



# Cathedral Kitchen News

ISSUE #02  
2022

Dear Friends,

As usual, we had a busy summer at Cathedral Kitchen and expect to have an even busier fall. It has been six months since we re-opened the dining room for sit-down meals, and guests seem to be enjoying the re-designed set up of the tables and chairs and the choice seating. When we surveyed guests in July, some of the things they said about eating at CK were that *"it's pleasant and spacious – there's room to move"*, *"it's peaceful,"* *"It's a safe place to come and it's quiet,"* *"I like having people to eat with – the community."* Because of the way guests feel about eating in the dining room, and the increasing costs of almost every commodity, it's not surprising that the number of meals served to guests that come to CK has significantly increased since re-opening the dining room. In fact, in August we served over 10,000 meals in the dining room or to-go, which is the highest monthly count we have on record since before 2014. We have been seeing many new faces among the guests that rely on us for a meal, and more guests than in the past seem to be experiencing substance use and extreme mental health challenges. Our Meal Program staff have done an amazing job helping the guests, maintaining a calm and safe environment, and keeping up with the growing numbers.

Another CK highlight is that in August we were finally approved to erect a 20-foot by 40-foot Pavilion between our two buildings. This structure, which will be named with input from the meal guests, now houses all of the services provided during the meal, in one central location. Both the services that CK offers: beverages such as coffee and lemonade, personal hygiene items, and groceries, as well as our partner organizations' offerings are now provided to our guests in an enclosed space that is heated, cooled and ventilated based on the weather. For more than two years most services have been outdoors, which was often challenging for our guests, staff and partner organizations as we were repeatedly and negatively impacted by inclement weather.

The next significant endeavor for Cathedral Kitchen is to re-open the CK Café in September which has been closed since the beginning of the pandemic. We are re-painting and freshening up the Café space, updating the menu (while keeping some of the favorites) and training current staff to run the Café. It will be re-opening for lunch on Tuesday, September 20th. I hope to run into many of you as you return to eating and visiting in the CK Café this Fall!

Best Wishes,

*Carrie Kitchen-Santiago*

Carrie Kitchen-Santiago  
Executive Director



Our new pavilion, where we can offer guests services like personal care (seen above) away from the elements.

# Cathedral Kitchen Board of Directors

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Melissa Wikle

**Founded in 1976, the Cathedral Kitchen is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.**

## Mission Statement

*Cathedral Kitchen's mission is to help people out of food insecurity and champion their pursuit of stability and prosperity.*

**Federal Identification Number**  
22-3114500

**United Way Agency Code**  
18099

**Combined Federal Campaign Agency Code**  
18099

## Cathedral Kitchen

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*A member of*



# Welcome New Board Members

CK would like to welcome two new members to our Board of Directors!



Erin Coleman is an Emmy Award winning journalist with more than 20 years of on-air news experience who can currently be seen weekday mornings anchoring NBC10 News Today from 4am to 7am. She also co-hosts The Lineup, a digital newscast streamed on the NBC10 apps on Roku and Apple TV. Erin received her Master of Science degree from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Language and Literature from Brown University. Born and raised in South Jersey, Erin began to get involved with Cathedral Kitchen while creating a promotional video for our virtual Harvest Happy Hour event. She began volunteering in the meal program and emceed our Culinary Arts Training Graduation.

When Erin was asked why she wanted to get more involved and join the Board she replied, "I have a profound interest in helping to ease the food insecurity crisis in our community that has been exacerbated by the corona-virus pandemic. I believe no person in the richest country in the world should go hungry and yet it happens quietly every day. I absolutely love what Cathedral Kitchen is doing to not only feed those in need but use that as a gateway to change their lives in other ways."

Zettra Goodman Waters has 30 years of mortgage banking experience and is currently Senior Vice President at Freedom Mortgage Corporation's international headquarters based in Marlton, NJ. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and History from Oberlin College. A graduate of Camden High School, Zettra was inducted into the Camden Schools Foundation Hall of Fame in 2018. She continues to support the Camden City school district by mentoring students and alumni. Zettra is a member of the company's philanthropic committee, Team Freedom Cares, a participant in all Diversity and Inclusion Committee efforts, and a Mentoring Advisor at Freedom Mortgage, in addition to being very active in the Family and Youth Ministry at church. Zettra has volunteered as a server in our Meal Program and a surveyor for the annual Guest Survey, where we gather feedback from our meal guests (see results from this year's survey on page 5) and she is a member of CK's Finance Committee.



When Zettra was asked how CK is meaningful to her, she told us the following, "I believe that in America, people should have certainty around at least one meal a day, something so basic changes lives. Cathedral Kitchen embodies core attributes for the community that I believe in; safety and nourishment."





*SERV provides counselling and assistance to victims of domestic violence and sex trafficking.*

Christina, came from Philadelphia to Camden a few months ago and asked a stranger for help. He was a frequent meal guest at Cathedral Kitchen so he suggested she join him that day and talk to someone. It happened to be a Monday so the Personal Care service, where we distribute toiletries, socks and underwear was taking place. Instead of selecting items on the personal care order form, Christina wrote, "I ran away and need help" and handed it in.

Gwynn, our dedicated volunteer and leader of the Personal Care service, received the note and passed it along to Beck Giovanni, MSW, CK's Guest Services and Data Manager. Trained in domestic violence and trauma, Beck invited Christina to come into the office and offered her assistance.

Christina was clearly scared. She told Beck that the people she was staying with always take her money so she left and was now homeless. Beck conducted a screening consisting of a series of questions, such as, "are you being abused or sex trafficked?", to which Christina replied "no"; but Beck heard some red flags. Christina went on to say the people she was living with would give her drugs and then bring men to the house. Christina did not feel like she could say no to the things they wanted. She felt controlled with no other options.

Beck contacted one of our partner agencies, the SERV division of Center for Family Services, which provides counselling and assistance to victims of domestic violence and sex trafficking. A SERV counselor spoke with Christina and confirmed Beck's suspicion that she was being sex trafficked. The SERV counselor began the process to find a safe house for Christina. Afraid and traumatized, in the meantime, Christina, curled up in a ball to sleep under Beck's desk.

At 7:30 that night the SERV counselor called to say they located a safe house in Central Jersey and Christina could come that evening. Beck drove her to a meeting spot where they would meet with the SERV counselor.

While they were driving, Christina opened up and shared that she had been treated this way by everyone in her life. Her long history of trauma had created mental health challenges for her. Christina had a nickname for herself when she was forced to do things against her will.

It's been more than two months since Christina entered the safe house. The SERV Counselor recently reported back to Beck and shared that Christina is doing well. She is engaging in mental health care and working towards stability.

It is rare that in such a short period of time, Christina was able to trust the people she encountered at Cathedral Kitchen. From the meal guest who brought Christina to CK, to the volunteers at Personal Care, to Beck who knew to ask more questions, to the SERV Counselor who was ready to act on the situation, Christina felt safe enough to open up and break a history of abuse and trauma.

Cathedral Kitchen is a place where people know they can get more than just meals. It is a safe haven where they know that we can help.

**There are 40.3 million survivors of human trafficking globally, with hundreds of thousands in the United States.**

**- Services Empowering Rights of Victims**



## Harvest for Hunger 2022

### Thursday, November 3rd

### 6:00 - 9:00 PM

### *Lucien's - Berlin, NJ*

Harvest for Hunger has been Cathedral Kitchen's annual fundraiser since 2007. After two years of hosting the event virtually, we are excited to be back in person!

Some event highlights include:

- Wine, craft beer, and spirits tastings
- Food stations and hors d'oeuvres prepared and served by CK culinary staff and students
- Silent and live auction and raffles including wines, chefs' tables, sports memorabilia, designer bags, golf outings, and vacations
- Current and former NBC10 news anchors Erin Coleman and Terry Ruggles serving as the auctioneers and emcees

Harvest for Hunger 2019 raised more than \$170,000, which supported CK's human services programs. CK is fortunate to have a loyal base of donors and volunteers, and we hope you are eager to reconnect and attend in person this year!

Tickets and sponsorships are now available! Please visit <http://ckharvest2022.givesmart.com> or text **ckharvest2022** to **76278**. Looking to donate a prize that we can use for the auction? Please call us at 856-964-6771 or email [harvest@cathedralkitchen.org](mailto:harvest@cathedralkitchen.org).



# Survey Says



A volunteer conducts a survey with a meal guest.

Cathedral Kitchen is proud to serve all in the community, no ID or registration required. This summer, we conducted an anonymous guest survey where our meal guests told us their opinions and needs. Upon compiling the results, we are able to identify changes to be made and services to be added in order to meet those needs. A couple of our major changes in recent years, such as starting the personal care service and redesigning the dining room layout, were due to the results of past guest surveys.

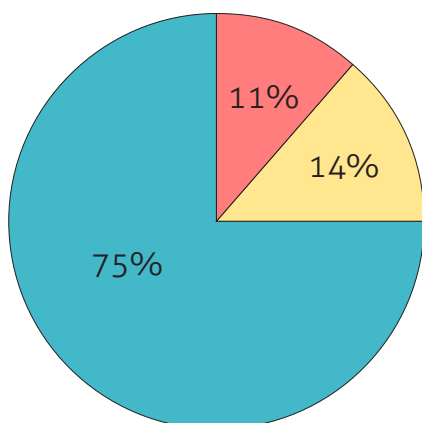
Some notable results of this year's survey include the following: 26% of guests have been coming to CK for meals and services less than a year and 37% have been coming for more than 5 years. 69% of guests have been without stable housing for some, most, or all of the last 3 years. 36% of guests are responsible for kids under the age of 18. More data can be seen below.

Cathedral Kitchen continues to serve hot meals to hundreds of people each day. This summer we have watched numbers rise both on-site and through our outreach, and strive to meet the rising need of those in the community. Cathedral Kitchen provides a safe, welcoming space and a sense of community to all who need it.



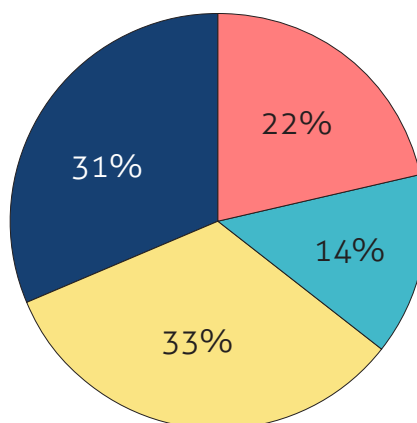
- 96% of guests say they think the meals taste good
- 81% of guests report having gotten a COVID vaccination
- 79% of guests surveyed say they are from Camden

**CK Guest Employment Status**



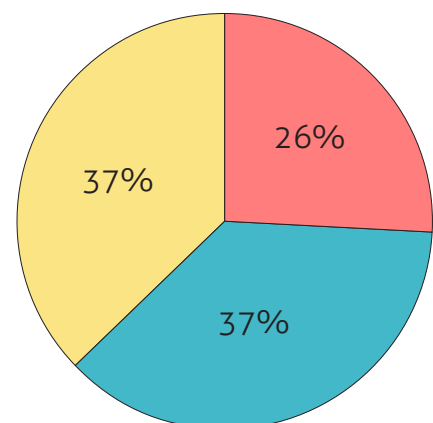
■ Unemployed  
■ Working Full-Time  
■ Working Part-Time

**Amount of time CK Guests have been without stable housing in the past 3 years**



■ Most of the 3 years  
■ All of the 3 years  
■ Some of the 3 years  
■ Never

**Guests have been coming to CK for...**



■ More than 5 years  
■ Less than 1 year  
■ Between 1-5 years

**"I like the way I am treated when I'm here. CK doesn't judge you, they welcome you with open arms." -CK Meal Guest**



*CK's contract meal team provides meals 365 days a year to 9 VOADV sites.*



In 2011, Volunteers of America Delaware Valley (VOADV) approached CK about providing meals for its eight sites (transitional housing and shelters) on a contract basis. With limited kitchen space, CK was only able to take on a pilot program with one site at the time.

The pilot was a success and in 2013, CK was fortunate to be able to acquire the building next door, 1506 Federal Street, and rehab it into a social enterprise that could take on VOADV's full contract as an income generator, as well as serve as an employment site for CK's culinary graduates and Camden residents.

In 2014, construction was completed and the VOADV contract meal program began. This past year, a ninth VOADV site in Blackwood was added to CK's contract. For the past eight years, CK has prepared an average of 1,600 daily meals, 365 days per year, totaling more than 4.5 million meals for VOADV's sites. Each meal is required to meet nutritional standards set by the state. CK meets regularly with VOADV staff to assure client satisfaction and receives very positive reviews regarding the quality of the meals and service from residents.

The VOADV contract is run by Chef Danny Satterfield and Sous Chef LeBaron Harvey (CK Graduate). It operates from 4:00 AM to 6:00 PM seven days a week. "While the contract provides additional income to help offset CK's human service programs such as the Culinary Arts Training and the Meal Program, the operation's ability to provide employment opportunities in Camden is one of the most satisfying outcomes," says CK's COO John Gonzalez. Currently there are 13 members of the team who are CK graduates and/or Camden residents.

**"Our relationship with Cathedral Kitchen is a unique partnership which is incredibly valuable to us, and more importantly, to those we serve. Their mission is to provide our community with high quality, nutritional sustenance, culinary training, and supportive services to those in need. We are grateful for such a unique partnership which binds us together in our mutual commitment to those in need."**

***-Dan Lombardo, VOADV President***





*Kristal speaks to the Summer 2022 graduating class.*

Five years ago, Kristal, a single mom on probation, decided she wanted to put her past behind her. With her record it was difficult for her to secure a job, so after showcasing her love of cooking, her family and friends referred her to CK's Culinary Program. "I first applied in 2017 but I was still dealing with a lot, so it didn't work out at the time" Kristal explains, "then I decided to try again in 2020... and my class was cut short due to COVID. I was constantly checking my emails to see when the class would resume, and jumped to submit another application the first chance I got." The class wasn't easy for her, but she worked hard, proving to herself and others that she could succeed. "Chef Nai and Ja'Net were strict with me, but that's what I needed" she says, "the class gave me the structure that I needed to move forward in life."

Kristal says she is thankful for everything she was taught in class, as she implements all of it at her current employment at the Merchantville Country Club. From different techniques and skills, to budgeting time and carrying one-self properly, she feels confident in her position. "The class and Chef Nai (her catering experience especially) prepared me for this environment" Kristal states, "one day I'm working a big catering job for a golf tournament, another day I'm working at the restaurant... but no matter what I'm sure I can get the job done."

Kristal Jimenez graduated from CK's Spring 2022 Culinary Arts class with the Award of "Outstanding Student with Potential to Succeed" and has certainly lived up to the title. Praised by her instructors, fellow classmates, and CK staff for her hard work during the class, she now works at the Merchantville Country Club: catering for events and golf tournaments, and working in the bar and restaurant. "I'm grateful to CK, Chef Nai and Ja'Net especially" she says while discussing her journey, "they pushed me to be the best person that I could be."



*Kristal and her team show off their dish during the pasta competition that is held each semester.*

## CK Café & Pop Up



Our team has been working hard preparing the CK Café for its Grand Reopening on **Tuesday, September 20th**! Come join us for lunch featuring plenty of new delicious dishes, along with some past best sellers.

**The CK Café will be open Monday through Friday from 11AM - 2PM, located at 1506 Federal Street in Camden.**

While we prepare to open the Café for business, our CK Café Pop-Up meals for 4 are still going strong! If you haven't ordered yet, place your order at <http://ckcafepopup.square.site> and give it a try. Many keep coming back each week for these delicious meals prepared by our Kitchen team.

Proceeds from both the CK Café and the CK Café Pop-Up help us meet the needs of those we serve in the community.

## CK Café Grand Reopening - Tuesday, September 20th!



***You're Invited!***  
**Cathedral Kitchen's 14th Annual**

Presenting Sponsor:

**Holman**

# Harvest for Hunger 2022

Thursday, November 3, 2022 | 6:00 - 9:00 PM  
***Lucien's - Berlin, NJ***

***Join us for a night of bidding, food,  
drinks and fun!***

Visit ***www.ckharvest2022.givesmart.com*** or text  
***ckharvest2022*** to ***76278*** to register and purchase tickets.

*Any questions, please call 856-964-6771 or email [harvest@cathedralkitchen.org](mailto:harvest@cathedralkitchen.org).*

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