



Your September Kitchen Corps Newsletter

Thu, Sep 10, 2026 at 9:00 AM



Dear Friend,

Happy September and welcome back to your Kitchen Corps newsletter. As summer wraps up and fall sets in, there's a familiar rhythm taking over: backpacks by the door, earlier sunsets, and the first cool mornings after a long, hot season. It's a time when routines reset and we look ahead to what's next.

Disasters don't follow a calendar, and they rarely give warnings. That's exactly why looking ahead sits at the heart of our work every day. This month, we're exploring what that readiness looks like through our Climate & Natural Disaster Fund and the partnerships that go beyond fundraising.

1,446
Kitchen Corps
Members
Welcomed in August

79,814
Members in Our
Kitchen Corps
Community

Here's what's inside:

1. A Look Into Our Climate and Natural Disaster Fund

2. An Update on Our Work in Nepal
3. Staff Spotlight: Meet Michael Mertz, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations
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Thank you for being part of our kitchen.

With gratitude,
Lindsey



Lindsey Latham
Kitchen Corps Manager
World Central Kitchen

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



A Look Into Our Climate & Natural Disaster Fund

Natural disasters are hitting harder and more often than ever, with nine of the last ten years setting records for costly disasters. But they don't just damage buildings. Families lose their homes, clean water, schools, crops, and jobs. When the grocery stores close, one question comes first: how will families eat today?

That's why our Climate & Natural Disaster Fund (C&NDF) exists. We can't wait until after a disaster hits—we have to be ready before it does. For storms we can see coming, like hurricanes, we position teams ahead of time. For sudden disasters like earthquakes, we mobilize and connect with local partners to begin serving meals quickly. A dedicated fund makes speed possible, because it allows us to respond with the urgency of now.

In just the last month, our teams have responded to seven different natural

disasters: floods, earthquakes, wildfires, a hurricane, and a volcanic eruption. But every time, our teams are ready with hope and hot meals.

In Gary, Indiana, our teams served meals after a derecho knocked out power. In Colombia, local partners are "adopting" whole neighborhoods near the earthquake zone, cooking daily meals for families. This readiness stretches from wildfire smoke in Spain to volcanic ash in Guatemala.

Thank you for being part of a community that makes this possible.

[Learn More: The Climate and Natural Disaster Fund](#)



An Update on Our Work in Nepal

When a glacier collapsed on the Nepal-China border on August 26, the debris flow swept away bridges, roads, and whole settlements along the Trishuli River. Fifteen days later, search and rescue operations are still underway, and many communities remain reachable only by helicopter or on foot.

WCK responded immediately, serving hot meals and local favorites like samosas and momos to survivors as they arrived at a makeshift airfield in Bidur. On September 1, we opened our first community kitchen in Gerkhutar with the Chefs Association of Nepal and the Nepal Scouts. We now support **nine community kitchens** and have served **more than 21,700 meals**.

Community kitchens are the best approach here: people strongly prefer cooking their own food, and the kitchens let displaced families care for their own community again. Our teams bring large-scale cooking, food safety, water, and logistics expertise. Locals bring the knowledge that matters most: what their community actually wants to eat.

The air still feels heavy, but amid the loss there are moments that keep our

teams moving—a woman found alive from a flood-buried home, a helicopter landing, a father and daughter reuniting. We hold onto those moments and we keep serving.

Watch: Overcoming Challenges in Nepal



Staff Spotlight: Michael Mertz

Michael Mertz joined WCK in 2025 as Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations. He leads the team turning institutional support into what our teams need on the ground: grants, donations, employee giving, and in-kind support. WCK is entirely privately funded by foundations, corporations, and donors like you. Below, he shares how our corporate relationships are vital to our work.

How do our partnerships with corporations and foundations make WCK faster or better?

Corporations and foundations provide the resources that power WCK's work worldwide, but these partnerships go well beyond funding. Our partners span logistics, travel, hospitality, food service, and technology. Depending on the response, they may help get our teams where they need to be quickly, manage logistics of operating in new locations, or lend expertise to ensure we're using the best tools and resources available.

What is something a partner has said or done that has stuck with you?

What always sticks with me is when we send a first alert and hear from a partner who has been personally affected by what is happening. Sometimes it is someone we work with directly. Other times, employees across the company have been impacted. Being able to tell them WCK is there responding creates a different kind of connection. They have supported our work, and now they can see that work reaching a community they care about. That moment feels very personal, and it always stays with me.

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

A grilled cheese with the sharpest white cheddar you can buy and sliced onions soaked in white vinegar. My mom only made it for me during the summer when I was a kid. Why this was a seasonal meal, I still don't know, but it always feels like home.

[Learn More: Corporate and Foundation Giving](#)



2X
Your Gift

**One Way to
Maximize Your Support**

Want to know one way to increase the impact of your monthly gift? Match it!

Many employers offer workplace matching programs for one time gifts and monthly gifts, which can double or even triple your donation to help us deliver more nourishing meals to families facing crisis. A number of companies kick off their matching windows this time of year ahead of the holiday season and year-end tax deadlines.

Curious if your company will match your gift? Check on Double the Donation below, or reach out to your HR team.

[Check For My Employer](#)

Your generosity as a Kitchen Corps member continues to have a lasting impact. Thank you for your support, and thank you for being part of our kitchen.
