



project feast

empowering refugee & immigrant cooks



Project Feast is a 501c(3) nonprofit social enterprise. Our mission is to transform the lives of refugee and immigrant cooks through providing pathways to employment in the food industry and to be a platform for intercultural exchange in the broader community.

2016: A Look Back

<http://ProjectFeast.org>

Project Feast was founded in 2013 with the premise that refugee and immigrant women have many skills they bring with them to the United States, including their culinary skills and heritage. Project Feast offers the refugees and immigrants who face many barriers, an opportunity to make their cooking skills marketable in the food industry.

We tested our premise through training sessions that enabled cooks to obtain food handler permits and familiarize themselves with catering as well as facilitating cooking classes. We hired refugees and immigrants to help us cater events providing them experience, wages and enabling many in the broader community to taste amazing and authentic food from many countries. Some early successes lead us to launching Commercial Kitchen Basics, a 6 week skills program and subsequently a part time apprenticeship to run a small deli in partnership with the Tukwila Community Center. Through these trainings, we graduated more than 30 refugee and immigrant cooks, predominantly women and enabled 150 people to obtain food handler permits.

In these early years, while we targeted job placement or further training as outcomes, we saw that our programs helped our participants gain confidence. We realized that intangible outcomes such as increased comfort in public speaking and confidence were just as important to getting jobs and advancing as hard skills are. Through the deli apprenticeship program, we realized that a longer format hands on experience would be more beneficial than our 6 week skills training for skill retention as well as for skills that could lead to more advanced positions in a commercial kitchen. While many of our participants wanted jobs in the food industry, many shared their dreams of opening their own food business. Throughout this year there was a constant stream of news regarding the Syrian refugee crisis and the highly divisive Presidential election. There was much portrayal of refugees and immigrants in a negative light. It's always been a part of the Project Feast mission to be a platform for intercultural exchange. This year, we were determined to take our community events to the next level. These realizations led us to creating an outline for **Project Feast 2.0: a more intensive and longer culinary training wrapped around running a small restaurant and creating a myriad of opportunities for deep intercultural dialogue.**

Today, we are poised to launch the new apprenticeship program in mid January and open the café to the public in mid February. We look forward to a busy year with graduating many apprentices, deepening our partnerships, continuing our community events and fostering dialogue. Your support has been invaluable. We hope you will continue to follow us, attend our events, hire us for catering, and invest in our platform for empowering refugee and immigrant cooks.

With gratitude,
Veena Prasad
Executive Director

community events



We engaged more than **400** people through our programs, alumni and outreach events. We launched two new programs that focus on creating platforms for intercultural exchange and peaceful dialogue.

Migrating Meals is a monthly series in which we feature a different immigrant or refugee run food restaurant every month. In groups of 15 or 20 we share a meal and engage in meaningful discussion, as we learn about the home country of the restaurant owner and share stories.

Potluck for Peace is an initiative launched in partnership with Interfaith Community Sanctuary that focuses on bringing people of all backgrounds together to share food from their home countries and engage in peace building dialogue while celebrating our shared humanity. We launched our first Potluck for Peace in September 2016 in honor of Welcoming Week and World Peace Day.

"What a perfect combination of people, food, and conversation. Not to mention poetry readings and an article that likens our language as ecosystems. This is an interesting way to bring light to areas of the world--like Kurdistan--that we may not know a lot about." - Migrating Meals attendee



catering



Our catering program continued to receive rave reviews for our delicious food. Since we had an extended kitchen search this year, our catering was reduced to what events we could do as private cooking, demos, or in partnership with our friends at Carver Kitchen. Through these events, more than **1300** people had an opportunity to taste food from Iraq, Eritrea, Somalia, Burma, Philippines and other countries.

We catered events ranging from **20 to 200+** people. Our customers ranged from WA State Department of Health to social justice organizations like No New Jim Crow.

"What a wonderful, wonderful meal Project Feast provided last night...people were raving about the food"
- Barbara McMichael, SoCoCulture



training café



Apprenticeship

This is a 4 month hands-on culinary job training program for immigrants and refugees who are passionate about food and starting careers in the food industry.

Hands on Training Participants will gain hands on experience in a working commercial kitchen. On the job training will include working in our lunch cafe as well as gaining work experience in our catering program.

Leadership Training Students will have the opportunity to develop skills such as public speaking, complete personalized projects, and event planning.

Job Support Participants will be supported in their search for and securing of jobs in the food industry.

We are excited to announce the launch our Culinary Apprenticeship Program and training cafe in January 2017. After an extensive search this year, we secured a commercial kitchen in Kent, found funding and began the process of permitting and construction for required remodels. We're launching our training cafe in partnership with the Food Innovation Network (FIN). While we provide culinary training, our FIN partners help food entrepreneurs in South King County incubate new businesses in the same kitchen. Three of these new entrepreneurs are Project Feast alumni who will be starting their own food business next year.

Our experience with the search and the hassles of remodeling will make us better mentors for our graduates who dream about their own business.

We recently formalized a partnership with Highline College to receive accreditation. Our apprentices will receive 20 credits and a Highline Certificate upon graduation. In all, apprentices will receive more than 400 hours of training and work experience.

We recently announced that **Executive Chef Lisa Nakamura** will be joining the Project Feast team. Lisa has worked in the food industry for 20+ years, worked at fine dining for Michelin starred restaurants and has opened two of her own restaurants in the Seattle area.

We're grateful for funding from City of Kent and the Port of Seattle for enabling the launch of our training cafe.



2016: At a Glance

- We found the perfect space for a small restaurant in downtown Kent and the necessary remodeling is now underway
- Developed curriculum for a 4 month intensive culinary training program that meets for 5 hours every day
- Gained accreditation for our apprenticeship program through Highline College.
- Entered an agreement to be anchor tenant and provide orientation and some mentorship to FIN entrepreneurs incubating food businesses for the first time
- Launched Potluck for Peace and Migrating Meals
- Developed new partnerships and strengthened others
- Hired Executive Chef Lisa Nakamura
- Raised \$25K in donations and matching and \$70K for launching the apprenticeship program and building our capacity next year

2017 Goals

- Launch the apprenticeship program and graduate 15 apprentices
- Launch cafe and through it, further diversify revenue stream
- Expand our catering by 50% and increase our capacity to cater events larger than 200 people
- Expand our individual donor base and attract major donors
- Expand our platform for community events and touch 500-700 people
- Expand the board of directors

Alumni Spotlight

- Hawa Sheikhadan, Inna Stetsenko, and Angelica Hernandez started food businesses of their own
- Sisters Sheelan and Zozan Shamdeen and Yanzhi Zhang and her friends have concrete plans to start their own food businesses and will be operating from the Project Feast / FIN kitchen
- Jaqueline Garcia, also Project Feast board President, started working at Highline's Startzone program to enable other members of her community to start food and other businesses
- Taghreed Mahmood partnered with Kathleen Flinn, award winning author and journalist to help her write an Iraqi cookbook
- Taghreed Ibrahim successfully enrolled in South Seattle College's pastry school and is at the end of her first year
- Sheelan Shamdeen now works as a Program Assistant at the Food Innovation Network, a close Project Feast partner

donors and funders

Aileen Balahadia
Alison Kapadia
Amy Payne
Andri Kofmehl
Anitha Prasad
Angela Meyer
Annie Keating
Bonnie Payne
Brenna D Leker
Brett Tomky
Caitlin Wasley
Candy Lim
Carol Lumb
Carver Kitchen LLC
Cheryl Jenrow
Christine Mackay
Decker Rimmer Foundation
Douglas Loudenschlager
Elisabeth Kofmehl-Luessi
Erika Fardig
Erin O'Neill
Estelle Broyer
Esther Hong
Felix Buchmann

Food Innovation Network
Gnocchi Bar
Harvest Foundation
Hannah Lee-Jones
Jaqueline Garcia
Jessica Clark
Jessie L Rymph
Jon Kroman
Judith payne
Julie Miller
Katherine Burns
Katherine Smith
Kristine Wallen
Laura Neidhart
Lut Van Damme
Maha Shamdeen
Margaret Payne
Mark Reynolds
Marques Kirsch
Mary Rose
Maryjane Gasdick
Medina Foundation

Melanie Wyffels
Nancy Ward
Niki Sharan
Port of Seattle
Pierre Della Nave
Rachel Duboff
Rachel McDonald
Rebecca Finkel
Rene Kofmehl
Ron Lamb
Ruth Etzioni
Seattle Foundation
Sam Snyder
Sandrine Espie
Sarah Tran
Savitha Swaminathan
Shabana Gidwani
Susan E Dorsch
Sze S Lim
Tovolo
Tracy Klinkroth
Victoria Kaplan

Abby Henderson
Andri Kofmehl
Angelica Hernandez
Erin O'Neill
John Saunders

Logan Van Meter
Megan Coombes
Melissa Beadle
Miyoung Yoo
Raquel De Hoyos

Sheelan Shamdeen
Sydney Simon
Taghreed Mahmood
Taghreed Ibrahim
Trinh Duong

partners

Food Innovation Network
Carver Kitchen
Highline College
City of Kent

Jacinta's Apparels
Interfaith Community Sanctuary
Marketshare

Safari Njema Kenyan Restaurant
Olive Tree Mediterranean Restaurant
Assimba Ethiopian Restaurant

In-kind Donation Wishlist

Truck to enable us to cater larger events
iPad for cash register use at our cafe
Commercial gas 2 ft flattop grill

Commercial undercounter dishwasher
Steel prep tables
Commercial refrigeration

*In good working condition

*To make a cash donation, please go to our website and scroll down for the donate button



Gracias **شكرًا** Salamat 謝謝
ጸቅንጸይ አመሰግናለሁ Mahadsanid
سوپاس ДЯКУЮ cho tôi biết

Thank You

A heartfelt thank you to all of you who have believed in our vision and enabled us to make strides through your partnership, donations, time, encouragement and advice. We would not have made it so far without your support.

Board of Directors

Jaqueline Garcia
Laura Neidhart
Sydney Simon
Cheryl Jenrow
Njambi Gishuru

Staff

Veena Prasad
Molly Payne