



Meal Times



Spotlight On

Frank : Veterans Shouldn't Fade Away

Frank walks into the Project Open Hand San Francisco Grocery Center with his own handcart and plastic bags. He's ready to shop for this week's worth of healthy groceries.

He has a pair of large Sony headphones over his ears, connected to a portable CD player that fits perfectly into his left-pant pocket. Wherever he goes his music goes.

"I love music." Frank, an Air Force veteran, is also a musician. He writes his own music. Plays the keyboard. Sings his own vocals. "I can play all kinds of music like classical and, my favorite, jazz," he said.

While Frank can probably play the perfect tune to any song, his body plays an altogether different note. Because Frank has a bad heart.

Born in 1952 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Frank joined the Air Force at the young age of 17 and became an Aircraft Sheet Metal Specialist. After his service, he made his way out west to San Francisco. He held jobs at United Airlines, the Veterans Affairs hospital, and in the food service industry.

Now a senior living in the South of Market neighborhood, Frank has had to deal with several health complications. He has heart disease. He had a stroke and two heart attacks. And he has a hard time holding down his food because of his irritable bowel syndrome.

"Old soldiers don't die, they just fade away," Frank said. And he continued to fade as access to healthy and nutritious foods were out of reach. "Food is so expensive," he said. "I would be going without food sometimes, very little food, or have bad food they give to poor people."

Frank clearly needed help. During a medical visit, he learned about the services available to veterans in need

"I met with an RDN and we went over my health problems. And then they came up with a plan for me. You have to eat the right foods to live and control your underlying condition. If you don't eat the right food, it gets worse."

- Frank

like himself and his case worker referred him to Project Open Hand. On his first visit, he met with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) for a nutrition and wellness assessment. They discussed how medically tailored nutrition could support his dietary needs and get him back on the road to better health.

Did you know that Project Open Hand has provided 596 one-on-one RDN sessions to veterans like Frank over the past 10 years? **In that time, Project Open Hand served 786 veteran**

clients and provided them with 168,040 meals and 27,250 bags of groceries.

Over 70 percent of these veterans were over the age of 60, and over 61 percent indicated that their monthly income was below \$1,200 – not nearly enough to survive in one of the most expensive regions in the nation.

It's been a year and a half since Frank signed up in June of

2019. He comes in three times a month to pick-up medically appropriate foods like fresh vegetables and nutrient-packed proteins. He said that the nutrition he receives has given him increased energy and kept him healthy, especially during COVID-19.

Access to healthy nutrition has been a life-changer for a veteran like Frank.

"That's why COVID is tearing us up, because we can't afford to get the good, healthy foods during this time.

"Project Open Hand takes away a lot of the stress of wondering how I'm going to get certain foods. If I run out of money, I'm not going to stress about how I'm gonna get my next meal, where's it going to come from. Who am I going to turn to? I call that stress," Frank said.

Project Open Hand relieved his stress. Now, Frank can continue to concentrate on his love of music while staying perfectly in tune with his health.

None of this is possible without the support from friends like you. Will you please consider a gift today? Just go to www.openhand.org/donate to make a one-time gift or join the Supper Club with a monthly gift.

Thank you.



2021 - A Glimmer of Hope



Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it."

- Helen Keller

Dear Friend,

The world is a different place and it has changed in such profound ways. Nearly one person is dying every minute as a result of COVID-19. Our unemployment rate reached an all-time high. Anxiety and loneliness hit every corner of our society and caused immeasurable pain and suffering. Social inequality and police brutality dominated the headlines and revealed to us what true injustice is. And to top it off, divisive leadership contributed to a growing sense of unrest.

Project Open Hand wasn't immune to the difficulties. Because of COVID-19, six of our 16 community nutrition sites - where seniors and adults with disabilities can enjoy a meal in a communal setting - closed. Our volunteer force, dwindled down from 125 daily volunteers to 28. And our clients, many of whom sheltered in place, were isolated at home and wondering how they would receive a meal from us.

Yes. 2020 will forever be remembered as a year of suffering. But it should also be remembered as a time when we stood up, against immeasurable odds, to overcome challenges.

At Project Open Hand, we increased our frozen meal capacity by creating additional freezer and storage space, which allowed us to increase our frozen meal production from 8,000 to 17,000 meals per week. Additional storage helped our community nutrition sites switch to pick-up only, and we saw meals increase from 6,000 to

9,000 per week. To make up for the loss of volunteers, staff members and additional hires stepped in. **These were just a few of the solutions we made because of your support.**

It is now 2021, and there is hope on the horizon. The new President is taking office and, hopefully, national healing will soon follow. Diverse communities of all colors will continue to mobilize together to bring about social change. And COVID-19 vaccinations, currently being administered to individuals and communities most at risk, will be widely available. Later this year, our communities, schools and businesses will re-open.

At Project Open Hand, we continue to adapt to every situation we are faced with because our clients need us, like Frank in our cover story. They depend on our services for food and nutrition security. Most importantly, medically-tailored nutrition keeps them in good health during these difficult times.

There will be unforeseen challenges ahead in 2021. But we will respond as we've always done through your generous support, and that gives us hope that we will overcome this crisis.

Please consider a donation at openhand.org/donate. Thank you.

Paul Hepfer
Chief Executive Officer

Gilead-Funded Nutrition Intervention Shows Promise

Gilead Sciences generously awarded three members of the California Food is Medicine Coalition (CalFIMC) a multi-year grant to provide a medical nutrition intervention to high risk HIV positive individuals who are 50 years of age or older. Member organizations that are a part of this grant include Project Open Hand, Project Angel Food, and Mama's Kitchen.

Very early results show that this intervention has had a positive effect on the clients. Ninety percent of clients reported that they maintained or improved their adherence to medication as a result of participating in the program. Additionally, older adults tend to experience increased social isolation and compounded with COVID-19, the impact could be greater for those individuals. For clients in the program, 60 percent experienced decreased social isolation. Some have attributed this to their time spent communicating with a registered dietitian and the friendly delivery drivers that stop by once a week.

"Mentally and physically, the intervention brought me back to life. The dietitian taught me how to eat properly with the right portions because I could only afford Top Ramen and fast foods," Project Open Hand client Toni said.

Visit openhand.org/gileadgrant to read the full story.

Quarterly News from Project Open Hand | Published Since 1989



Project Open Hand

Project Open Hand's mission is to improve health outcomes and quality of life by providing nutritious meals to the sick and vulnerable, caring for and educating our community.

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Community

Spotlight: RDN on Diabetes Intervention

You've been diagnosed with diabetes. Your mind swirls with questions: What comes next? Did eating too much sugar cause my diabetes? And will I ever be able to eat sugar again?

Maybe you wonder if you will have to inject insulin, or if there is any way to reverse your diabetes. Perhaps you've seen what happens to other people with diabetes, and you wonder if the same things will happen to you.

Here at Project Open Hand, there is a team that can answer these questions and more - the team of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists.

A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) is a nutrition expert. RDNs are skilled in providing Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) to people living with diabetes. Project Open Hand clients can take advantage of free and unlimited visits with an RDN on our team.

During an initial MNT session, the RDN spends time getting to know the client as an individual. The RDN gathers information about a client's medical history, lifestyle, and eating habits. The RDN will also help the client to discern realistic and measurable health goals, and will provide nutrition education and counseling tailored to the client's goals, and help develop a plan of action to achieve them.

An important part of the plan is learning healthy new dietary and lifestyle practices. The RDN shows clients what nutrients to focus on, and how much of them to eat. Here at Project Open Hand, we

offer meals and groceries that are tailored to people living with diabetes, and the RDN helps clients learn how to make use of them.

The RDN also teaches clients the importance of checking their blood glucose (or blood sugar), and how often to do so, and helps clients incorporate healthy changes like physical activity into their lifestyle. The RDN will also follow up as often as needed to help implement those changes and achieve those goals.



Just as importantly, the RDN helps separate diabetes facts from fiction. There is a host of information about diabetes available to the public these days, and not all of it is accurate. For example, one common myth is that eating too much sugar causes diabetes, and that people living with diabetes have to avoid sugar entirely. The RDN explains the diabetes disease process and clarifies what to do to stop the progression of diabetes.

At Project Open Hand, 20 percent of our clients are diagnosed with diabetes and depend on our medically appropriate nutrition to stay healthy.

Please consider a donation to openhand.org/donate so that our clients continue to receive critical, life-saving nutrition. Thank You!

By Jenna Miles, Registered Dietitian



Project Open Hand Plate Clubs

Your gift makes a difference. *MealTimes* offers special acknowledgment to Project Open Hand supporters who have made gifts totaling \$1,000 or more from July 1, 2020 through Oct. 31 2020. If you have questions about this list, please contact donations@openhand.org or 415-447-2300.

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From Our Kitchen to Yours



Kim's Granola Recipe

by Kim Madsen, Director, Nutrition Services

Ingredients

- 3 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup raw sunflower seeds
- ½ cup flaxseed meal
- 1 cup slivered or sliced almonds
- ½ cup non-fat dried milk (optional)
- ½ cup wheat germ
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- ½ cup canola oil (or oil of choice)
- ½ cup honey (or ¼ cup honey and ¼ cup molasses)

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 250 F°
- In a large bowl, mix all dry ingredients; mix well
- Add ½ cup oil to coat by mixing with hands or mixing spoon
- Add ½ cup of honey or honey and molasses mixture and stir well.
- Spread mixture onto lightly oiled or parchment covered cookie sheet or 13 x 9 baking pan.
- Bake 40 minutes or until golden brown stirring a couple times during cooking time.
- Keep an eye on it as it can burn!
- Makes 8 cups total

You can swap out ingredients for some of your favorites. Try any nut seeds you prefer or have on hand. Other suggestions include sesame seeds, chopped pecans, pumpkin seeds.

Nutrition information:

¼ cup: 135 calories, 4 g protein, 11 g carbohydrate, 9 g fat (4 g mono-unsaturated fat, 3.4g polyunsaturated and 0.8 g saturated fat) 2.3 g total fiber.

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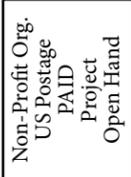
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Celebrating 35 Years

Hand to Hand



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