the health, wellbeing and future of our children, families and communities.”

The management team, support staff and volunteers behind Nourish America™ credit their success to the collaborative effort they foster between concerned citizens, businesses nationwide, natural product manufacturers, government agencies and various funding organizations. Distribution of millions of daily vitamins is accomplished every year at more than 300 organizations and agencies in 33 states that serve at-risk children, including public school districts, Head Start programs, churches, medical clinics, homeless shelters, hospital outreach programs, public health departments and countless other community-based and faith-based organizations.

“It is through this donation of valuable staff time at our distribution sites, in addition to the generosity of our sponsors and supporters such as Tishcon Corp, Natural Alternatives International, Healthy Directions, Wyeth Consumer Healthcare, SoLo GI Nutrition and NOW Foods that we are able to provide daily nutritional support for thousands of our nation’s most vulnerable,” said Dr. Morton.

The success of the organization’s programs and the tangible results produced are evident in programs throughout America. For example, in the counties of Sunflower and Bolivar, MS, more than 6 million children’s chewables were distributed in the past year to schools there. Follow-up with parents whose children received Vitamin Relief USA’s vitamins for six months showed dramatic results. Among the findings: 80 percent of surveyed parents reported an increase in their children’s energy while 78 percent noted better appetite. Over 50 percent said their children demonstrated improvements in physical activity, sleep and well-being. And more than 40 percent reported higher self-esteem, a more positive attitude, and better grades and social behavior.

Vera Sublet of Ruleville, the mother of an energetic first grader, says she has seen a remarkable transformation, not only in her child, but in their home life as well. “My son Ricardo had shown signs of hyperactivity and difficulty focusing on school,” she said. “After taking the vitamin tablets, his behavior has changed tremendously, and he is now well behaved and focused. His self-esteem is really high, particularly since he became an honor student. Our life together now is so much less stressful and happier.”

### **About Nourish America™**

Nourish America™ is the expanded non-profit organization of Vitamin Relief USA. Vitamin Relief USA, under the umbrella of Nourish America™, has received the highest rating two years in a row from Charity Navigator, the nation’s leading charity watchdog organization, ranking Vitamin Relief USA in the top 14% of 5,000 of America’s best-known charities. Independent audits show that 93% of donated funds go directly to Vitamin Relief USA programs. Nourish America™ is a dba of Vitamin Relief USA, a tax-exempt, non-profit organization committed to improving the health status of children, seniors and adults at risk for malnutrition through vitamin supplementation, health education, and donations of nutritional foods. To support Nourish America™ - Vitamin Relief USA, or for further information, please call 866-487-1484 or visit the website at [www.vitaminrelief.org](http://www.vitaminrelief.org). Below please find a media **backgrounder** detailing specific information about Nourish America™.



Kindergartner from Isla Vista Youth Project proudly displays his own bottle of vitamins provided by Nourish America.  
Photo courtesy of Nourish America.

###

## **Media Backgrounder**

### **For media interviews please contact:**

Mary Morton  
Nourish America™ - Vitamin Relief USA  
P.O. Box 567  
Ojai, CA 93024-0567

(805) 715-2693– voice  
(805) 715-9701 – fax

[www.vitaminrelief.org](http://www.vitaminrelief.org)  
[mary@vitaminrelief.org](mailto:mary@vitaminrelief.org)

### **Nourish America™ Vision:**

From metropolitan cities to rural country settings, children, families, seniors, and all citizens at risk of malnutrition are making dramatic improvements in health, school performance, behavior and self-esteem through Nourish America's™ largest project, a vitamin distribution program called Vitamin Relief USA™. The vision behind these improvements is the eradication of nutritional deficiencies in the United States through multivitamin and mineral supplementation programs. With the expansion of Vitamin Relief USA™ into Nourish America™, it will now provide malnourished people with a variety of nutritional products and educational programs to enhance their health and well-being.

### **Nourish America™ Mission and Goals:**

To provide nourishment to those in need

1. Develop programs and collaborations to provide nourishment to those at risk of nutritional deficiencies.
2. Support educational initiatives that promote the health of individuals and families.
3. Advance research on the efficacy of micronutrient supplementation for those at risk for malnutrition.

### **How the Programs Work:**

Nourish America's™ products are shipped to collaborative distribution sites who distribute nutritional supplements and healthy products to their clients.

Nourish America™ maintains a close relationship with each individual distribution site to assure success of the program. All sites also provide periodic updates on exactly how many products have been distributed. Also, sites participate in their "Annual Site Survey" that gathers important information to gauge the success and measure specific outcomes of the program.

### **An Idea That Is Growing:**

The word is out: Almost daily, **Nourish America's™** phones ring with calls from interested agencies and organizations eager to become a collaborative distribution site. Through national and local media coverage in newspapers, magazines, television and radio, as well as word of mouth from our sites to other agencies, Nourish America's™ largest project, *Vitamin Relief USA™*, is known broadly as a viable, economical and effective intervention in the continuum of care for those at risk, and Nourish America's™ other projects will only strengthen that care.

## Vitamin Relief USA™ Awards:

“Four Star” rating (the highest available) two years in a row for its financial health from Charity Navigator, America’s leading charity evaluator. This ranks Vitamin Relief USA in the top 14% of the thousands of non-profits Charity Navigator has rated.

The first-ever “Impact Award” by the California Association of Non-profits (CAN)

The “Celebrating Excellence Award” from the Campaign for Better Health and Citizens for Health

The first “Celebrating Seniors Award” from Senior Friendly Communities of America

The “Hero Award” from the Dietary Supplement Education Alliance

Nourish America’s™ success is due to the collaborative spirit of our stakeholders. The Vitamin Relief USA™ programs of Nourish America™ would not be feasible without the enthusiastic and gracious support of individuals and sponsors who share a similar objective concerning the eradication of malnutrition in the United States.

## How Multivitamins Can Help

Until 20 or 30 years ago, the goal of dietary improvement was to ensure or optimize normal nutrition (i.e. prevent nutrient inadequacies), and that remains a key purpose of dietary guidelines and nutrient recommendations. However, beginning in the late 1970s and continuing throughout the 1980s, a series of major reports began to emphasize not only “health promotion” but also “disease prevention.” USDA studies have found that 35.1 million Americans, 12.4 million of which are children, live in households considered “food insecure.” The study, conducted in 2005, concluded that this represents 16.9 percent of all U.S. children. “Food insecurity” is described as “a lack of access to enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times due to lack of financial resources”.

Here’s a sample of what Nourish America™ has learned:

- Rickets is 100 percent preventable, but over the past decade, this vitamin D deficiency disease, has increased threefold. If left untreated, it can cause severe health problems, including seizures, fractures, and skeletal deformities. African-Americans are particularly susceptible.
- Poor nutrition causes anemia, growth and development problems in children and exacerbates medical problems in adults.
- Multivitamins can slow the progression of HIV.
- Taking a calcium supplement and multivitamin every day helps prevent bone in children with asthma.
- Approximately 50 percent of children have below-normal intake of vitamin B6, vitamin A, calcium, iron and zinc. These deficiencies can lead to increased risk for infection, illness and complications from minor illness.
- Deficiencies of the B vitamins can lead to depression, lack of coordination, and poor mental acuity.
- Vitamin and mineral deficiencies place children at increased risk of stunted growth.

These points represent just a sampling of the multitude of research showing that nutritional supplements and nutrient-dense food enhance the health, strength and quality of life of needy children.

“Vitamins and other safe, natural products...have and should play an important role in improving America’s health, nutrition and wellness.”

Senators Orrin Hatch and Tom Harkin.