

NATIONAL CULINARY REVIEW

COVID-19 SPECIAL ISSUE

WHAT COMES NEXT



American Culinary Federation
The Standard of Excellence for Chefs

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secretary Meg Trout says members have been busy helping to feed those in need at homeless shelters, the Boys & Girls Club of America and the Salvation Army.

ACF New Mexico Chapter

Chapter President Leonard Bailey II, CEC, CIC, chef-instructor at Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico, says his chapter members have been hard at work feeding residents of the Navajo Nation, which was hit particularly hard by the coronavirus pandemic. ACF Chef Bob Witte CEC, AAC, culinary arts director at Navajo Technical University, has been leading that effort, along with NTU Chef-Instructors Joe Chapa CWPC and Brian Tatsukawa CEC. The team has raised \$2,000 for a community food pantry in nearby Gallup that feeds members of the Navajo Nation, and worked with volunteers to box up and distribute the food. The ACF New Mexico Chapter raised an additional \$2,000 for CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center, where Chef Cristian Pontiggia, executive chef of Sassella in Santa Fe, has helped lead efforts to feed first responders and healthcare workers on the front lines. In fact, Chef Bailey points out, Chef Pontiggia has been feeding 80 meals a day, and on his own, has raised nearly \$40,000 in funds to continue the effort. An additional \$2,000 was directed to Aggie Cupboard, a campus food pantry at New Mexico State University in Los Cruces, to help feed first responders in an effort helmed by Chef Keith Mandabach, CEC, AAC, a professor at NMSU. The chapter donated yet another \$2,000 to Joy Junction, a homeless shelter in Albuquerque, where Chef Bailey has led volunteer feeding efforts. The remainder of the chapter's saved funds has been earmarked for food cards for members in need in \$50 increments.



In addition, Bailey partnered with a NewChef uniform company to make cloth masks with the ACF logo for anyone volunteering in the community. "We want to make sure we are taking care of not just our chapter members, but also non-ACF members, our culinary community and general communities at-large," Bailey says.

ACF Triad Chapter

Chef Jeff Bacon, CEC, CCA, AAC, vice president and executive director of Providence Kitchen BB&T, a restaurant and catering company operated by the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina in Winston-Salem, has been leading efforts to feed a whopping 30,000 meals a week to children in need, all in just 700 square feet of kitchen space inside the food bank's main warehouse.

"Part of my job before all this happened was preparing meals for after-school and the summer and we were doing 500 to 600 per day then; now, we're preparing 3,000 to 4,500 meals a day, and all of our workers from the now-closed catering and restaurants who would have been laid off are now a part of this team," says Chef Bacon. "That amounts to about 60 employees preparing breakfast and a second meal for lunch or dinner for the children every day." Many of those employees are graduates of Second Harvest's Providence Culinary Training program, a culinary school for ex-convicts and others challenged with finding employment.

While local school districts are continuing to feed children who receive federally-subsidized meals during the school day, the efforts of Chef Bacon's team is to cover those who can't make it to the school to pick up the packages. The team has been working with about 30 sites in two counties to distribute the food to those families. "Between the schools, our efforts and some other organizations, we think we are covering every child that needs to be covered in the region," he says.



Bacon is part of a group of local chefs, including many ACF chefs as well as restaurant owners and managers who together launched Heard Collaborate Café, a non-profit backed by the Second Harvest Food Bank to feed displaced hospitality workers. The team is currently cooking and boxing up about 400 meals daily out of the closed Providence kitchen. The other space at the restaurant is set up for displaced workers to pick up unemployment and food stamp applications. During the first two weeks, Heard used inventory from closed restaurants in the Winston-Salem area, and has since received all of his ingredients via donations, or used donated funds to purchase food and disposables.

"It's been really cool to be so busy and focus on the positive," says Chef Bacon, who notes that the name for the Café came out of the commonly used word amongst chefs after acknowledging an order in the kitchen. Notable chefs in the area take turns leading the food production and menu development each week.