

## Hospitality Industry Pros Relish the Chance to Help During Pandemic

<https://chicago.eater.com/2020/4/16/21222277/chicago-chefs-restaurant-bar-coronavirus-elis-chesecake-jerrys-sandwiches-cobblestone>

Read, in their own words, how Chicago restaurant leaders are coping with the COVID-19 outbreak

by [Naomi Waxman](#) Apr 16, 2020, 9:45am CDT

As Illinois's stay-at-home order, [now in place through at least the end of April](#), drags on, the predicament has posed challenges and provided opportunities for the members of Chicago's food and beverage industry. Working to balance commitments to their staff, customers, and communities, chefs and owners have found themselves reflecting on the nature of hospitality itself and how they can serve others.

In this regular feature, Eater Chicago will talk to three members of Chicago's food world, asking them how they see their role during this crisis and their strategies



Dr. Markus Chwajol of Cobblestone *Cobblestone [Official Photo]*

Dr. Markus Chwajol opened bar and restaurant [Cobblestone](#) in North Center in late February, but was forced to close the space due to Illinois's stay-at-home order. He has pivoted his operation toward pickup and delivery orders. Chwajol is a neurosurgeon and delivered free meals to health care workers for Easter and Passover at UIC Medical Center.

“As a physician, I can see how hard the nurses work, especially in the COVID units — not only the nurses but other staff, nurse practitioners, and physician's assistants. These are selfless jobs. I felt that people outside of this profession, like restaurateurs, should keep up and do something selfless as well. Restaurants are usually fun places where people go when they're happy. There's much less happiness these days because of the lockdown and pandemic, so we wanted to bring back the feeling of more happiness and joy from having a wonderful meal...I'm helping people in the hospital by treating them, and occasionally saving their lives, and that's more something that I love as a professional. But we can give joy and help at the same time by providing an hour, an hour and a half, of happiness over dinner, some enjoyment of a nice meal and beverage. It's sort of a similar platform of helping people, making them happy.”