



Common Threads
COOKING FOR LIFE

FY 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Reflecting on our past, driving towards
our future: A year in review.

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Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends,

As we stand at the threshold of another year, we are energized by the incredible progress we've made and the opportunities that lie ahead. Looking back on 2024, we are deeply grateful for the chance to drive meaningful, community-led change toward a more nutrition-secure world. What an impact we have had! Together, we've touched the lives of 84.9K children, families, healthcare providers, and community members across the country—empowering them to build healthier, stronger communities.



In schools and neighborhoods across America, students are learning—often for the first time—about nutrition and the importance of healthy eating. As they grow, they will carry these lessons into their roles as teachers, social workers, chefs, doctors, researchers, and parents. They will become the next generation of leaders in the fight against food insecurity, obesity, and food-related health disparities. Their passion and determination will inspire change in neighborhoods nationwide, serving as living proof of the lasting impact we've made together.

Looking ahead, we recognize that 2025 will bring its share of challenges. With an unpredictable economy and evolving funding landscapes, we must remain flexible, creative, and resilient. But one thing is certain: our commitment to our mission will never waver. We will continue doing what we do best—working side by side with our communities to imagine bold new solutions and chart innovative paths forward. Together, we will keep building a future where everyone has access to the nourishment they deserve.

Our strength comes from the passion of those we serve and the unwavering dedication of our community. The spirit of Common Threads—our shared vision, collective efforts, and commitment to nutrition security—will guide us through whatever lies ahead.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our employees, board members, volunteers, partners, and all of you. Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

In Good Health,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Linda Novick O'Keefe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Linda" being the most prominent.

Linda Novick O'Keefe
Co-Founder & CEO

Common Threads Partners with the University of Miami to Advance Culinary Medicine

As part of our growing commitment to Food as Medicine, Common Threads collaborated with the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine on the Cooking Up Health program. This initiative equips future healthcare professionals with hands-on nutrition education, demonstrating the vital role of food in preventing and managing chronic diseases.

Medical and physical therapy students participating in Cooking Up Health gained practical experience in preparing nutritious meals while deepening their understanding of the connection between diet and well-being. Under the guidance of professional chef instructors and faculty members, students learned to translate nutrition science into real-world applications, helping to shape a new generation of healthcare providers who can confidently counsel patients on healthy eating habits.

Beyond the classroom, students applied their knowledge in the community by co-teaching nutrition lessons to elementary school students at the Overtown Youth Center. This hands-on approach ensures that nutrition education reaches underserved communities, reinforcing healthy habits from an early age.

Initially piloted by the Osher Center for Integrative Health and expanded through funding from the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, this program is also being studied for its long-term impact. By assessing how culinary medicine can influence both young learners and older adults, Common Threads and its partners are helping to define best practices in nutrition education and preventive healthcare.

Our collaboration with the University of Miami underscores Common Threads' dedication to innovative, impactful programming that supports the Food as Medicine movement. By equipping medical professionals and community members with the skills and knowledge to make informed dietary choices, we are shaping healthier futures and driving meaningful change in public health.



[Click here to view the full article.](#)

By the Numbers

84K

PARTICIPANTS
reached by
Common Threads
(children and
adults)

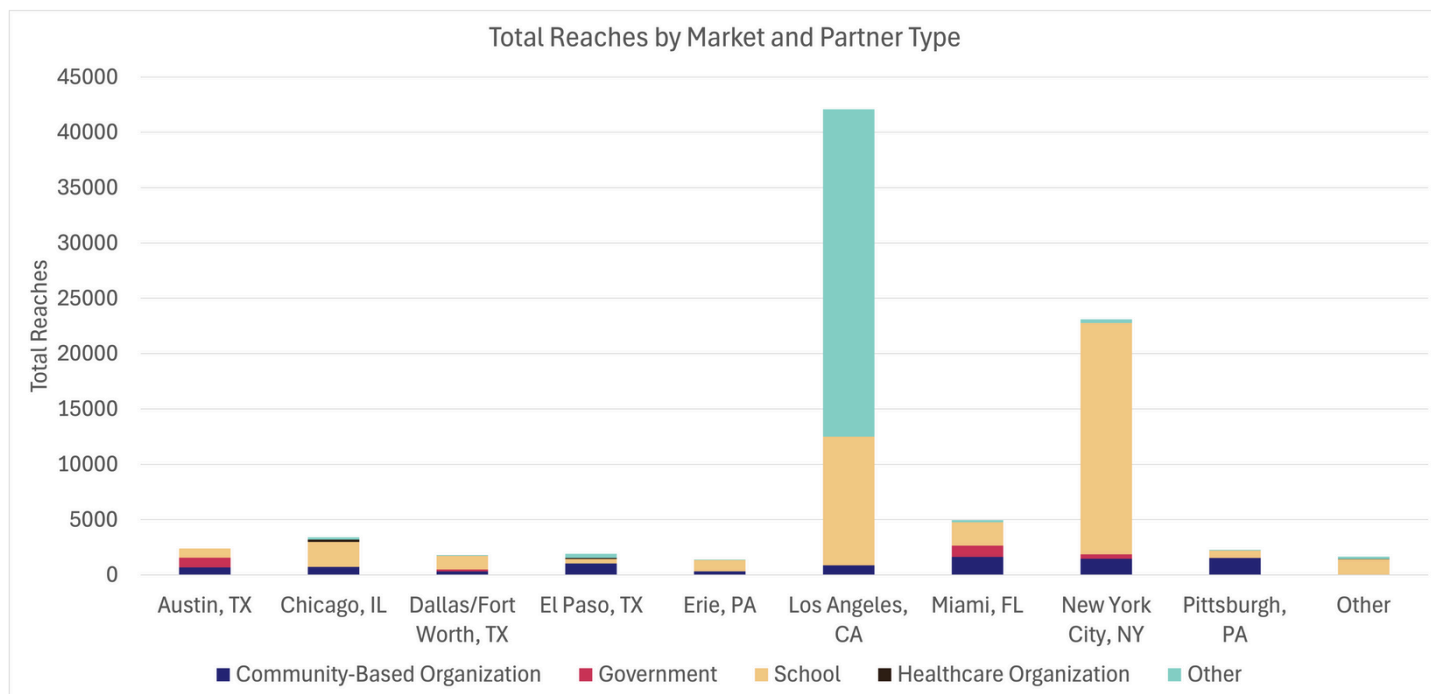
247K

SNACK & MEALS
prepared and enjoyed
by participants during
programs

264K

PROGRAM HOURS
completed over
the year

Total Market Reaches



FY24 Program Highlights

Community involvement is at the heart of Common Threads' mission. Throughout the year, our programs have been highlighted in the media, showcasing the impact of hands-on learning and food education in fostering healthier communities. These special features reflect our commitment to empowering individuals with essential cooking and nutrition skills while strengthening local partnerships.

Michelle Bernstein's Miami Visit

Students at Thomas Jefferson Middle School K-8 Academy in Miami had an extraordinary opportunity to cook alongside one of the city's most celebrated chefs, Michelle Bernstein. This hands-on experience not only introduced students to the joys of cooking but also emphasized the importance of nutrition education and culinary skills in everyday life. Events like these inspire young learners to develop healthy eating habits and engage meaningfully with their food choices.

[Watch the news clip and read more here.](#)



Chef Eduardo's LA Visit

High school students in our Kitchen Clinic program with LAUSD experienced an unforgettable cooking session with celebrity chef Eduardo Garcia, famously known as the Bionic Chef. His inspiring story of resilience and passion for food empowered students to see cooking as both an essential life skill and a path to wellness. By engaging with industry professionals, students gained a deeper appreciation for food's role in overall health and well-being. Read all about this incredible experience in the Los Angeles Daily News.

[Click here to read more.](#)



FY24 Program Highlights

Mobile Markets with Giant Eagle

Access to fresh, nutritious food is a fundamental right, and our partnership with Giant Eagle helped bridge the gap for families in Pittsburgh. Through nine mobile markets, we provided fresh, affordable groceries to communities facing food insecurity. Each market not only offered a selection of over 300 healthy food items but also featured live cooking demonstrations, empowering attendees with the knowledge to create nourishing, budget-friendly meals. This initiative underscores the power of food access in promoting community well-being and long-term health.



Cooking Class for Seniors

Recognizing the importance of nutrition at every stage of life, Common Threads partnered with the Serafina Food Pantry to bring Ask A Chef classes to the Rebekah Baines Johnson Center in Austin, a housing community for low-income senior citizens. These interactive sessions offered hands-on culinary guidance, helping seniors develop practical cooking skills to prepare nutritious, affordable meals. More than just a cooking class, these gatherings fostered a sense of community, connection, and empowerment among participants, reinforcing the role of food in enhancing quality of life.





Advancing Nutrition Education Through Research Partnerships

National Institutes of Health (NIH) – Nourished Minds

Common Threads is collaborating with NIH researchers to develop and test a tool that measures well-being improvements in youth participating in our programs. This tool focuses on PERMA-related outcomes—Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement—to assess the impact of culinary and nutrition education on youth flourishing.

UTHealth Houston School of Public Health in El Paso Campus (UTHealth Houston) – Enhancing Caregiver Impact

Common Threads is partnering with UTHealth Houston in El Paso to revise three existing Caregiver Workshops, increasing opportunities for audience engagement while incorporating the latest dietary knowledge and trends. Additionally, plans are underway to update the existing Caregiver Workshop surveys to align with the newly enhanced curriculum.

UTHealth Houston School of Public Health in El Paso (UTHealth Houston) – Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Evaluation

Common Threads collaborated with UTHealth Houston in El Paso to modify existing curricula by incorporating specialty crop-specific information and developing youth and adult surveys. These surveys are designed to measure key specialty crop outcome metrics for programs in Chicago, El Paso, and Los Angeles.

University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) – Kitchen Clinic Program Evaluation

Common Threads completed a two-year collaboration with UC ANR to evaluate the Kitchen Clinic—a culinary medicine curriculum aimed at enhancing high school students' nutrition knowledge, cooking skills, and interest in healthcare careers. The study also examined the program's impact on students' dietary behaviors and overall self-efficacy.

Funding Spotlights

Common Threads is deeply grateful for the invaluable support of our corporate and community partners. Their generosity and commitment allow us to expand our reach, deliver impactful programming, and foster healthier futures for families across the country. This year, we are proud to highlight exceptional partnerships that have made a significant difference in the lives of those we serve.



Building New National Partnerships

Thanks to their support, we expanded into new markets, including Atlanta and Indianapolis. Through special events and hands-on cooking programs, we inspired families to embrace healthy living. A standout moment was a guest appearance from a New York Liberty player, reinforcing the power of teamwork and wellness.



Fueling Healthier Futures

As a national sponsor since 2020, Kroger brands have supported our vision of a world where people are empowered, nourished, and equipped to cultivate healthier futures for themselves and their communities.



Transforming Lives Through Nutrition Education

A steadfast supporter since 2008, Conagra has transformed lives in Chicago through food and nutrition education. In 2024, our collaboration continues to create a lasting impact in communities facing food insecurity.

Funding Spotlights

CONTINUED



Giant Eagle Fuels Nutrition Education in Pittsburgh

Since 2018, Giant Eagle has supported our culturally responsive cooking and nutrition programs in Pittsburgh and Erie, equipping thousands with the knowledge to make nutritious, affordable food choices.

anahata ♥ foundation

Advancing Food Is Medicine Through Kitchen Clinic

Renewing our partnership in 2024, Anahata and Common Threads continue advancing the Food Is Medicine movement through the Kitchen Clinic program, empowering students with lifelong healthy habits.



Bayer Fund

Bayer Champions Food Security in Pittsburgh Communities

Bayer's ongoing support has allowed us to bring nutrition programs to underserved communities in Pittsburgh, reinforcing their commitment to food security and family well-being.



Supporting Food Is Medicine to Prevent Chronic Disease

Over four years, Northwestern Medicine has supported our Food Is Medicine initiatives, equipping families with the knowledge and resources to prevent chronic diseases through hands-on cooking and access to local, nutritious produce.

Finances Fiscal Year 2024

Audited, October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

Common Threads

Statements of Financial Position September 30, 2024 and 2023

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 680,745	\$ 915,302
Accounts receivable, net	103,799	79,458
Pledges receivable, net	672,836	649,666
Government grants receivable	731,747	778,628
Prepaid expenses and other assets	<u>37,474</u>	<u>52,546</u>
Total assets	<u><u>\$ 2,226,601</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 2,475,600</u></u>
 Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 15,756	\$ 29,845
Accrued liabilities	140,632	182,520
Deferred revenue	<u>150,000</u>	<u>179,423</u>
Total current liabilities	306,388	391,788
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions	971,311	1,013,111
With donor restrictions	<u>948,902</u>	<u>1,070,701</u>
Total net assets	<u>1,920,213</u>	<u>2,083,812</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u><u>\$ 2,226,601</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 2,475,600</u></u>

See notes to financial statements.

Common Threads

Statement of Activities

Year Ended September 30, 2024

(with summarized comparative totals for the year ended September 30, 2023)

	2024			
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total	2023 Total
Revenues and net assets released from restrictions:				
Contributions and private grants	\$ 1,021,104	808,173	1,829,277	2,291,582
Governmental grants	1,747,842	-	1,747,842	1,375,180
In-kind contributions	688,979	-	688,979	522,701
Program service fees	619,241	-	619,241	437,209
Special events, net of costs of direct benefits to donors	3,198	-	3,198	1,858
Other income	26	-	26	3,471
Net assets released from restrictions	929,972	(929,972)	-	-
Total revenues and net assets released from restrictions	5,010,362	(121,799)	4,888,563	4,632,001
Expenses:				
Program services	3,879,702	-	3,879,702	3,579,737
Management and general	717,248	-	717,248	458,114
Fundraising and communications	455,212	-	455,212	564,705
Total expenses	5,052,162	-	5,052,162	4,602,556
Change in net assets	(41,800)	(121,799)	(163,599)	29,445
Net assets, beginning of year	1,013,111	1,070,701	2,083,812	2,054,367
Net assets, end of year	\$ 971,311	948,902	1,920,213	2,083,812

See notes to financial statements.

Supporters

October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024

Visionary (\$500K+)

Paso Del Norte Health Foundation
SNAP-Ed New York

Leader (\$250K+)

Anahata Foundation
Elevance Health
iHeartIMPACT

Investor (\$100K+)

Austin Public Health
NYC Council Speakers Initiative
SNAP-Ed Pennsylvania
Takeda
United Way of Miami-Dade

Pioneer (\$50K+)

Annenberg Foundation
Bank of America
Bayer USA Foundation
Conagra Brands Foundation
Giant Eagle Foundation
Kroger | Mariano's
North Lawndale Fresh

Sustainer (\$25K+)

Barilla
Batchelor Foundation
FMI Foundation
Hunt Family Foundation
Giant Eagle
Griffith Foods
Nielsen-Massey Foundation
NYC Council District
Nutrition Incentive Hub
Peacock Foundation, Inc.
Shipt
The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust
USC Good Neighbors Grant

Ally (\$10K+)

ALDI USA
Ann B. Zekauskas Family Foundation
Birmingham Foundation
Dr. Scholl Foundation
Ezaki Glico USA
Julia Child Foundation
Nestle USA
PNC Charitable Trust
Smart and Final Charitable Foundation
Spirit Airlines Charitable Foundation
State Senate District NY

Supporters

October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024

Individual Donors

\$10,000 +

Scott Barnhart
Angie Cooper
Neil Cotty
Sarita Dandamudi Rao
Mike Denman
Lori McGee
Ken O'Keefe
Elizabeth Wise

\$5,000+

Michelle Bernstein
Barbara Harrison
Janice Wade Miller
Geoffrey Tully

\$1,000+

Cyrus Bahrassa
Anne Curry
Geofferey Ellis
Bradley T. Hasemeyer
Jodie Holstein
Marissa Huttner
Margaret Wright

\$500+

Jon Arredia
John Bakke
Sarah E. Bro
Alexandra Clavero
Eduardo Contreras
Chanel Dennis
Kassandra Hendrix
Ed Levy
Jed Miracle
Adam Stoltz
Marvin Wilmoth

\$250+

Doneen Arquines
Jill Becher
William Cartwright III
Bianca Castagnaro
Swati Chandra
John Chiu
Eduardo Contreras
Stephanie Folkens
Scobey - Thai Family
Elizabeth Gadinsky
Raphael Lunetta
Heidi Miller
Tania Norria
Brianna Quaglia
Sunny Reelhorn Parr
Katherine Schaaf
Cary Walker



National & Regional Boards

October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024

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Abel Martinez
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Eduardo Garcia

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