



**HAWAI'I COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

827 Fort Street Mall
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
HawaiiCommunityFoundation.org



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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact: Sheila Sarhangi
Hawai'i Community Foundation
media@hcf-hawaii.org

Contact: Jennifer Karaca
Common Ground Collective
hello@commongroundcollective.com

COMMON GROUND COLLECTIVE RECEIVES \$155,000 GRANT FOR MAUI EMERGENCY FEEDING TASKFORCE

HONOLULU, HAWAI'I — Common Ground Collective has been awarded a \$155,000 grant from the Maui Strong Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation to support the [Maui Emergency Feeding Taskforce \(MEFT\)](#), a grassroots community effort being coordinated by Common Ground Collective.

Born in the aftermath of the devastating August 2023 fires, the Maui Emergency Feeding Taskforce was formed to address the critical issue of food insecurity, which was reaching crisis levels on Maui long before the fires destroyed thousands of community members' homes and workplaces. Despite the severity and scale of the problem in the initial days after the fires, the vast majority of Maui's early feeding efforts were organized by community grassroot organizers and local nonprofits, which jumped into action to nourish the community while national non-governmental organizations and government agencies at the county, state, and federal levels focused on other disaster response efforts.

After disaster strikes, it's considered a best practice for local governments and other agency partners to stand up an emergency feeding task force to ensure that displaced families don't go hungry after losing homes, income, and the means of transportation needed to travel to grocery stores or meal-distribution hubs. Common Ground Collective's executive director Jennifer Karaca spearheaded the effort to launch this task force in September as a solution to open lines of communication among community organizers and government officials, advocate for greater collaboration, and ease daily burdens on displaced families.

"Access to food is a vital factor in building resilient communities," says Micah Kāne, CEO and president of HCF. "The Maui Emergency Feeding Taskforce and its partners played an integral role feeding families immediately after the wildfires and it has not lost sight of its mission since. We are proud to support MEFT as it continues to feed Maui's communities and works to improve food security for Maui's future."

The task force, which has been meeting multiple times a month since its inception, comprises community hub leaders, local businesses, restaurants, chefs, and nonprofits. The collaborative has worked to build a network of support for organizers and groups who've spent the last six months feeding Maui, in addition to beginning to draft community plans to strengthen the local food system and more quickly respond to residents' needs during crises in the future.

“I am extremely grateful to HCF for supporting the Maui Emergency Feeding Taskforce,” says Karaca. “Many community members affected by fires are falling through the cracks and are not being provided with shelter or supplies. However, thanks to various local nonprofits, restaurants, chefs, farmers, and community hubs, many of these folks have been able to find crucial food, hot meals, local produce, and basic necessities. We are thankful that HCF recognizes this task force’s mission to ensure that we close the gaps not only for this emergency, but for all disasters in the future.”

Besides meeting the immediate needs of Maui’s displaced families, thousands of whom are still living in hotel rooms without kitchens to cook, the task force will focus on developing institutional infrastructure and community connections that will help build food independence and resilience in Maui County.

Some of the task force’s actionable goals include:

- Mapping governmental and community responses to understand gaps, overlap in service areas and landscape of current response efforts.
- Opening lines of communication with non-governmental organizations, state and federal agencies and community partners to ensure adequate information is being shared to meet short-, mid- and long-term emergency food needs.
- Seeking solutions that aim to overcome supply chain issues, funding shortfalls or a lack of organizational bandwidth and instead strengthen the local food system.

The task force has already made huge strides in strengthening local response efforts, breaking down barriers in communication and providing education about the existing gaps in disaster response. Learn more about the Maui Emergency Feeding Taskforce by visiting eftformauai.org and read more about how Common Ground Collective has worked to support food security in Maui both before and after the fires at commongroundcollective.com.

As of January 26, 2024, HCF has awarded \$87.5 million from its Maui Strong Fund to more than 150 organizations.

HCF has a unique role in disaster preparedness and response. The organization collaborates with partners, both inside and outside philanthropy, for a coordinated effort to secure maximum community impact. HCF has demonstrated its ability to raise funds quickly—and deploy grants rapidly to community organizations that are at the heart of emergency response efforts.

For nonprofit organizations seeking funding from the Maui Strong Fund, please visit the HCF website [here](#) for detailed instructions on how to apply for a grant from the Maui Strong Fund.

For donations to the Maui Strong Fund at HCF, please visit <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/maui-strong>.

For questions or additional information on giving, please contact Donor Services at (808) 566-5560 or donorservices@hcf-hawaii.org.

*****VISUALS*****

For images of Common Ground Collective and its work feeding families on Maui, [please visit this Dropbox folder](#).

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About the Hawai'i Community Foundation

The vision of the Hawai'i Community Foundation is to create an equitable and vibrant Hawai'i in which all our Island communities thrive. With our more-than-106-year history, our trusted expertise, and the generous support of donors, we are working to address the root causes of our state's most difficult challenges, including expanding access to affordable housing, conserving fresh water resources, and ensuring the healthy development of Hawai'i's young children. HCF works in communities across Hawai'i, with offices and staff located statewide. For more information about HCF, please visit hawaiicommunityfoundation.org and follow our social media channels on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

About Common Ground Collective

Founded in 2017, Common Ground Collective (CGC) is a Maui-based non-profit organization that works to promote food security and economic opportunity through education and capacity-building assistance. To accomplish its mission, CGC provides harvesting and administrative services for agricultural landowners and supplies Maui nonprofit organizations with fresh, local produce to nourish food-insecure populations.