



# NMTC CASE STUDY

## DC CENTRAL KITCHEN'S MICHAEL R. KLEIN CENTER FOR JOBS & JUSTICE

### Washington, DC

A NEW KITCHEN AND FOOD HUB EXPANDS THE REACH OF  
HUNGER-FIGHTING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE.

# MICHAEL R. KLEIN CENTER

*A new kitchen and food hub expands the reach of hunger-fighting social enterprise.*

The District of Columbia faces significant challenges with food insecurity. According to Feeding America, 68,900 people (including 17,890 children) lack consistent access to enough nutritious food to lead an active and healthy life. In addition, in neighborhoods where food is scarce, life expectancy is nearly two decades shorter than in more affluent areas.

DC Central Kitchen (“DCCK”) is a pioneer of the social enterprise movement. The organization envisions a more just city where everyone can access healthy food, meaningful careers, and opportunities to achieve their full potential. Through the Culinary Job Training program (CJT), DCCK creates opportunities for people with barriers to employment to learn new skills while furthering DCCK’s healthy food mission to serve the community with staffing by program participants and volunteers.

DCCK is vital in increasing access to healthy food in the District of Columbia through its Healthy School Food, Healthy Corners, and Community Meals programs.

Since the 1990s, DCCK has operated out of the 9,000 sq. ft. basement of its Federal City Shelter, which has been inadequate to meet DCCK’s current programming and desired growth. For example, the organization turned away job training applicants because classrooms were too

full and rejected contracts to serve meals to low-income students because of insufficient production space.

In late 2020, DCCK leased 35,921 sq. ft. of former Coast Guard Headquarters at the mouth of the Anacostia River in the RiverPoint development in the Buzzard Point neighborhood of Southeast DC.

The organization then embarked on a \$35 million fundraising campaign to build out a new multi-purpose facility in the leased space. The new facility (named the Michael R. Klein Center for Jobs & Justice) includes:

- Class A office space with a long-term lease;
- A state-of-the-art preparatory kitchen;
- A new demonstration kitchen;
- DCCK's third social enterprise café;
- A teaching classroom;
- An educational media studio; and



## FINANCING

- NMTC allocation: CAHEC New Markets (\$8M); Chase New Markets Corporation (\$2.5M); and The Reinvestment Fund (\$8M).
- NMTC equity investor: Chase
- Leadership Gifts: Michael R. Klein (\$10 million), The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation, Government of the District of Columbia & DC Workforce Investment Council, Craig Newmark Philanthropies and craigstable, The Sheehy Family, Carol & Douglas Steenland, CoBank, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.



- Space for other entrepreneurial nonprofits.

## FINANCING

The project received significant philanthropic and individual support, including \$10 million in seed funding from Michael R. Klein, founder and Chairman of the Board of the CoStar Group, Inc. In addition, three CDEs combined to provide \$18.5 million in NMTC financing. CAHEC New Markets and Reinvestment Fund both provided \$8 million, and Chase New Markets Corporation provided an additional \$2.5 million in its allocation. Chase also served as the NMTC equity investor for the transaction.

## IMPACT

### Create Quality Jobs and New Investment:

The project will create 50 new jobs and retain 176 full-time employees, all paying living wages and having extensive benefits.

More than 90% of DCCCK's training participants self-identify as Black or African American. Over 90% of students enter their program with no income, 60% have histories of incarceration, and 25% have experienced recent bouts of homelessness.

The building is LEED certified and includes wellness spaces for staff and students to ensure DCCCK meets their physical and mental needs throughout the workday. The Klein Center's light-filled, 36,000 sq. ft. space will allow for self-care sessions and group retreats, such as yoga classes, journaling workshops, and healthy cooking demonstrations.

## IMPACT SUMMARY

Create 50 full-time employees and retain 176 full-time employees.

Expands its culinary training program for people with barriers to employment by 150%.

Doubles daily meals served by DCCCK in the DC region from 1.2 million meals to 2.1 million meals annually.

Generate over \$200 million in annual financial impact for the community by 2025.



DCCCK will also expand its volunteer network from 16,000 to 20,000 volunteers annually and generate over **\$200 million** in annual financial impact for the community by 2025.

**Provide More Meals:** DCCCK provides meals to soup kitchens, shelters, and other community programs. The project will increase its capacity from 1.2 million meals to 2.1 million meals annually.

"I'm always telling people about DC Central Kitchen's Culinary Job Training program. I tell them, I've been through this and that, but this was the best decision I ever made. It got me back on my feet, and also gave me a trade...but the choice is yours. This is your key. Use it."

**-Cora, DCCCK Employee and Culinary Graduate**

DC Central Kitchen provides food service for 19 DC schools by sourcing ingredients from more than 30 local family farms. Every meal is scratch-cooked according to recipes designed by an expert team of chefs and dietitians. The program provides meaningful, living-wage careers for at-risk adults who have completed the Culinary Job Training program.

**Expand Culinary Job Training:** DCCK's Culinary Job Training program has helped more than 2,000 men and women launch culinary careers. The program provides culinary arts education, career readiness training, and real-world internships for adults who have experienced barriers to employment and young adults ages 18-24 who are not in school or working. Trainees receive hands-on culinary training and career readiness training as they prepare to earn two valuable credentials, including the ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification. This project will allow DCCK to expand its training program by 150% to 250 or more participants annually.

**Learning by Doing:** DCCK's third cafe opened in the lobby of the Klein Center. The Klein Center Cafe serves fresh coffee, delicious pastries, and light fare featuring locally-sourced ingredients. In addition, the cafe provides on-the-job training to youth and

adults facing barriers to employment. Culinary Job Training students can receive hands-on experience with hospitality service while interning at the café.

**Fighting Food Waste:** With increased cold storage at the Klein Center, DCCK can be more agile in recovering fresh, unprepared food items from various food donors across the region. Once food reaches the kitchen, LeanPath's waste tracker technology informs production methods, menu development, and recipe selection in the school and café operations. In addition, the Klein Center allows DCCK to broaden the number of staff receiving LeanPath training, increase composting efforts, and install one of the largest commercial food service bio-digesters in the world, which will cleanly and securely divert food scraps back into the water system instead of landfills.

**Promoting Culinary Entrepreneurship:** The new space is co-located with the acclaimed food justice social enterprise Dreaming Out Loud and its accelerator program for disadvantaged food entrepreneurs. A collaborative, Community Supported Agriculture program for DCCK staff will expand sales opportunities for Black and value-aligned farmers in their food hub network while helping staff and their families access fresh, healthy, local foods.

