

Message from the Executive Directors

As summer continues across Contra Costa County, many families are feeling the growing strain of rising food costs, housing expenses, and economic uncertainty. For households already living paycheck to paycheck, the summer months can be especially difficult as children lose access to school meals and family grocery budgets are stretched even further.

Food insecurity remains a serious and growing issue throughout our community. Across California and the Bay Area, more families, seniors, veterans, and individuals are struggling to consistently access nutritious food due to the rising cost of living and ongoing economic pressures. We continue to see increased demand for meals and groceries across our dining rooms, mobile unit, and pantry programs as more neighbors turn to us for support.

Behind every meal served is a story: a senior trying to make a fixed income last, a parent balancing rent and groceries, a veteran facing hardship, or an individual working to rebuild stability after difficult circumstances. Hunger often remains hidden, but the need in our community is very real.

Thanks to the compassion and generosity of our volunteers, donors, staff, and community partners, we are able to continue providing nutritious meals, groceries, and hope to thousands of individuals and families throughout Contra Costa County. Your support allows us to respond to growing needs while continuing to strengthen programs that create long-term impact.

This summer, we remain focused on expanding partnerships, increasing food access, supporting workforce development through our Culinary Arts Training Program, and advancing plans for our new Central Kitchen in Antioch, a project that will significantly increase our ability to serve the community for years to come.

We are deeply grateful for everyone who stands with us in the fight against hunger. Together, we are building a stronger, more compassionate community where no one is forgotten and no one goes hungry.

Janette Kennedy, Executive Director Development & External Relations
Joleen Lafayette, Executive Director Operations



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Executive Director
Development & External Relations



Joleen Lafayette
Executive Director Operations

Special Announcement:

Best of Martinez

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa has once again been recognized in the annual Best of Martinez awards, earning 1st Place for "Best Nonprofit Organization" for the third consecutive year.

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa is deeply honored to receive this meaningful recognition from the community we proudly serve. Since 1983, the organization has provided nutritious meals, groceries, and supportive services to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity throughout Contra Costa County, serving more than 7.5 million meals since its inception.

This recognition reflects the compassion and generosity of the Martinez community, as well as the dedication of the volunteers, donors, community partners, and supporters who make this work possible every day.

"We are deeply grateful for the continued support of our community," said Janette Kennedy, Executive Director Development and External Relations. "This recognition belongs to everyone who helps us nourish lives from our volunteers and staff to the individuals and organizations who stand beside us in the fight against hunger."



As the need for food assistance continues to rise across the county, Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa remains committed to ensuring that no one in our community goes hungry. Through its dining rooms, mobile unit, grocery distribution efforts, and partner services, the organization continues to provide thousands of meals and critical support to neighbors in need each week.

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa sincerely thanks the Martinez community for its ongoing support. Together, we are helping ensure that every individual and family is met with dignity, compassion, and hope.

Partnerships

Did You Know? Our Partnerships Multiply Our Impact

At Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa, a hot meal is often just the beginning. While many people know us for serving meals in our dining rooms, our impact extends far beyond our own walls. Through a network of community partnerships across Contra Costa County, we're bringing nutritious meals, workforce opportunities, and supportive services directly to people where they live, learn, recover, and rebuild their lives.

Meeting People Where They Are

Every day, Loaves and Fishes partners with organizations that serve our county's most vulnerable residents. Together, we provide meals to families facing food insecurity, individuals experiencing homelessness, seniors, migrant farmworkers, and people in transitional housing.

Our meals reach communities through partnerships with organizations including Concord Refuge Church, RESTORE, SHARE Community Outreach, Hijas del Campo, Delta Landing, Opportunity Village, West Pittsburg Community Church, Stoneman Village, the Antioch Senior Center, and the Concord Mobile Dignity Center. These partnerships ensure that nutritious food is paired with other essential services such as healthcare, showers, housing support, case management, and outreach.

Building Pathways to Employment

Food security is only part of the solution. Through partnerships with organizations including Opportunity Junction, Mt. Diablo Adult Education, Rubicon Programs, SOAR (Stand Out, Achieve & Rise), and Trinity Center, Loaves and Fishes helps individuals gain valuable job skills and workforce experience.

Whether supporting students pursuing career training, providing paid kitchen internships, or offering culinary education that prepares participants for employment, these collaborations help people build brighter futures while meeting immediate nutritional needs.

Supporting the Whole Community

Our partnerships also extend to seniors and even their beloved pets. Weekend meals and grocery distribution reach older adults through the Martinez Senior Center, while the Martinez Men's Sober Shelter receives regular meal support. Through the Contra Costa Animal Services, we help distribute pet food so individuals facing hardship can continue caring for their animal companions.

Working Together to End Hunger

Loaves and Fishes proudly collaborates with more than two dozen nonprofit organizations through the East Contra Costa Community Alliance (ECCCA) and works alongside the Food Security Collaborative of Contra Costa County, joining forces with organizations including the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, Meals on Wheels Diablo Region, St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County, and White Pony Express to strengthen the countywide response to hunger.

Looking Ahead

As community needs continue to grow, so does our vision. We're exploring new partnerships with organizations to expand our reach and connect even more individuals and families with nutritious meals, workforce development opportunities, and supportive services.

Together, partnerships make every meal go further—and every act of kindness reaches farther than we could ever accomplish alone.

Client spotlight: Theodore

A Warm Meal, A Lifeline, and a Community That Cares

For many individuals experiencing homelessness or hardship, a hot meal is more than nourishment — it is dignity, comfort, hope, and a reminder that they are not alone.

Recently, Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa received a heartfelt message from Theodore, a guest who shared how deeply our staff, volunteers, and meal program have impacted his life.

Theodore explained that he lived in his car for nearly two years and continues to face daily challenges while working to stay safe, healthy, and hopeful. Through the support of community organizations, including Trinity Center and local churches, he has been able to access basic necessities like laundry and showers. But he shared that one constant source of stability and compassion has been the meals and kindness he receives at Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa.

"I go to Loaves and Fishes almost daily," Theodore shared. "Loaves and Fishes has literally kept me alive."

Theodore especially wanted to recognize the care and dedication of the volunteers and cooks who serve meals with warmth and compassion every day. After enjoying what he described as **"one of the best corned beef meals"** he has ever had, he felt compelled to reach out and thank the people behind the program.

"There's nothing more satisfying and gratifying than getting a delicious hot meal at least once a day," he said. "Without the help of your program that would not occur."

Stories like Theodore's remind us why this work matters. Every meal served is more than food on a plate — it is an act of compassion that helps nourish lives and strengthen our community.

We are deeply grateful to Theodore for sharing his story and allowing us to recognize the resilience, gratitude, and humanity that exists within every person we serve.

Culinary spotlight

Finding Her Passion: Juana's Story

When Juana first learned about Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa through Facebook, she was hesitant to apply. Living with her mother and siblings and sharing one family vehicle, she was uncertain about her future. What she did know was that she loved cooking and helping others.

After seeing how Loaves and Fishes supported the community through its meal programs and other services, Juana enrolled in the Culinary Arts Training Program. The program's hands-on approach helped her build confidence, develop professional kitchen skills, and learn the importance of teamwork.

"The program prepared me in so many ways," Juana says. "Everything was hands-on, giving us the opportunity to quickly grasp concepts and build confidence."



Since graduating, Juana has found both stability and purpose. She began working part-time at Eight Acres Kitchen + Bar and has since advanced to a full-time position. She has also been able to move into her own apartment.

"I found my passion in the kitchen, and I love it," she shares.

Juana's journey reflects the life-changing impact of the Culinary Arts Training Program—helping participants gain skills, secure employment, and build brighter futures.

Culinary arts training program update:



Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa offers a free 12-week Culinary Arts Training Program for individuals interested in pursuing careers in the food service industry. Through hands-on instruction, participants develop the essential skills needed to qualify for entry-level positions in professional kitchens.

The program provides training in commercial kitchen operations, food preparation techniques, workplace readiness, job retention, and life skills. Our goal is to equip students with the knowledge, confidence, and practical experience needed to build meaningful careers and achieve greater financial independence. Upon successful completion of the program, students earn their ServSafe Food Handler certification.



Upcoming Sessions:

Sep 1 - Nov 19, 2026

Jan 5 - Mar 25, 2027

Apply: <https://loavesfishescc.org/culinary-arts-program/application/>



835 Ferry Street, Martinez, CA 94553 • loavesfishescc.org • P: 925-293-4792 • F: 925-957-6155 • Tax ID# 68-0018077

This program is funded in part by Community Development Block Grant by Contra Costa County, City of Pittsburg, City of Antioch, and the City of Walnut Creek.



Loaves and Fishes
OF CONTRA COSTA

Nourishing Lives

835 Ferry Street, Martinez, CA 94553

Tax ID# 68-0018077

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE!
DONATE**

Write a check or donate online at
www.loavesfishescc.org

We also accept food donations

Generously Printed By: **Prestige**
Printing & Graphics
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LOAVES AND FISHES OPERATED DINING ROOMS/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

ANTIOCH

American Legion Hall
403 W. 6th Street
Antioch, CA

MARTINEZ

Dining Room/Admin Offices
835 Ferry Street
Martinez, CA

PITTSBURG

Central Kitchen
510 Garcia Ave, Unit H
Pittsburg, CA

PITTSBURG

St. Vincent de Paul
1415 Simpson Court
Pittsburg, CA

OAKLEY

Red Man-Pocahontas Hall
1403 Main Street
Oakley, CA

WALNUT CREEK

Trinity Center
1888 Trinity Ave.
Walnut Creek, CA

SAVE THE DATES!



Concord Turkey Trot

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2026
STARTS: 8:00AM / NEWHALL PARK
1351 NEWHALL PARKWAY
CONCORD, CA

benefiting
Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa

**THE BIG
LA BOCCE 2026
Bocce Ball Tournament**

**SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 19th**

**Martinez Waterfront
Park Bocce Courts
245 N Court St,
Martinez, CA**

Go to LFCC Website for more information. <https://loavesfishescc.org/events/upcoming-events/>

August Is Make-A-Will Month

Creating or updating a will is an important way to protect the people and causes that matter most to you. It can help ensure your wishes are clear, provide for loved ones, and make future decisions easier for your family.

After taking care of family and friends, you may also choose to include Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa in your will, trust, or beneficiary plans. A legacy gift of any size can help ensure that nutritious meals and groceries remain available to future generations throughout Contra Costa County.

Visit www.loavesfishescc.org/legacy-giving/ to explore free estate-planning resources or to let us know confidentially if you have already included LFCC in your plans.

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa does not provide legal, tax, or financial advice. Please consult a qualified professional regarding your individual circumstances.

info@loavesfishescc.org

