



## ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES — OF OREGON —

**Jacobsen Valentine, Founder and Executive Director of Feed the Mass, is being honored with the Young Visionary Award for his leadership that inspires hope for future generations.**

Born and raised in Hawaii, Jacobsen learned the importance of community and love through food from his mother and grandmother. Inspired by his grandmother's culinary skills, he developed a passion for cooking. After moving to Oregon at age 11, he continued using food to connect with others. Jacobsen pursued business and culinary arts education, later becoming a youth leader in a local church.



Realizing the lack of food education in his community, Jacobsen founded Feed the Mass in 2016. He came up with the name when he heard the story of Jesus and the miracle of feeding the masses with five fish and two loaves of bread. "The story wasn't that he multiplied the food, but that if people shared the little they had it would always be enough. To feed the mass you need to teach people to feed each other," says Jacobsen.

Feed the Mass exists to fight food insecurity and food waste at the source. The program uses excess food supply to cook healthy meals for members of our community in need, addressing food insecurity and food waste at the same time. They also empower Portland kids to feed themselves and others by teaching them to cook simple and inexpensive meals that are both nutritious and delicious. To date, Feed the Mass has served 170,000 meals to our Portland neighbors and rescued 115,000 pounds of food from being wasted.

"My goal is to teach people that we take care of each other through food and cooking," Jacobsen says. "Food connects every person in the world. I want to use it to create a community that is inclusive, diverse, and accessible to everyone."