The kindness of the volunteer that brought the wonderful food our chefs made, and the generosity of spirit in which it was offered made a HUGE difference... every time they came bearing bags of food, it was like a beacon of light and hope coming up the stairs—with a smile!

Brigitte, Ceres Client

What truly matters

A moving college application essay from a Teen Leader

by Alexis Weiss

Over the last nine months, I have volunteered over 42 hours at Ceres Community Project — an organization dedicated to preparing medically tailored meals for people facing serious illnesses such as heart disease or cancer. My hours in the kitchen, along with other youth volunteers, have taught me to make healthy, homegrown meals, package them with care, and send them off with love.

Having lived with this challenge, I thought I knew how others felt until we received a card from a client. She thanked the Ceres volunteers for everything we do and even more importantly were her words that said we saved her life because, without us, she would’ve been incredibly alone. Volunteer at Ceres helped me realize how important community is and that we all need to be cared for sometimes. I feel really lucky to be such a beautiful bald woman and fight cancer on my own terms.

The last time I saw my mom was just before she went into hospice care. I watched her life go from vibrant to vulnerable in just a matter of weeks. She never once let us see that side of her. Cancer is a family disease that significantly impacts everyone, with such grace and strength. I know she put on a brave face for her daughters, but somehow, even on the days she was feeling her worst and the most hopeless, I never once let on that side of her. I watched her life fall out; I felt her hugs get tighter, but her bones get weaker; I watched my mother fight for her life. I never understood how she managed to be such a beautiful, kind woman and fight cancer with such grace. I know she put on a brave face for her daughters, but, somehow, even on the days she was feeling her worst and the most hopeless, I never once let on that side of her. Cancer is a family disease that significantly impacts everyone, and for those without the support that my family was fortunate to receive, it’s challenging to get through.

Join the Kale Club!

From now until March 24, we’re looking for 30 more people to join! Through our monthly donor club, you can nourish our clients and empower youth volunteers starting at just $5 per month.

For more info, visit Ceresproject.org/KaleClub

Above: Teens Chefs and staff in front of our new kitchen in Novato.

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Cathryn Couch, Founder and CEO, said, “We are so thrilled to be moving into this new kitchen in Novato that will give our team full access, seven days a week. This means we’ll be able to add a fourth shift for youth volunteers, giving 30% more youth a chance to be involved. The kitchen will also enable Ceres to provide up to 50,000 more meals a year to community members in need.”

Since the start of our Marin County program in 2010, we have operated from shared commercial kitchen spaces with constrained hours, storage, and equipment; because of this, we’ve had limitations on our production capacity and youth engagement. The new kitchen had long been used by youth volunteers starting at just $5 per month. 

Once the team gets settled, we will gradually scale up meal production, allowing us to support more clients and their families, including in underserved areas like West Marin. The kitchen, with its ample refrigeration, will also help relieve constraints at our Santa Rosa and Sebastopol sites.

As the year goes on, we expect to add to our weekly schedule, starting with new morning shifts, and eventually employing the same model we use in our Sonoma County kitchens, with four cooking days and 2 delivery days per week. This means that teens currently on a waitlist can join our Youth Development Program, where they’ll gain confidence and new skills, learn to prepare and enjoy healthy meals, and benefit from the caring, supportive atmosphere created by our staff, adult mentors and their peer Teen Chefs. The site
People Power

In 2022, 382 adults volunteered their time and talents.

We’re grateful to these individuals who have dedicated 300+ hours to our work.

[List of names]

We make every effort to keep accurate records. Please let us know if we’ve omitted your name in error.

Happy Birthday to Our Garden!

Just one year ago, we officially opened our new Sebastopol garden. Thank you to everyone who has helped to create the wonderful community resource. Watch the garden grow at Caregivers.org/Garden/Video

Above: Teen Chef’s Robby harvesting the first pineapple peppers in the new garden.

Harvest of the Heart

To the following corporate and foundation partners who’ve provided recent funding of $1,000 or more, or $2,000 in-kind donations.

[List of names]

BY THE NUMBERS

202,810 MEALS DELIVERED

CLIENTS SERVED

1,319

298 TEEN CHEFS & GARDENERS

29,220 HOURS OF ADULT VOLUNTEER SERVICE

% Clients living on less than $27K per year

83%

Thank You

To the following sponsors: Access

Recent examples include:

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• An ongoing pilot with two Sonoma County clinics to test the effect of providing a combination of healthy meals and produce bags to very low income women during their pregnancy and immediately following birth.

Learn more about how we’re helping people get the food support they need to live longer and healthier lives at Caregivers.org/research

Advancing Access

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email: development@caregivers.org
What truly matters
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Frank Dono
Anne Dowie
Sarah Dove
Steve Derr
Embree De Persiis
Lindy Hahn
Ruth Fults
Jane Frances

Please let us know if we’ve omitted your name in error.

Vonna
Jennifer Lorenzen
Ileene Link
Sherry Lester
Beth Lamb
Carie Krumme
Laurel King
Ruth Johnson
Ronald Jenkins
David Jasper
Beth Harlan
Elizabeth Quinto
Linda Patterson
Jeff Parker
Julia Morris
Marlene Montalvo
Martha McCabe
Sarah Marovich
Donna Maricle
David Mallie
Darrell Luperini
Sue Zee Poinsett
Melissa Yates
David Weinstein
Wally Wathen
Ann Wathen
Diana Van Ry
Edith Ullman
Jeanette Swanstrom
Anne Stephens
Kathi Silverman
Paula Shaul
Jacques Schlumberger
Barbara Schlumberger

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Above: Teen Gardener Ronit harvesting the first jalapeno peppers in the new Ceres garden.

Harvest of the Heart

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email: development@ceresproject.org

Because we believe that everyone should have access to the food they need to support their health, improve their quality of life, and experience the joy of advocating for systems change. The small amount of time and resources we’ve invested, alongside our colleagues in the Food is Medicine Coalition, are yielding big results.

• In California, doctors can now prescribe medication (MTM) to their patients who are Medical members. Great holds a contract with Partnership HealthPlan to provide MTM to their members.

• The White House has a bold National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health that aims to end hunger and reduce diet-related disease by 2030, in part by increasing access to MTM and other food as medicine interventions for Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries.

The pilots and research studies we conduct help us build the evidence to encourage the health plans to offer MTM after they add MTM to their formularies and offer these services for their members and patients. Recent examples include:

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Learn more about how we’re helping people get the food support they need to live longer and healthier lives at Ceresproject.org/research

In 2022, 382 adults volunteered their time and talents.

We’d love to thank individuals who have dedicated 200+ hours to our work:

Karon Reckner
Kim Kelner
Mary Barnes
Susan Beniston
Mary Beniston
Karin Riepe
Karen Rugg
Irene Basker
Katie Braddy
Maggie Hackett
Steve McCann
Mike McCann
Sue McCoppin
Karen Taylor
Amy Taylor
Sally Close
Doreen Dwyer
Ellen Dwyer
Karen Dwyer
Linda Dwyer
Anita Dwyer
Danna Dwyer
Kathy Dwyer
Margaret Dwyer
Balan Dwyer
Susan Dwyer
Elizabeth Dwyer
Joy Dwyer
Brenda Dwyer
Barbara Dwyer
Sharon Dwyer
Paula Dwyer
Bonnie Dwyer
Roberta Dwyer
Sandra Dwyer
Beverly Dwyer
Melinda Dwyer
Maureen Dwyer
Evelyn Dwyer
Karen Dwyer
Linda Dwyer
Sue Dwyer
Ashley Dwyer
Karen Dwyer
Linda Dwyer
Sue Dwyer
Elizabeth Dwyer
Joy Dwyer
Brenda Dwyer
Barbara Dwyer
Sandra Dwyer
Sue Dwyer
Bonnie Dwyer
Elizabeth Dwyer
Karen Dwyer
Sue Dwyer
Linda Dwyer
Ashley Dwyer
Karen Dwyer
Linda Dwyer
Sue Dwyer

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Alaska Charity Fund Trust – Sue Bellido
AMC Medium
Almond Health of Sebastopol
Bチョルochell Foundation
Buckhorn Heros Mini Golf Club
Byers Beef Cattle Foundation
Cal-Bred Cattle Systems
Camarillo Venue
Community Foundation of Sonoma County
Earthline Cooperative Exchange
Good Earth Natural Foods
Google, Inc.
GraceMed Foundation
Great US Foundation
Hart for Plant-Healthy Foundation
Jeffrey Foundation
Kaiser Permanente
Kaleidoscope Technology
MarinHealth Medical Center
Marcy Wolmar
Meet
OMH Corporation
Owens Valley Soo Tsin_sq.
Redwood Credit Union
Telephone.org
Santa Rosa Junior
Sonoma Independent Charter School
Southwest Center Vineyards
Sweden Federal Credit Union
Steelhead SaladWorks
WCRE
Sutter Medical Group of the Redwoods
Senior Farmers Market Foundation
The Bonjour Project
The Break Family Trust
The Kaiser Family
The Westmark Foundation
Weineman Family
Wesleyan Food Bank
Widmer Craft Beer Management
Wilde Green Gourmet

Thank You

Helen Stoddard, benedictine sister and creator of the garden, with Ashley Dwyer, admiring the new space.

People Power

Diane Cowdrey
Angie Cominsky-Wachs
Mike Clementi
Cie Cary
Julie Burford
Max Bridges
Karen Boga
Sharon Beckman
Kyra Auerbach
Karen Anderson
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Laurel King
Ruth Johnson
Ronald Jenkins
David Jasper
Beth Harlan
Elizabeth Quinto
Linda Patterson
Jeff Parker
Julia Morris
Marlene Montalvo
Martha McCabe
Sarah Marovich
Donna Maricle
David Mallie
Darrell Luperini
Sue Zee Poinsett
Melissa Yates
David Weinstein
Wally Wathen
Ann Wathen
Diana Van Ry
Edith Ullman
Jeanette Swanstrom
Anne Stephens
Kathi Silverman
Paula Shaul
Jacques Schlumberger
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Sue McCoppin
Karen Taylor
Amy Taylor
Sally Close
Doreen Dwyer
Ellen Dwyer
Karen Dwyer
Linda Dwyer
Anita Dwyer
Danna Dwyer
Kathy Dwyer
Margaret Dwyer
Balan Dwyer
Susan Dwyer
Elizabeth Dwyer
Joy Dwyer
Brenda Dwyer
Barbara Dwyer
Sharon Dwyer
Paula Dwyer
Bonnie Dwyer
Roberta Dwyer
Sandra Dwyer
Beverly Dwyer
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Maureen Dwyer
Evelyn Dwyer
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Byers Beef Cattle Foundation
Cal-Bred Cattle Systems
Camarillo Venue
Community Foundation of Sonoma County
Earthline Cooperative Exchange
Good Earth Natural Foods
Google, Inc.
GraceMed Foundation
Great US Foundation
Hart for Plant-Healthy Foundation
Jeffrey Foundation
Kaiser Permanente
Kaleidoscope Technology
MarinHealth Medical Center
Marcy Wolmar
Meet
OMH Corporation
Owens Valley Soo Tsin_sq.
Redwood Credit Union
Telephone.org
Santa Rosa Junior
Sonoma Independent Charter School
Southwest Center Vineyards
Sweden Federal Credit Union
Steelhead SaladWorks
WCRE
Sutter Medical Group of the Redwoods
Senior Farmers Market Foundation
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BY THE NUMBERS

202,810 MEALS DELIVERED

1,319 CLIENTS SERVED

298 TEEN CHEFS & GARDENERS

29,229 HOURS OF ADULT VOLUNTEER SERVICE

% Clients living on less than $27,000 per year: 83%

---

Thank You to the following corporate and foundation partners who've provided recent funding of $10,000 or more, or over $1,000 in kind donations.

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People Power

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---

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A moving college application essay from a Teen Leader

by Alexis Weiss

What truly matters

Cancer is a family disease that significantly impacts everyone, whether we’re directly affected or not. When I was ten years old, what mattered most to me was being able to play outside and have fun. However, my mom’s battle with breast cancer made it challenging to get through.

One moment we were perfectly okay, and the next, my mom was unable to move from bed. She never once let us see that side of her. On the days she was feeling her worst and the most hopeless, she put on a brave face for her daughters, but somehow, even with such grace and strength. I know she put on a brave face for her daughters, but somehow, even with such grace and strength, I know she put on a brave face for her daughters, but somehow, even with such grace and strength.

I knew how others felt until we received a card from a client. She thanked the Ceres volunteers for everything we do and even more importantly, her words that said we saved her life, because without us, she would’ve been impossible alone. Volunteering at Ceres helped me realize how important community is and that we all need to be cared for sometimes.

During this time, I’ve realized the importance of giving back to others. I’ve learned how to be such a beautiful bald woman and fight cancer with such grace and strength. I’ll never forget the day we received that card from a client. Her words helped me realize how important community is and that we all need to be cared for sometimes. I feel very lucky that I can give others the same love and care that my family benefited from and everyone deserves.

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