



THE HEALING POWER OF FOOD

A Healthy Life Delivered.



A \$19.5 million campaign for **Open Hand Atlanta**

We deliver love, dignity, and nutrition to neighbors in need. Our campaign will seed the next era in our evolution as we expand our reach and change lives by improving health for those most at risk.



Open
Hand
openhandatlanta.org



“ Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.”
 — Hippocrates



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A \$19.5 Million Campaign
for Open Hand Atlanta



A Letter From Us

My career in family business taught me many things, and I consider compassion the most important. With more than 200 employees under my leadership, each with their own unique personality, needs, and drivers, I found compassion was what they valued most—compassion not only from their supervisors, but also from their colleagues and from our clients. In her roles as executive, entrepreneur, leader, and philanthropist, my mother, Cathy Ellis, taught me the beauty of leading with a firm but compassionate hand. She was a driven individual who fought for her success. She exemplified that same strength over the last 2.5 years of her life as she battled lung cancer before succumbing to the disease in 2015.

Even though she is no longer physically present in our lives, her legacy endures. It is in honor of this legacy that I work every day to live and act with the kind of drive, courage, compassion, and empathy she consistently embodied. Through my mother, and the great leaders with whom she surrounded herself, I learned the value of service. Practicing this value means caring for our community. As we listen to our hearts, service to others creates joy within each of us. And through service we act compassionately to help those in need, leaving a sustainable impact in their lives.

I strive to enact these lessons daily. And through my work with Open Hand Atlanta, I've found a means of channeling those virtues, applying them in service to others, particularly those in need of nutritious meals and nutrition education that help them live fuller, healthier lives. Open Hand has a long history of doing exactly that. It all began with a simple act of love, kindness, and compassion, when in the 1980s, the organization was founded to bring comfort and healing to those living with and dying from AIDS. More than 30 years later, Open Hand has evolved as a nationwide leader in the food-as-medicine movement. We are ever mindful of the history that brought us to this point, driven by the mounting need around us, inspired as we look boldly ahead to serving the food and nutrition needs of a growing number of neighbors. After all, we began as friends caring for friends, and that's who we remain.

To that end, Open Hand Atlanta has launched *The Healing Power of Food: A Healthy Life Delivered* capital campaign, a \$19.5 million initiative that will fund our new home adjacent to the Grove Park neighborhood and Westside Park—and a stable future for our organization. Our relocation to a larger, better-equipped facility will position Open Hand for our next era of service. It also creates an opportunity for each of us—as we listen to our hearts and act with compassion—to power change in the lives of our neighbors. If you have supported Open Hand in the past, we invite you to continue that journey through *The Healing Power of Food*. If you are only now learning of the work we do, of the vital role nutrition plays in the health and well-being of individuals, their families, and their communities, we invite you to begin your journey with Open Hand today.

Each of us has the power to heal, the power to lead, the power to transform lives. Through our campaign and our compassion for our community, we have the power to act on all of this today. Thank you for considering how *The Healing Power of Food* presents the perfect opportunity to deliver lasting change throughout our Atlanta community. The need is here. With Open Hand Atlanta, the solution is as well.

As I think today of my mother, reflecting on the values that continue to shape me, I know the power is in my hands. It's in our hands. I humbly ask for your support and compassion to accomplish this incredible goal for our beloved Open Hand!

In Partnership,



Johanna Ellis Reisinger

The Healing Power of Food Campaign Chair
Member, Open Hand Atlanta Board of Directors



**THE HEALING
POWER OF FOOD**



**Open
Hand**

From Then to Now

During the height of the AIDS epidemic more than 30 years ago, Open Hand founder and former executive director Michael Edwards Pruitt and a small group of friends sought to comfort those living and dying with the disease. They began preparing and delivering home-cooked meals, harnessing the power of food and compassion to make the sick feel better—physically, emotionally, and mentally. This simple act of kindness soon became a labor of love, and in 1988, Open Hand Atlanta was born in the rectory kitchen of Atlanta’s St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church.

We soon expanded our mission beyond food preparation and delivery to include a comprehensive approach to nutrition care. This evolution made room at the table for many more Atlanta-area neighbors in need: diverse, at-risk populations throughout the community who would benefit from medically tailored meals and fresh groceries that address a variety of health challenges. At Open Hand, however, we do much more than simply provide food. Our meals are delicious, health-promoting, and delivered with love to our neighbors in need. Open Hand enables people to live healthier lives with dignity, and we empower our clients to prevent or better manage chronic disease

through tailored nutrition interventions, including a range of therapeutic, high-quality meal options designed by professional chefs and registered dietitians, as well as nutrition counseling and coaching. Our clients include seniors struggling to age in place, as well as adults of all ages battling diabetes, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, cancer, renal failure, and other serious chronic health conditions. Many of these individuals are at high risk for hospital readmission and include people in rural communities with limited or no access to adequate nutrition or health care.

More than three decades later, Open Hand is one of the largest community-based providers of home-delivered meals and nutrition services in the U.S.—delivering 5,000 meals each day with love and compassion to our neighbors in need. Our nutrition education outreach empowers 3,000 more people each year as they take control of their health by gaining the knowledge and skills to prepare their own nutritious food. We also always provide our services free to clients—three-quarters of whom live at or below the federal poverty line. One-third of our clients report that, if not for Open Hand, they would have no idea where their next meal is coming from.





OUR 2021 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



1,453,000

medically tailored meals

Educated
259
clients about
nutrition.



Served **6,022**
customers with nourishing
food at Grady Hospital's
Jesse Hill Market.



5,044
boxes of fresh produce
provided for cooking
class participants.

Delivered
5,000
meals each day
to clients in **29**
Georgia counties.



Cared for **4,530**
Open Hand clients, **99%** of whom
are from low-income households,
and **75%** of whom live below the
federal poverty line.

“

I'm a five-time stroke survivor, which has left me with very low mobility on my left side. Preparing meals was just torture. When I got my first Open Hand meal, I was so impressed. You can tell that it's fresh and well-prepared. It's nutritious and delicious! Being disabled, I often feel pitied by those around me. Open Hand does the opposite. They treat me with dignity. I can't tell you what a difference this program has made in my quality of life.”

— Leslie, Open Hand client

Nutrition For All

Equitable access to food or a lack thereof—specifically nutritious food—is a key driver of health outcomes. By leveraging the national platform of the Food is Medicine Coalition (a partnership of community-based, medically tailored, and nutrition education providers throughout the country), Open Hand helps foster a nationwide shift from a focus on food insecurity, which emphasizes quantity, to a focus on nutrition insecurity, which emphasizes quality. Those struggling with nutrition insecurity often cannot afford or obtain nutrient-rich foods, placing them at much higher risk of either developing chronic disease or exacerbating a pre-existing illness such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, or kidney failure.

In 2020, Open Hand clients continued to report significant improvements in their health and quality of life (even in light of the numerous challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic):



We witness on a daily basis the devastating effects caused by a cycle of chronic disease and a lack of access to nutritious food. Not only does this weigh heavily on our hospital system, but it also damages patients' and their families' quality of life. Open Hand creates access to a critical resource our patients and families need to live healthy lives—right here on our campus at the Jesse Hill Market and through the organization's home-delivered meals."

— John Hauptert, President and CEO, Grady Health System



The first ingredient in our meals is always love. In 2021, we cooked nearly 1.5 million meals that nourish the body and soul. Our made-from-scratch meals are frozen to maximize freshness, then delivered directly to the doorsteps of those we serve. We offer custom menus to address specific health conditions, and all our meals meet or exceed the most rigorous nutritional standards set by the American Diabetes Association, the USDA, and the American Heart Association. In short, we believe food saves lives. And we're not the only ones.

Managed Care organizations and other health care organizations in Georgia and across the country increasingly underscore the role nutrition plays in the treatment and mitigation of disease—particularly for those living in poverty and most at-risk for poor health outcomes. As a proven industry leader, Open Hand stands ready to account for that trend in our own planning. We have long understood the connection between nutritious food and disease prevention and management and have already begun partnering with hospitals and safety net clinics in both urban and rural communities throughout Georgia.

Partnering with Managed Care Organizations

Research has documented the improved health outcomes for patients and cost savings achieved through medically tailored nutrition interventions. Open Hand is at the forefront of partnerships with managed care organizations. In recent years, more than 50 managed care entities across the nation have contracted with organizations like ours for the provision of medically tailored meals. The Healing Power of Food campaign will enable us to expand these partnerships, providing healthy, custom meals to many more medically fragile people throughout our community and across the state.



“

It was very important early on for me to keep my sodium intake below 2,000 grams a day. Most people don't have to think about it, but it was a big challenge. My Open Hand meals were such a blessing. They took all the guesswork out of managing my diet, and not having to worry about shopping or preparing food helped out so much when I wasn't feeling well.”

— Will, Open Hand client

Innovation is at Our Core

Open Hand was born out of a creative response to a need, and we are proud to maintain a culture of innovation. Our innovative spirit led to the launch of our successful social enterprise **Good Measure Meals™**, which sells the same meals that nourish and offers nutrition coaching to its customers. A full 100 percent of its net proceeds goes directly to support Open Hand's mission. Every two Good Measure Meals™ purchased supports one Good Measure Meals™ provided to a neighbor in need through Open Hand. In this same spirit of innovation, we recently launched our own customized tele-nutrition platform to reach more individuals throughout the state of Georgia with nutrition education.

More Essential Than Ever

66 No organization in our city or our state is as well-positioned as Open Hand Atlanta to meet the growing nutrition needs of those most at risk. As the national dialogue around nutrition's role in driving better health outcomes gathers momentum, we remain at the forefront of something truly transformative: a movement that increasingly and quite simply positions food as medicine. Aligned with the Food is Medicine Coalition, we have formed dynamic new partnerships with statewide, community-based organizations, managed care organizations, and safety net clinics that will amplify the demand for our services and expertise. These new partnerships will provide an additional stream of earned income for Open Hand, ensuring long-term sustainability and a stronger financial footing.

As demand has increased, so has our urgency to respond. Relocating is one necessary step in that direction: a wonderful, new home with enough room to deepen our impact while also welcoming the surrounding community into our new space with open arms. Join us then, as we embark on this next chapter in the life of Open Hand Atlanta, ever inspired by the guiding principles of love, compassion, and service that gave rise to our mission so many years ago. With your support, we stand ready to meet this moment."

— Matthew Pieper
Executive Director, Open Hand Atlanta and
Vice Chair, Food is Medicine Coalition Advisory Board



Growing our Impact

The need for Open Hand's programs has mounted over the last decade, particularly in light of the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on health and household income. Consequently, our current 30,000-square-foot facility, located between Buckhead and Midtown, is no longer sufficient to accommodate the multiplying demand. We are operating above capacity and with a deficit in cooler/freezer, warehouse, and meal-packing space. Our current location has never had adequate loading docks for this level of delivery and service, and it presents no feasible options for expansion.

Therefore, we have launched The Healing Power of Food, a \$19.5 million campaign, which will fund our relocation to the Grove Park/Westside community and thereby expand our capacity to meet a growing demand throughout metro Atlanta and beyond.



“

We have been proud supporters of Open Hand for over 15 years. Time and time again we have seen what a profound impact access to the nutritious meals Open Hand provides—regardless of ability to pay—can have on a person's quality of life and wellbeing. We are grateful for Open Hand and the service they offer our community.”

— Helen and Jimmy Carlos,
Honorary Campaign Co-Chairs



KEY FEATURES

Open Hand Atlanta's new home in Grove Park



Location:
1380 W. Marietta St.
(adjacent to Westside Park)

43,000
square feet

Centrally located within Open Hand's service area



The Healing Power of Food

A \$19.5 Million Campaign for Open Hand Atlanta

Campaign Component	Estimated Cost
A fresh foundation: Purchase of property at 1380 West Marietta St.	\$8,400,000
Renovation hard costs: Covers the construction costs of converting the new space into our new home.	\$6,500,000
Renovation soft costs: Covers costs associated with construction contingency, a construction manager, finance, and the campaign.	\$2,816,000
Cultivating healthy communities: Includes start-up costs of Open Hand's workforce development initiative	\$304,000
Fortifying our infrastructure: Includes the cost of three refrigerated fleet vehicles	\$280,000
Preparing for the future: A building maintenance fund ensures the new facility is properly maintained	\$1,100,000
CAMPAIGN TOTAL	\$19,500,000

8 loading docks
(7 more than in the current facility)

Space for **culinary training** and professional development opportunities for employees and surrounding neighbors wishing to pursue a career in food service



100%
increase in
warehouse space

75%
increase potential
for cold storage



3

new refrigerated
fleet vehicles, which
will allow us to
deliver an additional

14,000
meals each week

Open Hand Atlanta

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