

Our HEALing Kitchen

WELCOME TO OUR HEALING KITCHEN!

Welcome to our newest edition of Our Healing Kitchen! You have in your hands, a manual that was lovingly prepared to equip you with skills to incorporate more fresh foods into your diet. This Garden-to-table guide is bursting at the seam with recipes that are brimming with health-promoting, disease-fighting properties. Once inside, you'll see that we also blend in a wide array of healthy living tools to live your best life. Think of this book as not just a cooking manual but a healthy living roadmap!

Across the country, people are seeking out fresh, local produce with which to nourish their families. Local farm markets are exploding, more people are gardening, and areas that once lacked a supply of affordable, fresh produce are beginning to receive equal access to this life-saving food. There really is a food movement occurring as communities are rising up to take charge of their health. Nothing has a profound effect on our health, as does the food with which we nourish our self!

You may come to this book as a student in an "Our Healing Kitchen" class or as an individual wanting more resources for your health journey. We hope to empower you and your community. The HEAL team has witnessed health transformations in individuals, families and neighborhoods that can occur when they adopt the principles inside. We are thrilled for you to dive in and begin the HEALing journey that awaits!



The HEAL Team

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Our HEALing Story

ABOUT US

The HEAL Program was created in 2014 as a jointly-funded collaboration between Parkview Health and the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation. Knowing that all people need quality, nutritional food to lead a full, active, and healthy life, the HEAL program works to improve health outcomes in Allen County, Indiana.

Allen County residents living in communities without nearby grocery stores or affordable farm stands, face challenges in accessing quality, affordable food and in knowing how to include it in their diet. In our county, there are 51,830 residents identified as food insecure (14% of residents). Approximately 17,940 of them are children under the age of 18 (feedingamerica.org).

According to the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the health of a community is driven by environment and zip code. In order to improve the environment of our community and thus its health, HEAL addresses food access and education through three key programs: HEAL Farm Markets, GATE (Growth in Agriculture Through Education) Urban Garden, and Our HEALing Kitchen Cooking Classes.



GATE URBAN GARDENS

HEAL financially supports several community garden programs including GATE (Growth in Agriculture Through Education), a program aimed at teaching low-income youth in the food desert neighborhoods in the 46803 zip code how to prepare, plant, harvest, and sell produce at a farm market.

GATE's founder, Gonzalee Martin, operates a two-acre urban garden on Slataper Street in Fort Wayne, which is adjacent to a low-income housing

complex. The garden welcomes multicultural collaboration and allows four local Burmese farmers to sell produce at the McCormick Place Farm Market which is also located on the Slataper property. As quoted by Mr. Martin in a HEAL video, "What I am teaching the kids, no one can ever take away from them. They will know how to produce food, they will always be able to eat something healthy, and will have experiences that will resonate with them for the rest of their lives."

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Gonzalee Martin
Founder of GATE

Our HEALing Kitchen



HEAL FARM MARKETS

HEAL markets, which serve primarily food desert neighborhoods, feature a variety of fresh produce that is grown by local farmers whenever possible. A unique feature of the markets is that HEAL (through funding from St. Joseph Community Health Foundation and Parkview Health) offers double purchasing power for individuals with SNAP EBT cards or Senior/WIC produce vouchers. HEAL Markets are the only farm markets in the area that offer a “double up” program.

OUR HEALING KITCHEN COOKING CLASSES

Our HEALing Kitchen (OHK) was launched in 2016 to teach participants how to select, prepare, and incorporate fresh produce and healthy foods into their diets. Over the last two years, HEAL has witnessed true transformation in participants’ lives including weight loss, lower blood pressure and sugar levels, and fellowship. Learning, cooking and eating together promotes health and wellbeing, helps foster community, and empowers participants to take charge of their health!

Since 2016, OHK has:

- Trained 1,100 adults and teens
- Awarded 92 grants to local partners
- Hosted 119 classes
- Increased average daily consumption of fruits and vegetables by 0.7 cups

Although the numbers are impressive, reactions and testimonials capture the full impact of OHK classes. Here is what a few participants had to say about the class:

“Over these last 8 weeks I’ve learned so much and the class has awakened a real joy of cooking in me. Before Our HEALing Kitchen, I rarely ventured into the kitchen, but now I feel really comfortable in the kitchen. I sure will miss the classes and spending time cooking with all the other participants.” - Emanuel Baptist Participant

“This class came at a time when I most needed it. I was desperate to learn how to incorporate more fruits and vegetables in my life. This class answered that question for me. Through this class I have successfully cooked many new, healthy recipes for my family. They now ask me for advice on what is healthiest and most delicious! HEAL has been a blessing!” – Body of Christ Church Participant

“These classes allowed the women in our shelter the opportunity to not only learn about healthy eating and active living, but also allowed them the opportunity to build and strengthen the community amongst themselves.” – YWCA instructor



“THROUGH THIS CLASS I HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COOKED MANY NEW, HEALTHY RECIPES FOR MY FAMILY. THEY NOW ASK ME FOR ADVICE ON WHAT IS HEALTHIEST AND MOST DELICIOUS!”

Body of Christ Church Participant