One of Teen Leader Diego Maldonado’s favorite Ceres memories is cooking a fundraising dinner at Forestville’s renowned Backyard Restaurant alongside other Teen Chefs. As he and Elliot worked the stoves in the open kitchen and sent out plate after plate of beautiful, delicious food, he was having too much fun to feel stress or nervousness.

Diego has come a long way from his first day in Ceres’ Sebastopol kitchen. It was June 20, 2012, two days after he’d attended an orientation session. A shy person by nature, he was very nervous about “starting something completely out of my comfort zone” and concerned that he wouldn’t know anyone, but was soon welcomed by staff who recognized him from the orientation, and teen Maya who put him at ease as she showed him around the kitchen. His fears allayed, he started his first task: making a soup. “I had to add saffron,” Diego remembers. “I didn’t know what it was. How could such a small amount impact such a giant quantity of soup?”

Today, Diego wears the white chefs’ coat of a Ceres Teen Leader and has made lasting friendships with teens he’s met from as far away as Petaluma, Pt. Reyes and even Germany. He’s transformed from a shy teen into a young adult comfortable speaking to large or small groups about Ceres’ work. That stint behind the stoves at Backyard’s Ceres fundraiser turned into his first job. He’s changed his eating habits, forsaking junk and fast food, which “just don’t appeal to me anymore” and favoring fresh home-cooked vegetarian food. He rides his skateboard rather than driving, aware of the environmental and health impacts of his choices. At home, Diego cooks, gardens, composts and recycles, and enjoys stronger bonds with his family through new common interests such as cooking. He and his mother have read Ceres’ Nourishing Connections Cookbook numerous times, and use it regularly. The whole family now eats more vegetables, whole grains and probiotic-rich foods.

When I asked him the most important lessons he’s learned at Ceres, the first thing he said was: “First of all, I would never have been sitting here talking to you 2-1/2 years ago. I’m much more confident now.” He also recognizes Ceres’ influence on his decision to college. As the first in his family to pursue a higher education, Diego says there was a lot he didn’t know and that his family couldn’t help him with. Ceres’ Associate Director Margaret Howe provided mentoring and support. Diego has just completed his first semester. His long-held desire to be a chef hasn’t changed, but his time at Ceres honed his career focus, leading him to course work including nutrition and dietetics. He knows he’ll “have more career options because of that.” From not considering college as an option, Diego now intends to pursue a four-year degree.

(continued on next page)
As a Teen Leader, Diego regularly contributes new ideas. In one instance, he approached Margaret with a concern that some of the newly-named Teen Leaders weren’t ready for the task and needed additional skills to be effective. Margaret considered his comments and then sent a note to all the Teen Leaders inviting them to participate in a teen-led committee to develop new criteria for Teen Leader advancement. Diego was part of the group that developed a checklist and self-review matrix for applicants, and a peer-review process for current Teen Leaders to assess applicants’ readiness. Diego says that process “felt amazing. It was a new experience for me. I said something that was risky. I was listened to. I made a difference!”

Margaret points out that Diego’s experience “didn’t happen in a vacuum. He was listened to all along, when cutting salmon, leading a recipe, or talking with staff. He learned to trust that it was OK to come forward with this bigger issue. We see all teens as capable, creative and caring, and believe that they make Ceres better when we listen to them and include them in decision-making. We treat young people with respect, and give them the space to contribute. That changes their relationship to their world in a profound way.”

Today, through his time at Ceres, Diego has gained a deep understanding of how a seemingly small amount of something can have a big impact—in the world, just as in a soup. His time at Ceres has “given me hope. The world is not the happiest place, but that just means there’s a lot more room to make it better. I feel really proud that every week, I’m able to make a difference in the lives of the 100 clients we serve.”

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**Introducing the Newest Teen Member of Ceres’ Board of Directors**

Jessie Brandt has joined Ceres’ Board, in one of two seats designated for youth. Jessie, an incoming Senior at Summerfield Waldorf School, is “so excited that this position was created. I appreciate that Ceres sees and brings out wisdom in us young people, and allows us to have a voice in the community. This dynamic of listening to ideas and giving wisdom is part of the beautiful rhythm of Ceres. In this opportunity to experience a wider perspective of the program, I look forward learning about all the parts of the organization that carry out our mission. I will bring my view as a kitchen worker, a member of the Teen Leader team, and as a young person, looking and living life in a different way. I am honored to, for my last year in this community, help in a new way to spread our web of love.”
Improved Service for Spanish Speaking Clients

“Sometimes I almost doubt I went through cancer.” After treatment for breast cancer last year, Agua Caliente resident Noemi, 63, “continue(s) to live with enthusiasm for life, for family, for myself.” Ceres provided 12 weeks of healing meals for Noemi, and also her mother, aged 93, during treatment. Noemi lives with her son, and helps care for her mother during the day.

Noemi enjoyed her meals, knowing they would help her keep up her strength, and were designed to be of special benefit during her treatment, when nausea and lack of appetite can leave many patients malnourished and with less successful treatment outcomes.

Because of that, she tried all of the dishes and foods in her weekly delivery, some of which were unfamiliar to her. Her favorites included the weekly fish and poultry entrées, salads and healthy desserts, while she was less fond of the broth, which she shared with her daughter.

Noemi has always cooked every day, and is back to doing so now. She credits Ceres’ influence with some lasting changes to her diet, including giving up canned food, adding more fresh foods, and adopting water as her beverage of choice.

In 2014, our Sonoma Valley kitchen served nearly 6,500 meals to 47 clients and their families, and we’re on track to deliver nearly 15,000 this year.

To better serve clients like Noemi, whose primary language is Spanish, we’ve translated most of our written client resources into Spanish, added a Spanish-language phone line, and are offering our Healing Foods Basics nutrition class in Spanish. We have trained additional bilingual client liaisons, each of whom holds a small number of clients and conducts an initial home visit followed by weekly phone calls throughout service to answer questions, provide resources, and make adjustments as needed to the client’s meals.

It’s personal connections like these that make receiving meals from Ceres such a life-changing and affirming experience for Noemi and the 150 other clients we are honored to serve each week from our three program sites in Sonoma and Marin. ♥
Ceres Supports Efforts to Close the Gap in Outcomes

Ceres Community Project is proud to be a pledge signer to A Portrait of Sonoma County, an in-depth report released last year that looks at how residents of Sonoma County are faring in three fundamental areas of life – health, access to knowledge, and living standards – that are essential to well-being and opportunity. While many are doing well, the report showcases wide disparities in outcomes based on where people live, their ethnicity and their level of education. Though often hidden from view, similar disparities exist in all the communities we serve.

At Ceres we’re focused on insuring that our programs reach those who have the most to gain. Here are a few examples of work we’re doing to close the opportunity gap for groups and neighborhoods facing the greatest disparity:

• 78% of Ceres’ clients have household incomes below $45,000 and 57% below $25,000

• Over the past eighteen months we’ve translated most client materials into Spanish, trained bi-lingual Client Liaisons, and now offer Healing Foods Basics in Spanish

• At our new Dream Center program site in Santa Rosa we’ll provide opportunities for youth who have experienced trauma, neglect, abuse and other challenges to discover their power to make a difference while gaining the skills they need to be successful in life, school and work

• Sonoma Valley, where we opened a program site two years ago, is home to two Sonoma County neighborhoods with the greatest disparity. This year we’ll provide 15,000 meals for low-income families with illness and 3,000 hours of connection and work-based learning for young people.

Portrait of Sonoma County: Agenda for Action

• Make Universal Preschool a Reality
• Redouble Antismoking Efforts
• Improve Neighborhood Conditions to Facilitate Healthy Behaviors
• Mend the Holes in the Safety Net for Undocumented Immigrants
• Address Inequality at Education’s Starting Gate
• Prioritize On-Time High School Graduation
• Reduce Youth Disconnection
• Take a Two-Pronged Approach to Raising Earnings: Boost Education and Improve Pay
Your Help Makes all the Difference

by Executive Director Cathryn Couch

I hope you were inspired like I am when you read about the ways you and other Ceres supporters are changing the lives of cancer patients like Noemi and teen leaders like Diego. The delicious and nutrient-rich organic meals help nourish our clients back to health – and show them they’re not alone at one of the most challenging moments in their lives. At the same time, teen leaders like Diego discover their power to make a difference while learning to cook and eat for health in the Ceres’ garden and kitchen.

We’ve raised more than one-third of our $1.6 million goal, but we still have a long way to go….and we need your financial support!

Thanks to Ceres’ unique program, every dollar you give helps care for clients suffering from life-threatening illness and mentor the young people in our community. Your gift of $500 will provide 8 weeks of meals for a client and 16 hours of mentoring for a young person like Diego. A gift of $100 will provide 11 nourishing meals and 3 hours of mentoring. If you’ve already donated to Ceres’ 2015 Annual Campaign, thank you. If not, could you make a gift today? You can use the donation envelope included with the newsletter or donate quickly and easily online by using the Donate button at www.ceresproject.org.

More than 600 families like Noemi’s are counting on our help this year, and every meal they receive will be prepared by a teen like Diego who gains life-long skills and discovers the joy of giving back.

Thank you for creating a caring community.

♥

Thanks to the following donors, who have donated $25,000 or more for major support of our programs this year

Anonymous*
Jim & Patricia Costello*
Dean Witter Foundation*
Myra & Drew Goodman
The James Irvine Foundation*
The John Jordan Foundation
Ren Nelson
Sonoma Wine Country Weekend
Walmart Foundation*
Greg Young

*indicates new donor

Enjoy more stories, photos and video about our work and its impacts in our online annual report www.CeresProject.org/AR2014
Upcoming Classes & Events

Volunteer!

We have regular orientations for new teen and adult volunteers. You can find out more about Ceres and discover the many ways to get involved. Visit our website to see a list of dates for our three locations.

Visit our website to register and get more information about our classes and events.

www.CeresProject.org/Events.html

Connect with us

www.CeresProject.org
www.CeresProject.org/Facebook
www.Pinterest.com/CeresProject

Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter

www.CeresProject.org

Upcoming Classes & Events

June 23
Annual Teen Dinner at zazu kitchen + farm (see back cover)

July 15
6:00 – 9:00 pm
Benefit Concert with Jazz Singer Kellye Gray at Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary

Join us for an exceptional summer night in the Osmosis Meditation Garden with Texas native Kellye Gray, one of the most accomplished jazz vocalists on the national scene. Her stunning musicality and warm, enveloping voice will fill the evening air with magic. Kellye has entertained dignitaries and heads-of-state, and shared stages with an impressive constellation of international jazz, blues and R&B stars in a career spanning twenty years.

Enjoy a sumptuous meal prepared and served by Ceres’ Teen Chefs along with wine, other beverages and desserts. Then cap the night with a sole-warming cedar enzyme foot bath.

Tickets for the evening are $65 and are available online at www.osmosis.com/event

Thank you to Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary for supporting Ceres with this event!

September 26
10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Now in its 19th year, the Kendall-Jackson Heirloom Tomato Festival is a full-day event featuring more than 150 varieties of heirloom tomatoes (grown in the Kendall-Jackson culinary gardens); a chef competition featuring Bravo's Top Chef contenders; and tomato-inspired dishes from nearly 50 prominent wine country and Bay Area restaurant chefs and food purveyors. Guests will also enjoy wine tasting, live music and educational wine and garden seminars.

Join Ceres at this fun event, where we’ll offer two special dishes created to showcase the delicious flavors of heirloom tomatoes.

Tickets are available now at www.KJ.com/Visit-Tomato-Festival

October 13
CeresFest
our 3rd Oktoberfest Celebration
Lagunitas Taproom, Petaluma

Watch our website for more event details.

Save the Date
Kendall-Jackson Heirloom Tomato Festival benefiting Ceres Community Project

Healing Foods Basics
This class offers a practical overview of Ceres' nutrient-rich approach to healthy eating, with recipes, resources and a food demonstration.

Three Dates to Choose From
June 25 ¡En Español!
July 30
Ceres Community Meeting Room
7351 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol
August 26
Hanna Boys Center
17000 Arnold Drive, Sonoma

All classes from 6-8 pm.
For more information and to register:

www.CeresProject.org/HPB
Harvest of the Heart

August 15

Please join us in the Ceres Community Garden for an evening of food prepared by a gathering of the best chefs in Sonoma County paired with some of the finest wines in the world, all served in the Ceres way—with warmth, generosity, and abundance of spirit!

Chefs
Daniel Kedan, Chef/Owner, Backyard Restaurant
Barbara Hom, Chef/Owner at Night Owl Catering
And more renowned chefs, including the Ceres Teens!

Ceres Smoothie Bar · Country Fair Games & Music
Live Auction, featuring auctioneer, State Senator Mike McGuire

Help us raise $200,000 to nourish local families facing a health crisis, and empower teens.
Tickets plus Sponsor and Table Host opportunities available at www.CeresProject.org/Harvest2015

Kale Sunflower Pesto

Dairy Free

1 bunch of Lacinato or other kale
\( \frac{1}{2} \) – \( \frac{3}{4} \) cup extra virgin olive oil
\( \frac{1}{4} \) cup fresh lemon juice, preferably from Meyer lemons
1 cup toasted sunflower seeds

1. In a three quart pot, boil water for blanching the kale. Have a medium bowl of ice water set aside for cooling the kale after it is blanched.

2. While the water is coming to a boil, strip the leaves from the stems of the kale. When the water has boiled, place the leaves in the boiling water. Turn off the heat and wait about 4 minutes until the kale leaves are bright green. Using a slotted spoon remove the kale and dip it into the ice water to stop it from cooking. Leaves should be a bright green color.

3. Using your hands, squeeze as much liquid out of the kale as you can.

In a blender or food processor put \( \frac{1}{2} \) cup olive oil, the lemon juice, sunflower seeds, garlic, salt, kale leaves and optional cheese if you are using it. Pulse, then blend until smooth. Add more olive oil if it needs to be creamier.

4. Store the pesto in a glass container or freeze. Pour a thin layer of olive oil over the top to reduce oxidation. Pesto will last for 3 to 4 days in the refrigerator and up to a month in the freezer.

Makes about \( 1 \frac{1}{2} \) – 2 cups
Annual Campaign
Goal $1,600,000
Contribute online or with enclosed envelope today
www.CeresProject.org

5th Annual
zazu kitchen + farm dinner

Join us for a deliciously exciting evening, when Ceres’ Teen Chefs take over the cooking and serving at zazu alongside Chef-owners Duskie Estes and John Stewart
3 course prix-fixe menu $49 per person

Tuesday, June 23
Doors open at 5:00 pm
zazu kitchen + farm
6770 McKinley St, Sebastopol
call 707·523·4814 today for reservations.

Thank You!