



The Food Fighters: DC Central Kitchen's First Twenty-Five Years on the Front Lines of Hunger and Poverty

Alexander Justice Moore

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Robert Egger wasn't impressed when his fiancée dragged him out one night to help feed homeless men and women on the streets of Washington, DC. That was twenty-five years ago, and it wasn't that the cocky nightclub manager didn't want to help people—he just felt that the process was more meaningful to those serving the meals than those receiving them. He vowed to come up with something better. Egger named his gritty, front-line nonprofit DC Central Kitchen, and today it has become a national model for feeding and empowering people in need. By teaming up with chefs, convicts, addicts, and other staffers seeking second chances, Egger has helped DC's homeless and hungry population trade drugs, crime, and dependency for culinary careers—and fed thousands in the process. Written by a DC Central Kitchen insider, *The Food Fighters* shows how Egger's innovative approach to combating hunger and creating opportunity has changed lives and why the organization is more relevant today than ever before. This retrospective goes beyond the simplistic moralizing used to describe the work of many nonprofits by interviewing dozens of DC Central Kitchen leaders, staff, clients, and stakeholders from the past two-and-a-half decades. It captures the personal and organizational struggles of DC Central Kitchen, offering new insights about what doing good really means and what we expect of those who do it. “The women and men of DC Central Kitchen are in the business of changing lives. I have felt first-hand the energy and enthusiasm in that basement kitchen, and it's infectious. This book is a testament to what is possible when we break down stereotypes, rethink old models, and challenge ourselves to become true agents of change.” —Carla Hall, co-host of ABC's *The Chew*
“Robert Egger and DC Central Kitchen ... changed my life, and I have never looked back. Their story will open a door to a new way of thinking about bringing dignity and hope to those in need.” —José Andrés, James Beard award winner, chef and owner of ThinkFoodGroup

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