

# CERES COMMUNITY PROJECT

SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER



## Let's Keep Saying "Yes"

Together, we accomplished something extraordinary in 2020. We're still in the midst of the marathon brought on by the pandemic. Help us keep saying "yes" this year. Here are three key things you can do:

- Volunteer. We especially need adults in Sonoma County
- Join Kale Club, by becoming a monthly donor
- Sponsor Harvest of the Heart or our classes: business partnerships provide visibility and community goodwill for your company

Read more about these opportunities inside.



2020  
BY THE NUMBERS

**183,761**

**NUMBER OF  
MEALS DELIVERED**

**104,339**

*more than in 2019*

**CLIENTS SERVED**

**1,579**

**% increase in  
Latinx clients**

**407%**

**324**

**TEEN CHEFS &  
GARDENERS**

**616**

**ADULT  
VOLUNTEERS**

**\$38,000**

**VALUE OF ORGANIC  
PRODUCE GROWN IN  
CERES GARDENS**



**by Reilly Briggs,  
Policy Coordinator,  
Ceres Community Project**

Between fires, floods, public safety power shutoffs, and now the COVID-19 pandemic, it's no secret that the North Bay has experienced a number of traumatic events since 2017. For the youth in Sonoma and Marin counties, these constant emergencies have marked their high school experience.

Three of Ceres' youth volunteers spoke to us about how they've been coping. Meet Eric Abrahams, 17, a Teen Leader who's been volunteering in our San Rafael kitchen for 2 years. Owen Searles, 18, is a college freshman who's been volunteering in Sebastopol for 2 years. Sarah Elliott, 18, is about to become a Teen Leader, and has been volunteering in Sebastopol for 3 years.

"I have to remind myself this isn't normal sometimes, because it's been

so long and I've just gotten used to it. It's hard not to become apathetic about everything" says Eric. Adverse Childhood Effects (ACEs) such as the events listed above, can have life-long impacts on adolescents' health and wellbeing. ACEs are linked with chronic health conditions, educational attainment, and an easily-triggered stress response.

COVID-19 and sheltering-in-place has had a particularly harsh effect on youth as they navigate distance learning - often while sharing space or devices with siblings and family, navigating poor internet connections, and staring at screens all day.

"The non-academic stuff is hard. I just miss my friends" said Eric, "It's the little things like being able to hang out with a bunch of my friends in the library at lunch." Teens across the country are having trouble learning and focusing in this stressful environment.

*Above: Eric, Teen Leader in San Rafael.*

*cont'd over*

# Thank You

to the following corporate and foundation partners\*

Allensby Charity Fund Trust - San Rafael Elks Lodge

American AgCredit

Balo Vineyards

Bethlehem Foundation

California Fire Foundation

Character Builders Inc.

City of Sebastopol

Clif Bar Family Foundation

Community Foundation Sonoma County

Compass Real Estate

County of Sonoma

Earthtone Construction

End World Hunger Foundation

Evergreen 161 Sebastopol

Gourmet Mushrooms

Grace US Foundation

Haystack Farm

Jonas Family Foundation

Kaiser Permanente

Lynmar Estate Winery

MarinHealth Medical Center

OMW Corporation

PG&E

Presbyterian Church of Novato

Private Wealth Partners

Redwood Empire Food Bank

Scott Evans Foundation

Silk Road Teas

Soiland Co, Inc.

Solful

SPARC

Summit State Bank

Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation

Syar Foundation

Trusted Advisors Group North Bay

Veronica Foods Company

Wildbrine

World Centric

\* who've provided \$1,000 or more in support from 10/6/20-1/20/21

*“I am so grateful for Ceres’ meals. I feel much healthier. It seems like as we get older we are forgotten by much of society. Ceres takes good care of me and helps me to feel connected to others. I love knowing that teenagers are helping me. I keep the cards that they write—they are so sincere and beautiful. It’s good to feel the camaraderie between the ages. I love the soup - it’s the best part.”*

**—Mary Lou, Ceres Client**

# Youth Resilience

cont'd

Sarah shared: "I really struggle when there isn't a lot of interaction, especially in school. It's really hard to focus. If I'm in my room all day, staring at my computer, I just get really frustrated and I stop learning very much...it seems like it's never gonna end, like what's next?"

Ceres Community Project provides a safe, supportive, and stable space for youth to have positive interactions with peers and mentors, develop decision-making skills, build resilience, work together as a team, and garner confidence. Our youth program is centered around positive youth development and rooted in evidence-based practice to support the growth and development of youth into leaders. "My favorite part of volunteering is Sara [Ceres' garden manager]! She's just really good at what she does, and she's someone I've always been able to talk to. She's also a great mentor, and even if there's something she doesn't know a ton about, she still finds a way to be a valuable part of the conversation," says Owen.

While our Santa Rosa and Sebastopol kitchens were closed to volunteers at the start of shelter-in-place, our gardens and San Rafael kitchen stayed open, and our youth had the opportunity to volunteer and contribute to their community during the pandemic. Owen said that "Constant is a really good word to describe volunteering at Ceres during the pandemic. Because during COVID, you kind of lose track of the days, but Ceres is a way to at least keep track of my days and have something to build around." Volunteering is shown to help build trustworthy relationships, strong social networks, and improved general well-being. It's also been proven to boost your mood, and our youth volunteers express the same sentiment. "It's usually very de-stressing! It's very fulfilling, and helps you look back on your day in a more positive light. There's something very grounding about it," Eric said about volunteering in the garden. Sarah said that "Ceres is like a haven for me. It's filled with people to connect with, and I always leave knowing that I've helped the community and I've helped myself."

# Harvest of the Heart



September 18



**Our annual gala raises funds to sustain our neighbors living with a serious health challenge and to empower teens to become healthy, engaged leaders and changemakers.**

**Support our virtual event:**

- *Gain visibility for your business as an event sponsor*
- *Become a Ceres Champion: start a Peer-to-Peer fundraiser*

Contact Laura J Giacomini

[lgiacomini@ceresproject.org](mailto:lgiacomini@ceresproject.org) or 707.829.5833 x131

## Teens Share Self-Care Tactics

Self-care is crucial for emotional resilience, managing stress, and improving our outlook. For Sarah, self-care looks like practicing the ukulele, going on runs with her dog, and hiking. Cooking new recipes (especially Indian food!), activism, and playing music helps Eric unwind. Owen volunteers and surfs with his friends to help cope with the

daily stressors of life. Other key elements of self-care include a nutritious diet and getting enough sleep.

*This is a condensed version of an article from our Nourishing Discourse series. Read the full article for helpful mental health and self-care resources at [ceresproject.org/mentalhealth/](https://ceresproject.org/mentalhealth/)*



# Virtual Classes

Now you can join one of our food and health classes from anywhere, on Zoom! Our classes are informational and inspiring. Amanda Newman-Crutcher, Ceres' Nutrition Education & Services Manager, teaches in English. Spanish-language classes taught by Sandra Tafur.

**Wednesdays, 5:30-6:45pm**

**Sliding scale \$0 - \$40 per person**

**[ceresproject.org/classes](http://ceresproject.org/classes)**

## FEBRUARY

24 **Comidas para mejorar la inmunidad**

## MARCH

3 **Prevent or Reverse Metabolic Illness:**

Blood pressure, blood sugars, triglycerides, waist size and healthy lipoproteins.

10 **Reimagining Breakfast**

Start the day with a protein-rich meal to fuel your body and mind.

17 **Reimagining Lunch**

Inspiring, simple meals to enjoy at work, home or school.

24 **Reimagining Dinner**

Create a food matrix - get out of your dinner rut.

31 **Comidas para una mejor digestión**

## APRIL

7 **Spring Clean Eating**

Explore teas and foods that support healthy detox.

14 **Curious about food sensitivities or allergies?**

An elimination diet can help identify triggering foods.

21 **Sauces, Dips and Dressings**

To support a diet rich in vegetables.

28 **Alimentos para mejorar el Ánimo**

## MAY

5 **Enhancing Digestion with Nutrition and Herbs**

How and what you eat can relieve digestive tension.

12 **Making Healing Broths to Boost Nutrients and Taste**

Enjoy broths alone or as part of any soup or stew.

19 **Learning to Love Vegetables!**

Eat the rainbow for health.

26 **Verduras, como plato principal**

# Volunteers needed!

*We especially need adult volunteers to prepare and deliver meals in Sonoma county. We offer rigorous attention to Covid safety, small shift sizes and many days and times to choose from. A safe, fun and rewarding way to give back. Email [volunteer@ceresproject.org](mailto:volunteer@ceresproject.org)*



**Sponsoring a class can provide visibility for your business and a learning opportunity for your employees.**

**Contact [evie@ceresproject.org](mailto:evie@ceresproject.org) to learn more**

# Help Your Community

Join our volunteer family! Learn more inside or email [volunteer@ceresproject.org](mailto:volunteer@ceresproject.org)



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# KALE CLUB

“Nobody’s perfect, but EVERYONE can be awesome”



Ceres

COMMUNITY PROJECT

Did you know that March 10 is International Day of Awesomeness? Neither did we! At Ceres, we see awesomeness every day in our clients, teens and volunteers. We’ve decided to embrace this day and challenge you to show your awesomeness by joining Kale Club. Our goal is to welcome 25 new, awesome monthly donors during the week of March 10.

[CeresProject.org/awesome](http://CeresProject.org/awesome)