



IMPACT REPORT

Feeding Opportunity & Community



FALL 2022



Cover photo: Root alumni Zach (left) and Fernando (right) prep onsite for an event at New Entry Farm.
Interior photo: Alumni employees preparing community meals in the Root kitchen.

LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

With the publication of our inaugural impact report, we're pleased to share highlights of Root's success stories, our continued growth despite uncertain times and with new leadership at the helm, our shared vision for the future. Needless to say, our journey has not been without challenges – for our youth, our North Shore community, and for the foodservice industry.

When Root launched in 2017, our primary goal was to help young adults create a pathway to independence through foodservice training and employment. While serving youth remains our north star, over time we have broadened our mission to create further opportunities for young people to serve our neighbors facing food insecurity. When the pandemic hit and our program was interrupted, Root's leaders saw an unmet need and expanded operations to include meal production and delivery to local residents who needed our help. These efforts became a blueprint for our Community Catering initiative and social enterprise model which employs Root graduates.

As the year draws to a close and we pause to recognize all that we have accomplished, we'd like to extend our thanks to Scott Knox, Root's former executive director, who played a critical role in our growth and success over the past four years. From our pilot class of three, to recently celebrating a 100% graduation rate with our spring cohort and now welcoming our 18th class of trainees, over time we've come to speak about Root's expanded focus as "feeding opportunity and community". And we have you – our community – to thank for making all of this possible. We truly appreciate your unwavering support and partnership.

With gratitude,



Jennifer Eddy

Jennifer Eddy
Founder and Board Chair



Allison Caffrey

Allison Caffrey
Executive Director

OUR MISSION CONTINUES

Root's mission is to help young adults create a pathway to independence through foodservice training and employment. By developing essential life and work readiness skills, youth leave Root prepared for success in the workplace.

OUR PROGRAMS: FEEDING OPPORTUNITY & COMMUNITY

Culinary Job Training

Our 14-week program and post-graduate support combines hands-on foodservice training with job and life skills. Trainees work with a professional chef, receive one-on-one mentoring, earn two ServSafe certifications, and develop personal finance and workforce readiness "soft skills," all while earning a monthly stipend.

Social Enterprises

Root Café, Catering by Root and the HarborPoint event site support our mission by creating youth employment opportunities and generating earned income to offset reliance on philanthropy. Despite pandemic-related revenue loss from the closure of our café and event space, our team's experience in large-scale production provided a springboard for the launch of community catering.

Community Catering

We employ graduates to produce 500+ meals each week for children, seniors and families experiencing food insecurity, sourcing from local partner farms whenever possible.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

Youth-First remains our "North Star"

Root leads with the interests of youth in our programs and our enterprises.

Hands-on experience differentiates our graduates and empowers them

We believe hands-on skill development is the most effective approach to job training.

Team transcends individual and collaboration leverages our individual efforts

We serve youth and Root's mission most effectively by working together and with our partners.

Diversity and inclusion strengthens us


We acknowledge, respect, and embrace the differences amongst each other and the communities we serve.


Big success is a series of small wins

We celebrate individual victories as steps on the path to success.





WHO WE SERVE

 **Youth from low-income communities** in Essex County, ages 16-26, with barriers to success

 **Individuals and communities** experiencing food insecurity including those served by local food pantries, shelters, and human service agencies

 **Referral partners and social service agencies** who share in our youth-led mission

 **Local restaurant and foodservice partners** who support our program and employ our graduates

 **Retail customers** of our catering and café and **guests of HarborPoint**, who support our mission with each purchase

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Root's staff and our local partners are critical to our ability to help youth navigate their own paths to success.



RELATIONSHIPS HELP BUILD TRUST

CAROLYN CURWEN, EMPLOYMENT & POSTGRADUATE PLANNING SPECIALIST

"At New Liberty Innovation School, we build relationships with students. That's why our partnership with Root is fabulous. Root's focus is the same. It's all about building relationships with the students and helping them get from where they are to where they want to be."



INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

EVYAN, ROOT GRADUATE

"Root helped to remind me what I am willing to accept as a worker! I was able to use the skills learned in workshop during a work evaluation in order to negotiate getting a raise."



SERVING THE COMMUNITY

ROBYN BURNS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SALEM FOOD PANTRY

"Distributing Root's community meals through our distribution sites enables us to provide even more of a benefit to our pantry guests. In addition to a fresh variety of groceries, a pantry guest being able to take home a healthy and ready to eat meal can make a big difference for someone navigating food insecurity."



MEETING STUDENTS WHERE THEY ARE

SARA D'ALESSANDRO, ROOT DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

"Flexibility is the name of the game. We go out of our way to work around a student's challenges and obstacles. We take time out of our day to listen to people's needs; not just professional needs, but whatever anyone is going through."



TEACHING LIFE SKILLS

FERNANDO, ROOT GRADUATE

"The skills taught at Root are absolutely needed in your life. Root taught me customer service and hospitality. It also taught skills that applied to the outside world, like financial skills, dealing with people and trying to be a caring person."



RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

JIM ECONOMIDES, CO-OWNER, LULU'S BAKERY

"We knew that Root had a really good reputation as a strong culinary workforce development program, so when we were thinking about hiring and training new staff, Root was near the top of the list, in terms of organizations we wanted to partner with."



OUR POSITIVE IMPACT

158 graduates through **17 cohorts** to date

73% average graduation rate, 10% higher than national average for peer organizations⁺



x2

A second *Meet and Eat* per month has been added!

25⁺

job opportunities created, at above minimum wage*



220⁺

hours of culinary training for each trainee, with an emphasis on skill-development, confidence-building, and habit-building

300 lbs

fresh local produce sourced weekly (in-season)

55,000*
(and growing!)

nutritious community meals produced by Root alumni*



*as of 12/31/21

+as reported by Catalyst Kitchens

\$550K

in earned income generated by Root social enterprises*

2,000

community meals served per month and growing!*

IT'S INCREDIBLE TO LOOK BACK ON WHAT ROOT HAS ACCOMPLISHED IN FIVE SHORT YEARS. I'M EXCITED TO BUILD ON THAT WORK, WHICH HAS POSITIONED ROOT TO SIGNIFICANTLY SCALE OUR REACH AND IMPACT. – Allison Caffrey, Executive Director



Ingredients:

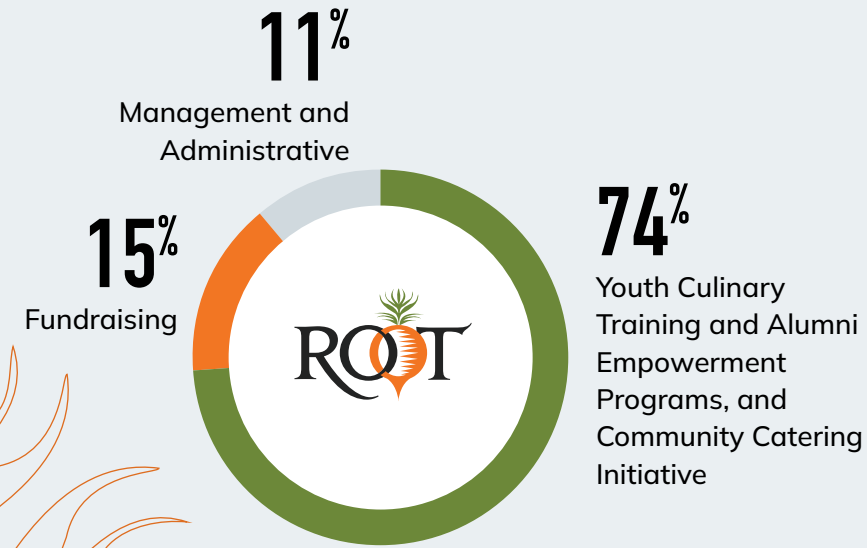
- 1 Chicken Stock
- 2 Fresh Vegetables (carrots, onions, celery, kale)
- 3 Orzo Pasta
- 4 Raw Chicken
- 5 Chickpeas
- 6 Seasoning Packet (salt, herbs, spices)

Instructions:

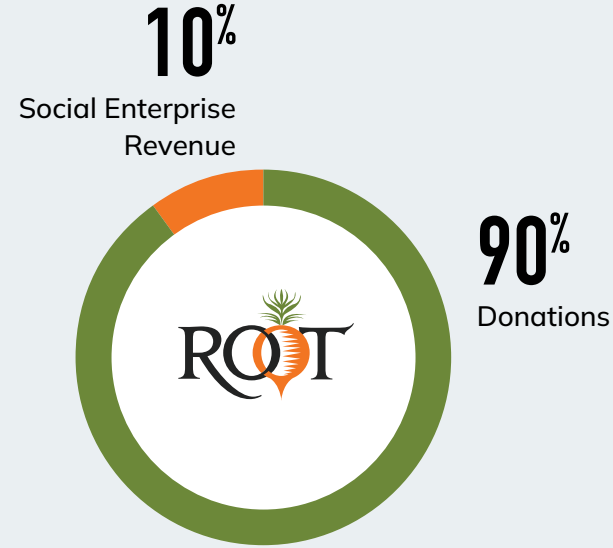
- 1 Thaw frozen chicken stock by using a microwave or leaving it in the refrigerator overnight
- 2 Place stock, fresh vegetables and seasoning packet in the slow cooker
- 3 Turn slow cooker on high and heat for 3 hours
- 4 Once the stock is at a simmer add the orzo, chickpeas and raw chicken
- 5 Cook on high for 30 minutes (or until chicken is cooked through)
- 6 Enjoy

Crock pot meal kits being prepared for Acord Food Pantry.

2021 EXPENSES



2021 REVENUE AND SUPPORT



2021 Total Revenue **\$1.1 million**

For additional information and financial statements visit www.rootns.org/financials

2021 Funding Highlights

\$113K generated in Social Enterprise revenue, despite pandemic restrictions

\$350K Cummings Foundation 10-year sustaining grant awarded in support of our Community Catering initiative

\$75K in investments from new funders toward our Youth Culinary Training and Alumni Employment Program

OUR STAFF

- Allison Caffrey**
Executive Director
- Sara D'Alessandro**
Director of Programs
- Faith Emerson**
Director of Development and Communications
- T. Caleb Friday**
Director of Finance and Operations
- Sam Hunt**
Director of Social Enterprise
- Keith Seeber**
Managing Chef Instructor
- Kellie Silva**
Chef de Cuisine
- Eboni Williams**
Culinary and Program Assistant (and Root graduate!)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Jennifer Eddy, *Founder and Board Chair*
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- Jami Barry
- Nate Berkowitz
- Elisabeth Massey
- Frank McClelland
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- Paul Nightingale
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- Heather McClelland
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- Irvett Perrin
- Carm Procaccini
- Sharon Rogers
- Nina Simonds



For a complete list of Root donors, and corporate and foundation partners visit www.rootns.org/supporters

WAYS TO SUPPORT ROOT

WHY YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The number of young adults experiencing barriers to work in the Commonwealth has risen over the last two years. According to Measure of America, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has at least **57,200 young adults**, aged 16-24 struggling to connect to employment opportunities.*



\$50

A **\$50** gift delivers a nutritious meal kit to a family of four in need on the North Shore.



\$250

A **\$250** donation covers a monthly commuter rail, bus, or ride-share pass to help a trainee get to Root.



\$500

A **\$500** investment supports the completion of two ServSafe certifications for one cohort of trainees.

BE PROUD OF YOUR DOLLAR!

Consider using Root for your next catered event. Contact Chef Sam Hunt at shunt@rootns.org

SPREAD THE WORD

If you know a young adult who might be interested in Root, please contact Sara D'Alessandro at sdalessandro@rootns.org

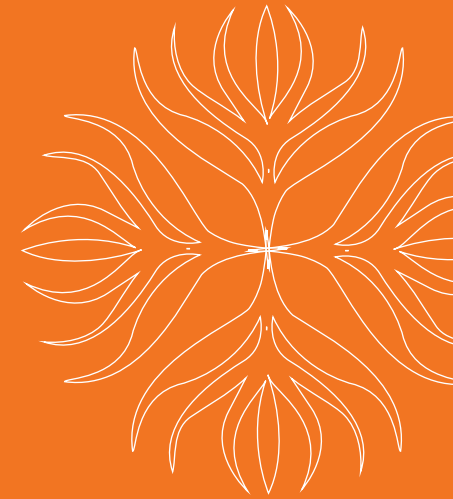
DONATE TODAY

www.rootns.org/donate today

* A Decade Undone: 2021 Update, Measure of America

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