



For Immediate Release: August 29, 2022

**The California Food Is Medicine Coalition Announces
New Director to Advance Medically Tailored Nutrition in California**

Outgoing Director, Ann Thrupp, Receives Fulbright Scholarship

San Francisco, CA, August 29, 2022 – The California Food is Medicine Coalition (CalFIMC), an association of leading nutrition services providers in the state, named Michelle Kuppich the new director of CalFIMC. Kuppich will be responsible for leading the Coalition’s advocacy efforts, advancing awareness and understanding of evidence-based medically tailored nutrition, guiding the development of strategic programs of the Coalition, and driving the expansion of healthcare partnerships that provide medically-tailored nutrition programs.

Kuppich is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) who arrives after serving seven years as the Senior Manager of Nutrition Services Integration at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, where she advanced the business case for improving consumer access to Medical Nutrition Therapy provided by RDNs and other evidence-based interventions. Her previous experiences include patient care, disease management, clinical quality, and she has extensive knowledge about health insurance, use of outcomes data, and reimbursement. She also worked for two years as a RDN for Project Open Hand earlier in her career, and also served on CalFIMC’s Medical Advisory Council for several years.

“We are excited to have Michelle step into the role of director. We anticipate that she will help in accelerating advocacy and outreach for medical nutrition interventions, sharing the health benefits for patients and measurable savings in healthcare costs,” Project Open Hand Chief Executive Officer, Paul Hepfer, said. “She has many years of experience in nutrition services and understands the evidence base for nutrition interventions, health insurance, value-based payments, outcomes evaluations, and multi-stakeholder perspectives. We are confident she will build on the good work of our outgoing director, and we will look to her for guidance and support moving forward.”

Ann Thrupp, PhD, the outgoing Director of CalFIMC, has served as the leader for nearly three years. She has helped to build the capacities and influence of the coalition, as well as its advocacy and strategic initiatives throughout the state. She brought her extensive experience in food systems, policy, and food security to the coalition. Thrupp is stepping down in order to undertake a research project related to agriculture and health in Costa Rica, supported by a Fulbright Scholarship, which she was recently awarded.

About California Food is Medicine Coalition

CalFIMC is a community-focused, results-oriented association of non-profit organizations with more than 160 years combined experience feeding and caring for high-risk and high-need individuals.

Our members' nutritious medically tailored meals serve 20,000 residents in 14 counties and growing. The MTM programs lead to better health, improved patient satisfaction, and lower health care costs.

<https://www.calfimc.org/>

About Project Open Hand

Founded in 1985, Project Open Hand is a nonprofit organization that provides *meals with love* to critically ill neighbors and seniors. Our food is like medicine, helping clients recover from illness, get stronger, and lead healthier lives.

Every day, we prepare more than 2,500 nutritious meals and provide more than 200 bags of healthy groceries to help sustain our clients as they battle serious illnesses, isolation, or the health challenges of aging. We serve San Francisco and Alameda Counties, engaging more than 125 volunteers daily to nourish our community.

<https://www.openhand.org/>

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