
Your July Kitchen Corps Newsletter

Jul 14, 2026



Dear friend,

As the summer heat settles in, I hope you and your loved ones are staying cool and safe. It's hard to believe we're already halfway through 2026, and I've been reflecting on how much has happened this year.

So far, WCK has responded to 21 crises around the world, from natural disasters to man-made emergencies. But in the destruction, humanity continues to do what we do best: finding hope through connection.

It's the same spirit that's been powering something joyful. WCK has spent time at watch parties for the world's biggest soccer tournament with local chefs cooking up their specialties, inviting fans to come together around the universal languages of food and soccer.

This month, I'm excited to share one reason WCK finds hope after a crisis—our Chef Corps—and the moments of connection that carry our teams through.

1,597
Kitchen Corps
Members
Welcomed in June

77,378
Members in Our
Kitchen Corps
Community

Here's what's inside:

1. An Update On Our Work In Venezuela
2. A Recipe For You
3. Inside Chef Corps
4. Staff Spotlight: Meet Laura Hayes, Chef Corps Director

Thank you for being part of our kitchen.

With gratitude,
Lindsey

P.S. Have questions about how we work? [Email us with your questions, feedback, or topics you'd like to learn more about.](#)



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Response Update
Our Work In Venezuela

On June 24, Venezuela was struck by two powerful earthquakes. Within hours, WCK was handing out sandwiches alongside local restaurant and community partners. By June 29, food trucks and local ice trucks were delivering hot meals and thousands of bags of ice to families and first responders battling extreme heat.

Last week, we opened a new large-scale Field Kitchen in La Guaira complete with a warehouse and lodging for dozens of staff and volunteers, increasing our daily capacity by 30,000 meals.

None of this would be possible without the people carrying it forward.

Jason Sevilla and Juan David, volunteers from Maiquetía, arrived in Caraballeda on the first day of the response. Despite losing family, friends, and neighbors, they chose to stay and help. They've supported WCK by helping move and organize water supplies at the Caraballeda Golf Course.

“People from La Guaira have to take care of one another,” they say. In the face of profound loss, they continue to show up for their community, helping people recover and rebuild.

Today, we've served over 600,000 meals across Miranda, La Guaira, and Carabobo through 65 distribution hubs.

Thank you again for powering our work.



Exclusive Recipes **For You, From Venezuela**

We've responded to crises in Venezuela since 2019, and that history is part of why we could show up within hours this time. That kind of foundation isn't built by one-time donations. It's built by monthly donors like you who keep our teams and relationships in place between disasters, so we're never starting from zero.

Torta de Cambur is a simple, sweet banana bread our Relief teams have cooked for Venezuelan families and refugees. The smell of cinnamon, vanilla, and warm bananas became more than a treat. It's a gesture of care and a reminder of food's power to bring light in dark moments.

Today, we're sharing these recipes with you.

[Click here for a PDF of the recipe.](#)

From our kitchen to yours, please enjoy this small taste of the resilience you make possible every day.

👉 Made the dish? Share your table with us!

Tag **@WCKitchen** and use **#WCKitchenCorps**



WCK's Chef Corps is a global network of over 600 prominent culinary leaders who help deliver fresh meals after crises. Chefs are some of the most connected people in their communities and just as skilled at handling chaos in a disaster as they are in their own kitchens. Their trusted reputations connect our ground teams with everyone they need to meet and their cultural guidance helps us build trust with the communities we serve.

Chef Amy Foote was WCK's first call when Typhoon Halong devastated remote, largely Indigenous communities in Alaska in 2025. She connected our team with tribal leaders, a salmon provider, and made sure we served comfort foods like salmon head soup.

One moment stayed with her. While serving reindeer, rice, and gravy, a teenage boy in line pointed to a sign noting the reindeer came from nearby Nunivak Island. "Home," he said.

*"That's our goal...To give someone a bowl of home
when they're not able to be there."*

Chefs like Amy do more than cook. In a crisis, they're connectors, problem-solvers, and trusted members of the communities we serve.



Staff Spotlight

Laura Hayes

Laura Hayes joined WCK in 2022 to build Chef Corps from the ground up. As Director of Chef Corps, she's the one who turns 600 chefs like Amy into a network by recruiting them, mobilizing them within hours of a disaster, and helping them fundraise for WCK. Below, she shares how your support fuels that work.

What does it take to mobilize chefs within hours of a disaster?

Clear communication and grace. Chef Corps members are sometimes personally affected by the very crisis WCK is responding to—though that doesn't always stop them. One member started cooking with us in Los Angeles after losing his own home in the Palisades wildfires. We look for humble heroes who know when to lead and when to take direction.

Walk us through what happens in the first 24-48 hours of an activation, from your perspective.

That's when I'm the busiest...this network is a resource to help get cooking as fast as possible. WCK values speed because when people are hungry, they're hungry now. When we're readying to respond, I will reach out to Chef Corps members with connections to the region, ask them to help us assess the situation by being our eyes and ears on the ground, and then share their contact information with the ground team so they can tap into their networks. I'll connect WCK teams and Chef Corps members so they can share leads and tips in real time—like where an especially vulnerable population might live so we can take care of them straight away.

What's the one meal that always makes you feel at home?

My mother's vėdarai—Lithuanian potato and onion sausages served with sour cream. We typically make them at Christmas.

The popular hospitality industry podcast, Flavors Unknown hosted by Emmanuel Laroche, recently featured Laura and the Chef Corps program.

Listen to the Podcast
