

Operation BBQ Relief to Provide 6 Millionth Meal at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Operation Restaurant Relief Program Led by Chef Aaron May to Commemorate 3 Millionth Meal Provided During COVID-19 Crisis



LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, May 27, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Operation BBQ Relief, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit disaster relief organization will serve its 6 millionth meal since its inception at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center on Thursday, May 28 at 12:00 PM.

“

We are so grateful to all of our corporate partners and volunteers. It is due to their unwavering commitment that Operation BBQ Relief has been able to provide six million meals to those in need.”

Stan Hays, Co-Founder and CEO of Operation BBQ Relief

The effort will also mark the serving of Operation BBQ Relief's 3 millionth meal since March 23 in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Meals have been provided to healthcare workers, first responders, veterans, and families in need due to the hardship caused by the pandemic.

In addition to deploying their trademark effort of providing hot barbecue meals to those affected by natural disasters, Operation BBQ Relief's new program, Operation Restaurant Relief, has been deployed in Kansas City, Bakersfield, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Nashville and Los Angeles.

“We are thrilled that Operation BBQ Relief has chosen Harbor-UCLA as the recipient of its 3 millionth meal in response to COVID-19 and 6 millionth meal since their inception”, said Kim McKenzie, Chief Executive Officer at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. McKenzie continued, “Our doctors, nurses and hospital staff are on the frontline every day in combating this pandemic. It is wonderful to show appreciation for their efforts.”

Operation BBQ Relief has been based at The Shelby located at 8445 W. Third Street in Los Angeles and has been providing 2,500 hot meals each day since May 4th under the direction of Food Network star and restaurateur Chef Aaron May. Chef May currently operates Dough in Los Angeles. The new initiative revives closed restaurants by utilizing their kitchens to provide free

meals to those in need and those on the front lines. As part of the effort, the restaurants rehire laid off workers to comply with the program and receive a stipend for their participation from Operation BBQ Relief.

While restaurants receive a small stipend to participate, it only defrays a portion of the restaurant's expenses. Nevertheless, the effort is being hailed as providing critical relief to the severely impacted restaurant industry while also feeding the community's most affected residents.

As a non-profit disaster relief organization, Operation BBQ Relief relies on corporate, civic and personal contributions to ensure their efforts continue. Operation BBQ Relief's corporate partners include Kingsford Charcoal, YETI, Farmers Insurance, Prairie Fresh and Ole Hickory Pits. The need for donations is greater now than ever before due to the magnitude of the COVID-19 crisis.

"We are so grateful to all of our corporate partners and volunteers," says Operation BBQ Relief CEO and Co-Founder Stan Hays. "It is due to their unwavering commitment that Operation BBQ Relief has been able to provide six million meals to those in need."

According to the National Restaurant Association, two-thirds of restaurant employees have lost their jobs due to COVID-19 and the industry will face \$240 billion in losses by the end of the year. With this plan, Operation BBQ Relief has managed a way to reverse restaurant closures, put employees back to work and provide free meals to the local community each day.

Following all Center for Disease Control guidelines, Operation BBQ Relief has worked around the clock to establish its additional protocols and processes specifically for COVID-19 that include: sanitizing surfaces regularly, medical screening of volunteers upon arrival to any Operation BBQ



Staff at The Shelby Restaurant in Los Angeles have helped provide over 70,000 meals to families and organizations affected by the pandemic.



Operation BBQ Relief provides meals to front line workers in the Los Angeles area.

Operation BBQ Relief has been able to provide six million meals to those in need."

Relief deployment site, limiting access to the food production areas, separation by at least 50-feet for receiving, delivery and distribution of food, as well as many other safety and security initiatives.

“Operation BBQ Relief is following all the recommended CDC and local health guidelines,” Hays says. “We have acted deliberately with care and concentration to ramp up COVID-19 deployments, like the Operation Restaurant Relief.”

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About Operation BBQ Relief

Operation BBQ Relief is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Kansas City, MO that was founded in May 2011 in response to a need for tornado relief efforts in Joplin, MO. Competitive pit masters from eight different states answered the call to feed displaced families and first responders. Together, they were able to serve over 120,000 meals in a thirteen-day period. This experience of building a network to feed individuals in need has been the inspiration for Operation BBQ Relief. To date, Operation BBQ Relief has provided over 6 million meals throughout the United States and internationally following natural disasters, during the COVID-19 crisis and through The Always Serving Project, benefiting the homeless, first responders, veterans, and service men and women. For more information, visit www.obr.org.

About Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Harbor-UCLA Medical Center is a Level I trauma center located in the South Bay area of Los Angeles County that provides health care services to over 700,000 residents, regardless of the ability to pay for care. The hospital, which is part of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, offers a full array of inpatient and outpatient medical care, including emergency services. As a safety-net hospital, Harbor-UCLA predominantly serves the low-income population, majority of which are covered through the State's Medi-Cal program. Harbor-UCLA Medical Center's mission is to put patients first and provide exceptional patient-centered care with the compassion and respect.

Sharon Green

Operation BBQ Relief

+1 5742147959

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