



**MARION
INSTITUTE**

Annual Report 2020



Creating a Culture of Health



**MARION
INSTITUTE**

National Impact:
Bringing Biological Medicine
into the medical mainstream.

Local Commitment:
Achieving a healthier,
more equitable Southcoast.



**BIOMED
NETWORK**

**Promoting
Health Equity**



**CONNECTOR
SERIES**

**Engaging
Audiences to
Inspire Action**



**GREENHOUSE
INITIATIVES**

**Amplifying
our Mission**



**SOUTHCOST
FOOD POLICY COUNCIL**

**Advocating
for Food
Justice**



**GROW
EDUCATION**

**Building
Resilient
Communities**

Our Mission

We are building a movement. One that engages individuals and communities in integrative approaches to whole body health.

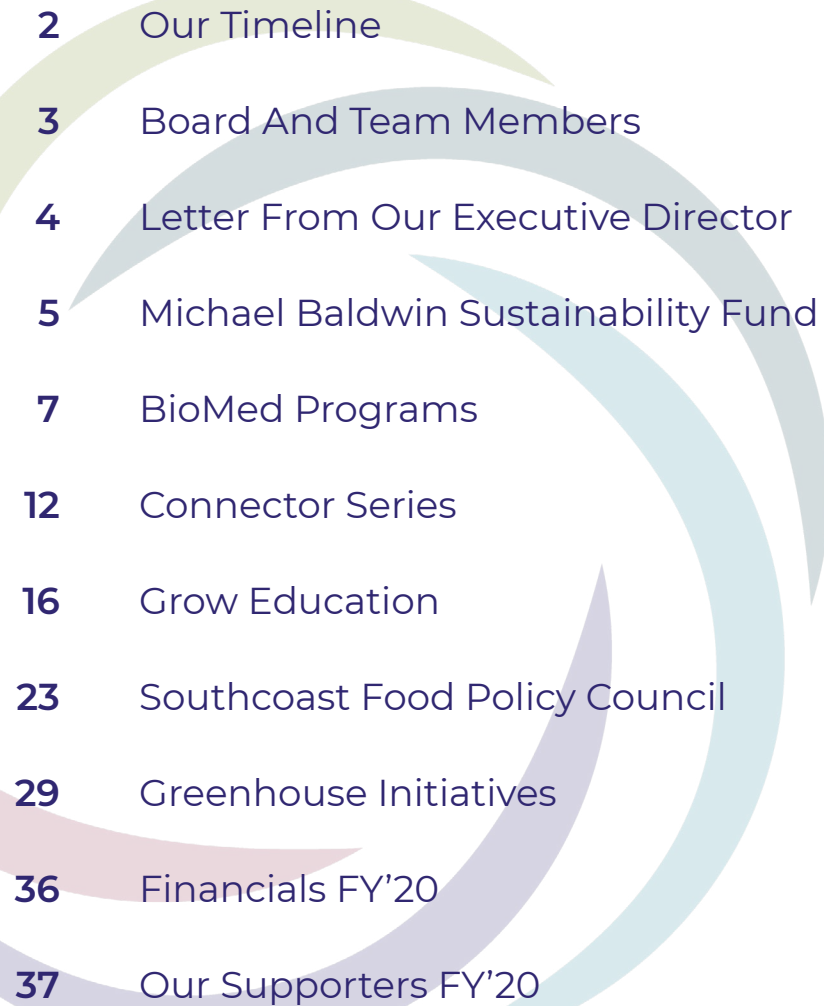
We educate and empower by supporting, connecting,
and applying the science of self-healing.

Our Vision

We are committed to our vision of community health,
environmental resilience, and social justice.

We believe optimal health is a basic human right, not a privilege.

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Our Timeline

1993

Margie and Michael Baldwin, and a small group of friends, create the **Marion Foundation**, a member-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit which pursued knowledge through informal workshops and seminars. It also acted as a resource center, distributing a quarterly newsletter with articles and information on a variety of thought-provoking topics.

2003

The Marion Foundation changes its name to the **Marion Institute**, with core, staff-supported programs and global "Serendipity Projects" (fiscal sponsorships.) "Changing ourselves, changing our world" becomes the Institute's mission.

2005

Bioneers by the Bay has its inaugural multi-day event, hosted at UMass Dartmouth and later relocated to downtown New Bedford. The transformative cultural conference is later renamed **Connecting for Change** and goes on to make a big impact in the lives of thousands of attendees throughout the years, until the last conference in 2015.

2009-2011

Energy, Ecology, & Economy: The MI adds a new program that takes a whole-systems approach to meeting the needs of the local community. **The Green Jobs, Green Economy** initiative is established in 2009, in partnership with the City of New Bedford and the New Bedford Economic Development Council. GJGE sought to support the New Bedford community in becoming a national leader in the green jobs and sustainability movement. The group is instrumental in helping to secure funding that is used to create the City of New Bedford's Energy Office.

The program reached out to over 3000 households and small businesses and over a dozen jobs were created through the work of its many partners and collaborators.

In the summer of 2011, New Bedford's energy efficiency efforts, solar efforts, and a grassroots initiative called the Southcoast Energy Challenge (SEC) join forces to create New Bedford Energy Now! (NBEN). The SEC would later become a program of the Marion Institute.

2016

The **Southcoast Energy Challenge**, an initiative started by the Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEAL) becomes a program of the Marion Institute. The Challenge provided an online portal where residents, businesses, schools etc. in the Southcoast could calculate their carbon footprint and provided a myriad of strategies for reducing ones carbon footprint. The SEC went on to take a greater role in outreach to low and moderate income populations in New Bedford, collaborating with MassSave on promoting energy assistance and efficiency and helping to set up energy audits. Solar energy and wind power also became key elements of the SEC messaging and advocacy work in the Southcoast region. The Southcoast Energy Challenge (SEC) was acquired at the end of 2018 by Self-Reliance, a Massachusetts non-profit organization with over 35 years' experience in the energy sector.

2018

MI celebrates its 25th anniversary with a "Silver Soiree" in October that brings together many faces from the past.

Grow Education expands its classroom programming, bringing a variety of local speakers to schools as part of the 2018-2019 Winter Speaker Series. Over 18 presentations were given to students, focused on bridging community resources for the students of New Bedford.

2019

Under the leadership of a new Executive Director, Liz Wiley, the MI refines its mission to focus on integrative and innovative approaches to whole-body health and adopts a new tagline, **"Creating a Culture of Health – National Impact, Local Commitment"**

Grow Education embarks on a **Farm-to-School Initiative** with New Bedford Public Schools. The program is piloted in 2 schools during the 2019-2020 school year.

1993

1997

2003

2004

2005

2009

2010

2011

2013

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

1997

The Marion Foundation creates its first core program- the **Biological Medicine Network**. It begins to host seminars for patients and doctors and in time, grows into a referral-based network connecting patients with integrative medicine practitioners across the globe.

2004

Wangari Maathai, founder of the Green Belt Movement, becomes the first African woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Green Belt Movement was an early fiscal sponsorship program based in Kenya and focused on environmental conservation, community development, and capacity building.

2009

The Marion Institute's Sustainable Education Initiative [SEI] is created; the project seeks to create edible school gardens. In 2013, SEI refines its mission to focus on public schools in New Bedford, MA. The project becomes a core MI program and is renamed **Grow Education**.

2013

Root Cause Solutions: The Marion Institute redefines its mission to reflect changing organizational goals: It "acts as an incubator for a diverse array of programs and Serendipity Projects that seek to find a solution to the root cause of an issue in the realms of sustainability and social justice."

In May, the Marion Institute acquires **Round the Bend Farm**, a Center for Restorative Community, which initially operated as a program of the Marion Institute and evolved into its own non-profit in 2015.

2015

The final Connecting for Change Conference takes place in October and transitions to the **Connector Series** program, which offers more intimate, curated events throughout the year, designed to increase interaction, foster dialogue, and bring innovative ideas to action. The first Connector Series takes place in April 2016 with *Lessons From Cuba: Building Community Through Food*, and is followed later in the year with 2 sold-out appearances by animal behaviorist and autism rights activist Temple Grandin. Since then, the Connector Series has hosted over 25 events with thousands of attendees.

2017

The Marion Institute increases its focus on biological medicine with the incubation of a new organization dedicated to the "science of self-healing." **The Bioregulatory Medicine Institute**, or BRMI, hosts its inaugural conference in 2017 quickly followed by another in May of 2018. During this time, they also establish a seminal educational website on bioregulatory medicine, BRMI.online, with in-depth articles, white papers, videos, and interviews with experts in the field.

MI begins the incubation of what will become the first medical and dental biological medicine center in North America: **The BioMed Center New England**. Located in Providence, RI, the BioMed Center officially opens in October 2018. MI continues to be the educational partner of the BioMed Center, collaborating with its practitioners on a number of events and initiatives designed to promote integrative, whole body health to an ever-growing audience.

2020

The MI welcomes a new program, the **Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC)**. Formally known as the *Southeastern MA Food Security Network*, the SFPC's mission is to connect, convene, and advocate for local food producers, consumers, and community leaders who seek policy and systems that strengthen our regional food system, improve community health, and eliminate food insecurity.

The COVID-19 pandemic creates an increased need in the community and the SFPC activates its membership to organize and re-allocate local and regional resources to combat the rising food insecurity on the Southcoast of Massachusetts. Through programs such as **Cooks for Community** and the **Farmers to Families Food Boxes**, the SFPC is able to mobilize resources and assist those in need. The SFPC membership grows to over 300 and weekly resource calls allow the group to stay agile and flexible to the needs of the Southcoast community.

From 1997-2003, the Biological Medicine Network (BMN) conducted a series of educational conferences & lectures with Dr. Thomas Rau, a pioneer in the field. This relationship would continue through 2014; in total, over 20 seminars were conducted, resulting in the education of hundreds of people on the topic of European Biological Medicine.

We have assisted 8 organizations in becoming certified 501(c)(3) charities: Coastal Foodshed, Creative Lives, Green Belt Movement, Gross National Happiness, Institute for Human and Planetary Flourishing, Leadership Brainery, Speak for the Trees, and The Unseen Hand. We've also helped former MI programs become independent organizations, such as Round the Bend Farm (RTB), a Center for Restorative Community, and Cambodian Living Arts.

We are currently incubating 14 organizations through our Greenhouse Initiatives program: BRMI, Community Youth Empowerment, Gold Standard Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Strategic Grants, Lawrence Arts House, Nourish, S.A.F.E., STEAM the Streets, Taktse International School, The Coms, The Himalayan Project, The Mastate Charitable Foundation, The Mindful Collaborative, The Relay Fund, and The Voice Movement Therapy Center.

Board and Team Members



A Year Like None Other

In our 27-year history, we have faced pivotal moments, encountered (and surpassed) numerous obstacles, and have successfully adapted to the changes in the world around us, all the while staying true to the core of our mission. No one at the Marion Institute could have known at the beginning of FY'20 what lay in store for us, as individuals, as an organization, as a nation, and as a global community. It was a year like none other, our resolve and resources tested, our mission made more necessary than ever. The pages that follow tell a story of how The Marion Institute continued to carry out its mission during a time of great uncertainty and found opportunities, through some of our programs, to forge new paths and strengthen existing partnerships to help meet the needs of our community- both locally and around the globe.

Letter From Our Executive Director



To say FY'20 has been challenging and life-changing is a major understatement. We have witnessed an unprecedented struggle with COVID-19, culminating in loss and economic hardship. Simultaneously, we are engaged in a historic,

resurgent movement for social justice. Focus and clarity on our mission – advocating for food justice, promoting health equity, and building resilient communities – has never felt more essential for creating a world that supports and protects everyone.

The pandemic has spotlighted the many gaps and social inequities that have remained hidden in our country for far too long. These inequities are epitomized by a food system that is incapable of providing the answers to chronic food insecurity, and has created a new crisis – *nutritional insecurity* – and the resulting health crisis we currently face.

At the onset of the pandemic, we witnessed these problems firsthand by the way the industrialized food system could not keep up with demand and left grocery store shelves bare. Meanwhile, food decayed at farms and spoiled in fields. As the months rolled on, the pandemic revealed how sick we are as a culture. The industrial food system has set an exceptionally low baseline for public health, and we can now attest to the dire consequences of this, written in the nation's sickness and mortality rates. Of equal importance, our nation is starting to acknowledge structural racism as a fundamental cause of the unacceptable and persistent health disparities in our country. I am proud that the Marion Institute was able to rise to the many issues faced by our communities during these crises and emerge as a response leader.

Through our programmatic work, we have remained committed to confronting these novel challenges by leading and coordinating a range of response efforts. Here are some highlights of our work in action:

- Our newly formed Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC) provided a weekly platform that encouraged and facilitated coordination and collaboration among the myriad sectors of our regional food system responding to the pandemic. This convener role was critical to our region's ability to continuously identify and remedy service gaps. Through our *Cooks for Community* initiative, we worked with five restaurants – that had previously been closed – to prepare healthy, culturally-relevant meals to our most at-risk community members. In total, we served over 11,450 meals. In collaboration with Sid Wainer & Son and the United Way of Greater New Bedford, we distributed over 30,000 Farmers to Families CSA-style food boxes to those most in need on the Southcoast.
- Early in the year, our Biological Medicine (BioMed) program held two bioregulatory symposiums in RI and MA with the doctors/authors of our primer book – *Bioregulatory Medicine: An Innovative Holistic Approach to Self-Healing*. During the pandemic, we launched a virtual series of house calls – *Coffee with Dr. Hennie* – in partnership with the BioMed Center of New England. Reaching over 600 attendees with specific ways to balance our immune-systems to fight against COVID-19. Through our BioMed scholarship program, we were able to provide need-based financial assistance to patients seeking biological medicine care.

continued...

- Our Grow Education program officially launched its Farm-to-School initiative in the New Bedford Public School district. The goals of the project are to work within schools to build and use gardens as a launching pad to incorporate food nutrition lessons into every third-grade classroom across the district and to bring back scratch-cooked, local foods to school meals. Promoting healthy eating is vitally important for the children of New Bedford where 19.2% of children are obese and where greater than 80% of residents do not consume the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

As we look to the future, MI will continue its pioneering and strategic advocacy for food justice, health equity, and resiliency. We are entirely grateful for your support and hope you will join us in our continuing efforts.



Liz Wiley
Executive Director

Michael Baldwin Sustainability Fund

The Marion Institute's (MI) history of pioneering action is rooted in the philosophy and personality of its founders, Michael and Margie Baldwin. They had a "hunch" that there was more to life than just the everyday cycle of work, raise children, sleep, and repeat. They believed that life could and should consist of continuous spiritual exploration, ongoing education, and the constant process of giving back to society and taking care of those in need. They put that hunch into action by creating the MI and sharing this vision with the world. Michael Baldwin, as Board President and Co-Founder, has been our heart and soul for as long as the Institute has been around. He is passionate, dedicated, thoughtful, empathetic, and incredibly knowledgeable. Margie often describes

him as incurably curious, and if you've had the good fortune of becoming Michael's friend then you know how passionately he shares this knowledge.

In honor of Michael's 80th birthday, his longtime friends, Whitney and Phillip Long, launched The Michael Baldwin Sustainability Fund, affectionately referred to as "Operation 80," at the end of FY'20. Although Michael's birthday, and the ultimate surprise announcement of Operation 80, took place in FY'21, we want to take this time to thank you – all of our amazing donors who so generously supported this effort. (See Michael's response to understand the impact of your support. If you missed it – Operation 80 remains open to your support.)

Michael's Response: "Gobsmacked" I believe is a British word connoting "mouth agape" or ASTONISHMENT. That's me last Fall when the team from the Marion Institute arrived, at our son's house, where we were zooming with our other two offspring doing a Happy Birthday ballyhoo, and suddenly on the screen, along with the MI team behind me, Phillip and Whitney Long showed up to announce, in force (!), the Operation 80 campaign with its stunning results. Oh my, talk about taken aback and speechless. And then this gorgeous engraved wooden box filled with fabulous notes from a myriad of admirers! Almost more overwhelming than the outpouring of financial support for the campaign. And nary a leak throughout the five months it was quietly unfolding.

It is probably the most meaningful event in the MI history, to have been able to raise such a grand amount for a stupid old (yes, OLD!) birthday of the founder. I just hope you all know how impactful this extraordinary event has been and will be, especially insofar as sustainability of our great work, past and present, has been/will be and IS! I am deeply touched by all of your thoughtfulness and generosity and hope this wee message conveys that sentiment in spades.

The Marion Institute is more charged, passionate, and primed to make a positive difference in this world of increasing pressure and deepening challenges than ever. And never have we had such a team of staff members and board participants to bring about the huge change so needed. Thank you all so much for your ongoing support, and your affection.



Michael Baldwin
Board President





BIOMED PROGRAMS

BioMed Network – Promoting Health Equity

Advancing integrative healthcare by expanding patient options for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of illness.

What We Do

- **Connect** people to an individualized, interconnected approach to whole-body health.
- **Educate** the public about alternative approaches to health care and advocate for complementary health practitioners.
- **Support** innovative ways for consumers to have maximum choice in their health care options.

**“Good nutrition will prevent
95% of all disease.”**

– Linus Pauling

BioMed Programs

Biological medicine seeks to bring the body into its natural state of balance and health. Widely practiced in Europe, it is an approach rooted in bio-individuality, treating each person as unique and personalizing therapy to treat the individual. It focuses on fostering wellness rather than suppressing symptoms.

Recognizing that there is common ground, biological medicine can work independently, or in tandem with, conventional allopathic medicine. The ultimate goal is to restore the body's equilibrium, support the immune system, and cultivate the integration of body, mind, and spirit.

The Marion Institute's BioMed Program began FY'20 with the goal of unifying programming around a singular mission and vision—strengthening the health of our community members, our environment, and our world. At that time, we could have never predicted how imperative this goal would become as a pandemic took hold in the early months of 2020.

For many years, the Marion Institute has promoted an alternative narrative to disease and healing through its focus on biological medicine. Different from the conventional narrative, BioMed places emphasis on uncovering and treating the root causes of disease rather than the suppression of symptoms.

With the pandemic having exposed the inadequacies of our current healthcare ecosystem, the Marion Institute's BioMed Program has recommitted to providing educational and networking opportunities that reach an ever-expanding audience by sharing information that helps communities of people better understand the nature of the human body and the path to optimal health and well-being.

Connect

The Marion Institute's **Biological Medicine Network (BMN)** and **Local Practitioner Network** are vital to the Marion Institute's mission to provide credible, relevant health information from a BioMed perspective and to connect individuals with providers offering an innovative and natural alternative to conventional care.

Provider Network

BMN facilitates connection-making between prospective patients and an array of doctors and health professionals around the world trained in various aspects of BioMed care. With the BMN, the Marion Institute is able to help communities of individuals become connected with care providers near and far.

Local Practitioner Network

The Marion Institute's local network of practitioners continues to grow and now **includes over 120 providers in the New England** region. These providers offer services and therapies that are well aligned with BioMed's core principals of practice, such as colonics, structural energy therapy, and lymphatic drainage. In FY'20, we diversified the nature of our partnerships to include guest submissions to our **BioBlog**, an online forum for those interested in exchanging ideas about the growing field of biological medicine.

BioMed Programs



78

total BMN practitioners

61

in the US

17

international

Guest authors bring depth of insight and expert knowledge to our ongoing exploration of Biological Medicine. These practitioners are also well-poised to address timely themes, such as the benefits of promoting mindfulness among teens in light of COVID, a topic addressed in our Connector Series program as many high schoolers were experiencing unprecedented disruption to their everyday lives.

Sponsors

The Biological Medicine Network actively works with practitioners and patients who want the latest updates in terms of protocols, treatments, products, and referrals. In the context of increased demand for alternatives to allopathic medicine, we spread the word about biological medicine while simultaneously promoting partners and sponsors who represent a shared vision of healthcare. In FY'20, we featured sponsors' content on our BioMed Network Facebook page and on our *BioBlog* to help consumers make informed health decisions in a time of turmoil.



8

global sponsors

Educate

Winter Film Series

We kicked off January 2020 with a curated line-up of health documentaries aimed at educating the public about food, medicine, and disease. Look at our Connector Series page for a full review of our winter film series.



BioMed Programs



Coffee with Dr. Hennie – A Virtual Holistic House Call

In light of COVID-19, the BioMed Program initiated new programming to

offer guidance and support to individuals navigating a flood of health-related information. In partnership with the BioMed Center New England, the Marion Institute launched a weekly "virtual house call" series with the BioMed Center's then-Medical Director, Dr. Hennie Fitzpatrick. "Coffee with Dr. Hennie" focused on answering individuals' COVID-related health questions in a Q&A format that provided participants with personalized and timely insight from a BioMed practitioner. Over the course of eight events, held virtually throughout April and May 2020, the series addressed individuals' most pressing health concerns while simultaneously engaging the pillars of biological medicine: quality nutrition, immune building, and detoxification.



of **virtual biomed**
educational events
this year



600+
people **attended**
these events

Support

Advocacy & Social Justice

COVID was not the only watershed event that the BioMed Program addressed in FY'20. In the past year, racial and societal uprisings in our nation once again highlighted the intersectionality of race, social stratification, and health, drawing attention to the ways that our current economic and social systems disenfranchise low-income and minority populations when it comes to health care.



The YWCA of Southeastern Massachusetts created a series of **racial and ethnic disparity working groups** to develop a framework of local solutions to address key issues, including Education, Housing, Health, Criminal Justice/Policing, Youth, LGBTQ+, Workplace, Food Justice, Board Diversity & Civic Engagement, along with the #SayHerName Campaign. Marion Institute team members participated in several of these groups and co-chaired the Food Justice working group.

BioMed Programs

The Mary Shands Scholarship Fund

Established in the summer of 2018, the Mary Shands Scholarship Fund provides financial assistance to patients seeking treatment from a BioMed Network Provider or a provider who meets the requirements to become part of the BioMed Network. The Fund was established in honor of Mary Norton Shands, a visionary whose efforts helped bring biological medicine to North America.



13

of scholarships awarded

from October 2019 -
September 2020

\$26,286

was awarded during this period of time

What's Next?

The pandemic forced us to pause the roll out of our planned course offerings, including a BioMed Worksite Wellness course and a BioMed Practitioner Certification Course.

We continue to develop content for our certification programs and explore new ways in which to design programs to help practitioners and medical professionals advance their knowledge and application of biological medicine. Currently, we are working on making both courses accessible to practitioners near and far through the use of online learning technologies. Courses are expected to come on-line in early FY2022.

A Note About BRMI

The Bioregulatory Medicine Institute (BRMI) has gained visibility world-wide and made the transition to a Greenhouse Initiative of the Marion Institute. BRMI is well on its way to achieving independence and will continue to work closely with the Marion Institute to promote biological medicine world-wide. More about their accomplishments can be found in the Greenhouse Initiatives section of this report.

"The scholarship has allowed me to... begin my healing journey. Without the Scholarship, I would not have been able to do this."

– Mary Shands scholarship recipient, 2019



CONNECTOR SERIES

Engaging Audiences to Inspire Action.

Bringing thought leaders from around the world to the Southcoast of Massachusetts, to foster understanding and discourse around big ideas.

What We Do

- **Engage** audiences and encourage thoughtful dialogue through author events, panel discussions, and intensive workshops.
- **Educate** audiences with cutting-edge ideas around health, social justice, sustainability, responsible business, and spirituality.
- **Empower** and inspire people to transform their learnings into positive social change.

“The secret to change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.”

– Socrates

Connector Series

While it's true that all of The Marion Institute's programs had to undergo some element of change in 2020 to adapt and thrive to the unpredictable circumstances caused by the pandemic, our Connector Series program underwent the greatest transition. Historically, the Connector Series relies on bringing people together to share knowledge and engage in new learnings. With the ability to gather in-person taken away, The Marion Institute, like countless other organizations worldwide, turned its attention to virtual events and zoom meetings as the conduits of connection with our constituents. This new normal did come with a silver lining; with geographic boundaries all but erased by the ubiquitous reach of virtual platforms, the Connector Series was able to engage new audiences and introduce new people to our organization, and our mission.

Engage



The 2020 Connector Series season started out strong in January with the first of three scheduled events that made up the **Winter Film Series**, a curated line-up of health documentaries

aimed at educating the public about food, medicine, and disease. These screenings, sponsored in part by Southcoast Health, a not-for-profit, community-based health system operating throughout southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island, were free and open to the public. The McBratney Amphitheater at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford, MA served as the perfect venue to screen each film and conduct a post-show discussion on the movie's theme. The follow up conversations allowed for the audience to further explore the concepts presented in each film, providing deeper interaction with the subject matter.



January 30 – HEAL: A film about the power of the mind

Post-Screening Discussion with Caroline Paradis and Kelley Cabral-Mosher, co-founders of Elevate Southcoast

About the Film: HEAL is a film by Kelly Noonan Gores about

the power of the mind to heal the body, featuring Deepak Choprah, Bruce Lipton and Marianne Williamson. In this movie, scientists and spiritual teachers discuss how thoughts, beliefs, and emotions impact human health and the ability to heal. A central theme in HEAL is the mind-body connection, which aligns with biological medicine's integrative approach to whole body health.

About the Speakers: Elevate Southcoast is an inclusive community dedicated to empowering people to harness their innate capacity for happiness, wholeness, and health by creating spaces for connection, learning, and exploration.



February 26 – Secret Ingredients

Post-Screening Discussion with Kathleen DiChiara, Functional Diagnostic Nutrition Practitioner, BioIndividual Nutrition Practitioner, and Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach

About the Film: Secret

Ingredients shares the stories of people who regained their health after changing to an all organic diet, free of GMOs, Glyphosate, and other toxic pesticides. The messaging in this film is in sync with our mission that *optimal health is a basic human right* and should not

Connector Series

be negatively impacted by our food system. At the heart of the story is Kathleen DiChiara and her family of five who were collectively struggling with 21 chronic diseases. When Kathleen was faced with a severe health crisis, she became determined to figure out what was causing these conditions.

About the Speaker: Kathleen DiChiara is a functional nutrition practitioner, researcher, and author. She has dedicated her work to increasing the public's knowledge about the connection between nutrition and patterns of disease.



March 25 – Lighting the Path

Post-Screening Discussion with Gabe Golden,

Director: Nearly 120 people attended the first two screenings; the third, scheduled for the end of March, was canceled due to the pandemic. Stay tuned, our Lighting the Path event with Gabe Golden eventually makes its debut in FY'21.

Educate



On May 14, 2020, the Marion Institute, in partnership with the New Bedford Lyceum and the New Bedford Whaling Museum, held our first virtual event "Curbing the Culture of Shame," a virtual panel discussion responding to themes presented in

the award-winning documentary "Audrie & Daisy." The film is an urgent real-life drama that examines the ripple effects on families, friends, schools, and communities when two underage young women find that sexual assault crimes against them have been caught on camera; they then suffer additional abuses at the hands of social media bullies, with shocking consequences.

The event garnered an incredible response, with nearly 100 people logging in that evening. During the event, viewers were shown clips from the movie, which were then discussed among a distinguished regional panel, including **Dr. Juli Parker**, Assistant Dean of Students/Director, Center for Women, Gender & Sexuality at UMass Dartmouth, **Stacy Malone**, Executive Director of the Victim Rights Law Center, **Claire Spaulding McVicker**, Executive Director of the Katie Brown Educational Program, and **Jeffrey Glidden**, LICSW, Violence Recovery Program Counselor & Advocate, Fenway Health.

The assembled panel brought a wealth of knowledge and expertise in working with victims and survivors of sexual assault and gender-based violence and covered a breadth of topics including victim's rights.

Connector Series

Empower

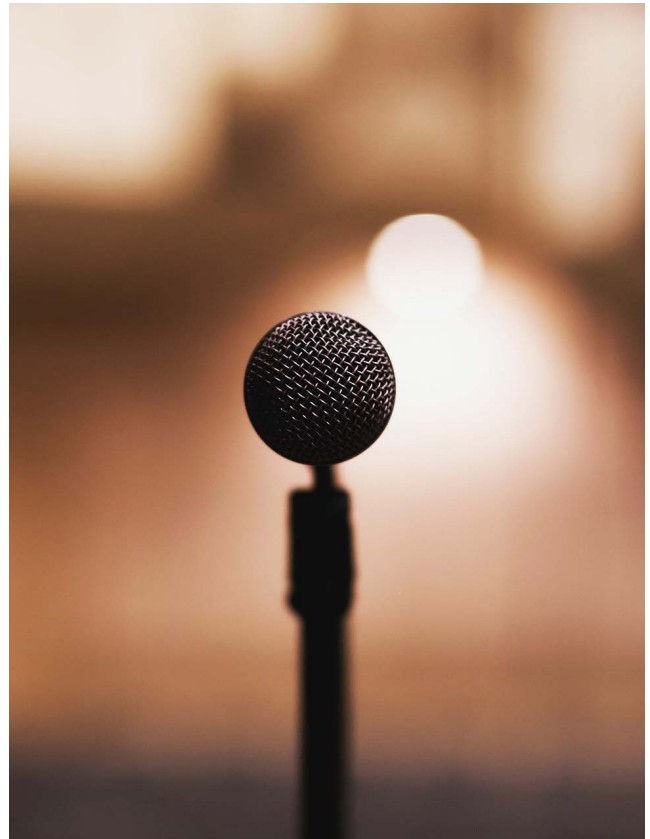
Often, change starts from within. As the pandemic began to take hold and embed itself into our daily lives, information (and misinformation) began to flood our inboxes, newsfeeds, and TV screens. Fear and uncertainty – about the novel coronavirus itself, the ways in which it was spread, and most importantly, how to protect oneself and loved ones from contracting the virus – made it difficult to determine which sources were credible and which were to be avoided.

In keeping with our mission to engage, educate, and empower, The Marion Institute joined forces with the BioMed Center New England throughout April and May. Individuals were invited to attend a series of free house calls via Zoom each Thursday at 9am. During these live virtual events, Dr. Hennie answered viewer-submitted questions about health care in the time of COVID-19, provided essential health information that cut through the COVID clutter, addressed the root causes of disease, and the importance of whole-body health in building up the immune system to combat infection. Resources were made available after each call and included timely materials such as COVID-19 Recommended Supplements, The 5R Framework for Gut Restoration, Suggestions for Better Sleep, and Breathing Techniques. As well as more detailed information that addressed the need for bolstering overall wellness for long-term health such as detoxing the body, hormone health, and biological dentistry.

In total, eight events were held and over 600 people attended our “Coffee with Dr. Hennie” series.

What's Next

With the looming uncertainty of the pandemic, MI did not plan in-person events for the remainder of FY'20. We look forward to resuming such events when it is safe to do so in FY'21, though we have learned much from our virtual foray and will embrace a hybrid model with future programming. We will also continue to offer virtual program-specific events that can increase our reach among relevant audiences across the globe.





GROW EDUCATION

Grow Education – Building Resilient Communities

Creating a culture of health
by incorporating health-building
habits into a student's Classroom,
Cafeteria, and Community.

What We Do

- **Classroom** – Educate students and support teachers by creating and implementing nutrition, ecological literacy, and sustainability curriculum.
- **Cafeteria** – Partner with Food Service departments to rebuild cafeteria infrastructure and capacity and return to culturally-relevant, fresh foods.
- **Community** – Engage students and families in menu development and project-based learning through school gardens.

“[Farm to School] supports the development of healthy eating habits from an early age...improves the quality of school meals, boosting student consumption and contributing to food security for the whole family. Fresher and higher quality means it tastes better and kids are more likely to eat it!”

– MA Farm to School

Grow Education

Evolving to Create Systemic Change



After many years as a school-based community garden initiative, Grow Education recognized the opportunity to create greater impact in partnership with the New Bedford Public School (NBPS) district by reinforcing lessons in the garden with experiences in the classrooms and meals served in school cafeterias. As the lead partner in the classroom programming of New Bedford's Farm to School initiative, Grow Education strives to support the advancement of our regional food security through systems-wide change in the school district and serves as an inspiration and prototype for the introduction of nutrition and agricultural lessons throughout the state.

Our Farm to School initiative represents the collective efforts of many stakeholders. In partnership with New Bedford's food service department, district administration, faculty, students, families, and community partners, school gardens will be used as outdoor classrooms and become a launching point for lessons in nutritious eating and sustainability, while offering new venues for learning and engagement. The success of the Farm to School initiative will usher in a new foundational norm for healthy eating throughout the district with the introduction of locally-sourced foods into school meals that are

Grow Education

culturally relevant and a return to cooking “from scratch.”

Throughout FY’20, and despite major disruptions caused by the pandemic, Grow Education persisted, bringing online new programming well-suited to meet schools’ evolving needs, advancing the goals of the Farm to School initiative, and promoting health and wellness in New Bedford’s district schools.

CURRICULUM



Fresh Fruits & Veggies Program (FFVP) with the NBPS

Every elementary school teacher understands the importance of reinforcement within their lessons. This year, Grow partnered with the New Bedford Food Service Department in implementing the FFVP to do just that. Taste-tests of fresh fruits and vegetables were served twice per week throughout the school year, exposing students to a diverse array of fruits and vegetables and encouraging them to be open to tasting and trying fresh and new foods. Originally piloted in two elementary schools in the 2019/2020 school year, FFVP expanded to all 19 elementary schools in the 2020-2021 academic year!



Winter Speaker Series

When the gardens go dormant late fall, our school programming heads back into the classroom for the Grow Education Winter Speaker Series. During the 2019/2020 school year, Grow Education conducted 13 Winter Presentations at seven partner schools. The expertise of local farmers, food-related educators, and high school students from Bristol County Agricultural High School introduced students and teachers to such topics as the importance of local foods, bees and pollination, anatomy of an egg and flowers, regenerative agriculture, and the magic of seeds.



These presentations are an important part of readying students for their experiential learning in the gardens and upcoming changes they will be seeing on school menus across the district.

Is that a Grow Education t-shirt we spotted in the classroom during a Winter Speaker presentation?

Grow Education



Grow's Virtual Classroom

As school districts made the switch to online learning and prepared to start the school year with this model, the Grow team reevaluated and devised a way to support at-home learning for students. Grow virtual classroom was launched with a series of videos that took students on “virtual field trips” to various local sites such as Round the Bend Farm in Dartmouth, MA to learn about chicken farming; to a New Bedford school garden to learn about planting and harvesting potatoes; and to the kitchen of a NBPS’s Food Service team member where students learned about nutrition via an interactive “My Plate” exercise.

“I just wanted to say THANK YOU for inviting me to be included in this cohort. This experience has been one of the best PDs I can say that I have been part of (and not just because of the reception lol) Looking forward to continuing learning about FARM TO SCHOOL with the Marion Institute.”

– New Bedford Public School Teacher

While these videos do not take the place of kids getting their hands dirty in the gardens, the virtual format allowed Grow Education to adapt to changing circumstances and reach new audiences through the Marion Institute’s presence on YouTube.



Farm to School (FTS) & FoodCorps

Leading up to the 2020/2021 school year, Grow Education planned and piloted an integrated Farm to School curriculum designed for the district’s third grade classrooms. This expansion included the build-out of garden programming at each school, professional development opportunities for science and health teachers, and the introduction of two FoodCorps members: Keri Cusson DeFusco and Mikaela Thiboutot. Keri and Mikaela worked with our partnered elementary schools to co-teach classroom lessons on agriculture, nutrition and healthy lifestyle practices. Our partnership with FoodCorps is another way we are embedding a culture of health across the district.

Teacher Professional Development

Seeking to engender the support of local educators in systems-level change around health and nutrition, Grow Education led its inaugural professional development workshop for third grade teachers in August. The experiential format, including farm-sourced

Grow Education

meals, represents the kicking-off of a year-long cohort experience that supports educators from New Bedford elementary schools with the integration of school gardens into grade-level learning and culture-building. Grow Education and FoodCorps staff, will continue to support these teachers throughout the academic year with Farm to School programming and the technical assistance required to successfully integrate gardens into the learning programs at their schools.

CAFETERIA

The New Bedford Public School's District Team, which included Marion Institute staff, was accepted as one of six statewide participants in the Massachusetts Farm to School Institute. The team participated in a two-day retreat at the Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, MA. during which we heard from expert speakers, participated in hands-on workshops, and deepened relationships among members of the team who collaboratively created an action plan for the upcoming year.



in the implementation of its shared action plan throughout the school year.

Our FTS team was given additional technical assistance and support from an assigned MA Farm to School Institute consultant who helped guide the group

FY'20 was a formative year in Grow Education's Farm to School visioning process with New Bedford Public Schools. Research was completed by visiting local districts and learning about national programs guiding the planning phase to



renovate the school district's food service infrastructure, with the goal of creating a brand-new central kitchen. This new infrastructure would allow the sourcing, storage, processing, and cooking of the envisioned healthier, fresh, local, and culturally-relevant menu changes that are coming to New Bedford students. We also launched a robust FTS evaluation plan through the support of Southcoast Health.



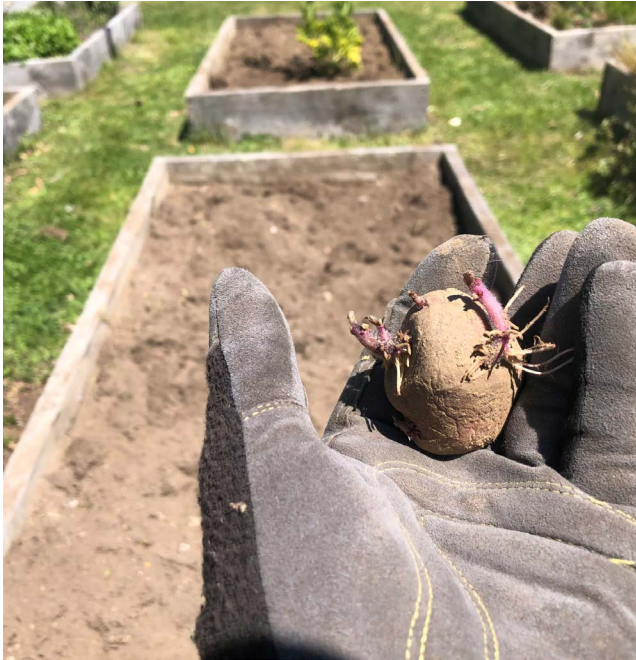
Rep. Schmid praises local schools and organizations for teaming up to promote local food sourcing. Source: Kerry Tallman, The Standard Times

COMMUNITY

The pandemic gripped the Southcoast just as Grow Education was heading into the gardens to conduct spring plantings with students. In mid-May, the Grow Education team was granted access to the school gardens to begin planting them across the city with the hope of supporting food security in their respective neighborhoods. Grow Education also received help from volunteers with Herbalists Without Borders who planted garden beds with culinary and medicinal herbs.

In late summer, Grow Education welcomed back Cristiano Dias as our garden manager. Cristiano cultivated, planted, and watered Grow Education's

Grow Education



seven school-based gardens and prepared them for the school year ahead. Cristiano first started working with Grow Education several years back as a student at New Bedford High where he helped build the school's garden. He continued with Grow Education as an intern, planting and harvesting produce, before being hired as a garden manager.



A fluent speaker of four languages – Creole, Spanish, Portuguese, and English, Cristiano has been a great resource to the neighborhoods surrounding the school gardens.



Grow Goes Virtual!

Unable to physically gather and share the fruits of our labor, Grow Education embarked on a virtual culinary and dining experience with Little Moss Restaurant in Dartmouth, MA to raise awareness and funds for our programming. Similar to Grow Education's commitment to establishing the foundational norm of healthy eating in the local community through its Farm to School work, Little Moss works with local farmers and fishermen so that they can offer their guests some of the finest and freshest New England fare.



Grow Education

Chef Lisa Lofberg, aided by “sous chef” and MI Executive Director, Liz Wiley, guided an audience of at-home chefs through the process of making a delicious, locally-sourced meal with all the fixings. Chef Lisa’s menu was a Southcoast twist on a school lunch favorite “Taco Tuesday” and included New Bedford Scallop ceviche, locally-caught Bluefish tacos with a lime-yogurt sauce and pickled red onion, and cucumber sorbet for dessert.

The live-stream class was a fun departure for participants with quarantine-fatigue and we look forward to future opportunities to feature local culinary talent and advocates for local agriculture!



WHAT'S NEXT

FY'20 certainly ended much differently than it began, but the lessons learned and the pivots made allowed us to look at the school year ahead with a new goal: how can we support educators during this time of remote learning? We look forward to continuing our virtual classroom and to finding ways for our FoodCorps team members to connect with students in ways that are meaningful, despite the lack of physical proximity. We will also continue to support education systems in assisting communities in incorporating lifestyle practices and engaging in behaviors that integrate the concept of food as medicine.





SOUTHCOAST

FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Advocating for Food Justice

Creating and leading an ongoing commitment to building the infrastructure and policies needed to confront food insecurity and inequality.

What We Do

- **Convene** a community of practice to assess and mobilize resources, and encourage and facilitate collaboration to effect social change.
- **Connect** local food producers, consumers, and community leaders to navigate and share resources.
- **Advocate** for policy and systems that strengthen our regional food system, improve community health, eliminate food insecurity, and confront food injustice.

“It’s imperative that those who are most impacted by food insecurity and food injustice have agency. The agency to change the conditions in their community rather than be subjects that are acted upon by others...We don’t need white people to fix us or save us. We don’t need missionaries. We need leadership that grows organically from communities.”

– Malik Yakini, Co-founder and Executive Director
of The Detroit Black Food Security Network

Southcoast Food Policy Council

At the end of 2019, The Marion Institute (MI) brought the Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC) on as an official program of the MI. The SFPC had previously been known as the Southeastern Massachusetts Food Security Network (FSN) and operated as a Greenhouse Initiative (fiscal sponsorship) of the MI. The FSN was formed in 2011 to address food security issues in our region, including emergency food access and distribution, nutrition education, and local sustainable agriculture. The MI had been a core member and strategic partner of the FSN since its inception. Hence, given its alignment with our mission to increase food security throughout the region and improve community health, it was a natural progression to bring this network in-house as one of our core programs.

The Marion Institute's SFPC provides a platform that encourages and facilitates coordination and collaboration among the myriad sectors of our regional food system. Our goal is to address the long-term systemic issues associated with food injustice and insecurity that plague southeastern MA communities, while supporting a regionally-based, environmentally sustainable, food economy. Today, most food is grown on large-scale industrial farms that are monoculture-based, pesticide demanding, soil depleting, transport intensive, and indifferent to the needs of the surrounding community. This detrimental status quo is being challenged across the nation and throughout Massachusetts by the creation of **Food Policy Councils (FPCs)**, which seek to unite community stakeholders to examine how their local food system functions and provide locally benefiting policy recommendations for improving that system.

The SFPC's network consists of nearly 300 stakeholders. These are our farmers, fishermen, food pantry leaders, institutional buyers, and community partners that produce, move or consume food. While

many of our member organizations are focused on the important task of providing direct services, the SFPC takes a systems-oriented approach, melding problem-solving, advocacy, and planning to address the overarching governing policies and practices that shape our food system. The result of this dedicated collective planning and coordinated action is the creation of a vibrant regional food system that works for everyone, regardless of socio-economic position, and that supports smaller scale, environmentally-friendly operations. We envision a thriving, inclusive, and culturally diverse regional food system in which we all can benefit from healthful, accessible, and affordable foods.

At the start of 2020, we began to strategize and plan for our new program by launching a Food System Assessment (FSA) for southeastern Massachusetts. FSA's are vital to providing stakeholders with an in-depth understanding of the regional food system by providing indicators of population, environmental, and economic health, while increasing awareness of the food system's assets, challenges, and opportunities. The objectives of the report are to: (1) catalogue the existing food system's assets and services, (2) identify gaps in the existing assets and services, (3) showcase possibilities for regional partnership and cooperation, (4) assess producer and buyer demand for a regional food hub, (5) consider policy changes that could support an equitable and sustainable food system for all, and (6) prioritize recommendations and action steps for the SFPC going forth. We began working on this updated food assessment at the beginning of 2020 with an initial goal of completing the project within six months. While the pandemic slowed our progress, it also provided new insights and opportunities by emphasizing the numerous service gaps and emergencies caused by an over reliance on an industrial food system.

Southcoast Food Policy Council

No one could have predicted the pivotal role that the SFPC would immediately play in the Southcoast's emergency response to pandemic-caused regional food insecurity, which was amplified by school and business closures, supply chain disruptions, and financial hardship resulting from unprecedented lay-offs. The SFPC framework allowed us to rapidly respond to food emergencies and emerge as a response leader because our mission and

infrastructure set the stage for such action. We used our convene, connect, and advocate structure to quickly meet the novel challenges confronting our families and communities by leading and coordinating a range of responses designed to safeguard communities and ensure our most vulnerable and deserving citizens were supported.

The infographic below provides a glimpse at our response.



11,425

meals delivered to people in need via our **Cooks for Community** initiative



30,000+

boxes (**600,000+ lbs of produce**) distributed to those in need



2,500

boxes per week Distributed to families via the **Southcoast Farmers to Families** initiative, a partnership with Sid Wainer & Son and the United Way of Greater NB



Created Southcoast **FoodAlert Listserv**



Completed **Southcoast FoodFinder** web-based application

5

of restaurants that participated



Compiled a master database of local food producers, pantries and supporting food related resources



25

of people employed



Hosted weekly SFPC member meetings resulting in a dynamic **"Community of Practice"** that has fostered strong partnerships, allowing the SFPC to rapidly respond to the COVID crisis



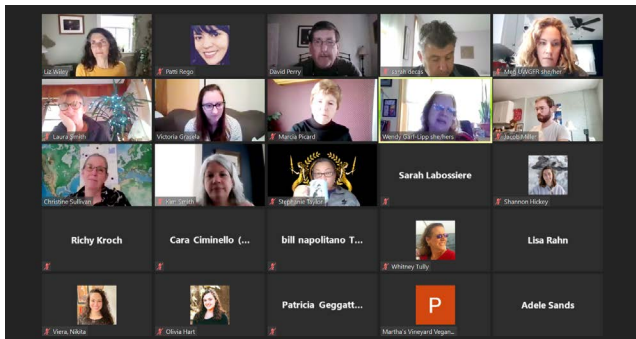
Worked with Southcoast Health to launch an initiative to provide **discounted family-style meals to front-line medical workers**

Southcoast Food Policy Council

Convene

Community of Practice Weekly Resource Meetings

At the very outset of the pandemic, the SFPC called upon its members-at-large and community partners along the Southcoast to participate in weekly update meetings to assess and mobilize resources, and to encourage and facilitate collaboration. These weekly resource meetings garnered an audience of approximately 30 participants. In FY'20, over 1,300 contact hours were logged on these community calls. As the weeks turned into months, these weekly calls proved to be crucial in connecting organizations to available resources, building relationships, and breaking down silos and regional barriers.



Connect

Southcoast COVID Recovery Resources Database

With all the confusion and fear at the start of the pandemic, the SFPC recognized the need to create a COVID-19 Local Resource List to serve as a master database of local food producers, food pantries, and related resources that coordinated response efforts to help Southcoast residents navigate resources that were available to them during this uncertain time. The document was a collaborative effort, pulling information from many of our stakeholders to create

a comprehensive, real-time document that worked to address needs as they arose. The development of the local resource list led us to take on and complete the much-anticipated **Southcoast FoodFinder**, a web-based application to assist residents in locating all their food needs such as local food retailers, farmers markets, food pantries, and community/senior meals in our region. Furthermore, we created the **Southcoast FoodAlert listserv** to streamline partner communication and food relief efforts.

Community Food Relief Programs

One of the biggest ways in which we were able to activate our network was through a variety of collaborative food relief programs that assisted food insecure and immune-compromised populations from Wareham to Fall River.

Family Meals for the Frontline: The SFPC worked with Southcoast Health to launch an initiative to provide discounted family-style meals to front-line medical workers and first responders.

Cooks for Community: The SFPC was able to immediately mobilize partnerships and resources to create the Cooks for Community initiative in three Southcoast cities: Wareham, New Bedford, and Fall River. The SFPC raised emergency funds to pay five local restaurants to prepare meals five days a week for a minimum of four weeks during the peak of the crisis. In this way, we supported restaurants



while keeping at-risk communities safe. Eligible recipients were identified by Council members, Southcoast YMCA, Southcoast Health, as well as other community partners; Community Youth Empowerment in Wareham, the City of New Bedford, and MassDevelopment's TDI

Southcoast Food Policy Council

initiative in Fall River. **In total, 11,450 meals were delivered from April-June.** Many of the initiatives expanded past the most critical four weeks of need.



Southcoast Farmers to Families Food Boxes: The SFPC also worked with Sid Wainer & Son and the United Way of Greater New Bedford on the Southcoast Farmers to Families Food Box program, which was part of a national program instituted by the USDA. The Food Box Program allowed us to

collaboratively **distribute over 30,000 CSA-type boxes of fresh fruit and vegetables** to those in need. Many families that worked with us during our Cooks for Community program transitioned from getting the individual nutritious meals to receiving these 20lb boxes of produce, once a week for a total of 13 weeks (through the end of August.) By the end of the program, we had worked with seven community partners to distribute boxes in Wareham, New Bedford, Fall River, and Westport.

Connecting Local Agriculture to Food Pantries:

Thanks to the support of the Southcoast Community Foundation, the SFPC worked with Coastal Foodshed and the United Way of Greater New Bedford's Hunger Commission on a program that purchased food from local farmers and distributed it to food pantries along the Southcoast. This **community supported agriculture approach to food pantries** provided low-income populations with healthy alternatives, while providing local farmers with a predictable source of revenue while they too struggled to meet new demands and find alternative ways to market their products.

Advocate

Updated Food System Assessment

While tackling the novel issues that arose from the pandemic, the SFPC and Northbound Ventures Consulting continued to work on updating the 2014 Southeastern MA Food System Assessment. Surveys were distributed to various stakeholders (food producers, consumers, and farmers) and their networks to solicit a broad range of perspectives and data. The updated FSA will present an evaluation of accomplishments and new programs put in place since the last assessment, update and evaluate statistics/data, and identify gaps that can be filled with policy change and/or programming.



The data collected during the Food Assessment update process will also provide insight needed to build a **regional food hub**. Food hubs are a crucial, but often invisible, part of the local food system. They make it possible for local producers to gain entry into new and additional markets that would be difficult or impossible to access on their own. Food hubs play an important role in supporting local food systems and food availability. Conversations around a food hub have existed for quite some time, but now there is the organizational infrastructure in place through the Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council's strategic partners to take these conversations to the next level.

Southcoast Food Policy Council

The final deliverable will be an updated and expanded report that includes recommendations and concrete action steps for moving shared food system goals forward at the local level, as prioritized by the SFPC's Advisory Board and core project partners.

Food Security Virtual Summit, September 2020

At the end of FY'20, the SFPC took part in a regional summit with local leaders at UMass Dartmouth, including State Senator Mark Montigny, UMass Chancellor Mark Preble, Erin McAleer, President of Project Bread, and Marion Institute Executive Director, Liz Wiley. During this virtual event, students, faculty, staff, and Southcoast residents discussed the cracks in the regional food system that were exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and discussed ways in which we can avoid future disruptions and address the systemic issues that lie at the core of food insecurity.

What's Next?

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the many gaps and shortcomings of our food systems, providing an unprecedented opportunity to design and engage in actions that will transform our food system for years to come. Our main goals for FY'21 begin with the completion and distribution of the 2021 Food System Assessment Report for Southeastern MA, which will chronicle the impacts of COVID-19 and guide us in developing a long-term food resilience plan to include:

- Creating a SFPC Community Advisory Board (CAB) to advance food security priorities;
- Building a local food economy and programmatic infrastructure that will provide ongoing food security for Southcoast communities;

- Creating the organizational and network structure that allows for rapid, coordinated, and successful stakeholder engagement when natural disasters occur; and
- Enacting policy changes to align governance and market dynamics.

Together, through our Southcoast Food Policy Council, we can create the necessary infrastructure to build a robust local food economy that supports regional control of our food supply chains. Only then will we be ready to combat the food insecurity and inequality that is always present, but even more prevalent during a public health crisis.

“Food Policy Councils operate in many cities, towns and regions throughout Massachusetts with the goal to improve the local food system. These coalitions bring organizations and public agencies together to build relationships, share best practices, and reduce duplicative efforts. The councils also advocate for policies to improve the food system in their community. Councils operate in a variety of ways and take on many different issues, but they all share the goal of supporting a food system that best serves their communities.”

– The MA Food Policy Councils Network



GREENHOUSE INITIATIVES

Amplifying Our Mission

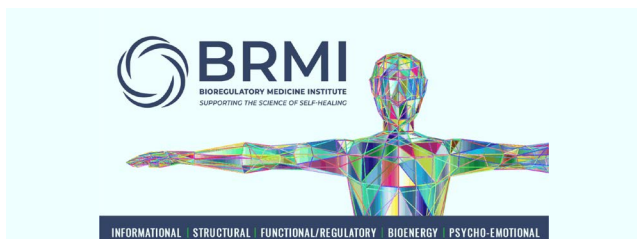
For over twenty-five years the Marion Institute has been the financial home of dozens of successful social change organizations.

By providing fiscal sponsorship and administrative backing, we enable an impressive array of visionary leaders to fully engage in the frontline implementation of their work, at every stage of growth and development.

Greenhouse Initiatives

A sometimes overlooked, but high impact program of the Marion Institute is our Greenhouse Initiatives (GI). These are fiscally sponsored, charitable programs for which we provide visionary change-makers with administrative support and financial management. Fiscal sponsorship allows programs that are not yet recognized non-profit organizations to fully engage in the frontline implementation of their work, attract donors, and apply for grant funding.

To date, we have supported over 50 leaders globally to help incubate their organization's visions and missions. **During FY'20, we supported 12 innovative programs from five continents and onboarded two new initiatives, Nourish[®] and The Mindful Collaborative.** Greenhouse Initiatives require a huge amount of time and resources, but they have the power to exponentially expand our collective impact toward making the world a better place.



Bioregulatory Medicine Institute (BRMI)

A former program of the Marion Institute, the Bioregulatory Medicine Institute (BRMI) transitioned to a fiscal sponsorship at the end of 2019, in preparation for beginning the process to become its own non-profit organization.

The mission of BRMI is to increase public knowledge and integration of Bioregulatory Medicine as a holistic evidence-based medical system. BRMI has created one of the world's largest and most comprehensive non-commercial databases free to access in both English and Spanish. In FY'20, with the challenges

of COVID-19 and the inability to hold in-person workshops and outreach, BRMI focused its attention on creating articles and material on its website. This focus resulted in a boost to their online growth, as they reported steady increases in social media followers, e-journal subscribers, and unique visits to BRMI.online, the latter having been partially due to providing a Spanish translation for content on the site.



Lawrence Arts House (La House)

Lawrence Arts House (La House) is an expressive arts studio in Lawrence, MA, which serves as a home for authentic expression and healing through the arts. All of their programs provide art therapy techniques and art materials to the population served, whether it is at partner schools or within the Lawrence community.

At the Guillemette School in Lawrence, La House worked on a project that created a school-wide conversation on respect, culminating in two permanent murals that provided a means for deeper self-expression while encouraging a broader dialogue on the topic within the school community. La House also deepened their relationship and work with another academic institution, Phoenix Academy, after the recent gas explosion in Lawrence took the life of one of their students. La House began offering art classes and programs to the student body and community as a tool for healing.

Greenhouse Initiatives

Additionally, La House engages the community through pop-up studio programming and making traveling public art out in the parks, coffee shops, senior centers, libraries, and other public spaces.



Mastate Charitable Foundation (MCF)

It was a quiet year at MCF with the pandemic in full force. “Our efforts this year, as always, focused entirely on local community development,” said Project Lead Tim O’Hara. MCF continued to finance the maintenance and improvements at the local soccer field, funded local infrastructure improvements, and provided financial boosts for low-income members of their Costa Rican community.

They also continued to be a solid source of “no strings attached” financing for local projects that fit within the MCF mission. They funded the construction of a tomb at the local cemetery for a low-income family whose matriarch was dying of cancer, helped to purchase glasses for a low-income man in the community, continued to support Don Dimo to maintain the soccer field, and financed a number of projects at the community center and soccer field that positively impacts just about every member of the local community. MCF is planning two new initiatives in 2021 that relate to food production and small business development.

The first will be a fundraising effort to start a robust garden program at the local elementary school, and

the second is a project to help finance a processing kitchen building for a small business in town that is expanding and will be teaching about and producing tinctures and medicinal plants. MCF hopes to start the distribution of scholarships for courses offered throughout the region related to sustainability education.



Nourishⁿ

New to the GI program in FY’20, Nourishⁿ is a global coalition of social entrepreneurs and community initiatives to help spark and spread cycles of economic, cultural, and biological vitality — what they call Nourishment Economies. These are situations where the vitality of people and the vitality of land build on each other in systemic and infectious ways, often through social and business enterprises operating at the overlap of public health, food systems, farming, and natural ecosystems.

This year Nourishⁿ, through funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, launched a three-year collaboration with 20 Native American community organizers and initiatives. This project builds relationships between communities and social entrepreneurs who have created self-sustaining nourishment-cycle enterprises, provides staff, information, and seed funding support for innovative steps in each community and shares learning between local, national, and international nourishment-cycle initiatives.

Greenhouse Initiatives

These collaborations, responding to emphasis of sustainable and nutritious food systems during COVID-19, include spreading soil-composting kits for households on the Navajo Nation, providing business training for small Native farmers, and supporting connection between community gardens, school programs, nutritious food supply for community elders, and a nascent commercial kitchen and public food sales enterprise with the Bishop Paiute Food Sovereignty Program in California.



S.A.F.E.

S.A.F.E. Maa continued their work in the remote Maasai community of the Loita Hills in southern Kenya, leading and supporting the community of 40,000 strong to move away from female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C) towards an alternative rite of passage for girls. The team interacts with all the different community groups in order to create a unified progression to FGM/C and uses culturally appropriate performance tours, workshops, and one-on-one interventions to create change. Through this methodology, S.A.F.E. Maa have moved 30% of the community away from traditional cutting to an alternate rite.

The majority of girls who are still cut undergo a much lesser symbolic cut, locally known as Kisasa. The team has also secured the backing of the Cultural Leaders who, in 2019, led the community in a Declaration of Abandonment. This was a significant turning point in S.A.F.E.'s mission and full abandonment is now cultur-

ally accepted. The team will continue their work until this change has been embraced by the whole community, but the advent of the pandemic presented new challenges. In March 2020, Kenya had its first case of COVID-19, and the government moved quickly to close the borders, restrict travel within the country, and ban public meetings and events, alongside a series of other containment measures. S.A.F.E. supported the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 response by creating short educational videos, which were shared via WhatsApp, Facebook, and through the local radio.

S.A.F.E.'s ability to remain active, and to incorporate COVID-19 education into their work, greatly strengthened their reputation and the trust within the community. S.A.F.E. Maa also distributed masks, soaps and sanitizers to needy families in the community.

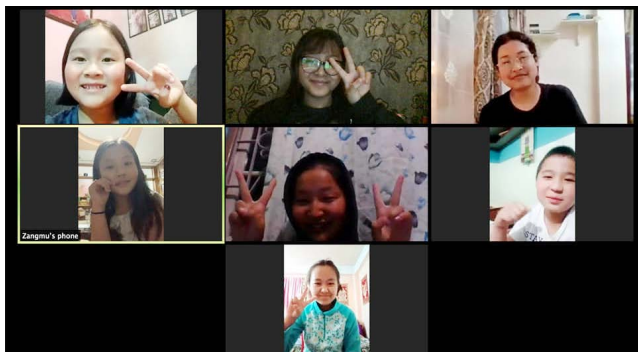


STEAM the Streets

STEAM the Streets (STS) has been involved in providing both place-based activities and scalable solutions to advancing Black and Brown representation and attainment in STEAM careers. STS partners with school districts on the East and West Coast (New Bedford, MA and Richmond, CA) to produce engaging career awareness programming that has provided valuable experiences for the youth involved (STEAM Ambassadors) and their wider peer group.

Greenhouse Initiatives

STS developed the first version of their online CareerHub, which provides exposure to STEAM careers through a culturally relevant lens. The first version lays out nine careers, road maps for each, and free online first steps students can take to start pursuing those careers. Each career is connected to profile videos featuring Black and Latinx professionals and young adults climbing the career ladder. In-school programs were brought to a halt with COVID-19, but the group was able to quickly pivot and began producing virtual programming.



Taktse International School

2019-20 has been another year of milestones and achievements for Taktse International School located in Sikkim, India. The second graduates of Taktse (Batch of 2016), Ingsa Subba & Sonam Ugay, have successfully completed their education and have graduated from Endicott College, MA. In addition to this, an increasing number of Taktse graduates are gaining admission to prestigious institutions all around the globe and continue to enthusiastically pursue quality educations.

Last winter, Taktse science and math teachers and two students were able to visit the U.S. The teachers visited Gann Academy in Waltham, MA and Berwick Academy in South Berwick, ME to make initial plans on forming a science institute where the teachers of affiliated institutions could work on the units they find most challenging and learn how to teach those units

to increase student comprehension. The students visited different schools and connected with various people in order to gain more exposure and build their networks. With the pandemic, classes at the school were migrated from in-person to virtual. Engaging students and teachers in the virtual mode was one of the biggest challenges of the year, necessitating an analysis of the education model to prioritize learning. Taktse remains grateful for all the support they receive and looks forward to continuing to innovate and hybridize an excellent and kind education for the future leaders of the Himalayas and the world.



The Himalayan Project

With COVID on the horizon at the start of 2020, The Himalayan Project (THP) decided to take a hiatus from its annual goals and divert resources to help support a Sherpa community in crisis. With the mountain communities in complete isolation as Nepal closed its borders and any access to remote areas of the country, food and medical supplies were simply not available and government funding out of the question. With fear and anxiety palpable, THP decided to help support families in desperate need of daily food and shelter. Funds collected for other endeavors were diverted to teachers and the families of scholarship students as the only financial support they were able to receive during this crisis. Once the pandemic is under control, THP plans to resume its previous goals to outfit an

Greenhouse Initiatives

expedition in Nepal to deliver fleece jackets collected from Washington State students; provide scholarships for students at the Mahendra Jyoti Secondary School in Chaurikharka, Nepal, and for Mingma Sona Sherpa whom attend the Taktse International School in Sikkim, India and fund a new science lab, computer lab, and library.



The Leadership Brainery

The Leadership Brainery (LB) envisions a day when top-tier graduate and professional school classrooms throughout the country are enriched by an equitable representation of first-generation and diverse students empowered to transform our country's leadership. FY'20 saw much advancement in the program throughout the pandemic.

LB Ambassadors gathered for the inaugural National Impact Summit (NIS) which took place October 11-13, 2019 at Harvard Law School. The Summit brought together over 100 diverse and first-generation college student leaders, local and national community leaders, recruiters from postgraduate schools, and representatives from LB's corporate partners. Over the course of three days, featured speakers shared their journeys while diverse student leaders in competitive advanced degree programs learned to develop a greater sense of their callings. This first convening was primarily focused on personal development. Through a variety of experiential programming, Ambassadors searched their own capacity to not only make change but also

manage it. The LB especially concentrated on helping these leaders identify vulnerabilities and overcome insecurity. The LB believes that leaders who are concerned with social transformation must take care of themselves while working to enhance quality-of-life in their communities.

In March 2020, The LB shifted gears and enacted their Student Relief Fund as an immediate response to the coronavirus outbreak, which granted 100+ diverse, low-income, and LGBTQ students with emergency aid.



The Mindful Collaborative

The Mindful Collaborative runs a mindfulness program for approximately 2,000 students at four New Bedford Public Schools.

Prior to the pandemic, student programming consisted of in-person sessions for 16 consecutive weeks and monthly thereafter. For educators, The Mindful Collaborative conducted 5 six-week mindfulness programs, two of which were not fully completed due to closures brought on by the pandemic. Additionally, 16 schools (educators and support staff) participated in one day and/or multiple day professional development sessions focused on learning mindfulness for self and students. Funding was also used to study the mindfulness program for students in collaboration with The New Bedford Health Department.

Greenhouse Initiatives

With the unexpected closing of schools due to COVID-19, focus and flexibility were absolutely necessary to the successful continuation of the program. The Mindful Collaborative switched to online teaching and created supplemental video content for students, which allowed for added engagement with their families as well. For teachers, the mindfulness programming became a way to help manage their own stress, find time for self-care, and feel more comfortable, knowledgeable and better prepared, to carry on mindfulness practices with their students. The Mindful Collaborative also runs programs for the New Bedford Police and the New Bedford Parks and Recreation's after school programming, which reaches a larger community that is not being directly trained through the school programming.



Bus Rapid Transit Strategic Grants

Through a grant from the Barr Foundation, the Marion Institute supported rapid-response mobility grants related to COVID-19. The purpose of the grant is to provide rapid relief funding to prioritize people rather than vehicles on streets. In response to dramatically reduced commuter traffic, the Marion Institute provided just-in-time grants to support “early adopter” municipalities across the Commonwealth to incentivize roadway redesign that prioritizes the movement of people rather than vehicles. Over the long term, these efforts will contribute to the Barr Foundation's broader goal of reduced regional Greenhouse Gas emissions.



The Voice Movement Therapy Center

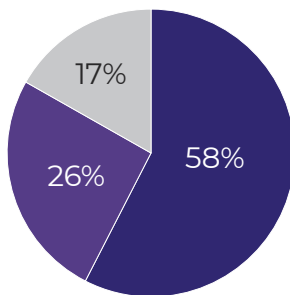
The Voice Movement Therapy Center (VMTTC) is a program of The Norma G. Canner Foundation for Voice Movement Therapy, a not-for profit 501(c)3 organization, which promotes this work through an intensive training program, *The Voice Unchained*. The primary work of the Norma G. Canner Foundation for Voice Movement Therapy has been its Practitioner Training which launched its newest cohort in October of 2019. Unfortunately, due to COVID, the program was halted in mid-March 2020, two-thirds of the way through the training, forcing the students, who come from all over the world, to go back to their homes.

Part of a VMT Training is taking students through the unexpected learning to “stay present and improvise,” which became their theme. By early April, two groups of students had started meeting on Zoom for mutual support and to work on projects together, and one group has continued to meet every week since. Soon after, the teachers came up with various plans that allowed individual sessions for students, singing lessons prioritizing key VMT practices, and weekly group meetings to deepen their knowledge of aspects of this work. The goal was to guide students through the emotional roller coaster so many people were encountering, by expressing their feelings through short voice and movement experiences and by creating songs built around specific vocal components. These songs were representative of this challenging time and were ultimately turned into a short video entitled: *VMT Virtually? Working through a Pandemic*.

Financials FY'20

Fiscal Year 2020 (October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020)

Revenue



■ Programs
■ Greenhouse Initiatives
■ Unrestricted

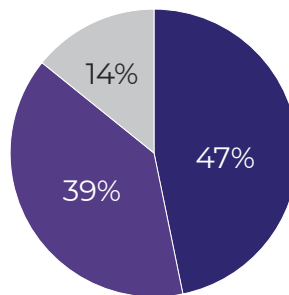
Programs
\$1,441,991

Greenhouse Initiatives
\$643,019

Unrestricted
\$420,839

Total:
\$2,505,849

Expenses



■ Programs
■ Greenhouse Initiatives
■ Admin/Fundraising/
Program Support

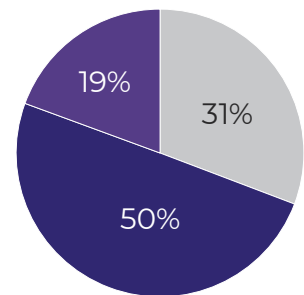
Programs
\$1,009,031

Greenhouse Initiatives
\$841,666

**Admin/Fundraising/
Program Support**
\$306,137

Total
\$2,156,834

Net Assets



■ With Donor Restrictions
(Programs)
■ With Donor Restrictions
(Greenhouse Initiatives)
■ Without Donor Restrictions

With Donor Restrictions
(Programs)
\$679,839

With Donor Restrictions
(Greenhouse Initiatives)
\$264,633

Without Donor Restrictions
\$419,874

Total
\$1,364,346

Our Supporters FY'20

Donor Spotlight:

The Marion Institute is grateful to all our donors who showed up in generous and impactful ways this year to help us fulfill our mission to promote health equity, build resilient communities, and advocate for food justice. We would like to extend a special thank you to the Southcoast Community Foundation for their generous support of food relief initiatives throughout the region via their Southcoast Emergency Response Fund. This fund “provided flexible resources to organizations working with communities at the intersection of being most vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus and most impacted by inequity.” Our Southcoast Food Policy Council was the recipient of several rounds of funding from the Southcoast Community Foundation and we are honored to be recognized and supported by them. Their support allowed us to invest in long-term systemic solutions, amplify our SFPC Community of Practice, and address food insecure community needs.

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Sandra Velasquez

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Southcoast Food Policy Council Members-at-Large

Very special thanks to all the SFPC members-at-large, a group that numbers over 300 strong across the Southcoast region. We applaud your commitment to the communities you serve and remain inspired by your willingness to meet weekly to address the extraordinary needs this crisis exposed.



Connect With Us:

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