



Olivia's Story

Ceres' Healing Meals touch the lives of many people facing serious illness in our community. Olivia, a young mother, was one such person. After her first routine mammogram at age 41, she was shocked when x-rays revealed a large tumor. Her doctor was hopeful – the tumor appeared to be contained and outpatient surgery was scheduled.

Olivia works in human services and was familiar with Ceres Community Project having referred others to the program. Still, it took weeks of encouragement from friends before she felt she could call Ceres and ask for help for herself. "I never thought the program would be something that I would have to use." Olivia enrolled to receive free weekly meals for herself and her young son, who was 7 at the time.

Ceres meals started arriving the day before Olivia's surgery. "When I came home from the surgery, there was food already made for me. Being able to feed myself and take care of myself was extremely comforting. Ceres' meals were healthy, delicious, well-prepared and pretty."

During recovery, she received more devastating news – the tumor was much larger than anticipated and the surgeon was recommending a mastectomy. "I was only 41 and that was a hard pill to swallow, but I went

forward with it." Then, the 2017 wildfires broke out. The medical offices where she sought treatment were destroyed in the blaze and Olivia's surgery was postponed. Like so many others, Olivia and her son fled to the coast to escape the smoke. Overcome with emotion, Olivia explains, "A Ceres volunteer tried to call but I wasn't able to retrieve calls at the coast. When the volunteer couldn't reach me, she called my parents to make sure I was okay. During that time of crisis, everyone was afraid, everyone knew someone who was affected, and everyone wanted out of the

smoke and away from the fires. When you are also dealing with something like cancer and you find out your doctor's office has burned, having someone call to make sure you are okay is very meaningful and important."

After the fires were contained, she proceeded with the mastectomy, which was an intense surgery with an equally intense recovery period. The medications were hard on her stomach, limiting the foods she could tolerate. "Ceres would include something called healing vegetable broth. There were days when that was the only nutrition I had. I don't know if it was the name or if it was actually something in the broth, but when I drank it, I would just feel better."

We Remember

Our hearts are with those impacted by the 2017 wildfires as they continue to heal, recover and rebuild. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our volunteers and donors, we provided 13,000 healthy meals, made with love, to evacuees and first responders.

Join Us

We're able to respond nimbly to calls for service thanks to you our community of volunteers and donors. With your help, we're ready to serve those facing the personal crisis of a severe health diagnosis, or a community crisis brought on by natural disaster. We're currently seeking teen and adult volunteers at our three locations: San Rafael, Santa Rosa and Sebastopol. Find out more inside!

Olivia's Story continued

Olivia shared that Ceres Healing Meals were an important part of returning to a normal routine with her son. The benefits reached beyond her needs as the cancer patient, allowing her to ensure her son also had nutritious meals. "To have healthy food to eat at our table when I knew that I would not otherwise be able to make these foods for him, was extremely important to having a normal day-to-day life. We would often look through the deliveries to see what was there because he really loved the kale salads. We'd also look for the dessert. If the week had been hectic, we would open the dessert, a fruit crisp or pudding, and eat that right away. After a hectic week, we would say, "Let's just have dessert first."

Olivia's experience with Ceres came full circle when she was invited to tell her story to Ceres youth and

adult volunteers this summer, which proved to be deeply moving. This would be the first time she had spoken to a group about her experience with cancer. Olivia had tears in her eyes as she recalled that day in the garden. "It was the first time I got to see the people on the other end – the people who were growing, harvesting and preparing the food that was brought to us. I got to tell them about my son and about how much he appreciated the food. I also got to hear what it was like for them, why they volunteered and for how long. For all those months, we had been working together and now we finally got to meet. It made me realize that I was part of something bigger than just eating healthy food." Olivia went home that day with a huge bag of freshly harvested kale for her son. She later told us how they had laughed when her son said, "Now you have to make the salad the way (Ceres) made it, so I hope they gave you the recipe, too." ♥

Affiliates Further Ceres' Impact



The replication of Ceres Community Project's program model began in 2010, when two groups, later to become Pathways Cooks (Summit, NJ) and The Village Project (Bay Village, OH), learned about Ceres and called asking if we would help them bring it to their communities. With a willingness to share all she had learned and a desire to see the Ceres model expand, Cathryn invited each group to Sebastopol for an informal training consisting primarily of shadowing and observation. These early experiences laid the framework for what became the Ceres Affiliate Partner program: a four-day intensive on-site training, access to our program materials and custom database, an affiliate license agreement, plus ongoing mentoring and support. Each new Affiliate Partner has the opportunity to learn from Ceres' experience so they can build on our knowledge as they envision their own programs serving their communities.

Since 2010, Ceres has trained and inspired 14 communities across the country to replicate our model with 10 successfully operating today and two launching soon. Nine of these groups operate as Ceres Affiliate Partners. Here is a quick glimpse into their programs.

Since opening its doors a year ago, **Caring Kitchen Project** (Ukiah, CA) is well on its way to doubling volunteer participation and clients served. Started in a small kitchen with only nine clients, they have grown to serve 14 clients and their families each week with the help of over 40 volunteers. A larger kitchen and the funding to support this growth are now on their wish list.

Celebrating five years serving clients in Eugene, Oregon, **Positive Community Kitchen** (PCK) has expanded into more neighborhoods this year, now reaching 75 clients weekly with the help of over 100 youth volunteers. PCK takes educating its community seriously - adult cooking classes are aired live on local TV!

Teen Kitchen Project (Soquel, CA) operates two kitchens serving all of Santa Cruz County. Launched in 2012 TKP will deliver 30,000 meals this year. They've been a leader in developing food as medicine models in their community and are currently part of a two-year pilot to evaluate the benefit of providing meals to low-income patients being discharged from the hospital.

Fox Valley Food for Health (Geneva, IL) is on track to serve more than 23,000 meals this year – a record high number for Geneva clients and their families. They have also trained more than 120 youth who have provided more than 40,000 service hours.

This year, **Revive and Thrive Community Project** (Grand Rapids, MI) launched Transition to Survivorship a 12-week nutrition and lifestyle education program to support survivorship for cancer patients. With a new commercial kitchen site and the help of local teen and adult volunteers, they prepare nourishing, healing meals for 18-20 people weekly.

Established with support from the Heimerdinger Foundation, **Meals 4 Health & Healing** (Nashville, TN) has served over 850 clients since 2013. Last year, 303 volunteers dedicated over 5,500 hours to ensure that local residents struggling with cancer received nourishing meals that support healing.



The team from Simsbury, CT

Since launching in 2016, **Healing Meals Community Project** (Simsbury, CT) has outgrown its kitchen for a second time. In July, the organization moved to a new location that includes an organic garden to grow fresh produce for the meals. It has provided more than 27,000 meals for over 215 clients and their families in 42 towns throughout the greater Hartford area with the help of 550 youth and adult volunteers.



The team from Aarhus, Denmark

In September, Ceres completed a 4-day affiliate training session for two new partners launching programs later this year. **Det Kærlige Måltid** (The Loving Meal) is proud to be the first Ceres Community Project affiliate outside the US - located in Aarhus, Denmark.



The team from Buffalo, NY

Moved by the huge impact Ceres had on the lives of his brother and sister-in-law as she battled cancer, Roger Peinkofer and partners will launch **Nourish WNY** (Buffalo, NY) to help women and families dealing with breast cancer.

Ceres will host its first Affiliate Symposium this October. Affiliate Partners will convene at our headquarters in Sebastopol to share innovative ideas, inspire one another with success stories and brainstorm solutions to challenges. The Symposium marks another exciting milestone as our model spreads through our Affiliate Partners. ♥

Our Affiliate Partners

Caring Kitchen Project, Ukiah CA, opened 2017, now serving 14 clients with 40 volunteers.
ncoinc.org/programs/caring-kitchen-project



Det Kærlige Måltid (The Loving Meal) Aarhus, Denmark. Our first international affiliate plans to begin service in November.
DetKaelrigeMaaltid.dk



Fox Valley Food for Health, Geneva IL, opened 2013. 40,000 hours—and counting—of teen service learning. FoxValleyFoodForHealth.org



Healing Meals Community Project, Simsbury CT, opened 2016, 550 volunteers have provided more than 27,000 meals to date.
HealingMealsProject.org



Meals 4 Health & Healing, Nashville TN, launched 2013, has supported 850 clients with nourishing meals.
HeimerdingerFoundation.com



Nourish WNY coming soon to Buffalo NY

Positive Community Kitchen, Eugene OR, opened 2013, serving 75 clients per week with help of 100 youth.
PositiveCommunityKitchen.org



Revive and Thrive Community Project, Grand Rapids MI, launched 2014, in



Revive & Thrive Project
Nourishing the community, one meal at a time.

addition to meal delivery and youth engagement, now offers a nutrition and lifestyle education program for clients recovering from cancer.

Teen Kitchen Project, Soquel, CA, launched 2012 and now serving 750 meals a week. This year, youth will contribute 4,500 of service learning www.teenkitchenproject.org



Legacy and Ceres-Inspired Projects

- ♥ AMOR Healing Kitchen, Charleston, SC
- ♥ Food of Love, St Helena, CA
- ♥ Pathways Cooks, Summit NJ
- ♥ The Village Project, Bay Village, OH



Watch us Grow

Notes from our Program Sites

While Ceres' impact spreads nationally through our policy work and our Affiliate Partners, we're also growing locally to meet our community's needs here in Marin and Sonoma counties.

We recently expanded our **San Rafael kitchen** lease to include a third afternoon. Adult volunteers staff a new prep shift on Tuesday afternoons, and their efforts have created more spaciousness and ease for our cooking and packaging days on Wednesday and Thursday. We're currently seeking volunteers for all three days so we'll be set to mentor more youth and provide nourishing meals to more families next year.

In **Santa Rosa**, our **garden** is a year old and thriving! What was once a lawn has been transformed into a vibrant ecosystem supporting edible plants and herbs, beneficial insects and the teen and adult volunteers who lovingly tend them. Drop by and take a stroll-the garden is open to visitors. Coming soon are new gates, a rain catchment system, and a beautiful mural created by Sarah and Levi Hylton, a mother and son who are both long-serving volunteers.

Our **Santa Rosa kitchen** hums with the joyous rhythm of teen chefs and adult mentors cooking together 3 afternoons a week. We've increased the number of clients and youth we serve this year, and are making plans to expand again in 2019 with the addition of a fourth cooking day. You can help us get ready by spreading the word that we're looking for volunteers.

Thank You!
Together, we're
delivering more
than 100,000
love-filled meals
in 2018

In **Sebastopol**, we're growing by serving congestive heart failure (CHF) patients through 2 innovative pilots in partnership with the California Department of Healthcare Services and Kaiser Permanente. Both pilots will assess the impact of home delivered, medically tailored meals on these patients' health and healthcare costs. We recently updated our pilot menu so we're able to serve CHF patients who also have diabetes, allowing more people to benefit.

Educating our community about the connections between food and health is a vital part of our work. Starting this month, we'll be offering classes in English and Spanish through a new contract with **Sonoma Valley Community Health Center** (www.SVCHC.org). Clinic patients and community members will be welcome to the bi-weekly classes. And we're continuing our partnership with **Sonoma County Libraries**,

offering Kids Can Cook II, a free new hands-on cooking class for 8-12 year olds running now through the end of the year. Check www.SonomaLibrary.org for information and registration.

As demand for our services rises, we need community partners like you more than ever. You can help us offer more healing meals and more opportunities for youth. Please consider volunteering and donating to support our work. We've recently

added several new staff members to our Volunteer Relations Department. Amy, Rosa, Lisa and Emily would love to talk to you and get you started in a rewarding role in our volunteer family. ♥

***Thank you for partnering with us
to create a healthier community.***



Calling All Volunteers!



Won't you join us in nourishing
our neighbors and mentoring youth?

Volunteer Orientations

San Rafael

Adults November 7

Youth November 14

Sebastopol November 12

Santa Rosa November 29

Visit our website to register and get details,
CeresProject.org

or contact us to schedule an interview.

707-829-5833 – volunteer@ceresproject.org

Our Volunteer Relations Team

Amy Loukonen

Manager

Rosa Lubin-Molina

Youth Coordinator (Sonoma County)

Emily Loen

Adult Coordinator (Sonoma County)

Lisa Bacon

Youth & Adult Coordinator (Marin County)

Ceres offers volunteers:

- ♥ Free classes
- ♥ Discounts on retail items
- ♥ Special volunteer-only gatherings
- ♥ Flexible scheduling
- ♥ New skills and social connections
- ♥ A rewarding way to help our community



*I enjoy the camaraderie and I feel as though
I am truly helping my community.
I feel I gain even more from the program
than I have given.*

Ceres Adult Volunteer



Ceres

COMMUNITY PROJECT

serving Marin & Sonoma counties

“Finding a place and people who help you not only externally show love and positivity, but also help you turn that inwards, is so important and that is exactly what Ceres does for teens.”

Ashlyn Dean, former Teen Leader, during her speech at Harvest of the Heart



Ceres Community Project
PO Box 1562
Sebastopol CA 95472
707-829-5833 • CeresProject.org

Cookies from Ceres for your holiday gift giving!

Your purchase of our beautiful, nourishing and delicious organic cookies will wow your friends and family, and help Ceres continue to deliver healing meals to clients and rich service learning experiences to youth.

Starting in mid-November, purchase online at CeresProject.org/Cookies and you can pick up your elegantly wrapped cookies at any of our three kitchens during the month of December.



Goji Bliss Balls
Gluten and vegan