

Meal Times

NEWS FROM
Project Open Hand



Summer 2016 Issue, No. 107



Join us Sept. 10-11 for

PROJECT OPEN HAND WEEKEND

Celebrating Ghirardelli Chocolate Festival and The Giant Race

Openhand.org/events

Life's What You Make of It: Daniel's Story

Yoga guru... Japanese washi crafter... Grateful Dead fiend... Project Open Hand client Daniel is passionate about exploring everything life has to offer.

Growing up in Big Sky Country, interacting with wildlife, trudging through snow banks, and enjoying the crisp feel of autumn air, the Montana native moved to San Francisco in 1973 upon graduating from college.

Acclimating to San Francisco quickly, Daniel built his career with companies like Williams-Sonoma and Smith & Hawken. Everything seemed to be going just as Daniel hoped, until October of 1980, when he was diagnosed with an illness that was yet unnamed and unknown.

Although his doctor explained that his blood work seemed to indicate some cause for concern, Daniel felt just fine. Daniel says, "At first, I thought, 'Well, if I don't feel symptoms, it must be a false positive.'"

He reflects on the first time he ever heard his mystery ailment referred to as HIV/AIDS many years later, and adds, "Well, it turned out it wasn't a false positive."

Having spent 36 years living with HIV, and only 30 years negative, Daniel explains, "I'm not Superman...so I have to think part of it is up here," as he points to his head.

"I know people who lasted six months, and I know people who lasted six years," he said. "If you're a negative person by nature; the virus will go like wildfire. But, if you're someone that can beat it in your mind, spirit, and essence...you stand a better chance."

In 1992, Daniel began volunteering for new studies

and tests. He considered his participation as a way he could give back and help others, as he would always sign up when they needed to prove new medications safe to take. He says, "I was getting Social Security at the time, so I thought, 'They do that for me, I'll do this for them.'"

Daniel began experiencing intense side effects from his medications, and had undergone a time when his T-cells were below 200. After he was referred to Project Open Hand, Daniel applied immediately. He remembers receiving his first hot meal clearly, as it was the very day Ruth Brinker died.

"I think she was looking over my shoulder that day," says Daniel of the Project Open Hand founder. It's a wonderful thing she started here. She's right up there with Mother Teresa in my book."

Daniel refers to the food from Project Open

*continued on
page 6*

*"So much of
our lives are
what we
make of it."*

– Daniel



Daniel displaying his newly crafted Washi eggs



Project Open Hand

meals with love

OpenHand.org

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Project Open Hand's mission is to nourish and engage our community by providing *meals with love* to the sick and the elderly.

MealTimes is published quarterly for the friends and clients of Project Open Hand.

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MARK'S LETTER

When Hulda and I first met, I immediately realized I was in the presence of a powerful force – an inspiration. Though barely five feet tall, she was fierce. Her edgy ensemble of a tight leather jacket and black boots was perfectly complemented by a smile so warm it lit up the room.

Stories like Hulda's create shared experience in a way that few things can. While no two stories are exactly the same, the nexus points of one person's story to another's inspire and change us deeply. The stories of others remind us we are not alone, but instead part of a complex and interdependent tapestry which we refer to as "community." Hulda, a client with Project Open Hand since 1998, is part of our rich shared tapestry.

The unique threads of Hulda's story would resonate with many in our community: she is not singularly identifiable by a class, diagnosis, ethnicity, gender or faith. She brings all of that and more.

Hulda was originally introduced to Project Open Hand because of her HIV+ status and her significant struggle with the symptoms. A few years later, following four bouts of pneumonia, she recalls when "the other shoe dropped" — she was diagnosed with prediabetes, and she began experiencing complications far beyond her usual symptoms.

The quick-sinking feeling she got when her symptoms began to worsen was indescribable. "Now what?" she thought. The next day she stopped in to pick up her meals and for her regular nutrition check-in with one of our registered dietitians, Kim. She told Kim the news and asked for help.

Without missing a beat, Kim assured Hulda, saying, "We've got this! Project Open Hand has been treating complex health issues for years and we're pros by now." Together, they built a plan for the nutritional requirements and lifestyle modifications that would help Hulda control her prediabetes and manage her symptoms.

Project Open Hand's story began in the trenches of the devastation caused by the HIV/AIDS crisis. And we've evolved over the years, through our deep partnerships with researchers, physicians, and especially our clients, learning firsthand how to help manage diseases for other clients beyond those facing HIV.

We have been committed to wellness through nutrition from day one. And we've developed medically tailored meal programs and nutrition education to address diabetes, breast cancer, cardio pulmonary and heart disease and other complicating illnesses facing our very vulnerable neighbors.

Martin Luther King Jr. wrote — "Life's most persistent and urgent question is 'What are you doing for others?'" We have been inspired to build community by "doing for others" like Hulda, and so many others who have become a part of our story over the years.

Everyday we answer the question that Dr. King posed, alongside our clients, because we believe that it is not enough to merely survive - we seek to thrive. With your support, we will continue to fix *meals with love* for those in need in our community.

Sincerely,

Mark Ryle, LCSW
CEO, Project Open Hand



Photo: Ed Carreón

from BARBADOS to BROOKLYN

MEET OUR NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF ADRIAN BARROW


Executive Chef Adrian Barrow's life journey is as extraordinary as his food.

Born in Barbados, Adrian moved to the "Big Apple" as a teenager, and enrolled in the culinary program at New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn. After his studies, he gained experience at many well-known, upscale New York restaurants including Union Square Café, Hudson River Club, and most notably, Blue Water Grill, where he was a sous-chef for five years.

Adrian then made the cross-country trip to begin his West Coast career at Aqua, then a Michelin-starred restaurant. It was at that point that Adrian began to feel like something was missing; that perhaps he had a special culinary calling – a calling where he could help others in need.

After many years of intense focus on a demanding career in so many top restaurants, Adrian began to feel worn down, and was also facing some challenging health issues. Determined to focus on his well-being, Adrian was encouraged to apply for meals from Project Open Hand by his doctor.

Within the same week, Adrian saw a job opening at Project Open Hand for special diets chef, and decided to drop off his resume alongside his client-intake form.



"The only thanks I ever want is for our clients to feel well and taken care of after they're finished eating."

– Adrian

Adrian has been on the Project Open Hand team ever since, and has undergone a variety of role changes throughout the years, transitioning from catering chef, to sous-chef, and now to executive chef.

Chef Adrian shares, "Through Project Open Hand's nutritious meals, and the love and support of my co-workers in the POH kitchen, I was able to regain excellent health and work my way up and find my true calling."

Client for four years, chef for eight — Adrian's is one of many remarkable stories in the Project Open Hand family, and his skill set in our kitchen is indispensable. Adrian concludes, "The only thanks I ever want is for our clients to feel well and taken care of after they're finished eating."

Compliments to the CHeFS Project

The pilot study has landed, and now it's time for the "CHeFS Project" to take flight.

Having recently completed a groundbreaking research collaboration with UCSF that studied over 50 clients with HIV, diabetes or dual diagnoses, Project Open Hand has reinforced with science what we've always known in our hearts: food = medicine.

The pilot study provided critically ill Bay Area residents with access to 100 percent nutrition for five months. Quantitative results were off the charts: hospitalization rates were down 63 percent; emergency room visits were down by 36 percent while medication adherence went up by 50 percent.

"The pilot program allowed me to be in a better physical and mental state," said one participant. "I have more energy and my mentality is stronger."

Project Open Hand and UCSF are now underway with Phase II – "Changing Health through Food Support." Also known as the CHeFS Project, the research study will follow 200 existing HIV+ clients in both San Francisco and Alameda Counties as they receive regular specialized nutrition education and access to all of their nutrition needs for six months.

The Pilot Study and CHeFS Project were made possible by grant support from the Kaiser Permanente National Community Benefit Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation. Stay tuned for more CHeFS Project client stories as the project develops – along with a full data report on the UCSF research team's complete data findings to be published in a medical journal this fall.

"These studies put Project Open Hand at the forefront of research on healthcare benefits of food and nutrition services."

–CEO Mark Ryle

Meet Team Piña at Project Open Hand Weekend!

The San Francisco Giants, Ghirardelli Chocolate Company and Project Open Hand are proud to join forces on September 10-11 for "Project Open Hand Weekend," – a special two-day celebration in which these three iconic San Francisco organizations are generating critical funds and raising awareness for Project Open Hand's mission to serve even more meals with love. A group that has been a front-runner for raising funds is Team Piña, the Giant Race team led by notable YouTuber Lexi Cozombolidis, who also happens to be Hunter Pence's fiancée.

This is the second year Lexi, aka @LetsGetLexi has led Team Piña, and she's thrilled they've been able

to fundraise for Project Open Hand's *meals with love* while supporting our hometown team. Lexi adds, "For me, it's really important to create a community where we can support our most vulnerable neighbors."

The race will be held on Sunday, Sept. 11, and runners will have the choice to participate in the half marathon, 10k, or 5k.

One thing you can count on Team Piña for is creativity in fundraising efforts! Piña member and fundraiser Angela Polione says, "My best strategy is a raffle. I purchase prizes for it and offer an entry per \$10 donated. Most people contribute because of the awesome cause, but they get the added bonus

of the raffle ticket!" Angela continues, "I love the entire experience. The race is a fun and positive atmosphere, and we're raising money for more than just food; Project Open Hand's meals with love are a gift from people that really care."



Fundraise-to-run the Giant Race at: <http://project.openhand.org/GiantRace2016>

NOTES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

July 11, 2016

To the amazing people who provide meals with love:

Please find enclosed a donation to your program in honor of my dear aunt and uncle, Carol and William, who passed away in May and June, respectively, just three weeks apart. Carol was a home economics teacher before she became the busy mother of four sons and a caregiver for her parents. Bill, too, was a teacher whose students learned to apply their skills to construction, electronics, computers, and pottery. He, too, was a caregiver for his parents and for his sister who will celebrate her 98th birthday next week. He prepared meals for church suppers, for loved ones and friends who were no longer able to do so, and for anyone who stopped by to visit.

It seems fitting to honor their memory by helping to support your amazing program. My aunt and uncle were very special people. They cared for others with so much love and kindness, and I believe they would have been pleased with this remembrance. Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,
Chris, SoMA

Plate Clubs



Every gift makes a difference. In each issue of MealTimes, we give special acknowledgement to our supporters who gave during the previous quarter (April 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016) and have given a total of \$1,000 or more. Your generosity enables us to provide nourishing food to so many of our neighbors. If you have questions about this list, please contact John McArdle, Director of Development, at jmcardle@openhand.org or (415) 447-2413.

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VOLUNTEER

spotlight

Wilshia, known as “Wil” for short, has been volunteering at Project Open Hand for four months, making him one of the newest regular volunteers in our kitchen.

He dedicates his time to Project Open Hand three days a week, and his duties include prepping food—chopping, peeling, and grating veggies—portioning components of each different nutritious entree and packaging the meals for distribution. He was inspired to volunteer regularly because of our clients. Wil says, “Project Open Hand helps everyone. That’s what I like to do...help people.”

Wil concludes, “My favorite part about volunteering in the kitchen is the people, of course. Everyone here is wonderful, and I feel loved when I’m here.”

Interested in volunteering with Wil? Email volunteer@openhand.org to hear how you may help!



Photo: Ed Carreón

DANIEL'S STORY *continued from page 1*

Hand as a “godsend” because the medication he takes and the food he consumes work hand in hand. “I cannot take my medication if I’m not getting proper nutrition. I will get nauseous...the spirit with which Ruth began this endeavor has blossomed profoundly. I feel blessed Project Open Hand came into my life.”

Daniel’s illness demands a lot of his energy and attention every single day. He is continually overcoming health-related and logistical obstacles

because of the diagnosis he received 36 years ago. Yet, with so many reasons to feel overwhelmed, Daniel has honed an innate ability to let it all go – and remain optimistic.

“What’s important is what’s in our minds,” he concludes. “Some people get up in the morning and they know they can climb that mountain. Some people get up and it’s already a cloudy day. So much of our lives are what we make of it.”

Recipe

FROM OUR
KITCHEN TO
YOURS

Pork Tenderloin Mole



ingredients

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 4 pieces of pork loins | 1 tbsp cumin |
| 2 tbsp. instant espresso powder | 1 tbsp. curry powder |
| 1 tsp garlic powder | 1 tsp black pepper |
| 1 tsp all spice | 1 tbsp ground ginger |
| 2 tbsp smoked paprika | 1 tbsp salt |
| 1 tsp cinnamon | 1 tbsp dried thyme |
| 3 tbsp Ghirardelli unsweetened cocoa | 2 tbsp olive oil |
| 1 tbsp brown sugar | 2 tbsp white wine |

directions

1. Dilute instant espresso in wine
2. Add all other dry spices and blend together
3. Brush all over pork loin and roast slowly at 375° for 45 mins until well caramelized color is attained

Serves 4

