



Media Contact: Jeannette Fournier // jfournier@caringforfriends.org // 202-295-7926

Caring for Friends Responds to Food Insecurity Among Philadelphia Restaurant Workers

January 13, 2021 — PHILADELPHIA — COVID-19 and related unemployment has created an unprecedented need for emergency food relief, especially among the professionals who work in the restaurant, hospitality and catering communities. Caring for Friends™ has activated its *Caring Community Kitchen* (2,000 sq. ft. professional kitchen) to share family-style and individual meals with those with self-declared need.

1,000 boxes of prepared meals will be shared at 5 sites across the City of Philadelphia with area restaurant workers and their families. This joint effort includes restaurant owners, workers, Chefs, Caring for Friends™ and food distributors. The meals will be prepared in Caring for Friends™ *Caring Community Kitchen* at 12271 Townsend Road, Philadelphia PA 19154. Caring for Friends' Kitchen Manager, Abdellah Abdul Qawi is collaborating with noteworthy area Chefs like Sofia Deleon (of El Mercuri) and Everybody Eats to create healthy and tasty recipes that our families in the restaurant industry will love. The effort hopes to reach, in particular, Latinx and Black workers and owners in the restaurant industry who have been hardest hit by sweeping unemployment.

Food for this unique give-back cooking event is being donated from a variety of sources including US Foods. "US Foods has a long-standing commitment to hunger-relief efforts across the United States," says Bob Reusche of US Foods. "In fact, since March, [US Foods has donated more than \\$35M](#) in food and supplies to organizations like Caring For Friends across the country. Supporting our Philadelphia communities is a key area of focus for us and this is especially true during this unprecedented time when so many families are dealing with food insecurities brought on by the impacts of the pandemic."

"We have never seen such a need in our 46-year history," says Jeannette Fournier, Executive Director of Caring for Friends™. "Folks who used to volunteer in our kitchen now have need for our meals. No one could have predicted how hard the restaurant industry would be impacted by COVID-19. There is simply no safety net big enough to support all of restaurant workers and their families who have cooked for us across the City of Philadelphia. We hope this event will model the caring community we can be to get through this time."

About Caring for Friends

Caring for Friends™, formerly known as Aid For Friends, is one of the largest food bank and most comprehensive prepared meal delivery programs in the 5-county Greater Philadelphia region. Caring for Friends typically serves thousands of meals and millions of pounds of groceries every month to seniors, kids and families. The organization also provides fresh, frozen and pantry stable food to faith organizations and community nonprofits to fill their community pantries and support their community feeding programs. <https://caringforfriends.org/>