



..... COMMON THREADS .....

# COOKING — *for* LIFE —

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



# A MESSAGE FROM LINDA, CHEF ART & JESUS

## DEAR FRIENDS,

At Common Threads, we have always taken a joyful and affirmative approach to bringing health and wellness to children, families and communities through cooking and nutrition education. **We grew by 40% in 2016**, with a focus on not only expanding our reach, but also deepening our local impact and embedding our preventative health programs into school districts and community organizations.

We have prioritized developing nutrition education programs that lead to true behavior change and have conducted rigorous evaluation and external collaboration with academic experts. While creating a scalable and sustainable intervention, Common Threads has created a platform for innovation in nutrition education.

Our programs played a vital role in helping children in underserved communities learn nutrition and hands-on cooking skills, empowering them to be agents of change for healthier families, schools and communities. Our students have learned how to cook healthy meals and snacks for themselves and their families, and have also gained confidence in their own abilities, learned to appreciate other cultures and built important relationships with their peers and mentors.

Thank you for being part of our village and helping us elevate the conversation around cooking as an effective and beautiful way to take care of our families and our future. Together, we can bring more hands on opportunities for children to gain the skills and knowledge they need in order to cook for life!

## IN GOOD HEALTH,

Linda Novick O'Keefe  
Chief Executive Officer

Jesus Salgueiro  
Co-Founder

Chef Art Smith  
Co-Founder

# **WE BELIEVE THAT HEALTHY COOKING, EATING AND LIVING IS NOT JUST A LIFE CHOICE, BUT A HUMAN RIGHT!**


That's why, in 2016, we brought health and wellness to 60,000 students, parents and educators across the country through cooking and nutrition education. At the heart of our organization is a deep commitment to the children, families and communities we serve. With each passing year, we could not be more proud of where we have been and where we are headed.

# SCHOOL YEAR + SUMMER BY THE NUMBERS 2015-2016

served  
**58,745**   
children


 PARTNERED  
with **558** schools &  
community organizations

 **684,745**  
of health and nutrition hours  
education received by program participants

 PROVIDED  
**2,237**  
TEACHERS  
with  
professional development around their  
own wellness & bringing nutrition &  
healthy cooking into the classroom while  
supporting the core content areas

  
REACHED  
**67,722**

children + adults

**51%**   
OF STUDENTS WERE AFRICAN  
AMERICAN OR HISPANIC

 **91%** of students received free  
or reduced-price lunches

**874** VOLUNTEERS  
LOGGED   
**17,321** hours  
in our kitchens and in support  
of our mission

  
CELEBRATED  
**13** YEARS

of teaching children living in  
underserved communities  
how to cook wholesome,  
healthy meals and snacks

 **498,024**  
healthy snacks & meals were  
prepared & enjoyed by students

 TRAINED  
**83** LOCAL  
CHEFS  
to teach healthy cooking classes in  
our schools & community partners



# SCHOOL YEAR + SUMMER BY THE NUMBERS 2015-2016



SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS CHOSE FROM

## 8 PROGRAMS

to bring nutrition & healthy cooking education to their students & families



PARTNERED WITH

## 376

summer programming partners, bringing nutrition education to students beyond the regular school year

### improved openness to new foods



55% of students tried at least 6 vegetables after program participation



### PROGRAMMING OUTCOMES

## 80%

of students could correctly answer nutrition knowledge questions after class

## 67%

of students reported liking vegetables after class and 64% reported consuming vegetables at least once per day



LAUNCHED

## COMMONBYTES

our online digital learning platform for nutrition & healthy cooking education

## 70%

of students agree that they communicate with their family about healthy eating after class.

## 85%

of students reported frequently eating together with their families and 47% help cook at home at least 3 days per week

## 88%

of all students who completed a Common Threads class feel they are able to **execute the cooking skills** they learned in class



"We are so grateful for our partnership with Common Threads. I can tell how excited our families are to learn new, simple, healthy ideas and become more knowledgeable about what they are feeding their children. Because of our partnership with Common Threads, I know our families will make healthier choices!"

- AMANDA POUR  
AUSTIN

"Making the pasta salad was so much fun. My other friends tried some of mine and said it was really good! I put in a lot of healthy vegetables. Thank you for sharing the table with us!"

-KIMBERLY  
LOS ANGELES

## 2016 RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

### NEWTEAMMEMBERS

We said we wanted to grow and we did. In 2016, Common Threads added **5 new positions** to an already amazing staff. The focused team continues to work together to achieve our strategic goals. We also trained **83 local chefs** to teach healthy cooking classes in our schools and community sites.

### PROGRAMMING

School and community partners were able to choose from **eight different programs** to bring nutrition and healthy cooking education to their students and families. Our Small Bites nutrition education program is available in- or after-school and is aligned to local education standards, engaging students' tastes and minds.

Cooking Skills & World Cuisine is our flagship program that teaches hands-on cooking techniques while exploring global food culture. Our Family Cooking Classes give parents the opportunity to share the table with their children over a healthy home-cooked meal. We also host Parent Workshops, Grocery Store Tours, Healthy Teacher Trainings and Teacher Cooking Classes to build a nurturing and supportive community of healthy role models around students that values nutrition and healthy cooking.

Common Threads has built partnerships with **558 schools and community organizations** to deliver our programming in nine major U.S. cities: Austin, Chicago, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Pittsburgh and Washington DC!



# 2016 RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

## COMPLIANCE

In 2016, Common Threads continued to set new standards for research and evaluation by a community-based organization. In addition to maintaining approved protocols at our Institutional Review Board, Common Threads now has approved research and evaluation protocols in seven school districts. We adopted the Common Threads Privacy Policy and became a signatory to the Student Privacy Pledge.

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In 2016, Common Threads developed collaborations to build evidence for the effect of cooking and nutrition education on health. We were fortunate to work with the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University to develop a culinary nutrition and community service curriculum for medical students.

We also collaborated with the New York University Center for Study of Asian American Health on the feasibility of using dietary recall measures, and the Center for Social and Economic Research at the University of Southern California on enhancing the effectiveness of nutrition education on vegetable consumption. A collaboration with the University of North Florida in Jacksonville provided valuable feedback on the satisfaction of schools in Jacksonville with Common Threads programs.

2016 also saw the publication of the University of Chicago's evaluation of our Cooking Skills and World Cuisine program in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, as well as presentations of our work at the conferences of the American Society of Nutrition, the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior, and the American Public Health Association.



"In my class, I learned to work together with my mother. Me and my mother can now bond through cooking. Now I have a new perspective on my foods."

- BLAIR BUTLER  
WASHINGTON DC

"Common Threads has changed the way students think about eating. With the nutrition knowledge gained, they are beginning to make better choices."

- DONNA CALDER  
CHICAGO

## 2016 RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

### ENGAGEMENT

In 2016, Common Threads held its signature event, the **Chicago Cook-Off**, to engage supporters and stakeholders in our largest and oldest market around a night of great food and fun. In Miami, we also hosted a **Cooking for Life Family Takeover Day**, a free event for local families to experience our programs firsthand with hands-on cooking lessons, healthy snack demos, games, live music, yoga and more. The next day, our **Sunday Brunch** brought together local supporters for an amazing meal cooked by celebrity chefs to raise money to fund our programs.

CT also hosted a series of expert panel discussions that brought together thought leaders from health, education, nonprofit, government and academia in Miami, LA, DC and Chicago. Our partners in all these spheres realize how critical it is to invest in the health of our children today. We are grateful to have support from individuals and organizations who have committed to giving underserved children in their communities a chance to lead healthier lives.

### COMMON BYTES GOES NATIONAL

After a successful beta-launch in Miami during the 2015-16 school year, Common Threads publicly launched its digital platform, Common Bytes, in the fall of 2016 and attracted users in all 50 states. The focus for 2016 was spreading awareness about Common Bytes as a resource to supplement our existing programs and provide widespread access to our nutrition education curriculum. We added more healthy recipes to the site to support classroom cooking and built digital versions of our students' favorite games from class so that they could bring the learning home and share with their families.



# OUR FINANCIALS



**INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS**  
\$43,706

**CORPORATE GRANTS**  
\$384,623

**FOUNDATION & TRUST GRANTS**  
\$2,357,726

**BOARD**  
\$37,246

**IN-KIND DONATIONS**  
\$602,951

**SPECIAL EVENTS REVENUE**  
\$122,162

**PROGRAM SERVICE FEES**  
\$76,952

**INVESTMENT INCOME**  
\$559

**OTHER INCOME**  
\$7,311

**A BIG HEARTFELT**

**THANK YOU**

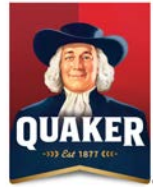
**TO OUR BOARD AND  
ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS**

## Institutional Funders

\$150,000 +



\$50,000 - \$149,999



ANNENBERG  
FOUNDATION



\$10,000 - \$49,999



ANONYMOUS FAMILY FOUNDATION

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3M

84.51

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