

# FULL PLATES

Spring 2024



## *Congratulations Graduates*

We recently had the pleasure of holding the 44th Community Kitchen Academy graduation. Four individuals graduated from this intensive 9-week program after having grown their confidence not only in the kitchen but in themselves!

Students graduate with ServSafe training, and work readiness skills, and are more ready to be employed in the food service industry. Students work with instructor, Chef Jon, to cook the food and produce nutritious meals that are served at Feeding Chittenden's food shelf, through the Good Food Truck, at local shelters, and more.



Your support makes the Community Kitchen Academy, food shelf, and all of our programming possible.

***Thank you for Feeding Chittenden  
and the Champlain Valley.***

With Gratitude,

Rob Meehan, Director



**Together, we can provide food,  
community, and opportunity for our  
neighbors facing hunger and  
food insecurity.**

# Changing Lives, One Meal at a Time

There is a feeling of great comfort that comes when you're served a hot meal. It is the quickest way to fill a hungry stomach and provide energy, relief, and bring the joy of flavor.

***With your help, Feeding Chittenden brought feelings of comfort to thousands of our neighbors last year by preparing and distributing 152,540 nutritious and delicious meals throughout Northwestern Vermont.***

We meet people where they're at, delivering meals to households, housing sites, and serving guests at the Community Resource Center, a warming shelter and resource hub located at Feeding Chittenden.

## ***Who are the cooks behind this incredible work?***

Feeding Chittenden's Chef Instructor, Jon Barzensky, Community Kitchen Academy (CKA) students, and volunteers prepare, package, and serve over 150 meals daily. It takes teamwork, resourcefulness, and lots of creativity to meet the need.

CKA is a statewide program of the Vermont Foodbank that operates in partnership with Feeding Chittenden in Burlington. This program teaches culinary skills to unemployed and underemployed adults to prepare them for sustainable careers in the food service industry.



Chef Jon takes students through a rigorous culinary curriculum where they practice what they've learned by preparing, packaging, and serving their creations.

***"We see people from all backgrounds, from different places, families with young children, people who are experiencing homelessness...Every day we serve a high-quality breakfast like French toast, eggs benedict, quiche, sausage, bacon, fresh fruit – and people are so excited."***  
- Chef Jon

***90% of the ingredients used in these meals come from rescued food*** – perfectly good food that grocery stores throw away due to damaged packaging, bumps and bruises, or nearing expiration dates. Feeding Chittenden rescues over one million pounds of food from landfills each year, supplying our kitchen with a mix of fresh fruits and vegetables, pantry staples, meat, dairy, and more.

***"CKA helps students grow into confident, competent graduates."***

# Meet our Volunteer Orlando

Orlando is a graduate of the CKA and now volunteers daily at Feeding Chittenden helping prepare food that is served for breakfast, packaged up for Grab n' Go meals, and distributed throughout the Champlain Valley.

Orlando grew up on the “streets of Puerto Rico, surrounded by drugs and gang activity.” He moved to the United States in 1980 and settled in Vermont after a period of incarceration. He has made big changes in his life and is dedicated to helping people. He believes that “everyone is good for something” and that he has found a passion for cooking, helping the community, and teaching what he has learned.

Orlando has seen and felt first-hand the impact that CKA has on students, “this can change people’s lives. It’s about something bigger than exams, ***people are different by the end of the course, they really care.***”

Orlando says he has found a sense of purpose in this work. He lives in a temporary shelter in Burlington and brings meals to those in need on his way home from Feeding Chittenden. He dreams of one day owning and operating a Puerto Rican food truck and living in a tiny home somewhere in Vermont.

***“All this help is changing my life. You are all my family now.”***





# YOU CAN MAKE *a difference*

*when you give back*

## ***Give Food***

Feeding Chittenden gladly accepts unopened, nonperishable food items. Food drives and donations help us stock a wider variety of foods in our pantries year-round. Visit [feedingchittenden.org](http://feedingchittenden.org) for a food drive toolkit and more.

## ***Volunteer***

Are you looking for a way to get involved? Consider volunteering as an individual, community group, or business! We couldn't do our work without our 250+ dedicated volunteers. Learn more at [feedingchittenden.org/get-involved](http://feedingchittenden.org/get-involved).

## ***Donate***

Your gift today will support a variety of programs that feed people and cultivate opportunities for those living in poverty. With your help, we can continue to share nutritious food with individuals, families, and seniors who rely on us to get enough to eat. There are a variety of ways to give!

*Make your gift today:*



## ***Leave a Legacy***

To leave a gift to Feeding Chittenden, a program of CVOEO, consider using the following language in your will: "I give and bequeath unto Feeding Chittenden at CVOEO, tax ID #03-0216837, \_\_\_% of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate to be used for general charitable purposes."

**Want to learn more?**

Contact [philanthropy@cvoeo.org](mailto:philanthropy@cvoeo.org).



**FEEDING**  
*Chittenden*

