



TAKING A FIELD TRIP—LITERALLY

While our pantry was closed for parking lot renovations for a week in August, the staff took the opportunity to pay a visit to a few of our farm partners. We toured **Crimson & Clover Farm** in Florence with Nate Frigard, **Prospect Meadow Farm** in Hatfield with Shawn Robinson (as shown above), and **Abundance Farm**, next door to the Center, with Nili Simhai. It was so great to see our partners on their home turf and learn more about the exciting and innovative ways they are providing healthy food and engaging the community.

FRESH FIRST PROGRAM: LOCAL, FRESH, AND MORE ABUNDANT

For years our Fresh & Local Program has played a key role in the pantry, offering weekly produce to clients to supplement their monthly groceries. The cost of fresh fruits and vegetables, particularly locally-grown items available at farmer's markets, is prohibitive for our low-income neighbors. Not surprisingly, the popularity of this program has soared and it's clear that regular access to fresh and local produce is a high priority for our clients, and for us.

In launching our new **Fresh First Program**, we have redesigned and reorganized the space, flipping our distribution priorities and encouraging clients to begin their meal planning with fresh produce when visiting the Center. To make this worth their while, especially when factoring in



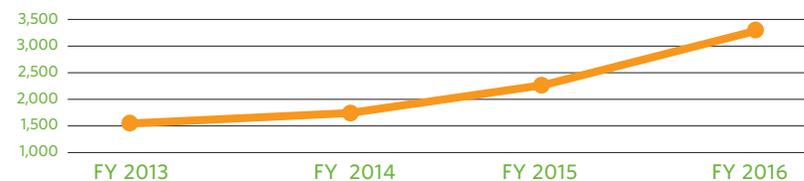
transportation costs and time, we elevated the weekly allotment of produce to equal the monthly portion. **This has**

had an immediate effect of encouraging more families to make weekly trips to the Center.

In addition to equalizing the weekly and monthly quantities, this new Fresh First Program offers a wider range of options to allow for nutritious choices. Because quantities of donated local produce vary widely and seasonally, we have begun augmenting donations by purchasing produce from local farms and from Squash Trucking in Belchertown, a 2014 CISA Local Hero award recipient. This helps ensure a predictable amount and variety of produce to offer our clients throughout the year.



AVERAGE POUNDS OF WEEKLY PRODUCE DISTRIBUTED EACH MONTH



“The first few times I left the pantry, I cried. I was overwhelmed by the gentleness from both Sarah and Walter when I was first getting set up. Who knew I’d eat raw spinach? Getting veggies weekly has afforded me the chance to try new foods.” —Margaret from Southampton



Have you heard about the recent SNAP (food stamp) fiasco in Massachusetts?

About 100,000 Massachusetts residents summarily lost their benefits during the period between March 2014 and March 2015.

During that same 12-month period, enrollment in MA declined by 11.3%, compared to a national average of just 1%.

The *Worcester Telegram* described the cause as a “poorly conceived attempt to streamline and automate” the state’s SNAP system.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS BRING DIVERSE SKILLS AND INTERESTS

We are very excited to welcome five dynamic additions to our now full Board of Directors



**Carla
Costa**

Carla is an arts administrator and facilitator whose work fosters creativity, innovation, and organizational change. She supports artists, educators, and administrators through new program development, space and strategic planning, and project management education.



**Janice
Mazzallo**

Janice, Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer for PeoplesBank, has more than 30 years of human resource management experience. During her tenure at the bank, she helped plan and implement a culture shift to improve employee engagement, impact on the community, and the overall performance of the organization.



**Celia
Overby**

Celia does workforce development programming with youth involved in the juvenile justice system through the management of a custom silk screening social enterprise called Exclusive Tees. She moved to western Mass in 2014 and recently bought her first home in Holyoke with her wife, Jamie.



**Yessenia
Sanchez**

Yessenia is a veteran who served in the United States Army Reserves for eight years. For the past six years Yessenia has been educating western Mass low income communities on the importance of obtaining health coverage. She has lived in the area for the past six years, and has two children.



**Jeff
Steblea**

Jeff serves as Vice President of Research Analysis & Management at Market Street Research in Northampton. An accomplished research analyst, he earned his Master’s in Communication from UMass Amherst. Jeff is a devoted husband and father, as well as a musician who performs as part of the vibrant western Mass music scene.

ABOUT OUR BOARD Our board members come to us with many different skills and interests. They also support the Center in diverse ways, such as doing committee work where they lend their expertise or learn a new facet of the organization, being our ambassadors in the community by visiting businesses that support us, making thank you calls to donors, volunteering in the pantry, and cultivating new donors.

“The Survival Center not only feeds clients who go home with groceries but also feeds volunteers with the great feeling of having helped those who are in need.”

—Bill, Center volunteer

On behalf of a handful of western Mass food security organizations, the Center wrote to the new Governor at the start of his term in January to call for an immediate response to this problem, and the group's efforts were met with swift and decisive improvements.

UPDATE ON CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Clients visiting the food pantry take advantage of a wide variety of supplemental services, screenings, and instruction. Recent offerings have included:

Abundance Farm

U-Pick information sessions

Art therapy volunteer

BMC HealthNet

MassHealth recertifications, healthy cooking with kids

Center for New Americans

Criterion Riverway

Early Intervention Program

Humans of Northampton

Opioid awareness outreach

Northampton Prevention Coalition

Public Health Nurse

Lyme disease prevention, sunscreen, flu shots

Salvation Army

Vouchers for furniture and clothing

ServiceNet

Behavioral health outreach

SNAP outreach

Tapestry

Public health screenings: blood pressure, STDs, pregnancy tests

Tobacco Free Community Partnership

CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES SPOTLIGHT

Salvation Army volunteer describes her experience working with a grateful client



Jen,
Salvation Army
volunteer

I recently worked with a man who was facing having his home electricity shut off the next day. With two young kids at home, he was overwhelmed and confused about what to do. I sat with him while he called the electric company and reviewed his options. As is often the case with creditors, they met him more than half way, simply because he was willing to contact them. They agreed not to shut off the electricity, instead setting him up for their "Fresh Start" affordable payment plan. We'd chat while he was on hold, and I saw him visibly relax after learning he wasn't losing power. At the end of the call he told me it meant the world to him to have me here—he would never have been strong enough to make that call without my help. I left with a big smile that day.

“You did more for me today than you could know.”

Our thanks to The Beveridge Family Foundation for the grant that funded this program's start.

CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES SPOTLIGHT

Our friends at Abundance Farm report on visits from Survival Center clients



A client from Ecuador said that she remembers getting fresh vegetables from the mountains when she lived in Ecuador, but that she herself had never harvested anything, as she was from the city. She was pretty excited to see how lettuce grows and how it's harvested.

A man in his 30s came one day, very wide-eyed, and said he had been there the previous week and picked some things that he had eaten for dinner. He said he had never eaten anything before that he had actually seen growing and was in awe. He just kept saying thank you, and acting surprised and incredibly grateful when I pointed out new veggies. He said he worked with computers and had never picked anything before.

“This is exactly the way we should be interacting with the community. Coming to where people are already getting help to offer our resources.”

—Paul, Northampton Prevention Coalition





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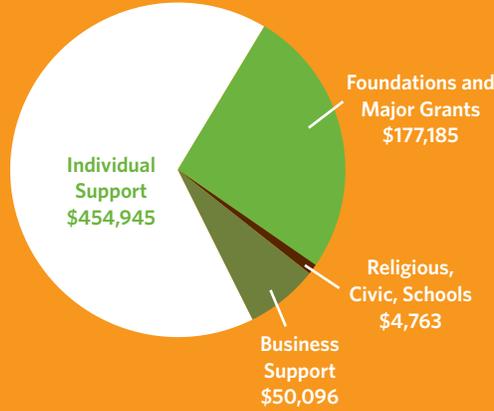
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United Way of Hampshire County

SOURCES OF OUR OPERATING SUPPORT



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 People's United Bank
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 The Charles H. Hall Foundation
 The City of Northampton
 The Horace A. Moses Charitable Trust
 The Howard E. Stark Foundation
 The Pearson Foundation Fund
 The S. L. Gimbel Foundation
 United Way of Hampshire County

BLACK BIRCH VINEYARD: AN ANNUAL SUMMER CELEBRATION



On a sunny August afternoon, Ed & Mary Hamel hosted a wonderful, family-friendly fundraising event for us at Black Birch Vineyard in Southamptn. **The Primate Fiasco** entertained us with their "old timey, steamfunk, sidewalk brasstronica", and joining us was a festive medley of local food trucks: **small oven** from Easthampton, **The Laughing Tomato**, and **Bart's** ice cream. More than 300 folks came out to enjoy the beautiful evening and support the Center. We look forward to our second annual Black Birch event next summer!

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 We are excited about our new endowment, and will soon be launching a planned giving program. *Stay tuned for more information or call us to find out more about it.*