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FareStart's National Effort Reaches Major Milestone, Welcomes 50th Organization to its Member Network

Seattle (Jan. 2, 2014) — [FareStart](#), the local non-profit organization that provides culinary job training to homeless and disadvantaged individuals, announced today that it has welcomed the 50th member organization to its national effort, [Catalyst Kitchens](#). Launched in 2011 to help bring the success of FareStart to communities across the country, Catalyst Kitchens is a collaborative network of foodservice social enterprise organizations that provide job training to individuals with barriers to employment across the U.S., Canada, and United Kingdom.

“Our national partnerships are effecting real, measurable change on the battle against homelessness, poverty and hunger in communities all across the country,” said FareStart CEO Megan Karch. “Collectively, we’re leveraging the impact of each of these organizations to strengthen and increase support services and training opportunities in areas where they are needed most. And, while we pause to celebrate this important milestone, we do so knowing there is more work to be done,” continued Karch.

Every day, men and women transform their lives in FareStart’s adult program, which includes culinary training, job placement services, life-skills classes, counseling, and assistance with housing, food, clothing and other support services to assist FareStart students as they change their lives. Since 1992, FareStart has provided opportunities for nearly 7,000 people to transform their lives, while also serving over 6 million meals to disadvantaged men, women, and children throughout the Puget Sound. As a social enterprise nonprofit, FareStart self-generates approximately 50 percent of its annual operating revenue through businesses like the FareStart Restaurant—which in turn provide valuable training opportunities and hands-on experience for students. Currently, approximately 87 percent of FareStart graduates have jobs within 90 days of graduation.

Catalyst Kitchens, an initiative of FareStart, was launched in an effort to take the FareStart model to a national scale—working with existing organizations across the country to help apply the lessons that FareStart and “Model Members” from within the network have learned over the past several decades. Since its launch in 2011, the Catalyst Kitchens member network has collectively provided training and job opportunities for more than 3,500 men, women and youth in 18 states, provided more than 11 million nutritious meals for those in need, and generated over \$30 million in social enterprise revenue—which has gone back into the organizations to help increase capacity and services.

Catalyst Kitchens provides resources to organizations at every stage of development and helps them make the leap, for example, from solely providing meals to those in need to providing meals and comprehensive food service job training. Catalyst Kitchens also helps organizations implement key support services like life skills, to help individuals break the cycle and become self-sufficient and successful citizens.

In the last half of 2013, Catalyst Kitchens welcomed seven new organizations to its network, including:

[Episcopal Community Services - Heartland](#) (Kansas City, Mo.); [Telamon Corporation](#) (Salisbury, Md.); [EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute](#) (Cleveland, Ohio); [The Heights Foundation](#) (Fort Meyers, Fla.); [Youth Uprising](#) (Oakland, Calif.); [Everett Gospel Mission](#) (Everett, Wash.); and [Pittsburg Community Kitchen](#) (Pittsburgh, Pa.).

“We’ve always said that organizations can be better, stronger and can have an exponentially greater impact by working together on these issues of joblessness, poverty and hunger—and the collaboration of our network is demonstrating that every day. We’re excited to continue to develop what we believe is an incredibly successful model with even greater potential,” said David Carleton, National Director for FareStart and Catalyst Kitchens.

For more information on FareStart, visit www.farestart.org. To learn more about Catalyst Kitchens and the national member network, visit www.catalystkitchens.org.

About FARESTART

FareStart provides a community that transforms lives by empowering homeless and disadvantaged men, women, and families to achieve self-sufficiency through life skills, job training and employment in the food service industry. Since 1992, FareStart has provided opportunities for nearly 7,000 people to transform their lives, while also serving over 6 million meals to disadvantaged men, women, and children. Every day, men and women transform their lives in the adult program, which includes culinary training, life-skills classes, counseling, and assistance with housing, food, clothing and other support services to assist FareStart students as they change their lives. FareStart’s Graduate Support Services program provides ongoing guidance to adult graduates, providing a full year (and sometimes longer) of support to help individuals move forward to self-sufficiency. FareStart, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, generates about half of its annual operating revenue through business operations, such as Guest Chef Night at the FareStart Restaurant. For more information, visit www.farestart.org.

About CATALYST KITCHENS

In 2011, FareStart launched Catalyst Kitchens to help bring the success of FareStart to communities across the country. Catalyst Kitchens is a collaborative network of organizations with a shared vision to empower lives through job training, self-generate revenue through social enterprise, and nourish bodies and minds through quality foodservice. Catalyst Kitchen’s national network is currently comprised of 50 members, including Life’s Kitchen (Boise, Idaho), Liberty’s Kitchen (New Orleans, La.), Inspiration Corporation (Chicago, Ill.), and DC Central Kitchen (Washington, D.C.). Over the next five years, Catalyst Kitchens will multiply the impact of foodservice job training and social enterprise by leveraging the experience of model members across the country. Catalyst Kitchens aims to launch 50 new programs, provide job training to 6,000 individuals, and serve more than 10 million nutritious meals. For more information, visit www.catalystkitchens.org.

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