#ThePlateFund Raises $6 Million to Provide 12,000 King County Restaurant Workers with Immediate, One-Time $500 Payments

To date: 7,600 total applications received, 5,232 applications successfully processed, $2.6 million paid directly to affected workers – with more help on the way as additional applications are received and processed

Partnerships Formed with El Centro de la Raza, Falis Community Services and Asian Counseling and Referral Service to Help Ensure Emergency Assistance Reaches Hardest Hit Communities

Launching Tonight, #ThePlateFund: LIVE, a Collaboration of Local Chefs and Bartenders, to Connect Community Over Virtual Food and Drink on Instagram

SEATTLE – #ThePlateFund, an initiative to provide emergency financial assistance to King County restaurant and food-service workers who have lost jobs and income due to business disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, announced today that it has raised $6 million to provide at least 12,000 King County restaurant workers with immediate one-time $500 payments.

The fund, created by the Schultz Family Foundation in partnership with #allinseattle, Seattle Foundation and UpTogether, has a goal of serving as many in-need restaurant workers as possible in King County. So far #ThePlateFund has raised $3 million from 1,500+ donors in addition to $3 million provided by the Schultz Family Foundation. To date, 7,600 total applications have been received, 5,232 applications have been successfully processed, and $2.6 million has been paid directly to affected workers. Additional payments will be processed as applications are received on a first come, first served basis. Members of the community are encouraged to help the fund reach more workers by donating at www.theplatefund.com. Donations are tax deductible, and one hundred percent of all contributions will go directly to workers.

To help ensure that assistance gets to the most vulnerable and hardest hit communities, #ThePlateFund also announced partnerships with El Centro de la Raza, Falis Community Services and Asian Counseling and Referral Service. Each organization will help direct payments to affected workers within their respective networks, including those who may be undocumented or unbanked, and may not be eligible for government assistance.
Starting tonight, the initiative will host #ThePlateFund: LIVE on Instagram. 
#ThePlateFund: LIVE is a collaboration of local chefs and bartenders who will virtually share food and drink recipes to create connections during the Stay Home-Stay Healthy order, while raising awareness about the level of need being experienced by restaurant workers as a result of the pandemic. Each night will feature a different chef or bartender from a King County restaurant, including:

- Wednesday 4/15 @ 5:00pm: JuneBaby, Spring Gin Cocktail with Megan Fitzpatrick
- Thursday 4/16 @ 5:00pm: Wilmott’s Ghost, Mint Julep with Katie Campbell
- Friday 4/17 @ 3:00pm: Linda’s Tavern, Mezcal Margarita with Linda Derschang
- Saturday 4/18 @ 6:00pm: Tom Douglas Kitchen, Scallion Rice Rolls with Eric Tanaka

Appearances by additional chefs and bartenders on #ThePlateFund: LIVE will be announced in the coming days.

When COVID-19 hit the Seattle area, more than 100,000 people were employed at some 5,000 food establishments in King County. Most restaurants have been forced to close or reduce operations, laying off some or all of their employees.

A vast majority of line cooks, wait staff, dishwashers, bartenders and other restaurant and food-service industry employees rely on every paycheck, as well as tips, to support themselves and their families. Many have already depleted their savings and find themselves without money as they wait for federal stimulus payments and unemployment insurance benefits. The fund is also intended to assist restaurant workers who will not qualify for unemployment insurance or the federal stimulus payment because of immigration status or other issues.

While most restaurant owners are doing everything they can to help their people through the crisis, the situation is especially challenging for single-location establishments and smaller businesses.

Any restaurant or food-service worker that has experienced a reduction in hours or been laid off as a result of the COVID-19 crisis can apply for assistance from #ThePlateFund. To qualify, applicants are required to provide proof that they live and work in King County; confirm that they have experienced a reduction of hours or been laid off; and upload a recent pay stub via photo or other means, showing they have an annual gross pay of less than $62,000, inclusive of tips. 
#ThePlateFund will also provide electronic codes for restaurant owners to distribute directly to workers who are in the greatest need.
• Workers who want to apply to receive payments can do so [here](#).
• Donors who want to contribute to the fund can do so [here](#).

The need is enormous. While the fund will not be able to assist all workers who have been affected by this crisis, it is continuing to raise money to broaden its reach as the crisis continues. The fund is designed to provide emergency bridge payments to cash-strapped restaurant workers until they are able to receive unemployment insurance and/or federal stimulus payments, if they are eligible. The fund is also intended to serve as a complement to other community-led COVID-19 relief initiatives in King County.

The application process and electronic payments for #ThePlateFund are being administered by UpTogether, a digital capital exchange platform created by the Family Independence Initiative and made available through the #GiveTogetherNow campaign.

In addition to the Schultz Family Foundation, #ThePlateFund is supported by a grassroots network of 1,500+ donors, partners and supporters, including many well-known restaurants, foundations, companies and philanthropists from the Greater Seattle community. Partners and supporters include: Seattle Foundation; Charlie’s Produce; Charlie and Courtni Billow; the Ellison Foundation; The Prado Group; Patty and Steve Fleischmann; Ray Bowen; Paul G. Allen Family Foundation; Carroll Family Fund; Valor Equity Partners; Ste. Michelle Wine Estates; Lucy Helm; John Meisenbach; Sid Lee (formerly Hornall Anderson); UpTogether; #allinseattle; Amperity; Seattle Restaurants United; Washington Hospitality Association; Seattle Restaurant Alliance; The Starbucks Foundation; and hundreds of restaurants from the Greater Seattle area. A full list of supporters and partners is available at [www.theplatefund.com](http://www.theplatefund.com).

Quotes:

- “All of us have a responsibility to help those in need during this unprecedented crisis. With #ThePlateFund, we have an opportunity to serve those who contribute to the vibrancy of our community, and now need a lifeline. We are grateful that so many are coming forward to help.” - Sheri Schultz, President of the Schultz Family Foundation.

- “I am grateful to our partners at #ThePlateFund for their quick work to distribute $500 payments to 5,000 King County restaurant workers. We know that working people everywhere are feeling the impact of COVID-19, and that’s especially true for our restaurant workers whose jobs have been deeply altered by the pandemic. Thanks to the quick work of #ThePlateFund and the Schultz Family Foundation, thousands of workers will be able to stay afloat as we wait for necessary federal relief.” - Seattle Mayor Jenny A. Durkan.
• “This is like a Godsend. There is definitely a need and I know a lot of people out there right now who could definitely use this.” – Trina Ewing, #ThePlateFund recipient, Bartender at Sheraton Grand Seattle

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