



# FEAST

FOOD • EDUCATION • ACCESS  
SUPPORT • TOGETHER

## ANNUAL REPORT 2018

FEAST  
3655 South Grand Ave,  
Suite 210  
Los Angeles, CA

[www.feastforall.org](http://www.feastforall.org)

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# A MESSAGE FROM FEAST'S BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

Thank you all for your ongoing support! 2018 was another tremendous year with several positive changes and significant growth as an organization. We began the year with a change of leadership, with our former Managing Director, Dana Rizer, succeeding founder Sam Polk as our new Executive Director. Dana, a true force in her new role, has worked diligently to sustain our mission and lead us in exciting new directions. We also underwent a rebrand, changing our name from Groceryships to FEAST (Food Education, Access, Support, Together). Our board, staff and community take great pride in our new name, as it describes the key ingredients of the program, highlights our community-based approach, and honors the celebratory spirit of our work.

In the pages that follow, you will find a thorough report of our outcomes and achievements. We are particularly proud to share that in South Los Angeles and surrounding areas, in 2018 we directly served over 400 participants and benefitted over 1,100 individuals through our core programs and community classes—our biggest annual impact to date! We've also expanded our programs' reach nationwide through a training and licensing model. We've launched FEAST groups in schools throughout NYC and with community organizations in Nebraska and Vermont, with more states to come! We've also begun a fantastic partnership with Chef Tom Colicchio's company, Crafted Hospitality; thoroughly moved by our work, they are personally committed to supporting our growth.

As a psychiatrist, I'm also excited to see us focusing our attention on the social and emotional components of our work, with greater consideration to stress-reduction, mindfulness-based practices, and the importance of social connection. Considering food within the broader context of overall well-being, we will continue to hone our efforts to address the effects of trauma and other social determinants of health.

I'm very proud to serve on this board, and to work with a passionate team committed to health equity and social justice. As we continue to evolve and broaden our reach as an organization we all look forward to this next chapter together! We want to thank you for being a part of our growing FEAST community and welcome your continued support and involvement. Should you wish to learn more about our programs, Board of Directors, Advisor's Circle, or other ways to support our mission, please don't hesitate to reach out to Dana: [dana@feastforall.org](mailto:dana@feastforall.org).

With your help, we will continue to democratize food access and positively impact the health of our community, one family at a time. Thank you again for everything you do to make our work possible!

Sincerely,



Christina M. Ford, MD  
Board Chair

## MEET THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## MEET THE TEAM

Dana Rizer  
Executive Director

Lauren Rejvani  
Communications and  
Development Associate

Amy Vu  
Associate Program Director

Ana Guzman  
Community Manager

# A MESSAGE FROM FEAST'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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2018 was a year of new beginnings! During my first few months proudly serving as Executive Director, our organization celebrated the change of our name to FEAST. In the second quarter, we welcomed a new team member, Lauren Rejvani, who joined as our Communications and Development Associate. In the third quarter, we welcomed another new team member, Amy Vu, who began overseeing our programs and community partnerships as our Associate Program Director. Together with FEAST's longstanding Community Manager, Ana Guzman, and with the support of many key foundations and individual donors, our small and mighty team successfully increased FEAST's outreach and impact, leading to the launch of programs in communities across the United States from Nebraska to New York City.

Looking back on the previous year, I am in awe of the power of two of FEAST's key ingredients: **Support, Together**. None of FEAST's accomplishments would have been possible without the support of our diverse and dedicated team, our strong and energized board of directors, and our growing family of FEAST supporters.

For every life that was changed in 2018 through the power of healthy food and human connection, know that your generosity, guidance and presence made that happen. On behalf of everyone at FEAST, thank you. We hope that you will be inspired by the impact report that follows, and that you will continue to join us on our mission to ensure that all individuals have access to the ingredients that create health and wellness.

In Gratitude,



Dana Rizer  
Executive Director



FEAST Leadership Training, October 2018, NYC



# FEAST'S MISSION IS TO PROMOTE WELLNESS AND ENRICH LIVES THROUGH THE POWER OF HEALTHY FOODS AND HUMAN CONNECTION

**FEAST was created to help individuals and families struggling with the effects of living within a broken food system build healthier lives. Research shows that health and wellness are the result of a variety of interrelated factors:**

## OUR FOOD ENVIRONMENT

which includes our ability to find and afford healthy foods in our neighborhoods, as well as the skills and support needed to prepare and consume those foods regularly.

## OUR EMOTIONS

which includes our ability to manage stress as well as our access to resources that help us help navigate life's challenges, and engage in basic self-care.

## OUR SOCIAL NETWORKS

which includes the feeling of being connected to and supported by close friends, family or colleagues.





# 16-WEEK PROGRAM OVERVIEW

FEAST programs were created based on the belief that health is not only physical, it is also mental, emotional and social. As a result, our program is designed to provide support on three levels:



## FOOD EDUCATION

We provide a comprehensive, practical education in healthy foods and eating habits, including: information on how to navigate our current food system in a healthy manner, identifying accessible, affordable whole food sources, shopping skills like label reading and budgeting, cooking skills, and a variety of fruit-and-vegetable-focused recipes each week.



## ACCESS

The transition from a processed diet of convenience, to a whole foods diet is challenging, and spending money on new, unfamiliar foods is a risk that many of our families simply cannot afford. Additionally, in many neighborhoods where FEAST groups are most needed, there may not be adequate access points for people to find fresh, healthy whole foods at the start of the program. This is why we continue to provide food access in the form of our "Scholarships for Groceries." By forming partnerships with local food providers, we offer our participants gift cards, farmer's market vouchers or weekly fresh produce deliveries at the end of every class to help them experiment with new recipes and ingredients at home.



## SUPPORT, TOGETHER

Weekly check-ins and sharing circles create opportunities for participants to address the underlying and often emotional elements of eating. The sharing topics help foster personal reflection and introspection, and the guided sharing circle structure creates a safe space for people to open up about deep, vulnerable issues while getting the support of their peers.





# 16-WEEK PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS 2018

## 16 Groups directly implemented by FEAST

Heart of Los Angeles  
O'Donovan Academy  
St. Joseph Center  
A Place Called Home  
West Hollywood Housing Corporation

With Love Market  
Children's Institute  
Miriam's House  
Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Mall  
Baldwin Park Kaiser Permanente



## 3 Groups implemented by FEAST Affiliates

Los Angeles - Providence Health, South Bay (2 groups)  
Nebraska - Community Action Partnership



**187 graduates directly served**

**519 additional family members reached through FEAST 16-week programs**

**\$24,576 worth of vouchers distributed to purchase fruits, vegetables, and whole grains**



# 16-WEEK PROGRAM OUTCOMES 2018



## PHYSICAL AND MEDICAL HEALTH\*

- 73%** of participants saw improvements in their pre-existing medical condition.
- 65%** of participants lost weight, with an average loss of 2.4 lbs per participant. The greatest weight loss was 17 lbs, a 7.5% decrease in body weight.

*"I can move better with less pain in my bones. Emotionally I am more content, less depressed, and less tired. I have more energy."*  
 – Maria M., St. Joseph Clinic

## EATING HABITS\*

### BY THE END OF THE PROGRAM...

- 92%** are "somewhat" or "very confident" they can identify healthy foods using the food label compared to 56% before.
- 97%** read nutrition labels compared to 70% before the program.
- 90%** participants consumed a fruit/vegetable at least one time per day compared to 71% before.
- 82%** "never" or only "once a week" drank sugar-sweetened beverages compared to 72% before.

*"I am incredibly grateful for the FEAST class. My anxiety has lowered since I have started eating healthier. I have been making all the recipes that I've learned in class. I was pre-diabetic but my doctor said that I now have a lower chance of getting diabetes."*  
 – Juana B., Children's Institute

*"I will forever be inspired and focused on the impact FEAST has had on me, both because of the education and the relationships and bonds forged in this loving group environment. The fundamental and life-changing tools and resources we've gained here are treasures that will continue to motivate us to turn life's stumbling blocks into stepping stones."*  
 – Linda J., Kaiser Permanente

## EMOTIONAL HEALTH\*

### ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE



#### Point Category

- 0-14 Low
- 15-25 Normal
- 26-30 High

# 5.5

### AVERAGE POINT INCREASE

among those who increased their self-esteem scores

After completing the program, 97% of participants had normal or high self-esteem, with the largest change in the "high" point category. Participants reported greater life satisfaction, feelings of worthiness and positive attitudes toward self.



## DEMOGRAPHICS\*

- Female **95%** Hispanic/Latino **72.38%** **85% of participants are overweight or obese.** 60% have 1 or more health issue such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and/or high cholesterol.
- Male **5%** African American **9.52%** Half also live with a family member suffering from health problems.
- Age **45** White **17.14%** **57% rely on public assistance** such as SNAP/CalFresh, disability, child support, etc..
- (median) Other **0.95%**

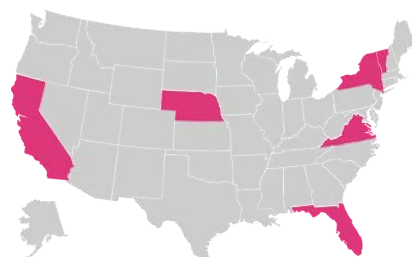




# TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM OUTCOMES

## 2018 TRAIN-THE-TRAINER ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

In order to reach more communities in need, in 2018 FEAST focused on further developing and growing its Train-the-Trainer Pathway towards scale. In 2018, FEAST trained 14 leaders across 6 states, including California, New York City, Nebraska, Virginia, Vermont, and Florida.



## CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Providence Health, Los Angeles



In less than 2 years, 11 Health Educators and Community Health Workers from Providence Health have participated in FEAST's Leadership Training. To date, they have implemented five FEAST groups, serving 60 families across in the San Fernando, South Bay, and Santa Monica areas in Los Angeles. Program outcomes show that individuals make substantial changes physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Here's what Providence Health group participants have to say:






*"It's been a great experience to be a part of this program because I have learned not only the importance of nutrition but also the importance of being physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually healthy"*  
– Noelia, FEAST Participant

*"I am diabetic and my doctor told me that my sugar levels are better and that I should continue doing what I've been doing lately. I used to have to get my blood sugar levels checked every 3 months and now I only need to go every 6 months."*  
– Evelyn, FEAST Participant

*"This program is unique because whatever relationship you have with food, you're going to walk away with a different understanding of it... About four classes in, participants start to show changes. Their appearance and attitude changes, how they share is different. They come in glowing."* — Lucia, FEAST Leader, Providence Health Educator

## WHAT OUTCOMES SHOW

-  **Improved Medical Health Outcomes:** Participant Maria M.'s improved her blood sugar control, dropping her A1C (a measure of blood sugar over the past 3 months) from 14% to 8.1%.
-  **Improved Emotional Health:** 100% of participants had normal or high self-esteem by the end of the program. 49% had high self-esteem, a 35% increase from the start of the program.
-  **Improved Physical Health Outcomes:** 45% of participants across all groups lost weight, the biggest loss was 35 lbs.





# FEAST GRADUATE SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

FEAST continues to support graduates on their health and wellness journey by providing Graduate Circles and ongoing fitness and cooking classes.

**432 graduates served through ongoing support activities**

## GRADUATE CIRCLES

After completing the program, graduates are invited to join a Graduate Circle to check-in about their progress. Graduate circles meet once a month and include fun activities such as fitness challenges, Zumba classes, walking groups, cooking demonstrations, garden visits and more.



## THE ART OF GOOD HEALTH

Judith Larson is a Community Health Worker and former participant of the FEAST program. Since she graduated from the program in 2015, she created her own class called, "El Arte de la Buena Salud (The Art of Good Health)," which was held at the FEAST office weekly. In her classes, she incorporated educational topics on health and also self-care practices such as art therapy. At the end of each class, participants would take home bags of farm fresh produce donated by [Food Forward](#).

**217 families reached through The Art of Good Health  
15,207 lbs of farmers' market produce distributed**

## SPECIAL WORKSHOPS

Volunteer chefs, fitness-instructors, nutrition students, and guest speakers are invited to contribute their knowledge to the FEAST community through special workshops. Thanks to the support from the [USC Good Neighbors Campaign](#) and others, student-volunteers led workshops on topics such as "Community Health Assessments," and "Healthy Eating During the Holidays." Additional classes were provided on Art Therapy and Parenting Skills.



# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

## PROGRAM SPONSORS



## CULINARY PARTNERS



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS



children's institute, inc.  
safe children, strong families, healthy communities



## FOOD SCHOLARSHIP PARTNERS





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