

Disney chefs prepare traditional Thanksgiving meal at Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. Nov. 22, 2018— It's the season of giving, and Disney chefs helped to bring the magic of our theme parks to others in the Central Florida community by preparing and serving a traditional Thanksgiving meal for more than 600 residents of the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida.

Disney's culinary outreach extends far beyond the holiday season. For the past 20 years, food and beverage teams from across Walt Disney World Resort have been visiting the Coalition for the Homeless twice each month to prepare a fresh and delicious meal for its residents—amounting to more than 9,000 meals annually.

“On any given day, more than 600 men, women, and children sit down for a warm and hearty meal at the Coalition, and when Disney is serving the meal, it's always a favorite,” said John Hearn, President/CEO of Coalition for the Homeless. “We are beyond grateful when Disney comes to visit, and we love that they always bring a bit of magic to the table. Of course, it's particularly special on Thanksgiving, and I know that everyone in the room is truly moved by the spirit of gratitude and generosity.”

From roasted turkey to dessert and everything in between, Chef Lenny DeGeorge, culinary director, Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park, and his team created a Thanksgiving spread to remember for Coalition residents. Disney VolunTEARs helped serve the special meal.

“There's no greater joy for a chef than seeing somebody enjoy the food you made,” Chef Lenny said. “Seeing the pure joy and happiness a fresh meal can bring someone, especially on a holiday and to someone who may not have been able to enjoy a good meal otherwise, is the very definition of Disney magic.”

Additionally, the Disney Harvest Program collects excess and unserved food from across the resort and donates it to area organizations like the Coalition for the Homeless. The organization also receives an annual community investment grant, in-kind donations, and the ongoing support of Disney VolunTEARs.

“In this season of giving, our Disney chefs embrace the opportunity to bring the magic of our theme parks to others in the Central Florida community, including the residents at Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida,” said Rena Langley, senior vice president of Walt Disney World public affairs.