

2021 Learnings & 2022 Key Strategic Priorities



FARESTART

DEAR FARESTART COMMUNITY,

The last couple of years have brought immense challenges and opportunities to FareStart, our community and the world around us. As we turn yet another corner in the pandemic, there remains extensive collective work to do to recover, rebuild and reimagine a more equitable future.

Today, food insecurity remains the highest for Washington State households with children, people of color and individuals who identify as non-binary. Unemployment data shows that communities in South King County are recovering from the pandemic at a significantly slower pace than other parts of King County due to economic disparities.

As FareStart celebrates our 30th year, we remain constant in pursuing our mission of transforming lives, disrupting poverty and nourishing communities through food, life skills and job training, locally and nationally. At the heart of our mission is working with people furthest from opportunity so they can support themselves and thrive. We also are more committed than ever to continuing our antiracist journey and creating a culture where everyone feels a sense of belonging and value.

This year marks the first of our [three-year strategic plan](#), which focuses on increasing food security and creating pathways toward personal stability and economic mobility. We are focused on communities furthest from opportunity and most affected by poverty, homelessness and hunger. 2022 will involve considerable innovating, listening, data gathering, iterating and relationship building as we evolve in the way we approach our work. We are deepening how we center our students and their experiences in our job training programs and wraparound social services. We are finding new ways to collaborate with and support partners to increase food access in underserved communities, especially in South King County. We are addressing the longer-term challenges of poverty and hunger by expanding our national consulting and developing a strong foundation for advocacy. FareStart always has been about creating community around food: in our restaurants, cafés and through community meals. At a time when our community needs us most, we are doubling down on our efforts to feed our neighbors in need and keep people from going hungry.

We're not just focusing on *what* we do, but *how* we do it to advance race equity, build connection and collaborate with communities.

Speaking of community, we cannot wait to welcome back onsite students, volunteers and supporters to FareStart this year. While our virtual programs will continue and have been successful in enabling us to expand our reach, we are actively working to provide in-person, on-the-job training opportunities for students while continuing to feed our community. We have missed you and the connection that comes from being together in person, working side-by-side in our kitchens and classrooms, connecting over coffee, attending in-person events and getting to know one another.

The following report looks back at some of our key takeaways and learnings from 2021 and details our work for the year ahead. As always, your questions and support are welcome. We are committed to keeping you regularly informed as we progress, so please continue to watch our [newsletters](#) and social media channels.

Thank you for being on this journey with us as we learn, grow and transform together.

With gratitude,



Angela Dunleavy
FareStart, CEO

2021 OUTCOMES & LEARNINGS

182

adults and youth enrolled into virtual job training programs

144

individuals graduated from virtual versions of Adult Culinary and Youth & Young Adult Barista programs

117

jobs placements or promotions facilitated for students and graduates

1.9 million

meals provided to people experiencing hunger and food insecurity

426,409

pounds of food gleaned, recovered and upcycled into meals, reducing food waste

70

nonprofit organizations across the United States supported through consulting

- Over the course of 2021, we continued to adapt our training programs to transform lives in a completely virtual space. In our Adult Culinary Program, students **continued to learn skills that can be applied across a variety of industries and jobs**, such as computer and financial literacy, self-empowerment and more.
- **FareStart combined our Youth Culinary and Youth & Young Adult Barista Programs.** The transition decision centered on our students, who shared they were most interested in gaining experience in the barista and customer service fields. We also expanded our partnerships to include the Y Social Impact Center to reach more youth. This program adaptation will allow FareStart to continue to grow and better serve young people on their journey toward personal stability, job readiness and educational advancement.
- We began **piloting a community-based, mobile market to find new ways to provide equitable access to fresh, healthy food** for communities who are underserved, including those who have been impacted by systemic racism in food systems. We conducted 20 events in 2021, distributing more than 19,000 pounds of groceries to over 1,200 households. Participants were surveyed and provided feedback that will help us evolve the pilot project in 2022.
- **We expanded our relationships with farmers who identify as Black, Indigenous and other people of color** to purchase produce for our meals, as well as distribute through the community market pilot project. We also engaged volunteers with planting and gleaning. Partnerships like these are helping farmers distribute and sell more of their product while reducing food waste and feeding communities.
- The Catalyst Kitchens Membership Network began its transition toward becoming a separate, self-governing organization. We will **continue to provide national impact through our consulting services** under the FareStart brand. For over 20 years we have provided training, resources, technical assistance and support to nonprofits that share a commitment to reducing poverty and hunger through food-based job training social enterprises.
- We continued to **deepen our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion**, as well as build workforce efficacy to advance our journey toward antiracism action. We hired dedicated DEI staff, adopted a formal commitment to antiracism, rewrote program curricula to include DEI training and rewrote job descriptions to include factors such as lived experience, trauma-informed approach and racial diversity.

2022-25 STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

Our strategic framework is based on three pillars rooted in our mission: personal stability, economic mobility and food security. These pillars will guide our work, our strategies and ultimately our impact as we work to build a more inclusive workforce for the communities that we serve and feed. Our end goal is transformational impact where communities locally and nationally prosper, individuals thrive and poverty is disrupted.



2022 KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

390

adults and youth to be enrolled into FareStart job training programs

270

adults and youth to graduate from FareStart job training programs

165

job placements and promotions for program students and graduates

35

high school credits to be earned by Youth & Young Adult Barista Program graduates

1.68 million

meals to be provided to people experiencing hunger and food insecurity

455,000

pounds of food to be gleaned, recovered and upcycled into meals or redistributed to partners

50

nonprofit organizations across the United States to be supported through consulting

PERSONAL STABILITY & ECONOMIC MOBILITY PRIORITIES

- Expand trauma-informed, individualized support and wraparound social services to help students **gain greater stability** as they learn job skills that lead to greater economic mobility.
- Continue our successful, **virtual training focused on transferable skills**, and **relaunch on-the-job training** for students. We will **pilot a paid, learning program with food-based employer partners and within FareStart's social enterprise businesses** that expands on-the-job training and wraparound social services to graduates as they obtain jobs and continue to gain stability.
- Develop and expand consulting offerings for nonprofit organizations and opportunity employers across the country that incorporate best practices in **student-centered, trauma-informed job training, job placement and wraparound social services**.

“These meals provide a sense of security for our tenants, that they’re going to have food. And a sense of safety that they’ll have food available to them and also just a well-rounded meal. I know that the FareStart meals have been really intentional about including the things that folks need to be healthy.”

- Staff member at Plymouth Housing



FOOD SECURITY PRIORITIES



**Photo provided by Dan Devries Photography*

- **Build our capacity** to produce seasonal, nutritious, culturally relevant meals for communities furthest from opportunity while reintegrating in-person, on-the-job training opportunities for students.
- Pilot projects to reduce food insecurity, including **creating a sustainable business plan** for the community-based mobile market and **launching an in-house commissary** to prepare food that can be adapted and used in prepared meals for FareStart and partner organizations.
- **Continue to grow and deepen relationships** with farms and organizations led by communities of color to purchase food and product, feed communities and reduce food waste.
- Co-develop a plan with community-based organizations, government entities and food entrepreneurs to **launch a future regional food hub** that increases food security, social services and job training opportunities in South King County.

SUPPORT PRIORITIES

- Work with our community and partners to **develop an advocacy and policy agenda** that supports personal stability, economic mobility and food security to address the root causes of poverty, homelessness and hunger.
- Conduct an organizational census and survey on staff and students to **explore and address representation and disparate impacts** by race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, first language and religion.
- Develop new ways to **support and train** staff to help our team grow, advance professionally and achieve greater mobility. We aim to lead by example and **continue to become the equitable employer we expect of other organizations and partners.**

“As a FareStart graduate I know how valuable having a FareStart graduate as part of my team would be. I know that I can count on them, I know that they are going to be well trained, I know that they are going to have courage, loyalty, accountability and resilience.”

- Jeff (he/him), Adult Culinary Program Graduate



JOIN US IN OUR WORK



Join us in our work to help realize our vision for a more equitable and just future – for everyone.

Learn more by contacting us today.



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Endnotes:

- *Washington State Employment Security Department*
- *Washington State Food Security Survey*