



Emma's Torch 2.0

Who We Are

Emma's Torch is a non-profit social enterprise organization, and our mission is to train refugees, asylees, and survivors of human trafficking in the culinary arts and empower them to build meaningful careers in the culinary industry. Our students participate in a full-time, paid, culinary training program in preparation for job placement. We celebrate what they have to offer and affirm their innate value and power. Emma's Torch honors Emma Lazarus, a staunch advocate for refugee rights whose poem, "The New Colossus," adorns the Statue of Liberty

Emma's Torch was founded in late 2016, and in the summer of 2017, we launched a pilot classroom cafe program to provide culinary training. In May 2018, we opened our first full-service restaurant in Brooklyn, receiving recognition from outlets such as the New Yorker, the Today Show, Bloomberg, CNN, and the Guardian, among many others. The restaurant houses our Culinary Career Apprenticeship program and has cemented Emma's Torch as a community institution. In response to demand for our services, we opened another program site at the main branch of the Brooklyn Public Library in April 2019, enabling us to increase our impact and to engage the community at large in supporting our mission. The revenue from our restaurant and cafe, as well as our growing catering business offset nearly 60% of our budget, providing a steady and sustainable model for growth, allowing us to do more with every dollar donated.

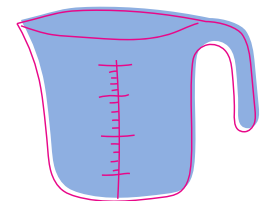
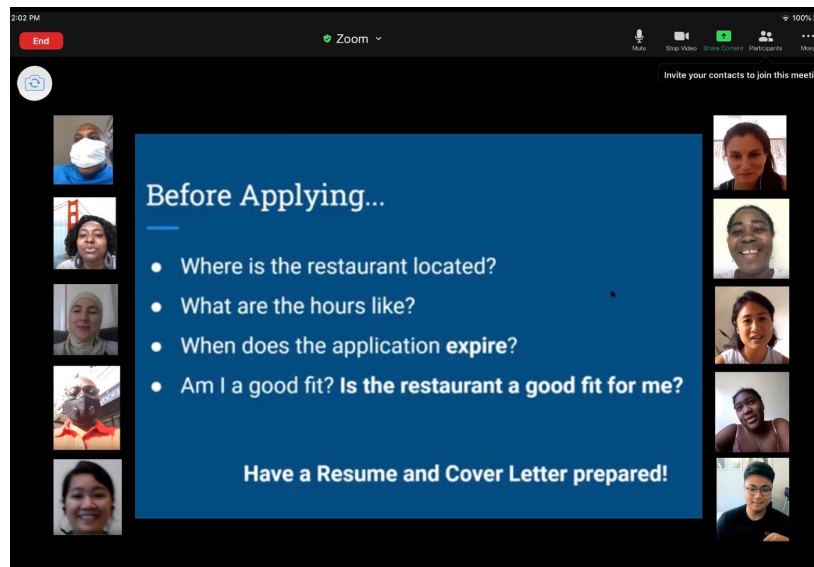
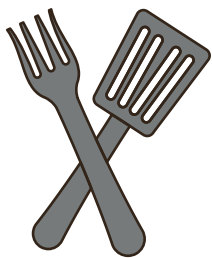


Our primary program, the **Culinary Training Program**, consists of full-time paid training, during which students receive instruction, mentorship, and work experience, as well as develop English conversation skills and other "soft skills" such as resume development and computer literacy. Upon graduation, we help each student take the first step in their culinary career through job placement and ongoing career retention and advancement services. Prior to the pandemic, this program had a cumulative track record of 97% placement for all job-seeking program graduates and 85% job retention at 6 months, bringing our students up from a pre-program income averaging \$10,000 annually to around \$32,000 to-start in their first year of employment.

Serving Our Community During the Pandemic

Although the grim realities of facing state- and city-wide shutdowns due to Covid-19 have caused Emma's Torch to temporarily cease in-person programming and its attendant revenue generating operations (classroom cafe, restaurant, and catering operations), we have not abandoned our mission. Emma's Torch has continued to support our students and alumni by providing **remote learning and engagement sessions** to provide resources and support to our community.

Since the crisis began, Emma's Torch has provided its students and alumni with over 100 hours of remote learning opportunities, one-on-one mentorship and counseling, access to food pantries, and guidance for applying for public assistance. With the pandemic shutdown hitting NYC hard, many restaurants closed their doors or had to lay off or furlough staff. Of our 110 alumni and students, 77 were eligible for unemployment benefits. Through our remote sessions, we have been able to **help our students and graduates access emergency relief funds** from GoFundMe and from partners such as ROAR, Zakat, HIAS, and others, helping them to make it through this perilous time.



"I don't have the words to express how deeply grateful I am to all of you for giving us the opportunity to make these days of silence we've been forced into less dark. Thank you for the everyday support you've given us, with words, with orientation, with guides, with integration, truly, thank you." — Liliana, from Venezuela, Culinary Career Program Graduate, March 2020 cohort

What's Next for Emma's Torch?

With Covid-19 infection rates at their lowest in New York, we plan to **reopen in-person programming** in mid-October 2020, with proper safety guidelines, protocols, and PPE. Emma's Torch 2.0 will look different, but will continue to live up to our mission to empower our students, one dish at a time.



Our New Program

- **Track I: Culinary Training Program**

We will be able to resume training for our students whose process has been frozen since March, and we will take on 4 students per month for full-time paid training in our revamped 10 week Culinary Training Program. We are keeping up to date on trends in the culinary industry and regularly have job offers and opportunities for our alumni from our employment partners, indicating revitalization of this employment stream.



- **Track II: Alumni Advocacy and Community Building Program**

Emma's Torch is also taking important lessons learned from the coronavirus shut-down, incorporating remote training as a regular aspect of programming. In addition to adding remote classes to our core program, we are developing a specific curriculum and schedule of remote sessions for program alumni. This new program will have four thematic tracks: Workplace Behaviors, Conflict Resolution, Career Growth, and Community Organizing - all with attention paid to how Covid-19 affects each issue at hand. Our alumni will benefit from this community and from these sessions as we work to address their ongoing and emergent needs, both professionally and situationally. In addition to regular classes covering the above topics and more, we will provide space for open-ended discussion on current issues and peer-to-peer advice and advocacy.

- **Track III: Leadership Development Fellowship**

We are adding another exciting program as part of resuming in-person operations. With urging from employment partners and our Culinary Council, we will begin management-level training for selected program graduates through a new fellowship. Emma's Torch will select four promising alumni per year who have at least 6 months of post-program employment experience into the 6-month Leadership Development Fellowship. Each cohort will have one Fellow who learns Front-of-House operations and management and one who learns Back-of-House operations and management. Fellows will earn a stipend of \$27,000 for the duration of their full-time, 6-month course. After graduating from this advanced fellowship program, they will have the skills and work experience to qualify for management-level employment which can earn them an average of \$65,000 annually to-start, with second year earnings averaging \$75,000. Not only will the opportunity for an increase in salary and title be of benefit to these individuals and their families, having refugees in positions of expertise and authority can help to change the local community's perception of who they are, their worth, and their humanity.

Our Social Ventures

We are **re-envisioning our revenue streams** to adapt to the Covid-19 era. Our classroom restaurant will transform into a cafe location for food and drink pick-up and socially distanced outdoor dining. Our programs are also developing and producing special packaged food products for industry partners - and for subscription and per-order pick-up, including cooking kits and special meal options such as our **CollaBox**, **ShabBox**, and **ET@Home** concepts. And to ensure we use our resources in further support of our community, we will be working with nonprofit partners to provide **hundreds of meals weekly for delivery to families in need**.

With Gratitude

We are excited to resume our in-person operations and programs at Emma's Torch, and we are grateful for the enduring support of our community who helped us to stay active and rebuild despite the shared hardship of the pandemic. We are pivoting and reinventing ourselves, using the experience and IP we have developed over the past three years to ensure our future. We return reinvigorated, with a renewed commitment to our mission, and with programs and tools that ensure success. **Thank you for sharing our vision and our mission** as we forge ahead, building community, and creating and refining innovative ways to support our students and alumni.

