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City of Akron Receives \$175,000 from America's Beverage Companies & U.S. Conference of Mayors as First Place Award for Mobile Food Market

Akron, Ohio, Jan. 23, 2025 — Over the weekend, American Beverage, the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America (ABFHA) and the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) [announced](#) the nine winning cities of the 2025 Childhood Obesity Prevention & Environmental Health & Sustainability Awards. Akron was the First-Place award winner in the Medium City category. Watch the award video [here](#).

Akron was awarded \$175,000 for a mobile market initiative which will bring fresh and healthy food directly to food desert communities, addressing critical challenges like obesity, diabetes and reduced academic performance caused by limited access to nutritious foods. Inspired by the successful Mahoning Valley Mobile Market model, Akron's 28-foot vehicle will offer a real grocery store experience that gives residents the agency to purchase fresh produce, meats, dairy and shelf-stable goods in their own neighborhood at affordable prices, accepting SNAP and providing grocery vouchers.

With these grant funds, the city intends to supply start-up funding for the newly formed nonprofit, Summit Fresh Mobile Market. In addition to other year-one costs, funds will allow for the purchase of a mobile market vehicle from another mobile market organization in the Mahoning Valley. Local partners of this effort include Church of Our Saviour, Open M, Crown Point Ecology Center, and United Disability Services. Plans include a launch this summer.

“Many neighborhoods in Akron struggle with limited access to healthy food, negatively affecting academic performance, mental health, and contributing to higher obesity rates,” said **Akron Mayor Shammus Malik**. “To combat this, we have partnered with a community-led effort: Summit Fresh Mobile Market, to bring fresh, healthy foods directly to those in need. We’re excited by the future of this program and the impact it can have on our residents in food deserts. I think this award shows the immense value in engaging with national organizations including the U.S. Conference of Mayors in order to provide new opportunities to our residents.”

“As a community, when we hear of an issue, we pull together to address it, and that’s what is happening here,” said **Ebony Yeboah-Amankwah, Executive Director of Summit Fresh Mobile Market**. “We have learned that there are pockets that do not have reasonable access to fresh, healthy, affordable foods and that is creating adverse impacts to the health of our neighbors in these communities. Thus, true to form like many other initiatives in Akron, community leaders have come together with help and support from the City to address this important issue.”

“Mayors know their cities best. That’s why America’s beverage companies are proud to partner with the U.S. Conference of Mayors to help drive community-based solutions that directly address today’s most pressing challenges,” said **Kevin Keane, president and CEO of American Beverage and president of the ABFHA board of directors**. “We congratulate the winning mayors and their cities for their outstanding efforts to improve the communities we call home. We look forward to building on our shared commitment to advancing health and sustainability nationwide.”

The announcement took place during the 93rd Winter Meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, where mayors from across the nation gathered to celebrate their peers’ dedication to creating vibrant, healthy and sustainable cities.

“This unprecedented partnership between ABA and The Conference is an

exemplar of impactful and transformative corporate citizenship,” **said USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran.** “Since 2012, we’ve successfully invested millions of dollars in improving the physical, social and environmental health of children and families in communities across the country – providing much needed support to an increasingly overburdened but critical safety net, when and where cities need it most. This is the textbook definition of effective public-private partnership.”

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