



Together we're creating the world we all want to live in



Ceres Teen Leader Hannah



Hannah discussing a recipe with Executive Chef John

“Working for Ceres restored my hope that as a youth in my community I had a place to actually help people. They teach us about different things going on around the world where people are making a difference in their communities. It has changed my outlook on my future. I realized that there are all these possibilities around me to make a difference but they are a little bit hidden. Ceres was really life changing for me. It propelled me to being motivated more.

I really do feel like I am making a difference. I wanted to step up my game and be a Teen Leader because it was a good opportunity for me, and then I could help Ceres even more. The second I walk through the door, the atmosphere there really, really makes me feel like it's not just an obligation or a responsibility. It's something that I really want to be doing.”

“Volunteering at Ceres made me realize how many things went into the food and how many different spices and vegetables you can actually fit into one dish. Then I started experimenting a lot more because I really noticed a difference when I ate healthier.”

Dear Friends,

In January we delivered our 400,000th meal – a number that would have simply stunned me back in 2007 when I started Ceres as a volunteer project in a Sebastopol church kitchen. Nearly 100,000 additional meals have been delivered in communities across the United States thanks to the Ceres National Affiliate Partners we've trained.

Each of these meals fed a person – and often a whole family – struggling because of a serious health crisis, bringing the nourishment of wholesome food but maybe even more importantly the nourishment of the community's love and care.

That's a half-million healing moments!

And behind the scenes these meals also nourished the people who made them possible: the youth and adult volunteers whose hearts and hands brought each meal to someone's table, and our donors whose financial gifts are touching, changing and saving lives every day.

“Ceres represents the world I want to live in,” one of our staff members said recently. Ceres creates a world of connection, kindness, generosity, empowerment and belonging. It's a world where everyone's gifts are valued, and where together we realize our power to make a real and significant difference in our communities.

As you'll read in the pages that follow, Ceres empowers young people to become the healthy, compassionate and engaged adults our world needs. We educate clients and teens about the power of their food choices, so they make lasting changes in the way they eat to help prevent illness in the future. We support organic agriculture and our local farms and food producers – ensuring a healthy environment today and for future generations.

But at our root Ceres strengthens the fiber of what makes us human – our capacity to put ourselves in another's shoes and to be willing to reach out with a helping hand. Thank you for being part of the amazing tapestry that makes Ceres Community Project so special and vital. Your gifts – of time, of talent, and of treasure – are creating the world we all want to live in.

With gratitude,

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Ceres Teen Chef Emma prepping fish in our Santa Rosa kitchen



National Service Learning Conference in Washington DC



Bioneers Conference in San Rafael

Youth Share Ceres' Message on National Stage

Thanks to sponsorship from the Shinnyo-En Foundation, Youth Program Manager Sara McCamant, Teen Leaders Shannon Gallup and Ashlyn Dean traveled to Washington, DC last April to present Ceres' work at the National Service-Learning Conference. In October, Ceres youth served a locally-sourced organic lunch to 400 youth at the national Bioneers Conference in San Rafael, and then Teen Leaders Levi Hylton, Sophie Leveque-Eichhorn and Hannah Pieh led a workshop on The Power of Our Food Choices.



Teen Chefs learning some knife skills from Chef Trudy in our San Rafael kitchen



Harvesting green beans from Ceres Community Garden in Sebastopol

Empowering Young People

At Ceres youth are the primary gardeners and chefs in our programs. Through that contribution, they discover their gifts and their belonging as valued members of the community.

In 2015 we provided 23,113 hours of mentoring and work-based learning to 437 young people. They learned to grow, cook and eat healthy foods – and about how their food choices can support health and protect our environment for future generations. Working under the guidance of our professional staff and adult mentors, youth became familiar with what employers expect and gained the skills and confidence to be successful in school, work and life.



Newly inducted Teen Leaders in Sebastopol

Youth who've been active for at least a year can apply to join our Teen Leader Program. In 2015, 59 Teen Leaders served as role models and peer teachers in the program. Sporting personalized chef coats, they welcomed new teens, supervised the preparation of recipes, managed the packing of client meal bags, spoke at events, supervised the prep and planting of garden beds and served as full voting members of our Board of Directors.

"At Ceres they start you out on small things. Then all of a sudden, they would throw something at you that you've never done before. It was pressure but it was the good kind. You knew they had that trust in you and it made you feel awesome. I just started to become more confident and to carry that out into my own life without really having to consult anybody or ask questions." ~ Lilyanna, Teen Chef

Caring for Our Neighbors in a Health Crisis

Ceres serves people facing a health crisis in Sonoma, Marin and now Alameda counties. Along with up to 24 weeks of nourishing organic meals for everyone in the family, we teach clients about the benefits of healthy, organic whole foods and connect them to the love and care of their community.

There are two ways to participate in our Meal Delivery Program – up to 20% of program spots are available for clients who are able to pay a below-market rate of \$85 per person per week for organic delivered meals. This encourages people who might not otherwise call us and generates vital income for our work. The remaining clients receive meals for free – thanks to the support of our donors and volunteers.

In 2015 we provided 94,593 meals to 642 clients and their families, with 89% of clients receiving free meals. Among these clients, 66% are living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level – just \$31,860 a year for two adults or a single parent and a child, and 83% of our clients have a cancer diagnosis.

Thanks to our new program sites in Santa Rosa and Alameda, our goal in 2016 is to provide 105,000 meals for 750 clients.

“As a cancer patient, and living alone, I find it a challenge to motivate myself to make a good healthy meal. The past two weeks of receiving your deliveries has been a God-send for me.” ~ Mark



Veggie Boxes Support Low-Income Clients Leaving Our Healing Meal Program

Affording healthy food is a challenge for most of our clients. In 2015 we began exploring how to support these clients as they make the transition from meal delivery to cooking on their own. As part of a pilot program, 18 clients with household incomes below \$45,000 received 8 weeks of delivered fresh organic vegetables from the Ceres Community Garden. We recently received a two-year \$60,000 grant from North Bay Cancer Alliance to develop a full transition support program for our clients.

“Thanks to you and the teens for growing everything and for initiating a great program to help me start cooking with more healthy vegetables.” ~ Harvey



Ceres Client Robert sitting down to a delivered nutritious organic meal of baked King Salmon with dijon and tarragon, quinoa, and broccoli



Delivery Angels picking up their bags of food



Delivery Angel Ralph greeting Ceres Client Darlene with the week's meals

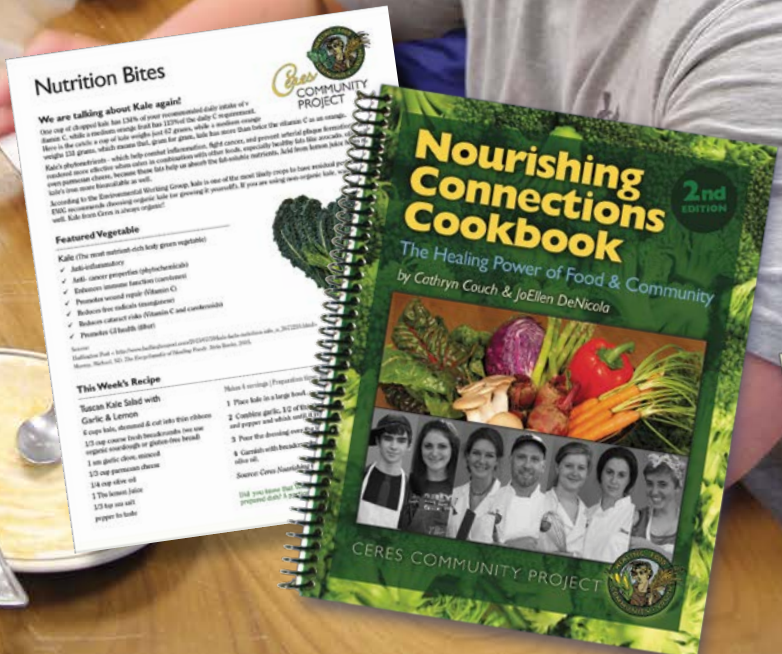
Teen circle on "Learning to Read Food Labels" led by Garden & Youth Program Manager Sara



"You are training the next generation of parents to understand the importance of preparing healthy meals for their families. We applaud and thank you for your passion and innovation."
 ~ Michael Purvis, Chief Administrative Officer, Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital



Tasting sauerkraut with Nutrition Education Manager Thais



Promoting Wellness

Ceres educates our clients, teens, adult volunteers and the broader community about how to shop, cook and eat for health – both personal health and the health of our environment.

- ♥ **Teens** – Ceres’ teens spend ½-hour of each shift learning about nutrition and “food system” issues. Topics include healthy snacks, why eat the rainbow, how to read food labels, food miles, why organic matters, and the importance of soil health. The result is young people who cook more, eat better, and are more likely to encourage friends and family to make healthy choices.
- ♥ **Clients** – Each week Ceres’ clients receive a *Nutrition Bite* with their meals. The *Bite* includes a recipe for one of the dishes in their bag – and some information about a food in that recipe and why it’s so good for them. Clients are more likely to try new and unfamiliar foods – like our client Linda who thought she didn’t like beets until a *Nutrition Bite* encouraged her to give them a try!
- ♥ **For our community** –

Healing Foods Basics and *Healing Foods Essentials* are two-hour classes offered at a variety of locations each year and in both English and Spanish. 130 people participated in these classes in 2015. We’ve also created a video version of *Healing Foods Basics* which is provided free of charge to each client and is available to the general public.

Nutrition for Wellness is a special program we developed for the West County Health Center and is now offered both there and at Alexander Valley Healthcare in Cloverdale. The 12 class series is free for clinic patients. We reached 176 patients in 2015.

Nourishing Connections Cookbook is now in kitchens all over the United States, and many of our past clients tell us it’s their bible to eating well. Through the cookbook we’re able to reach and support many more people than we can through meal delivery.

- ♥ **Commitment to Organic** – We use organic foods because scientific studies show organic crops provide more nutrition, are better for the environment, and reduce dietary pesticide exposure when compared to conventionally produced foods. In other words, it’s the healing choice for people and the planet.

“As part of my cancer protocol I am to become more plant-based. So far, I have eliminated coffee, started yoga, walking more, reduced animal products and use way less refined sugar. I honestly wouldn’t be as successful if it weren’t for your meals and TLC.”
 ~ Annie, Sonoma Valley client

“I joined Ceres to help people but I am also learning a lot about cooking and eating better.” ~ Lauren, Teen Chef



Happy volunteers Kate and Ann chopping 65 cups of broccoli at our new kitchen in Santa Rosa

A Great Place to Volunteer

We're proud that in the most recent report from North Bay Business Journal, Ceres was the 47th largest nonprofit in Sonoma County but had the 4th highest volunteer engagement! And in our end-of-year survey 97% of adult volunteers say that volunteering at Ceres has contributed positively to their life, and 94% are very or extremely likely to recommend Ceres as a place to volunteer.

*"Providing hope and support to those in need gives me a personal sense of fulfillment that is priceless."
~ Volunteer Client Liaison*



Adult volunteer group with Volunteer Relations Manager Caroline and Kitchen Manager Julie



Teens and Delivery Angel Jim loading his car with the bags of meals for his route



Sebastopol Wednesday morning adult volunteer prep team receiving instructions for the day

Building Community Is the Heart of Our Work

The research is clear – the more connected and engaged we feel, the healthier we are. Even more important than food, meaningful relationships that help us feel valued and valuable are keys to a long and healthy life. That's one reason we engage as many people as we can in our work. From youth and adult volunteers to our extraordinary community of financial donors, Ceres is committed to re-weaving the web of connections that make us and our communities healthy and strong.

The gifts volunteers give Ceres are tremendous. In 2015, 532 adults contributed 28,922 hours – the equivalent of almost 14 full-time staff – saving Ceres \$608,299. Volunteers mentored youth, delivered meals, supported clients, provided staff training, worked as handy-people, solicited auction items, processed donations, consulted about human resource issues, coordinated other volunteers, and so much more.

The generosity of Ceres' volunteers is the heart of our community and the heart of our work. We are enriched by their gifts, and together – through their service – we're building a happy and healthy world.

*"One of the most significant gifts of Ceres is the power of love and caring that comes with every contact and with every preparation. There is true healing in that gift."
~ Alva, Marin client*

*"Helping people makes you feel good about yourself."
~ Rodrigo, Teen Volunteer*

Making cookies the first week at our kitchen in Alameda



Thank you to Hanna Boys Center

We are grateful to Hanna Boys Center for hosting our Sonoma Valley Program site for the past two-and-a-half years. During that time, we provided 5,000 hours of work-based learning for youth and prepared and delivered 23,000 meals to Sonoma Valley families. Hanna Boys Center welcomed us and thanks to members of their board, provided free kitchen space for Ceres to operate. With the opening of our Santa Rosa Program at the Dream Center we've moved from Hanna but continue to serve the Sonoma Valley community.



The teens prepared and packaged the meals and then sat down together to have their own dinner of the food they had just cooked. This was the first time most of these young people had cooked and shared a meal.



Ceres Chef Tina working with Teen Leader Clare in our new Santa Rosa kitchen

Expanding Our Reach

During 2015 Ceres developed two important new program sites in Santa Rosa and Alameda that allow us to expand the diversity of youth and clients we serve. Opened in early 2016, both new sites are on the campuses of well-respected nonprofits that have deep experience in their areas of work.

In Santa Rosa we're at Social Advocates for Youth's new Dream Center campus. SAY provides housing, counseling and job training to youth who are disadvantaged and/or lack critical support. Along with our volunteer afterschool program for youth, Ceres is developing a full Culinary Arts and Food Industry Job Training Program and expanding our Catering Program to provide on-the-job training for youth.

In Alameda, we're at Alameda Point Collaborative, a supportive housing community for formerly homeless families. Youth in these families are now coming together two days a week to prepare healthy meals for very low-income women with cancer served by the Charlotte Maxwell Clinic in Oakland.

Yvonne Charles, Charlotte Maxwell Clinic Staff, shared clients' reactions upon receiving their first Ceres meals, "A couple of the ladies cried...the gratitude was overwhelming. They told me:

'I was trying to figure out what to do since I have another surgery coming up and knew I wouldn't have the energy to shop or cook.'

'My doctor said I needed to gain weight, but I didn't know what to eat. Having the meals already prepared is so helpful.'

'I didn't know what I was going to do. This is such a blessing.'"

Taking Root Across the Country

Since 2010 Ceres has supported communities around the United States interested in starting programs like ours. Today eleven communities – from Nashville to Grand Rapids, Michigan and Eugene, Oregon – benefit from programs based on Ceres' unique model.

In 2015 we offered two four-day trainings at our main offices in Sebastopol for teams from Clear Path for Vets in Syracuse, NY; Healthy Community Kitchen in Madison, WI; and Healing Meals Community Project in Hartford, CT. Teams receive comprehensive training, a complete Operations Manual, access to Ceres' customized data base program to help run their programs, regular support and training calls throughout the year and most importantly the benefit of our 9 years of experience.

“Standing on the shoulders of such an amazing organization as Ceres, our start-up has been more successful than we could have ever imagined. Thank you Ceres! We could not have this success without your training and support.”
~ Sarah Leathers,
Healing Meals Community Project, CT



Teen Chefs happily washing dishes at Ceres Affiliate Partner, the Teen Kitchen Project, in Soquel California

Our National Affiliate Partners delivered nearly 50,000 healing meals in 2015

In-Kind Support

Dozens of farms, grocers, food producers and other businesses joined hands with us by providing \$365,221 worth of in-kind contributions during 2015. These gifts allow us to leverage the cash support we receive and strengthen connections across our community. We're deeply grateful for these partners who are vital to our work.

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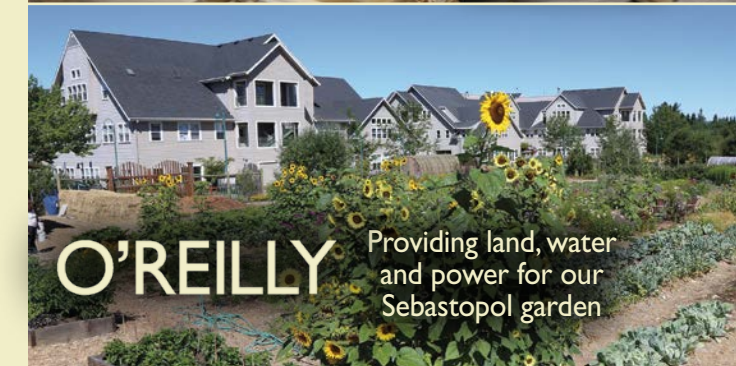
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Thank you!



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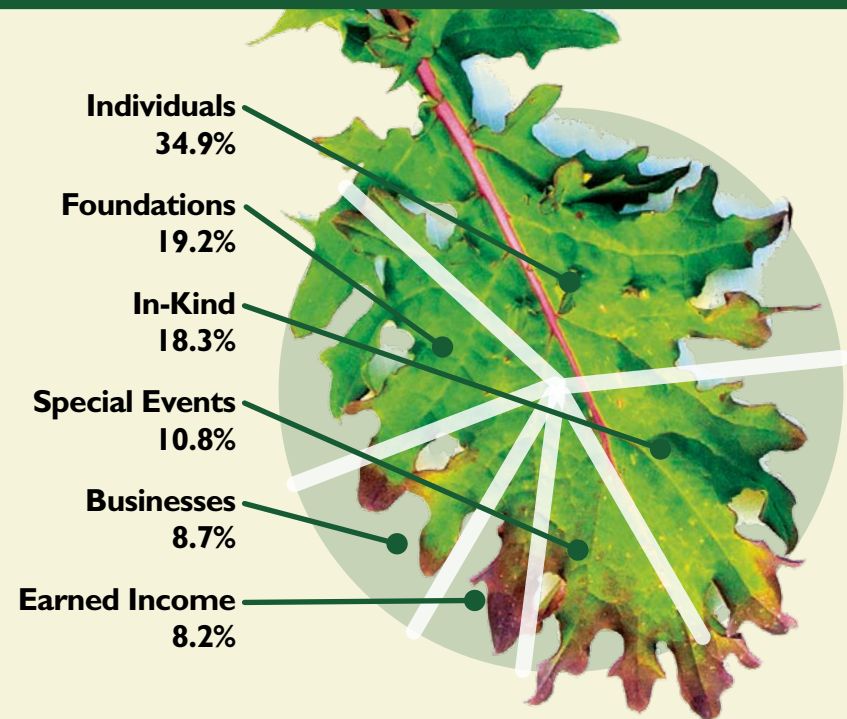
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Laurie & Michael Jacobvitz
Karen Johnson & Mark Lawson
Jacala Kinney & Noel Lyons
Deborah Kraft
Kevin Lampe
Rick & Dawn Larue
Joe LeBlanc
Shoshana Leibowitz
Tish Levee
Nancy & Les Lewis
Timothy McCallister
Scott McDougall & Ray Goodenough
Jane & David Meyers
Laura Moss & Paul Layrak
Lorraine Musante
Pam & Joel Neuberger
Douglas & Debra Noren
Gemma Paton
Sue Zee Poinsett
Stephanie & Michael Poley
Rebecca Porteous
Erin & Michael Rickard
Sheila Ryan
Maryann Schacht
Cassandra Shafer
Daniel Shanahan
Mark Short & Carl Ray
Irema Sivecic & Dragan Konjikusic
Cora Stewart
Jody & David Suchard
Janny & Mark Tansil
Kathy & Kenneth Taylor
The Broadview Group
Linda Van Sciver & Judith Kaye
Deborah Vogan
David & Marty Wait
Sally Walker & Tommy Shearer
Josh Weil & Claire Mollard
Jennifer Welch Crews

Where Does The Money Come From?

\$1,991,484



\$847,229

Value of Volunteer Time

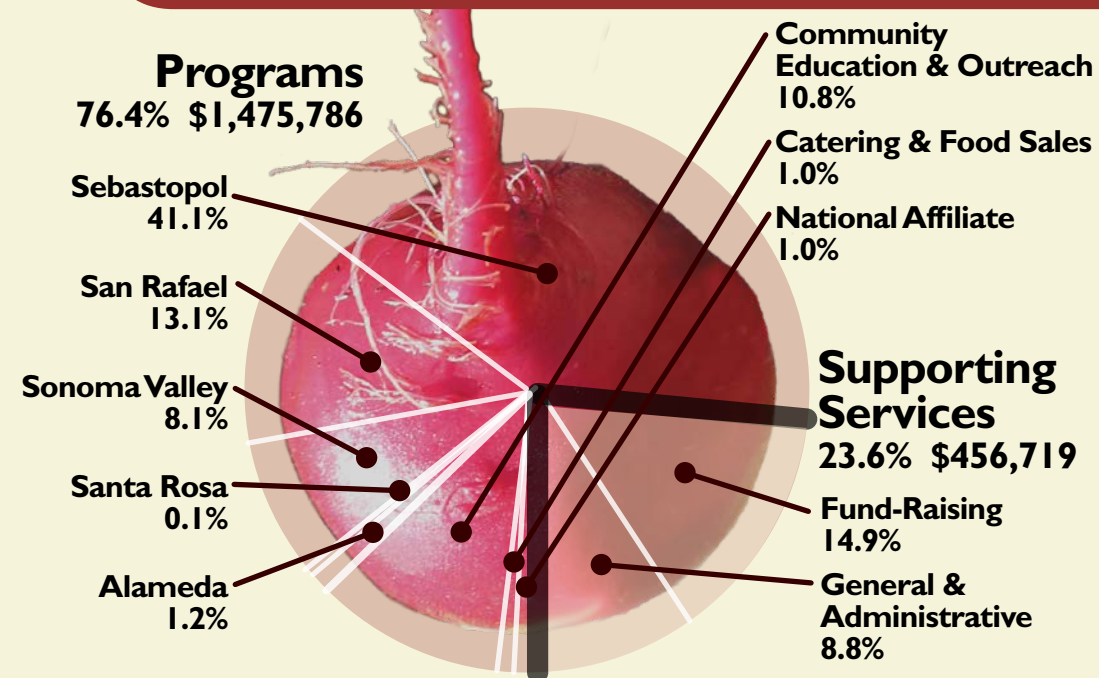
51,808

Hours Donated

See Ceres Federal Tax Forms at CeresProject.org/FedTaxForms.html

Where Does The Money Go?

\$1,932,505



Statements of Financial Position

	2015	2014
Cash	\$403,511	\$380,477
Accounts Receivable	324	1,958
Other Current Assets	7,903	5,883
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$411,738	\$388,318
Property & Equipment, net	1,078,423	1,014,273
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,490,161	\$1,402,591
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
Accounts Payable	41,822	25,938
Accrued Paid Time Off	23,888	21,630
Other Current Liabilities	5,236	10,507
Current Portion of Long-term Debt	11,000	10,000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	81,946	68,075
Long-term Debt	334,142	319,422
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$416,088	\$387,497
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	671,419	775,648
Temporarily restricted	402,654	239,446
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$1,074,073	\$1,015,094
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$1,490,161	\$1,402,591

Ceres Client Leticia



Leticia and Liz, her Spanish speaking Ceres Client Liaison

“Estoy muy agradecida a todos los que dan para que Ceres puede hacer este trabajo.”

“I’m so grateful to all those who give so that Ceres can do this work.”

“Me diagnosticaron cáncer de mama el año pasado. Cuando el trabajador social del hospital me aconsejó llamar a Ceres para obtener ayuda con las comidas, creí que no sería necesario, pero estoy muy contento de haberlo hecho.

Por la forma en que el tratamiento de quimioterapia me afectó, no podía cocinar mas. Mi hijo Donovan (20 años) es la única familia que tengo que vive conmigo, y trabaja largas horas, así que yo estaba sola mucho en casa. Cuando recibí las comidas, pude alimentarme. No habría manera de que pudiera haber hecho las compras para cocinar sola. No tenía la energía.

Donovan y yo recibimos comidas. Hemos cambiado la forma en que comemos-- ahora es más saludable. Utilizamos mucho menos azúcar y sal, y comemos menos carne y más verduras y frutas frescas, frutos secos y semillas, y hasta un poco de pescado y pollo orgánico. Siento que la comida me ayudó a recuperar mi energía y la salud después de haber terminado mi tratamiento.

Les quiero agradecer por todo, por toda la ayuda y el apoyo que nos brindaron a mi y a mi hijo. Nos cuidaron. Ustedes nos dieron amor y comida. No sólo comida, pero amor, también.”

“I was diagnosed with breast cancer last year. When the hospital social worker advised me to call Ceres to get help with meals, I thought it wouldn’t be necessary, but I’m so glad I called.

The way the chemotherapy treatment affected me, I couldn’t cook for myself. My son Donovan (age 20) is the only family I live with, and he works long hours, so I was home alone a lot. When I received the meals, I could feed myself. There’s no way I could have shopped and cooked. I didn’t have the energy.

Donovan and I both received meals. We’ve changed the way we eat now—it’s healthier. We use much less sugar and salt, and eat less meat and more fresh vegetables and fruits, nuts and seeds, plus a little fish and organic chicken. I feel like the food helped me recover my energy and health after my treatment ended.

Thank you so much, because you cared for my son and me. You cared for us. You gave us love and you gave us food. Not just food, but love, too.”

Ceres Staff

REGIONAL STAFF

Jake Blehm
Administration Director

Cathryn Couch
Executive Director

Julie Foley
Development Associate
& Events Manager

Arlene Harchut
Development Associate

Thais Harris
Nutrition Education Manager

Margaret Howe
Associate Director

Scott McDougall
Development Director

Deborah Ramelli
Communications Director

Paula Randall
Grants Manager

Nicole Saadeh
Catering Manager

Kim Stuffelbeam
Creative Director

Nicole Warner
Marketing & Design Associate

ALAMEDA COUNTY

Aileen Suzara
Project Coordinator & Chef

photos & bios on the web at:
CeresProject.org/staff.html

MARIN COUNTY

Linda Dovbish
Program Manager

Patrick Martin
Associate Chef &
Kitchen Coordinator

Kristin McKenna
Client Coordinator

Rebecca Shilling
Teen Program Coordinator

SONOMA COUNTY

Caroline Bañuelos
Volunteer Relations Manager

Hollie Fortcamp
Associate Chef

Tina Green
Program Manager & Chef

Lili Gunter
Client Manager

Cheryl Hamblin
Client Care Assistant

John Littlewood
Executive Chef

Sara McCamant
Garden & Youth Program
Manager

Gabriella Salomon
Associate Chef & Teen Program
Administrator

Nicole Sauer
Client Care Assistant

Julie Stuffelbeam
Kitchen & Delivery Manager

Samantha Wyman
Administrative Assistant

*(on the front cover)
Sonoma Valley Program Manager & Chef
Francesca with her crew of Teen Chefs and
volunteer adult mentors proudly displaying the
week's meals ready to be bagged and delivered*



Ceres
COMMUNITY
PROJECT

Headquarters
PO Box 1562
Sebastopol CA 95473


707-829-5833

info@ceresproject.org
www.CeresProject.org

Serving Alameda, Marin
& Sonoma counties

Program Sites

· Alameda · San Rafael
· Santa Rosa · Sebastopol

 Printed on recycled paper

This Annual Report was produced in-house with the help of staff and volunteers.
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Additional Photography: Sara McCamant, Francesca Ffis, Angela Farley
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*Teen Chefs busy
chopping, blending
and prepping the
week's meals in our
San Rafael kitchen*