



Open Kitchen



Open Kitchen is committed to implementing preventative actions to improve the US prison system. We aim to empower inmates and ex-offenders through the provision of rehabilitation programs, job training and education, and assistance with re-entry into society. Open Kitchen's mission is to reduce recidivism and to improve the overall well-being of those affected by the criminal justice system by addressing the root causes of incarceration.

Who are we?

Deidre, the visionary founder of Open Kitchen, embarked on a journey of discovery and empathy in 2016. Her travels took her to various countries where she had the privilege of hearing the heart-wrenching stories of survivors of human trafficking and other exploitative industries. Through these conversations and by engaging with non-profit organizations and government officials, Deidre gained an understanding of the profound emotional, social, and economic devastation wrought upon individuals, communities, and entire countries.

Determined to make a meaningful impact, Deidre and her team delved deeper. They reached out to various organizations that were already engaged in rescue, rehabilitation, and other forms of support. What they discovered was a crucial gap in the support system: job training and workforce integration.



Meet the Team →

02/13



Deidre Pujols

CEO + Founder

Open Kitchen was founded by Deidre Pujols in 2016. She had visited several countries and during her travels, learned of the devastating emotional, social and economic impact wrought by human trafficking and other exploitive industries. These experiences deeply affected Deidre and she was determined to get involved and make an impact.



Chef Cinthia Worsey

Executive Chef

Chef Cinthia graduated from Le Cordon Bleu California School of Culinary Arts and has worked in renowned restaurants such as L'Orangerie in West Hollywood. As Open Kitchen's Global Executive Chef, she runs the culinary program in Orange County, creates meals for fundraising events, oversees the global programs in different parts of the world and develops all the menus and manuals that are used in the kitchen.



Leoni K Webster

Director of International Child Welfare

Leonie has 25 years of child welfare experience working with multiple child welfare agencies in the United States, Latin America and Europe. A TBRI® Certified Practitioner, she is an international child welfare advisor specializing in child/parent attachment, residential care change management and policy reform.

What do we do?

As a result of her findings, Deidre founded Open Kitchen with a mission to bridge that gap and provide comprehensive support to survivors. The organization offers accredited training programs, life skills development, and job placement services to survivors. Additionally, Open Kitchen is committed to raising awareness and educating the public on the importance of investing in the rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors, recognizing that it is vital for their well-being and for the betterment of society as a whole.

“Substantial research has shown that access to education and training services while incarcerated can significantly reduce recidivism. A recent meta-analysis of correctional education programs found that inmates who participate in such programs on average had 43 percent lower odds of being convicted of a crime and returning to prison.”



What is Recidivism?

Recidivism is the act of a person committing a new crime after being released from prison or other form of punishment. It is often used as a measure of the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs and as a way to gauge the likelihood of an offender committing future crimes. Recidivism is generally defined as a return to prison within a certain period of time, such as within one or three years of release, but can also be measured by rearrest or re-conviction.

Why is this important?

Assisting individuals in prison through rehabilitation not only aids in their personal growth but also significantly reduces the chance of reoffending upon release. Additionally, providing basic necessities such as food, shelter, and healthcare not only upholds the fundamental human rights of prisoners but also contributes to the cost-effectiveness of the criminal justice system by decreasing recidivism. Furthermore, investing in the betterment of prisoners' lives not only increases public safety but also promotes fairness as incarceration should serve as punishment for committed crimes and not a lifetime sentence of hardship and suffering.



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75%

75% of individuals re-engage in criminal activity within five years of their release from jail or prison.

\$80B

\$80 B is roughly how much it costs to run the U.S. prison system per year, not factoring in social services.

43%

Inmates who participated in an educational program had 43 percent lower odds of being convicted of a crime and returning to prison.

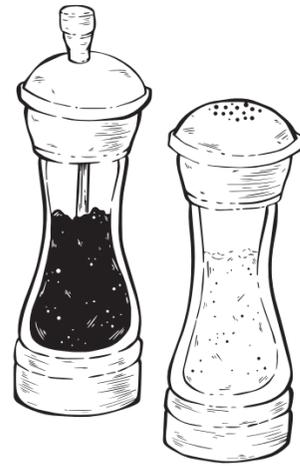


What are we doing about it?

For those who have fled or been rescued from oppressive, violent or other vulnerable situations, the lack of opportunities to acquire the skills and resources necessary to secure a job and maintain economic independence can be a major barrier to rebuilding their lives. Without support, many survivors find themselves returning to their previous circumstances.

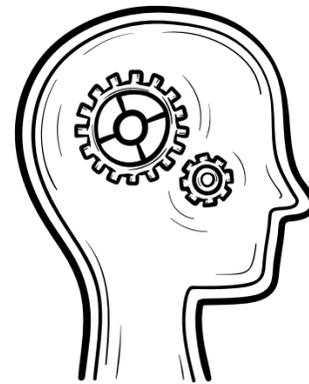
Our organization steps in to fill this gap by offering accredited culinary training, restorative healing services and job placement assistance to survivors. We believe that providing survivors with the means to gain financial independence is a crucial step in their overall recovery and reintegration into society.

Our Programs [————>](#)



Open Kitchen

Open Kitchen's culinary training program is accredited by the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation.



Open Mind

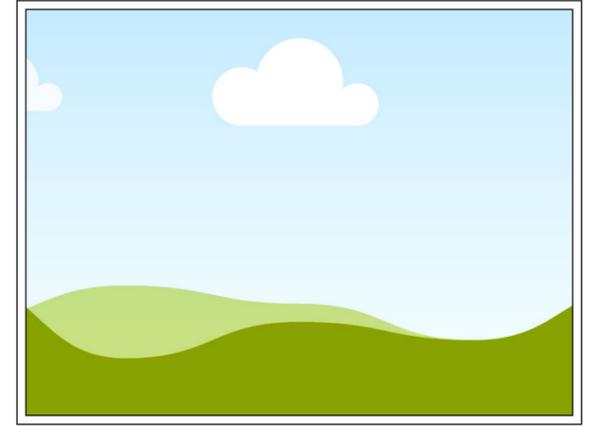
Open Mind is dedicated to educating the public on the importance of providing the vulnerable with the skills and resources they need to succeed in life.



Open Home

Open Home is dedicated to providing opportunities for individuals facing vulnerable life situations, all over the world.

International Outreach



Our mission is to offer opportunities to individuals facing vulnerable situations globally. We collaborate with local non-profit partners in various cities to establish and implement our culinary training program, tailored to the local culture. Our team of trained chefs, mentors, and staff provide the necessary training to equip students for success post-graduation worldwide. We have already established a presence in Mexico, Cambodia, and India.

Learn about our International Efforts 



Moldova



We've formed alliances with local non-profits and the Moldovan government to establish culinary programs in Chisinau, a regional women's prison, as well as in rural villages outside the city. In an effort to address the overwhelming orphan population, OGI has also developed a robust Child Welfare Division to bring much needed training to government leaders and local care providers in the region.

Cambodia



We collaborate with **Agape International Missions (AIM)**, a nonprofit that works directly with the Cambodian government to conduct raids on and arrest human traffickers. Together, we've provided support to four victims of human trafficking through teaching them culinary and life skills and by helping them secure job placement upon graduating.

India



Our partner **Vision Rescue** works to change the destructive mindset of “slum mentality,” the belief that you are destined to live in extreme poverty, through education, vocational training, healthcare and more. We teamed up with **Vision Rescue** to help strengthen their existing structures and to provide resources for their first ever Culinary Training Institute.

Mexico



Teaming up with **El Pozo de Vida** and **Sahl+Uno** in Mexico, we’ve been afforded the opportunity to establish a 12-week culinary training course to help provide women ages 16 to 38 who’ve experienced sexual exploitation.

How can you get involved?

Donations play a crucial role in the success of our programs. They allow us to provide essential resources and support to the individuals we serve. Without the generosity of donors, we would not be able to provide the necessary training, education, and support services that are vital to the rehabilitation and reintegration of vulnerable youth and survivors



You can donate towards a cause

You can employ our graduates

You can join our community



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Contacts



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