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FARESTART[®]
Great Food. Better Lives.

FareStart Receives Funding from Federal Government's Social Innovation Fund and the Venture Philanthropy Organization REDF

- Following a rigorous national competition, FareStart, which provides culinary and barista job training to disadvantaged and homeless people, has been selected for the new portfolio of California-based venture philanthropy organization REDF, joining a national initiative to scale up the social enterprise field across the U.S. supported by the federal Social Innovation Fund.
- FareStart is part of a growing field of innovative nonprofits in the U.S. called social enterprises. These are mission-driven organizations that hire and assist people willing and able to work, but who face multiple barriers to employment; reinvesting their revenue to create more jobs, and providing support to employees that increase their economic mobility and long-term employment.
- This grant is part of a nationwide initiative supported in part by the federal Social Innovation Fund (SIF), which has to date committed an unprecedented \$14.5 million to REDF's initiative. This is the largest federal investment ever in U.S. employment-focused social enterprises.

SEATTLE (February 8, 2016) – FareStart has joined the new portfolio of the venture philanthropy organization REDF, backed by the federal government's Social Innovation Fund. FareStart will receive multi-year grant funding and business advisory services to support and expand its culinary and barista job training program for disadvantaged and homeless adults and youth.

To select the grantees, REDF held a rigorous national competition for social enterprises to receive grants of at least \$100,000 annually for up to five years. More than 200 social enterprises from across 36 states submitted proposals but only 22 were selected. REDF has more than 18 years of experience providing funding and capacity building to employment-focused social enterprises in California. This is the first year the organization is expanding nationally to serve seven new cities, while growing the strong base of social enterprises in California.

The selected organizations will employ thousands of people nationally by investing these new resources for business growth. At the same time, REDF will foster deeper collaborations with small, medium and large employers, philanthropy and government to catalyze and accelerate the growth of social enterprises in order to catalyze thousands of additional job opportunities.

FareStart will use the funding to dramatically expand its culinary and barista job training programs including life skills, job readiness, job placement, transitional employment and wraparound support services. By the end of

2020, FareStart aims to double the number of students who annually receive hands-on job training, transitional employment and secure competitive employment within 90 days of graduation.

Last year, an [independent study by Mathematica Policy Research](#) of seven social enterprises funded by REDF showed the impact of these businesses:

- Every \$1 social enterprises spend returns \$2.23 in benefits to society.
- One year after starting work in a social enterprise, the income of people employed increased 268%, income from government benefits dropped from 71% to 24%, and housing stability tripled.
- Before being hired by the social enterprise, 25% of participants had never had a job and 85% did not have stable housing the year prior; 70% had been convicted of a crime.
- Six months after transitioning out of social enterprise employment, two-thirds were still gainfully employed.

“The Social Innovation Fund provides new pathways for people who have faced significant barriers to employment, said Damian Thorman, Director of the Social Innovation Fund. “We are excited this award to FareStart a subgrantee of REDF, will transform people’s lives by creating jobs using social enterprise solutions with funding from us.”

“We are thrilled to partner with REDF and the Social Innovation Fund to bring more opportunities to people in need in Seattle,” said Megan Karch, Chief Executive Officer of FareStart. “At a time when more people than ever are facing multiple barriers to employment, this partnership will enable us to expand our ability to provide on-the-job training, as well as, transitional employment while students seek permanent jobs.”

“REDF is investing in social enterprise growth because we believe right now is the game-changing moment when we can and must open up new opportunities to people who want to work and just need the chance to do so,” said REDF President Carla Javits. “We aim to catalyze the business community, philanthropy, government and nonprofits to work together to create job opportunities and hire people who need them, while developing an even more rigorous evidence base so that we can all do more of ‘what works best’ while developing a vibrant ecosystem that will have long lasting impact. We are grateful to the Congress and the Administration for supporting the Social Innovation Fund, to private donors and foundations that are stepping up to match this support, to the nonprofits that are taking the risk to create new business models, and most of all to the courageous men and women who are overcoming the odds, going to work and transforming their lives.”

ABOUT:

[FareStart](#) is a successful social enterprise nonprofit that trains homeless and disadvantaged individuals for jobs in the culinary industry, empowering them to transform their lives. FareStart has been training students in kitchen skills, meal preparation, safe food handling and meal planning through active participation in its restaurant and cafes, catering services and contract meals program for 24 years.

[The Social Innovation Fund](#) (SIF) is a program of the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#), a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. SIF is a powerful approach to transforming lives and communities, an approach that positions the federal government to be a catalyst for impact – mobilizing private resources to find and grow community solutions with evidence of results. As part of the SIF program, REDF must match the federal funds dollar-for-dollar and again by the organizations they select to receive grants. To date, REDF has received Social Innovation Fund matching investments from private funders including Bank of America, the Kresge, Weingart, Annie E. Casey, Woodcock, California Wellness, F.B. Heron, Kellogg, San Francisco and California Community Foundations, The California Endowment, JP Morgan Chase, and many other foundations and individual donors.

REDF creates jobs and employment opportunities for people facing the greatest barriers to work – like young people who are disconnected from school or work, people who've been homeless or in prison, and people with mental health disabilities. Founded in 1997 by George R. Roberts (KKR), REDF provides funding and business expertise to mission-driven organizations to launch and grow social enterprises, which are businesses with a “double bottom line” that make money in order to employ people with multiple barriers to employment. REDF has helped over 10,000 people in California get jobs and find hope. Now REDF is taking best practices learned from 18 years of experience to grow their impact nationally and help thousands more people work, advance, and create a more stable future. For more information, visit <http://redf.org/>. To learn more about REDF's portfolio organizations visit <http://redf.org/what-we-do/invest/>.

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