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ING

LA COCINA'S FOOD
ENTREPRENEURS

INTO THE NEXT GENERATION

STRATEGIC PLAN FY 17-20

“ NOT ONLY HAS LA COCINA BEEN THE MOST IMPORTANT FOOD ORGANIZATION IN SAN FRANCISCO, BUT AMID A CHANGING LANDSCAPE, IT MIGHT ALSO PROVE TO BE THE KEY FOR SAN FRANCISCO TO REMAIN SAN FRANCISCO. ”

THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS



**LA COCINA WILL EMBARK ON
THESE NEXT THREE YEARS FULLY
COMMITTED TO FIGHT FOR EQUITY**

For La Cocina, and as it turned out, much of the world, 2016 was a year of reflection and reconsideration. After having celebrated our 10th anniversary, we spent the year working with evaluators to measure our impact and evaluate the effectiveness of our incubator program. Along with our board of directors, we used those findings to plan for our organization's future.

The 3-year strategic plan that you are now holding is the result of many hours of careful listening. We interviewed funders, partner nonprofits, program participants, past staff, volunteers, donors and even our neighbors on Folsom Street to ground our dreams and plans in the needs of our community.

Through this process, we learned that despite the strides we've made in graduating 33 businesses out of our incubator, rising construction costs, high rents and labor shortages remain significant barriers to successful exit. In stepping back, we realized that our ten years have resulted in a wealth of knowledge about economic development, lessons that can be very valuable outside of our city and even outside of our state for the creation of opportunities for low-income entrepreneurs.

We realized that in order to continue to build towards equitable cities, we are going to need to fortify and nourish our own organization and especially our incredibly hard working staff. We were also reminded, ever so painfully throughout the election, the contempt with which so many people continue to view women, immigrants and people of color and the importance, now more than ever, of our commitment to equity and inclusivity.

As you'll see in this strategic plan, La Cocina will embark on these next three years fully committed to continuing to fight and advocate for equitable opportunity in the Bay Area and beyond for the talented entrepreneurs that make our economy, and country, possible.

Thank you for your support,
Leticia and Caleb



OUR MISSION To cultivate low income entrepreneurs as they formalize and grow their businesses by providing affordable commercial kitchen space, industry-specific technical assistance and access to market opportunities. We focus primarily on women from communities of color and immigrant communities.

OUR VISION That entrepreneurs gain financial security by doing what they love to do, creating an innovative, vibrant and inclusive economic landscape.



INVESTING IN OPPORTUNITY

23

BRICK &
MORTARS AS
OF 2017

35

ENTREPRENEURS
SERVED IN 2016

96

BUSINESSES
LAUNCHED
SINCE 2006

IN 2016, LA COCINA PROVIDED BUSINESSES WITH:

1,588 HRS

OF TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE
(\$154,175 VALUE)

\$346,465

IN DIRECT
CATERING AND
KIOSK SALES

\$193,600

IN PARTNER
FINANCING ACCESSED
BY BUSINESSES
DENIED BANK LOANS

IN 2016, LA COCINA WORKED WITH:

100%

LOW-INCOME
INDIVIDUALS

92%

PEOPLE OF
COLOR

85%

WOMEN

63%

IMMIGRANTS

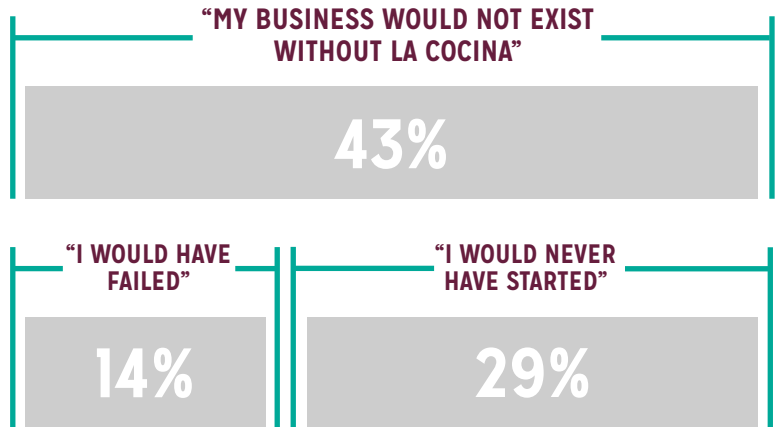
TEN YEAR EVALUATION SUMMARY

Haas Business School and McKinsey Consulting conducted an evaluation of La Cocina's programs. Through interviews and a deep-dive into our data, they came to two significant conclusions:

ENTREPRENEURS BELIEVE LA COCINA IS ESSENTIAL



"MY BUSINESS WOULD NOT HAVE REACHED THIS LEVEL THIS QUICKLY WITHOUT LA COCINA"

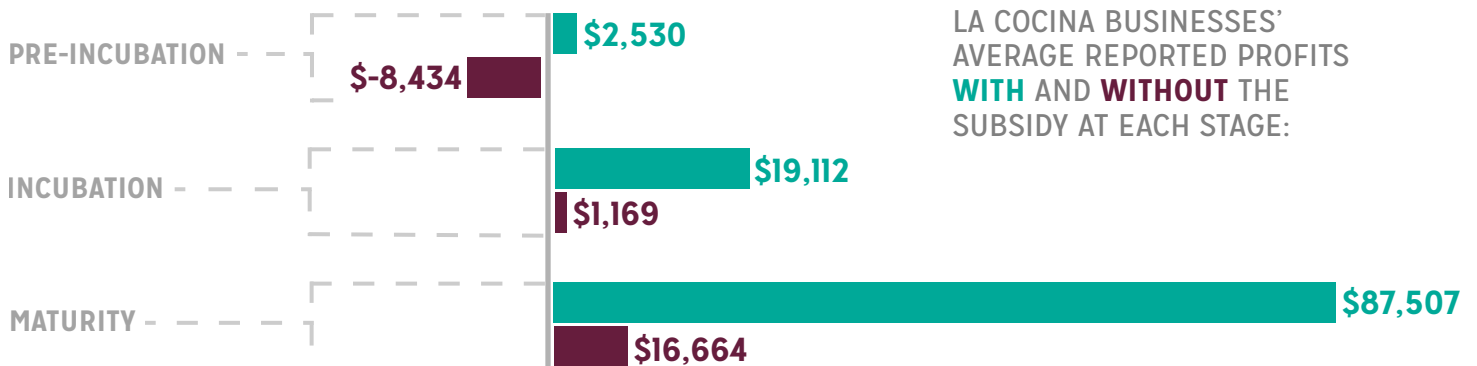


6 OF 7 CITED A LA COCINA EMPLOYEE AS ONE OF THE FIVE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE TO THEIR BUSINESS' SUCCESS

THE LA COCINA SUBSIDY WORKS

La Cocina subsidizes commercial kitchen space and technical assistance. On average, the incubator program subsidy is worth \$100,000/business: \$11,000 in pre-incubation, \$18,000 during incubation and \$71,000 for a mature business.

The average La Cocina business reports profitability right out of pre-incubation. **This is only possible with the subsidy.**



LA COCINA BUSINESSES' AVERAGE REPORTED PROFITS **WITH** AND **WITHOUT** THE SUBSIDY AT EACH STAGE:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OVERVIEW

1. DEEPEN IMPACT

OF LA COCINA'S SUCCESSFUL INCUBATION MODEL, INCREASING EFFICIENCY AND ACCELERATING RESULTS FOR OUR CLIENTS

1A. Identify and implement the next generation of program improvements

1B. Open and manage a commercial marketplace anchored by La Cocina entrepreneurs

1C. Elevate the perception of La Cocina entrepreneurs

2. EXPAND REACH,

LEVERAGING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED TO CREATE EXTENDED IMPACT OUTSIDE OUR CORE PROGRAMS, WITHIN AND BEYOND THE BAY AREA

2A. Expand the La Cocina Conference, providing significant thought leadership in the social sector and food spaces

2B. Publish the La Cocina Cookbook, celebrating the talent, stories and recipes of the women of La Cocina

2C. Amplify the voices of our entrepreneurs through media platforms, including F&B Voices from the Kitchen

3. BUILD CAPACITY,

GROWING INTO GREATER ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY AND INVESTING IN RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND CONTINUED SUCCESS

3A. Quantify La Cocina's impact and continue to develop capacity to collect and use data

3B. Invest in new physical assets, improving La Cocina's workspace and creating opportunities for new services

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: DEEPEN IMPACT

DEEPEN THE IMPACT OF LA COCINA'S SUCCESSFUL INCUBATION MODEL, INCREASING EFFICIENCY AND ACCELERATING RESULTS FOR OUR CLIENTS.

Sustain or increase numbers of entrepreneurs graduating to formalized businesses. Simultaneously, shorten incubation and strengthen business positions at graduation.

GOAL 1A: IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT THE NEXT GENERATION OF PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS to accelerate client business development during incubation. Consider developing new program delivery models, evolving a more targeted approach to access to markets and helping clients navigate broader economic trends, including increasing labor shortages and real estate costs.

WHY: Changes in the Bay Area are altering the communities where La Cocina has traditionally looked for pockets of informal entrepreneurship. These changes suggest that we evolve and extend our geographic reach while creating more opportunities to grow a business successfully.

OUTCOMES: More rapid pace of growth within the incubation program for some businesses, stronger economic and market position for graduating businesses.

GOAL 1B: OPEN AND MANAGE A COMMERCIAL MARKETPLACE in which La Cocina entrepreneurs can operate temporarily or longer-term, through real estate acquisition, thoughtful partnership, or secured management of such space.

WHY: Commercial rent increases and an explosion of micro-retail spaces are both combining and limiting access for La Cocina entrepreneurs in that space. This could be a long-term investment in inclusivity for the city as well as opportunities for our participants. Lastly, if the opportunity is profitable, it can be replicable.

OUTCOMES: Greater opportunity for growth, faster learning and faster access to a space during incubation, higher number of brick and mortar graduations and a new revenue source for La Cocina.

GOAL 1C: ELEVATE THE PERCEPTION OF LA COCINA ENTREPRENEURS, removing the barriers to their accessing the highest-level recognition in food; transform preconceptions that pigeonhole our clients as “low-income success stories” rather than “rising star chefs.”

WHY: There exists a gap in the food media world when it comes to low-income and immigrant entrepreneurs. Positive media coverage can serve both as an expansion of the opportunity index and as quiet advocacy for inclusivity.

OUTCOMES: Increased client visibility in major media, increased number of applications to the program and potential policy changes to support more inclusive economies.



“By 2020, I want Peaches Patties to grow from our kiosk at 331 Cortland Street. I’d like to have a full service storefront and our patties sold in local grocery stores. La Cocina will help us achieve our goals by connecting me to capital and to restaurant consultant resources, which will help with business expansion.”

SHANI JONES

CHEF AND OWNER, PEACHES PATTIES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: EXPAND REACH

EXPAND LA COCINA'S REACH, LEVERAGING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED TO CREATE EXTENDED IMPACT OUTSIDE OUR CORE PROGRAMS, WITHIN AND BEYOND THE BAY AREA.

Inspire and contribute significantly to the national conversation around low-income women and immigrant entrepreneurs and their success, inspiring and/or assisting in the expansion of other incubator models based on La Cocina.

GOAL 2A: EXPAND THE LA COCINA CONFERENCE, providing significant thought leadership in the social sector and food spaces. Building on the continuing and ever-evolving success of our Food + Entrepreneurship Conference, La Cocina will convene food-business incubators, local economy activists, inclusive economy practitioners, city planners and city officials to share the work of La Cocina and related efforts from around the world.

WHY: Food has captured the world's attention as a tool for social change and countless organizations regionally, nationally and internationally have expressed interest in La Cocina's model. Inspired by the way that the Exploratorium capitalized on its own early successes, we imagine this conference as a way to share our insights on economic development, maintain our leadership in the field and learn from other organizations as they bring those lessons back to their own communities.

OUTCOMES: Inspiration and encouragement for national economic development efforts and collaborations, stronger community ties and opportunities for new revenue streams, including greater access to markets.

GOAL 2B: PUBLISH THE LA COCINA COOKBOOK, celebrating the talent, recipes, communities and entrepreneurial spirit of the women who have made La Cocina what it is.

WHY: Cookbooks have become a big industry, and they can be a powerful platform for storytelling across the country. In telling La Cocina's stories, we are really telling the story of powerful women from across the world, who have taken their lives in their own hands, against significant barriers and made a living doing something that they love to do. It will inspire, it will drive sales and it will be delicious.

OUTCOMES: Increased visibility and opportunities for La Cocina clients and community and new revenue.

GOAL 2C: AMPLIFY THE VOICES OF OUR ENTREPRENEURS through media platforms, including F&B Voices from the Kitchen.

WHY: In order to create powerful leaders in the food industry that will be effective advocates of social change, we will create platforms, partnerships and events that put our entrepreneurs front and center.

OUTCOMES: Voices that are less often heard will be celebrated, and people will be inspired to engage with La Cocina and to support our community of entrepreneurs.



“La Cocina is the inspiration behind Spice Kitchen Incubator. The success of their entrepreneurs is fostered from their passion for the people they serve, their commitment to innovation, and from bringing the community together. We look to La Cocina as the model for kitchen incubation programs across the nation because of their demonstrated success and their promise to their mission.”

NATALIE EL-DEIRY

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT +
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, SPICE KITCHEN
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: BUILD CAPACITY

BUILD LA COCINA'S ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY, GROWING INTO GREATER ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY AND INVESTING IN RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND CONTINUED SUCCESS.

Move La Cocina into a next phase of maturity as an organization with stronger financial and operational capacity to support continued growth and greater efficiency. For non-profit organizations, stability is hard to come by, but it is often a predictor of long-term success. There are simple investments that can and should be made to protect the longevity of the organization.

GOAL 3A: QUANTIFY LA COCINA'S IMPACT and continue to build upon our learnings from the 10-year Evaluation. Develop our capacity to collect and utilize data in order to improve our program. After 10 years, La Cocina's findings can provide significant insight for change-making organizations around the impact of business incubation on immigrant communities.

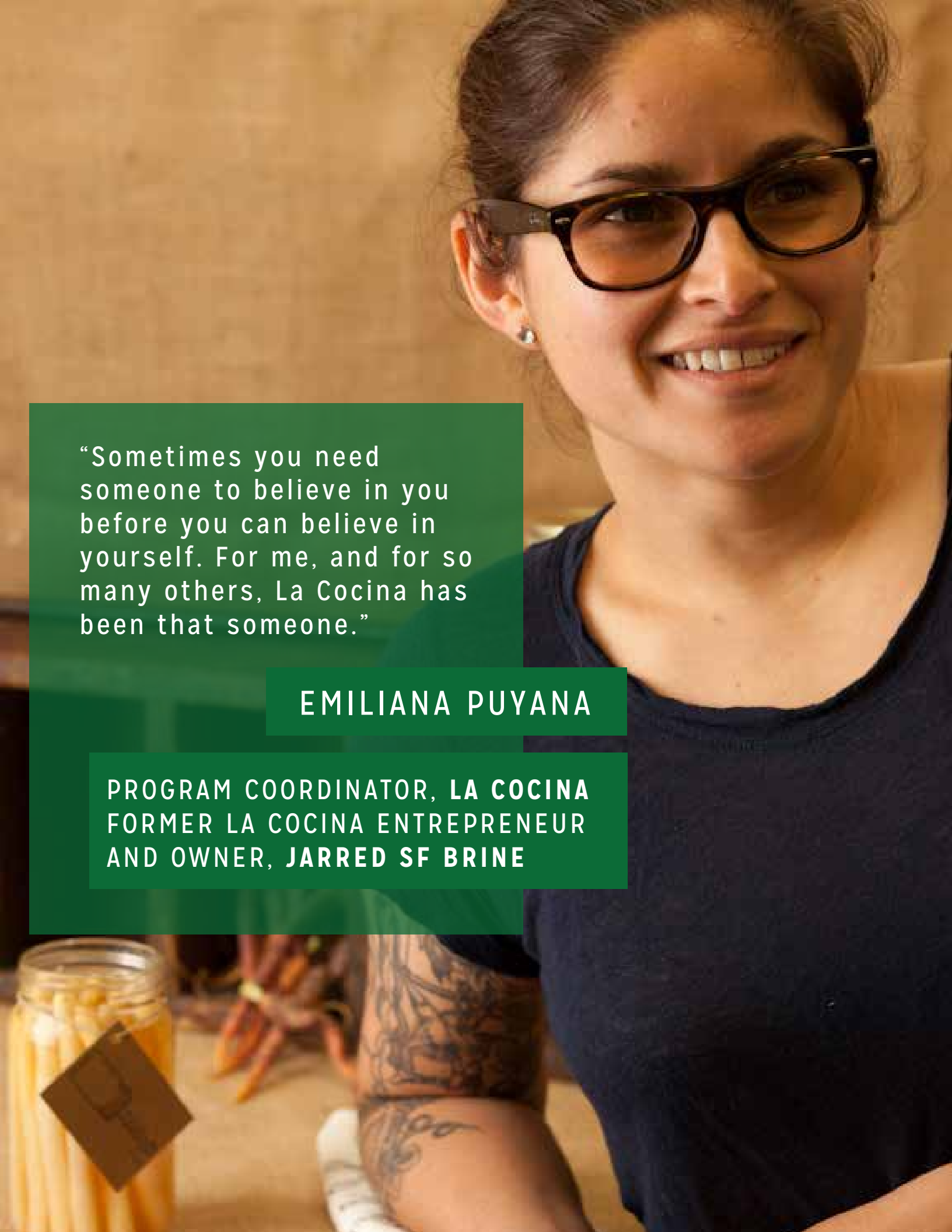
WHY: To improve the services that we deliver and to further advocate for organizations like ours to become fundamental to city planning and economic development.

OUTCOMES: Continued innovation and program success, new funding opportunities and an amplified voice on community issues important to La Cocina.

GOAL 3B: INVEST IN NEW PHYSICAL ASSETS, improving La Cocina's workspace and facilities. This may include adding on to La Cocina's current space in some way, or sourcing additional office space that would maintain connection to program while enabling business operations.

WHY: La Cocina currently occupies 2,200 square feet of space in the Mission District. That space is limited to a kitchen (about 60% of total) and office space. Expansion of the physical space would not only ease internal pressures, but also create classroom space and allow us to deliver new services, such as food business workshops, to new audiences.

OUTCOMES: Better learning environment and a more connected and happier staff, increased capacity and a greater footprint in low-income communities.

A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a dark blue t-shirt. She has a large, intricate tattoo on her left forearm. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a warm, textured wall. In the bottom left corner, there is a glass jar containing yellow sticks, possibly lemons or lemongrass, and some fresh carrots are visible on a wooden surface.

“Sometimes you need someone to believe in you before you can believe in yourself. For me, and for so many others, La Cocina has been that someone.”

EMILIANA PUYANA

**PROGRAM COORDINATOR, LA COCINA
FORMER LA COCINA ENTREPRENEUR
AND OWNER, JARRED SF BRINE**



THANK YOU

We are grateful to the members of our staff, board, graduates, partners and the many other stakeholders whose valuable insights and perspectives contributed to the development of this Strategic Plan.

We are excited to work with our participants, our board, our volunteers, our community and our funders to strengthen the inclusive economy that we are all building together. The risks around us are enormous - the terms for small business owners are constantly changing and our economy feels increasingly fragile. For our organization to thrive, we will all need to work together to remain nimble, which has served us well, and remain focused, which has served us even better.

**“ WHEN YOU INVEST IN LA
COCINA, YOU INVEST IN
EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE AND
VIBRANT ECONOMIES. WHEN YOU
SIT TO SHARE THEIR FOOD, YOU
PARTICIPATE IN BUILDING THAT
COMMUNITY. COME TO THE
TABLE.”**

CALEB ZIGAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LA COCINA

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2948 FOLSOM ST
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94110
+1 415-824-2729
WWW.LACOCINASF.ORG

PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIC WOLFINGER
GRAPHIC DESIGN: ISABEL SHAW