



# IS NOW EMPLOYEE OWNED

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**\*\*Native Foods Celebrates New Beginnings this Veganuary with Employee-Owned Transformation\*\***

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In a remarkable tale of resilience and community spirit, Native Foods, the pioneering plant-based eatery, announces a new chapter this Veganuary. Despite facing closure of 8 locations in 2023, the iconic brand has emerged stronger, transforming its three remaining locations into employee-owned entities, each with a unique and inspiring story.

**\*\*Dame Dia: A Tale of Resilience in Chicago\*\***



Dame Dia, a seasoned veteran with 15 years in the restaurant industry, is making significant strides at Native Foods' Chicago locations at 218 S. Clark. His journey is one of remarkable growth and resilience, starting as a dishwasher in Queens, NY, advancing to General Manager at Red Lobster, and later overseeing multiple eateries at JFK Airport's Terminal 5. Since joining Native Foods in 2018, Dame's dedication and experience have been invaluable in contributing to the success of the Chicago location.

**\*\*Michael Olivas: Embracing the Vegan Dream in Glendale\*\***



Michael Olivas, now at the helm of 680 S. Colorado Blvd., Glendale, CO, joined Native Foods in 2014 as an Assistant to the General Manager. His nine-year journey with the company is marked by deep connections with team members and guests. An avid reader, runner, and aspiring vegan chef, Michael's lifelong dream was to own a vegan restaurant, a dream that has now become a reality with Native Foods.

**\*\*Misti Rausch and Sean Reynolds: Leading with Passion in Palm Springs\*\***



The Palm Springs location at 1775 E. Palm Canyon Dr. is co-owned by Misti Rausch and Sean Reynolds. Misti, who joined in 2012 as a FOH employee, is dedicated to the vegan community and is thrilled to continue Native Foods' legacy, especially as the original location celebrates its 30th anniversary. Sean, who started in 2013 as a FOH Ringer/Runner, shares Misti's enthusiasm for menu and design innovations. A musician and a vegan convert, Sean credits Native Foods for profoundly changing his life and dietary choices.

These three locations, now flourishing under their dedicated owners, reflect the spirit of Native Foods' mission: "Help us change the way the world eats, one plant-based meal at a time." The community's overwhelming support and the owners' commitment to sustainability and plant-based goodness are testament to Native Foods' enduring appeal and its vital role in the vegan movement.

**\*\*Native Foods: Tasty Goodness, Mother Earth Approved\*\***

For more information, visit [NativeFoods.com](https://NativeFoods.com)

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**Press Photos**