

COMMUNITY KITCHENS



a place at the table for everyone

Reflections 2020-2023





My husband and I founded Community Kitchens in March 2020. As long-time residents and small business owners in Oakland, the project began as a way to help care for the community during the COVID pandemic by paying struggling restaurants to prepare meals for unhoused community members. We donated the first meals, but with community support our organization was soon supporting a network of fifty restaurants and providing meals to ten grassroots organizations who distributed them throughout the community.

Since 2020, Community Kitchens has **stayed true to our mission, bringing restaurants and community groups together to help feed those in need.** As we shift from pandemic response into a permanent food justice organization, we have grown exponentially and developed new tools in the fight against hunger and homelessness. Today, we supplement restaurant meals with meals produced in our own kitchen. We are delivering more meals to our unhoused residents with our CK Mobile Oasis Bus. Our kitchen is a workforce development tool, the CK Learning Kitchen, where young people from marginalized communities can receive culinary arts training. Our new partnership with the Alameda County Community Food Bank has opened the door to grocery distribution opportunities. **Our future growth will continue to uplift our community by focusing on what is common to all of us: the need for food, shelter, dignity and connection.**

Thank you for joining us at the table.

Maria Alderete
Co-Founder and Executive Director, Community Kitchens

Community Kitchens' Free Meal Program

Accessible Meals, Made with Dignity



Since our founding, our meal program continues to be the centerpiece of our programs. Our food justice approach focuses on equal dignity and improved access. We found a critical gap in access and funding for food programs feeding our unhoused. We hope that our warm meals nourish and uplift the spirits of our community members forced to live on the streets and the time saved by our direct distributions enables them to focus on improving their lives.

Redefining Foodways with Dignity

- “Meals with Dignity” - We serve the same meals we serve our customers
- We serve meals that are nutritious, not only for the body, but also the soul
- We provide menus that are tailored to cultural preferences
- We rotate meals regularly and provide client choice

**Our unhoused
spend 3-5
hours a day
accessing food**

Pioneering Accessible Distribution

- We meet our unhoused where they are and serve meals directly at encampments
- We stock Town Fridges in food deserts
- The time saved by these efforts allow our unhoused to focus on improving their lives

Community Kitchens' Restaurant Support Program

Supporting Small Businesses & Local Jobs



*Left: Quickly's team in Little Saigon, preparing Banh Mi sandwiches for distribution
Right: Tacos Sinaloa team, preparing burritos for distribution*

Restaurants anchor retail districts and neighborhoods, providing places for neighbors to come together. They represent and give value to the character of our community. And, when restaurants die, neighborhoods and a sense of community often diminish. Anyone who has lived in Oakland long enough has witnessed the power of restaurants to transform neighborhoods and knows that we have come too far and worked too hard as a community to return to the days of shuttered storefronts, dark streets and high-crime. At Luka's we saw first-hand how restaurants can anchor and transform a community from a dead zone into a destination.

During the pandemic we prioritized immigrant owned restaurants that were not able to access PPP loans or pivot to online sales. Today, we continue to provide critical revenue to support businesses struggling from the pandemic's slow recovery. **Our equity focused approach prioritizes restaurants that are BIPOC owned, in underserved neighborhoods and/or in their first year of business.**

50+ Restaurant meal partners

150 Local jobs saved

88% of Businesses supported are BIPOC or woman-owned

Partnering with Community-Based Organizations

Our “Meal Plus” Model



Candice Elder, Executive Director of The East Oakland Collective and Community Kitchens’ Board Member serving our meals to unhoused residents.

A Stronger Community Model

Since our founding, we have partnered with local Community-Based Organizations across Oakland to serve our unhoused community directly where they live. Our model uplifts our nonprofit partners by providing stable meal schedules so they can focus on their core mission.

Our “Meal Plus” Model means our partners serve our meals with other supplies and services, including CalFresh and Medi-Cal enrollment, healthcare, housing and job services, and essential supplies. By working together, we are able to provide more holistic support for our unhoused community members.

Decreasing Marginalization and Increasing Connection

Our quality meals build trust and are a bridge to providing other services. Our meal program promotes community connection rather than increasing marginalization.

12+ Community Group Partnerships:

- Berkeley Free Clinic**
- The East Oakland Collective**
- Homies Empowerment**
- Roots Clinic**
- BOSS Bay Area**
- People’s Programs**
- Serenity House**
- Punks with Lunch**
- East Oakland Burrito Roll**
- North Oakland Mutual Aid**
- Trybe**
- Kerry’s Kids**
- East Bay Head Start**
- Beyond Emancipation**

A Sustainable Model - Dining for Justice



Left: Adiam Tsegaye of Mela Bistro Modern Ethiopian Restaurant

Right: Ricardo and Marisol Montero of Rico Rico Taco

In February 2022 we launched Dining for Justice, an innovative community financing initiative to help finance our free and accessible meal program. Our proprietary restaurant surcharge provides \$250,000 annually for accessible meal production. This program provides reliable funding every month, which is critical due to the instability of public funding. It's also a way for restaurants to fund meal programs to uplift BIPOC and immigrant owned restaurants.

List of participating restaurants:

A Cote	Joodooboo	Ratto's
Aburaya	Kingston11	Rico Rico Taco
Agave	Left Bank Jack	Rico Rico Vegano
alaMar	London	Saucy Oakland
Alma	Lena's Soul Food	Sequoia Diner
Calabash	Lion Dance Cafe	Sobre Mesa
BHK	Low Bar	Tacos Oscar
Calavera	Luka's Taproom & Lounge	Tay Ho
Chop Bar	Mela Bistro	Two Pitchers
Comal	Millennium	Brewing
Communité Table	Petit Cafe	Wahpepah's
Everett & Jones	The Pleasure	Kitchen
BBQ	Principle Dining	Willie's Kitchen
Friends & Family	Events	Xingones at Fort
Home of Chicken & Waffles	Ramen Shop	Green

“

This is such an easy way to give back to your community by asking your guests to give a very small amount of money to help feed those in need. Our guests have overwhelmingly supported the 1% charge on their bill and have let us know that they are glad to see we are part of the solution for a very big issue in the Oakland Community.

— Daphne Knowles,
Owner, A Cote

Cooking with Our Whole Community



In May 2022 we launched our CK Home Chef program, a way for volunteers to turn their home kitchens into community kitchens. We train our volunteers on safe food handling and large meal production, share recipes from our restaurant chef network and provide packaging and labeling materials. We also partner with Mandela Partners to support BIPOC Bay Area farmers by providing fresh produce to our volunteers for meal preparation. Our volunteer chefs purchase ingredients, prepare and package home-cooked meals and stock Town Fridges.

Our CK Home Chef program brings the whole family together to help create delicious meals. **Our Home Chefs share family recipes, our CK Little Helpers measure ingredients, and the whole family is connected to ensure treasured family recipes are shared with our unhoused.**

100+ Volunteer Home Chefs

12,000+ home-cooked meals served in the first year

8 Town Fridges stocked throughout Oakland

CK Mobile Oasis

Bringing Meals and Water to Oakland Food Deserts



In August 2022 we launched our CK Mobile Oasis bus, stocking Town Fridges with restaurant meals funded by Measure HH and the City of Oakland Reducing Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Community Grants Program.

In July 2023 we started using our CK Mobile Oasis delivering hot meals, water and socks directly to encampments. Our outreach team, Christian and Kenai, are out in the streets four days a week. We are currently providing 500 meals each week by Chef Kendall from our commercial kitchen to East and West Oakland encampments. As a new Alameda County Community Food Bank agency partner, Chef Kendall is now able to source free produce and grains to turn into delicious prepared meals in the CK Kitchen for our encampment meal program and we hope to soon be delivering groceries, too.

In true Oakland style, our CK Mobile Oasis is also a mobile DJ platform, so when folks hear us coming, they know a hot meal is on the way.

Bus sponsors:

Block

Kaiser Permanente

Oakland Athletics

Oakland Roots

Uptown Community Benefit District

Oakland Rotary

Sock sponsors:

Bombas

Meal/Water sponsors:

SSB Grant

Wells Fargo

Kaiser Permanente

Connected with the Community We Serve

A National Voice for the Unhoused

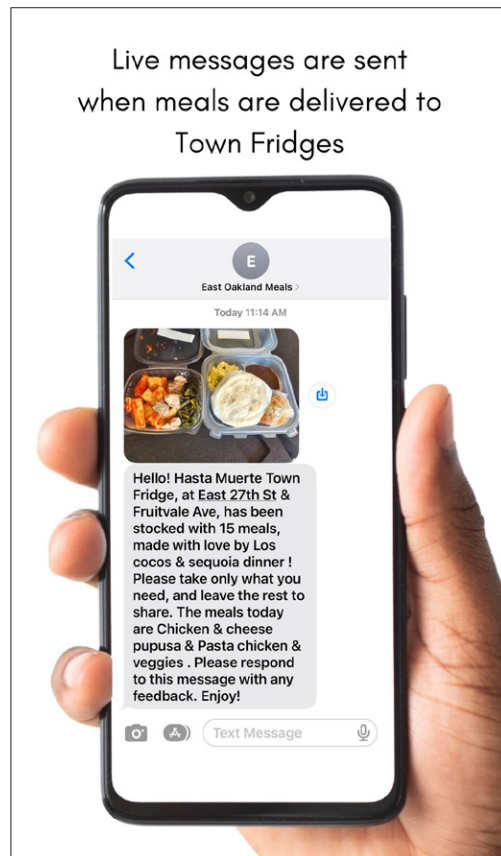
Our connection with our community helps us lead advocacy for the underrepresented. In July 2022 we hosted White House listening session in partnership with BOSS Bay Area to give our unhoused and residents living in transitional housing a national voice during the 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health.

Legislation in Action

In September 2022 we worked with Alameda County Social Services on a county sponsored legislative proposal to bring state funding for meal programs for our unhoused. We now have a bill! Our People's Plate Proposal, aka AB922, is sponsored by Assembly member Buffy Wicks and if passed will bring \$6 million in state funding over four years to the Bay Area to feed our unhoused partnering with housing outreach organizations.

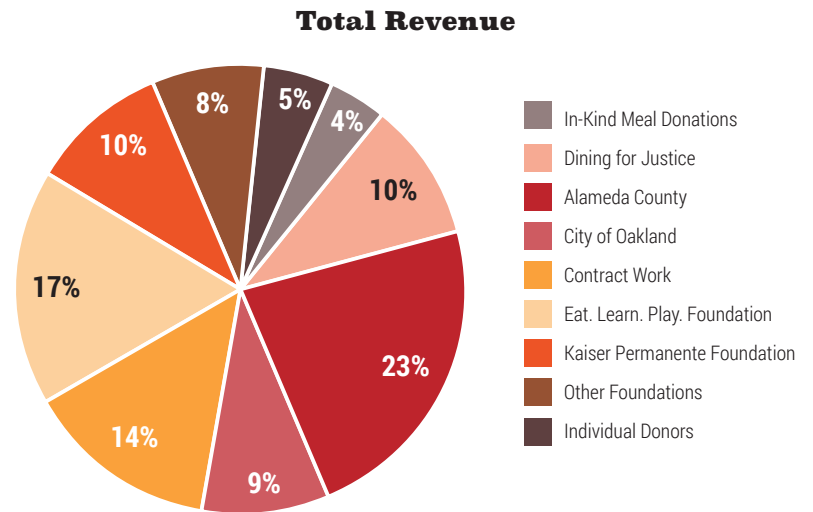
Our Platform for Direct Connection

In February 2023 we launched our CK Text Platform, a two-way text communication tool to alert our community when and where meals are available and give them a channel for giving us feedback on our program and their needs. We are grateful for the community engagement so we can continue to learn, grow and create programs that best serve our community.



Foundation for Growth.

In-Kind Meal Donations	\$165,450
Dining for Justice	\$397,850
Alameda County	\$915,833
City of Oakland	\$345,000
Contract Work	\$538,242
Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation	\$693,387
Kaiser Permanente	\$400,000
Other Foundations	\$324,591
Individual Donors	\$196,807
Total	3,977,160



Board Members

Maria Alderete

Co-Founder and Executive Director

Richard Mitchell

Board Chair and Co-Founder
Former Restaurant Owner - Luka's Taproom & Lounge

Tori Decker

Treasurer of the Board
Operations Director at Uptown Downtown Oakland CBDs

Candice Elder

Secretary of the Board
Founder and Executive Director of The East Oakland Collective

Adiam Tsegaye

Restaurant Owner – Mela Bistro Modern Ethiopian

Marisa Raya

Formerly with the City of Oakland Senior Analyst, Special Projects,
Economic & Workforce Development

Nigel Jones

Restaurant Owner - Kingston11 & Calabash

Abel Guillén

Deputy Superintendent, California Department of Education
Former District 2 Oakland City Councilmember

Chris Pastena

Former Restaurant Owner - Chop Bar, Calavera, Tribune Tavern &
Lungomare

Dina Older Aguilar

Vice President, Cornerstone Research Inc

Government Support

Measure HH and the City of Oakland Reducing Consumption of
Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Community Grants Program
City of Oakland Mid-Cycle Budget Community Grant
Alameda County Emergency Food Vendor Program
ARPA Grant – Dave Brown
ARPA Grant – Keith Carson
ARPA Grant – Nate Miley

Foundation & Corporate Support

Kaiser Permanente
Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation
Sunlight Giving
Wells Fargo
Kapor Center
Block
Main Street Launch
PG&E
Bayer
Clorox
Oaklandish
Oakland Athletics
Oakland Fund for Public Innovation
Oakland Rotary
Oakland Parks & Recreation Foundation
Oakland Roots
Port of Oakland
World Central Kitchen
Visit Oakland
Uptown Community Benefit District

Join us at the Table.



Food insecurity is a growing public health issue in our community.

Community Kitchens works in areas in Oakland where half the households struggle to get enough food to eat every day, and one in five live below the federal poverty line. An onslaught of post-pandemic evictions recently hit Alameda County and will push more people out onto the streets. We have seen the devastating impacts of hunger and homelessness on our community:

- Causes serious health issues
- Reduces life expectancy
- Makes it more difficult for a child to learn and grow
- Leads to stressful decisions like choosing between food, rent, bills, and transportation

Community Kitchens is positioned to make a real impact in reducing hunger and homelessness in our community. Our food hub, street meal outreach, mobile grocery distribution, pediatric pantry initiative and culinary workforce development programs help stop the cycle of intergenerational poverty in a sustainable and innovative way.

JOIN US AT THE TABLE. Together, we can make a difference for so many low-income residents of Oakland.

Average Life Expectancy

77 years United States

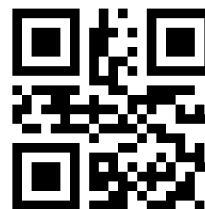
60 years chronic food insecurity

50 years chronic homelessness



CONTACT US

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Community Kitchens is a 501(c)3 organization registered in the state of California. Tax ID 85-1244770



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