

OCTOBER 2026

LIFELINE CDC

20 years of serving our community

**EMPOWERING
UNDER-RESOURCED
NEIGHBORHOODS
TO THRIVE**

**We Don't Measure Success by How Many Food Boxes We Give Away
We measure success by how many people no longer need one.**

Twenty years ago, LifeLine began with a dream: What if we could address poverty differently? What if, instead of focusing on what people lack, we started by discovering what they already have? Since then, thousands of community members have been asked:

“What gifts do you have? What dreams do you have for yourself and your family? And how can we help you move in that direction?”

Those questions are at the heart of who we are.

We have intentionally moved away from a traditional handout model that can create dependency. Instead, we use a strength-based approach built on a simple belief: every person has gifts, abilities, experiences, and something valuable to contribute.

We focus on what is strong, not just what is wrong.

Over the years, we have watched people find better jobs and more stable housing. We have seen children improve in school and become the first in their families to attend college. We have watched seniors come out of isolation, build relationships, and share their gifts and skills with others. And we have seen people who once came looking for help become the very people helping someone else.

Twenty years ago, this started as a dream in my heart—a desire to see justice and mercy go hand in hand and to see people recognized not for their needs, but for their God-given potential.

Today, LifeLine has four community centers that serve as hubs of connection and transformation. Each center shares the same mission, values, and goals, but no two centers look exactly alike. Their priorities grow from the dreams and needs of the neighborhood and from the unique gifts of the community members, staff, interns, and volunteers who make each place their own.

After 20 years, one thing has not changed:

We believe in people.

We believe your life story is not your life sentence.

We believe your current location is not your destiny.

And we believe every person should have the opportunity to help co-author the next chapter of their life.



- After-school & youth programs
- Homework, reading & STEM support
- Job searches & resume help
- Emergency food & resources
- Health & resource navigation
- Reentry support
- ESL & adult learning
- Senior activities
- Community gardens & healthy living
- Help with forms & applications
- Support groups & mentoring
- Community gatherings
- Family support
- Volunteer & internship opportunities

A place to belong, grow, and discover your gifts



How do you use your resources?

- Become a partner in the LifeLine story.
- Partnership can look different for everyone. What resources, gifts, or opportunities do you have that could help someone else move forward?
- Give: It costs about \$1,500 a day to keep LifeLine's work going. A gift of \$125 a month covers one full day each year.
- Share a skill: Can you cook, fix things, teach art, help with finances, write resumes, garden, or share another skill?
- Give your time: Mentor a young person, help with an activity, or volunteer at a community center.
- Open a door: Connect someone to a job, educational opportunity, business, or resource.
- Bring others: Introduce your church, business, service club, friends, or family to LifeLine.

Everyone has something to offer. What's in your hands?

Breaking the Cycle

F. came to LifeLine through the Welfare-to-Work program. With two strikes on his record, he knew he did not want to spend the rest of his life caught in the cycle of incarceration. As we worked alongside him, we discovered his passion for cooking and helped secure a scholarship for culinary school. Today, F. works full-time as a chef. But his story is bigger than a job. F. grew up in a family where gang life was part of the story. He became the first in his family to break that cycle—and he is determined to make sure his children grow up with a different future. That is what transformation looks like: discovering strengths, opening doors, and helping one generation change the story for the next.



LifeLine CDC

Mailing address: 731 E Yosemite Ave Ste B # 165

Merced CA 95340

phone: 209-259-8950

lifeline@lifelinecdc.org

<https://give-usa.keela.co/your-gift-changes-the-story>