



PROOF POSITIVE

Food Service Training Heart Of Our Mission

By Robin Kumabe, board president, Touch A Heart

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

Each year in Hawaii, an estimated 14,000 people experience homelessness. Of those living in a shelter, 71 percent are unemployed.

At Touch A Heart, we wanted to do something about that, so we created a strategy to empower the homeless by providing them with skills to work in the food service industry.

We partner with organizations that have underutilized commercial kitchens that can support our vocational training and internship programs for the homeless and disadvantaged. In turn, we also help the commercial kitchens generate revenue "with a purpose."

It's really a win-win!

Our pilot program is with The Salvation Army, which graciously partnered with us to provide both the "underutilized" kitchen at its Family Treatment Services location and three women from its Ke Ola Pono program. These women have just completed the first 12-week Basic Life Skills course in our Food Service Train-

ing Program, and already have been certified by the state Department of Health in the Food Safety Course.

They began the second 12-week Culinary Skills portion of our program January 2016. Once they complete the program, we will have paid internships for them to

to a growing problem. We strive to be agents of hope, transforming lives toward a stronger, healthier and sustainable future.

We hope you feel inspired to "Touch A Heart" and join our cause! If you have a kitchen that is underutilized and want to



(from left) Alexis Gregory, Kasey Masaoka and Stacia Loando from The Salvation Army's Ke Ola Pono Program proudly pose after completing the first Touch A Heart 12-week Basic Life Skills Course in the Food Service Training Program

PHOTOS COURTESY TOUCH A HEART

work in our own Social Enterprises, one of them being our Baker's Heart program. Additionally, they will have opportunities for internships and employment with some of our restaurant partners.

We don't build shelters or run a food bank, but we have found our own little way to be part of the solution

help transform your community, if you are an organization working with the disadvantaged or sheltered homeless, or if you'd like to volunteer or contribute, please let us know!

Visit us at touchaheart-hawaii.org or email info@touchaheart-hawaii.org.

Hawaii charitable organizations may send requests for space in either Proof Positive or the free advertisement below to dchapman@midweek.com.

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