

# THE COMMISSARY

downtown kitchen incubator



# REDUCING BARRIERS & BUILDING BUSINESSES

The Commissary, the region's first food business incubator and only shared kitchen permitted in Monroe County, is a social entrepreneurship enterprise aimed at facilitating the creation of new food business ownership opportunities for members of our community. **The Commissary is designed to increase success rates for new food industry entrepreneurs by reducing startup barriers and offering development support services.** The Commissary fills a much-needed gap in the greater Rochester market, encouraging aspiring food business owners to legitimize and accelerate their concepts.



Our facility offers 14 production kitchen stations, a full line of commercial grade kitchen equipment, along with cooled and ambient storage, available for use by Commissary members on an as-needed, pay as you go, hourly basis. Our kitchens and services accommodate food truck operators, caterers, bakers, virtual restaurateurs, home-based food businesses looking to legalize, and startup packaged food manufacturers. Membership also **includes access to ongoing business development and food industry specific incubation services designed to reduce start-up risks and build capacity for long-term success.**

The Commissary first opened in the heat of the COVID-19 pandemic - a time when many individuals became unemployed, and the restaurant industry was turned upside-down. Our turnkey, low-risk operation allows individuals affected by unemployment to launch their own businesses; also allowing existing restaurateurs to pivot their business models and re-launch.



"The Commissary gives me the ability to operate a food business legally, which is a huge deal. There are all kinds of awesome commercial equipment on site, so that you can really scale your processes without a ton of overhead, like I would need to pay in my own place. It's a great stepping stone for those who are transitioning from hobby to real-deal."

**Kayla Sandoval, Owner of Biscotti Brewers**

## MEMBER STATISTICS



total members



BIPOC-owned



women-owned

CHECK OUT  
OUR ACTIVE  
BUSINESSES HERE!



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# FUELING THE FIRE OF PASSIONATE ENTREPRENEURS

We are always looking for ways to improve support for food entrepreneurs in the Greater Rochester region. With the help of our donors, The Commissary is advancing small business owners of all backgrounds toward upward economic mobility. Your support helps us provide the best services to our members as they navigate the industry and increases their chances for success.

**Here's how your donation helps:**



## Affordable Kitchen Space

As a not-for-profit that seeks to serve all members of the community it is important that we are able to keep our kitchen rental costs affordable for all. Kitchen rental includes on-site staff support, state of the art equipment, prep stations, cleaning supplies, cold and dry storage, and 24/7 access.



## Visibility & Programming

The Commissary is committed to creating opportunities for our member businesses to improve their professional and culinary skills while also marketing their businesses. We regularly host open house style events, providing a small stipend to defray their event costs. Our ongoing [workshop series](#) provides Commissary member businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs with food industry-specific insight on a variety of topics. All workshops are recorded and available for free on our website. With additional donor support, a more robust lineup of events showcasing our members would be possible.



## Industry-Specific Mentorship

The on-demand and specific nature of our members' needs requires Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIRs) with broad and deep expertise within the food industry to meet with our members in small group and one-on-one mentoring sessions. Grant funding has been secured to pilot the launch of this program and we are seeking additional funding to sustain the program and enhance the breadth of topics covered as well as the diversity of the EIRs recruited to participate.



## Sales & Marketing Opportunities

Many of our members need a boost in establishing and connecting with their customer base. We have launched a stall at the Public Market to help meet this need. Our staff provides assistance in refining members' social media, website, and other marketing tactics. With additional financial support, The Commissary would launch a food business marketing workshop series to better guide the marketing needs of our member businesses.

**ADDITIONAL WAYS  
TO SUPPORT OUR  
MEMBERS**



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## DONOR WALL

The Commissary is a true community project that has been made possible through the generous support of partners in government, private business, and community-minded individuals. Donations over \$500 are memorialized on our donor wall in the Performance Kitchen.

# HEAR FROM OUR MEMBERS

"I love The Commissary. It gives me the ability to legally operate as a food business. I have the option of catering, take out, sit down service and so much more. Being a member at The Commissary **gives me so much access to different opportunities and a very diverse market...** My days weren't always bright but I finally made it to the other side. It's only up from here. **GrillBae gave me a real purpose and I'm just getting started.**"  
- Dallas Clinton, Owner and Chef, GrillBae



"The Commissary has allowed me to legitimize my business and take it to the next level. I appreciate the support that has been extended as I make the transition from "home" baker to "professional" baker. The **support has been next-level** including assistance with my health permit, to the free hours given when I first started out, to the daily, timely support I receive from Arthur [kitchen manager] when I'm on site. **I am so proud and grateful to be a part of what's happening at The Commissary.** Good things are happening, and better things are on the way!"  
- Erica Thomas, Owner and Baker, The Brown Suga Co.



"The best thing about working at The Commissary is the culture that is being shaped. The opportunity presented has been absolutely amazing. **Working among other passionate entrepreneurs who are not only promoting their own brands but also supporting others, has been such a beautiful experience.** The leaders of The Commissary genuinely **want to see you win, and so do the members.** I am proud to be art of such a humble, compassionate and caring environment. It is truly something special!"  
- Lisa Malavez, Owner and Chef, Qué Chévere



## Our Kitchen Community



STAY UPDATED:  @roccommissary  [The Commissary](https://www.facebook.com/TheCommissary)

