



FARESTART

2021 Strategic Priorities:

Pandemic Recovery & Advancing Racial Equity

Dear FareStart Community,

From navigating a global pandemic to the continued fight for racial justice, this past year has been both tragic and transformative for FareStart and the world around us.

We want to build back a better FareStart in 2021 and beyond – for our students, our staff and our communities. This year’s priorities address how we will continue to respond to and eventually recover from the pandemic. We will remain focused on expanding our food security work and creating pathways to economic mobility for students through job training.

To tackle the root causes of poverty and hunger, we must address racism. Individuals who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) are disproportionately impacted by these challenges due to systemic racism and the injustices and trauma that result from it.

While we began our diversity, equity and inclusion journey in earnest in 2018, last year’s horrific murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery – and so many other people of color who have lost their lives due to racism – caused us to further reflect upon and recommit to how we go about our work. We convened our staff and board of directors to talk about our goal to deepen diversity and inclusion and to take antiracist action. These were hard, heartfelt and challenging discussions.

As part of our process, we collectively defined what antiracism means to FareStart. We created a definition to provide explicit clarity to our community and serve as a guide for how we go about our work and realize our mission. This statement was unanimously adopted by our board of directors:

FareStart defines anti-racism as the clear acknowledgment that racism permeates organizations, communities, and industries, including our own. We recognize that we have a duty to be vigilant in addressing and confronting racism in how we make decisions, show up in our communities, build business practices and policies, and engage in intentional partnerships and philanthropic endeavors to fulfill our mission and vision.

This definition may evolve as we continue our journey and grow as an organization. We embrace this growth – and the potential of making mistakes along the way. This is part of doing the work and striving towards continuous improvement.

One of the mantras FareStart teaches its students and that we take to heart as a community is “We don’t just talk about it; we *be* about it.” That is why advancing racial equity is a cross-cutting theme across our organization priorities, including job training, food security, community engagement, talent development and fundraising.

We will keep you regularly informed about our progress on these priorities. Work is currently underway on our 2022-24 strategic plan. I look forward to sharing more details later this year as we continue to work to advance racial equity. Thank you for being a part of our journey as we work toward ensuring every individual has the opportunity to thrive in an equitable and just world.

With gratitude,



Angela Dunleavy
CEO

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- Safely transformed our kitchens and redeployed staff to provide **2 million emergency meals** to help reduce food insecurity across the Seattle area during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Launched **virtual job training programming** for both youth and adults, while supporting students with meals, housing, counseling and wraparound services
- Provided **over 100 job placements for students and graduates**
- Supported **more than 80 nonprofit organizations** across the country with resources and connections to help promote food security, job training and employment via our national program, Catalyst Kitchens
- Continued our commitment to advance racial equity:
 - Last Spring, **hired Marcus Bryant as our chief people and inclusion officer** to lead our diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) work and ensure it is integrated into everything we do
 - Hosted a two-day virtual **retreat with our board of directors focused on DEI**
 - **One hundred percent of our senior leaders developed DEI goals** for the first time in our organization's history
 - **More than 50% of our staff actively participated in our DEI task force** focused on the planning, measuring and staff engagement of organization-wide DEI strategies
 - Created a framework to **measure and evaluate our DEI work to ensure we are making progress toward goals**
 - **Launched a DEI Book Club** to serve as a place where DEI topics are regularly explored and provide an easy on-ramp to discuss hard topics in a safe space
 - Closed the organization to **participate in a statewide strike and peacefully march in support of Black Lives Matter**
 - Established **Juneteenth as an official employee holiday**



LOCAL & NATIONAL PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The pandemic dramatically changed the workforce landscape. Unemployment is on the rise and foodservice jobs are not expected to fully recover until at least 2024. Women and individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) have been hit especially hard by the loss of jobs. We need new strategies to prepare students for available jobs and long-term economic mobility.

- Create new and enhance current employment opportunities and access to career paths for adult and youth students and graduates to ensure educational advancement, job placement, job retention and wage progression; graduate 144 youth and adults and provide more than 90 job placements
- Increase enrollment and retention of students who are BIPOC and/or gender nonconforming in our programs for greater engagement and accountability
- Develop and pilot a national employer job training program to expand economic pathways
- Support FareStart's Catalyst Kitchens membership network and consulting clients as they adapt and recover from the pandemic; prepare eight programs to adapt or scale and launch two new programs; provide training to 50 organizations or 100 nonprofit social enterprise professionals across the country
- Pilot a BIPOC affinity group for FareStart's Catalyst Kitchens network staff; survey members to develop a longer-term diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy to affect national change

FOOD SECURITY PRIORITIES

The COVID-19 crisis has created a second pandemic: hunger. More people are experiencing food insecurity for the first time, while tens of thousands persistently suffer from a lack of nutrition.

In 2021, FareStart anticipates providing nearly 2.5 million meals to communities throughout the Seattle area. We also will pilot new strategies to provide increased, sustainable and more equitable food access to vulnerable and chronically under-resourced populations that are most commonly BIPOC communities due to systemic racism.

- Continue to focus on hunger relief through the pandemic; increase diverse, culturally appropriate meal offerings to better serve communities
- Complete community outreach strategy to build relationships and engage food security partners in South King County with a focus on organizations that are led by and serve BIPOC individuals
- In collaboration with community partners, pilot strategies for food security systems improvements, including a mobile market and expansion of frozen meals delivery to food banks
- Increase support for local growers with a focus on BIPOC farms
- Expand efforts to reduce food waste through in-kind donations and underutilized resources while alleviating hunger
- Maximize safety at our facility through continued adherence to and enhancement of COVID-19 protocols

TALENT & RESOURCE PRIORITIES

Realizing FareStart's goals and mission requires strong systems of accountability, staff and volunteer talent and effective partnerships. We also rely on public resources, generous financial contributions and revenue from our social enterprise businesses.

- Continue to shape FareStart's race equity and justice work through the expansion of our DEI team, as well as continue to build workforce efficacy, to advance our journey toward anti-racism action
- Develop a plan and pathway for successful community engagement and philanthropy with clearly identified DEI goals
- Work to advance racial equity through specific and measurable DEI strategies, including a targeted focus to serve, employ and promote people who are BIPOC and take anti-racist actions.
- Attract and retain talent by creating a coaching and feedback culture that supports good morale, aligns with our organizational values and objectively assesses work performance
- Create a plan and implement strategies to increase community partnerships and vendor contract awards with BIPOC-, LGBTQ- and women-owned businesses
- Create business plans to relaunch FareStart's restaurant, cafes, and catering/private event social enterprise businesses in 2022 in order to provide on-the-job training opportunities for students and fund our mission





OUR VISION

Every individual has the opportunity to thrive in an equitable and just world.

OUR MISSION

FareStart transforms lives, disrupts poverty and nourishes communities through food, life skills and job training.

OUR VALUES

Acceptance

We build relationships based on the belief that the past informs but does not dictate the future.

Respect

We treat everyone with dignity, regardless of background or differences. We actively listen and seek first to understand. We are honest, even when it is difficult.

Openness

We create a culture of trust through transparency and open communication. We are open to new ideas.

Collaboration

Contribute positively to strengthen the organization and our impact through teamwork and through partnerships.

Accountability

We are responsible to each other, to our community and ourselves. We are committed to rigorous evaluation and making fiscally responsible decisions that align with our mission.

Inclusion

We provide a community of belonging, regardless of background. We value and seek out diversity.

Growth

We are a learning organization. We invest in continuous improvement and growth.