

MARION INSTITUTE

ANNUAL REPORT | **2023**



BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES FOR 30 YEARS



**MARION
INSTITUTE**

OUR MISSION

The Marion Institute's mission
is to advance a culture of health.
We exist to engage individuals and
communities in systems level solutions
at the intersection of food, wellness,
and the environment.

OUR VISION

We seek an equitable, informed society
where people work in community
to heal themselves
and the planet.



GROW EDUCATION FARM-TO-SCHOOL

Partners with area elementary schools to build outdoor garden classrooms and deliver student lessons on plant lifecycles, food, nutrition, and the environment



FROGFOOT FARM NEIGHBORS FEEDING NEIGHBORS

Engages volunteers to grow and glean nutritious produce for regional food relief programs



SOUTHCOAST FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Leads a diverse coalition to eliminate nutrition insecurity, strengthen our regional food networks, and advocate for inclusive food system policies

ADVANCING A CULTURE OF HEALTH



BIOMED PROGRAMS

Empower the individual to heal and thrive naturally through nutrition, detoxification, and immune building



GREENHOUSE INITIATIVES

Provide fiscal sponsorship and administrative support to visionary projects at home and across the globe



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Joan Tiffany, Clerk
Michael Baldwin
Mike Delmonico
Leigh Phillips
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Dear Friend,

As I reflect upon the past year, I am overwhelmed with gratitude and appreciation for our team, board, partners, and most especially, our amazing and instrumental supporters. Year after year, you show up in ways big and small to champion our programmatic work and vision.

Thirty years ago, the Marion Institute started out as a group of friends who called themselves the “Hunch Bunch.” They were incurably curious and interested to explore questions and ideas bigger than their everyday lives by encouraging a deeper understanding of how to live in health, both at the individual and community level. They had a “hunch” that they would find greater fulfillment and meaning by working together in direct community service and involvement.

They widened their circle, pooled their resources, and incorporated the Marion Institute as a nonprofit. Thus began decades of investing in, and incubating programs and projects that unite a pool of friends and funders on a path to enhancing life for all.

Naturally, elements of the organization have changed and grown over the years. However, our focus on root-cause solutions that identify and address core issues, remains our guiding light, and is foundational to the work we do.

Operating in concentric circles of engagement, our programs connect via an iterative process that promotes the tenets of health equity, sustainable regional food systems, and resilient environments for all.

Photos from the Marion Institute’s Hunch Bunch Days.




Our **BioMed** program works at the individual level to promote wellness through educational courses, webinars, and outreach on lifestyle practices that improve emotional and physical well-being. Our community focused programs – **Grow Education, Frogfoot Farm - Neighbors Feeding Neighbors**, and the **Southcoast Food Policy Council** operate at greater and greater rings of engagement that address systems level issues focused on the devastating and increasing rates of food insecurity in our region. Here, we aggressively tackle nutrition insecurity, advocate for food system stakeholders, and work to build an equitable, resilient, and environmentally friendly regional food system.

Our **Greenhouse Initiatives** provide the opportunity to expand our reach to an ever-widening scale of impact. These mission-aligned projects at home and abroad exemplify the butterfly effect philosophy, that small change can have large scale impacts when given the supports to flourish.

For 30 years, the Marion Institute has worked to build healthier communities, and never before have our programs had the impact they do today. Thank you for being a part of this work and progress. **Call it a hunch – after three decades, we believe the best of the Marion Institute is yet to come.**

In gratitude,



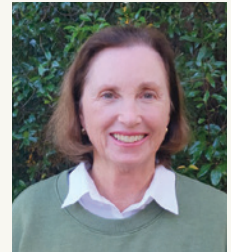
LIZ WILEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Mike Delmonico



Leigh Phillips



Jamey Shachoy

Marion Institute Team Members



Abby Smith, Chris Silva, Liz Russell, Rita Higgins, Christy Mach Dubé, Liz Wilely, Christine Smith, Nate Sander, Jessica Frank (Missing from Team Photo: Angela Silva and Adam Davenport)

New Team Members

Rita Higgins

Director of Food Access and Innovation



Rita comes to the Marion Institute with a rich background of experience as a food business entrepreneur, small food producer in the US and Ireland, landscape designer, and Selectwoman on Nantucket. Her work has always focused on

the human connection to land through the built environment. Originally from Upstate New York, Rita holds a degree in Environment and International Development from McGill University. She enjoys cooking, gardening, gathering with friends, and time outdoors with her family.

Nate Sander

Grow Education Program Manager



Nate has over 20 years of experience in the public education and holistic agriculture sectors. He taught and worked with Seattle Public Schools and the Gates Foundation to implement a school and community partnership

initiative. More recently, Nate was the Education Manager at Round the Bend Farm, where he focused on land-based systems, sustainable design, and beekeeping. Originally from Atlanta, Nate holds a degree in Fine Art from Appalachian State University. He loves traveling, spending time in the wilderness, and live music.



CONNECTOR SERIES

The Marion Institute's Events Bring Thought Leaders from Around the World to Share Ideas on Topics that Impact and Connect Us All

In venues large and small, we introduce speakers with cutting edge ideas to audiences who have a thirst for knowledge and a passion for positive change. Our events reflect our programs, and provide an open door for individuals to join us at the intersection of food, wellness, and the environment.



Climate change and its impacts on our environment were the focus of our Summer 2023 speaker series featuring **Jennifer Francis, Ph.D. and Senior Scientist** at the Woodwell Climate Research Center and **Dave Wiley, Ph.D. and Marine Ecologist** at the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.



FROGFOOT FARM

NEIGHBORS FEEDING NEIGHBORS

Improving Nutrition Security by Growing and Harvesting Local Produce

Our newest program, Frogfoot Farm – Neighbors Feeding Neighbors will dramatically increase the amount of fresh, nutrient-dense, and culturally relevant produce available in food relief programs across Southeastern MA while restoring six acres of land via climate-smart, regenerative farming practices.

Hunger is a Hidden and Persistent Issue for too Many Across Southeastern MA

As outlined in the Marion Institute's 2021 Food System Assessment report, 1 in 3 consumers surveyed said they often or sometimes ran out of food before there was money to buy more. This maps to statewide data reporting the same statistic: **1 in 3 MA residents are food insecure, with children most impacted.**

In June 2023, the Marion Institute, together with lead partner A.D. Makepeace Company, announced the launch of Frogfoot Farm – Neighbors Feeding Neighbors. The partnership grew out of A. D. Makepeace's steadfast support for the Marion Institute and the two organizations' commitment to improve nutrition security in our region.

Located on previously unfarmed land at the Wareham/Plymouth line, farm operations will include:

1. Growing fresh, culturally relevant produce, and
2. Establishing a volunteer gleaning program to harvest food from area farms that would otherwise go to waste in the field.

This farm will turn two critical food system gaps in the region – access to fresh produce in food pantries and food waste – into one solution, in one location.

Once fully operational, we anticipate engaging 2,000+ volunteers each year and harvesting over 200,000 pounds of produce to support our neighbors in need.

Gleaning: collecting otherwise unharvested crops from farmers' fields

Hundreds of thousands of pounds of produce go unharvested in the fields of Southeastern MA either because farmers do not have the labor to harvest a crop or the market to sell it to. The Marion Institute will train a volunteer gleaning team to harvest this food for area food pantries and soup kitchens.

Become a volunteer and make Frogfoot Farm your community farm too!



A.D. Makepeace Company (ADM) generously contributed use of land, along with soil improvements, irrigation, and team support. The Marion Institute (MI) must fundraise to support all other costs associated with designing, managing, and running the farm and gleaning operations.



Chris Makepeace - ADM Board Member, Jim Kane - ADM President & CEO, Margie Baldwin - MI Board Chair & Co-Founder, and Liz Wiley - MI Executive Director were joined by board and team members of ADM and the MI at a Groundbreaking Celebration on Frogfoot Farm.

Year 1 – Farm Operations and Goals

- Establish an Advisory Committee of subject matter experts to help guide our planning
- Improve soil health
- Install fencing to protect our crops
- Plant pollinator hedgerows
- Hire a Farmer and Farm Manager
- Plant and harvest 3+ crops
- Organize 5+ gleaning events
- Host 3+ BioBlitz (citizen science) events
- Recruit and train 100+ volunteers

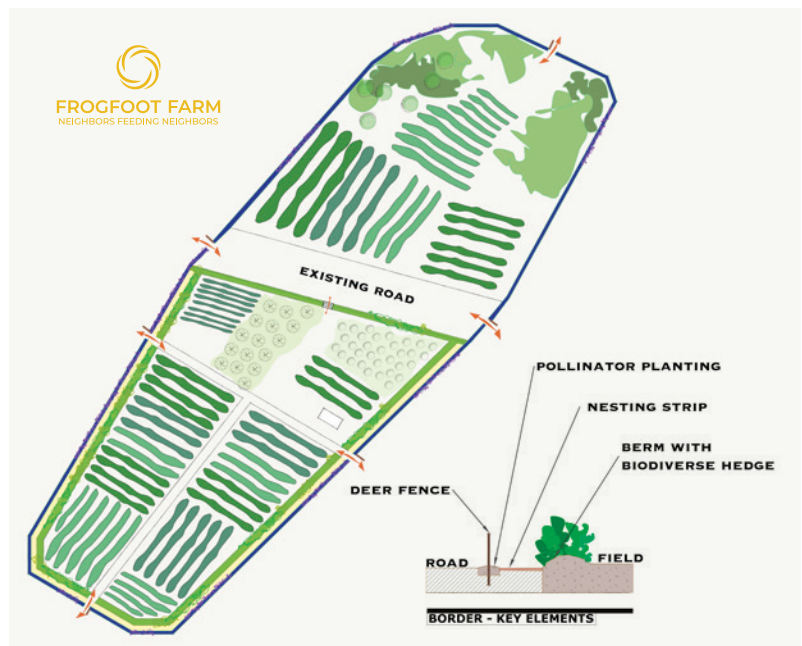
Healthy Soil Grows Healthy Food

Frogfoot Farm consists of six acres of previously unfarmed land located amidst cranberry bogs. We are restoring this ground by employing agro-ecology farming practices that build up and protect soil life, promote biodiversity, manage water wisely, provide increased resilience to extreme weather events, and minimize air and water pollution. **Agro-ecology manages farms by ecosystems and works with nature rather than against it to avoid damaging environmental impacts.**

Step one to growing nutrient-rich food for our neighbors in need is building up the soil's health. This began in summer 2023 when we planted Sudan grass as a cover crop in the South Field and included biodiverse pollinator hedging into our farm plan. Next, we identified the baseline biodiversity of the land via our first **BioBlitz**. From there, we will establish berms and hedgerows along the perimeter of our crop fields in early 2024, as well as a detailed soil amendment, crop cover, and farm plan.

Sudan grass is like a superhero for the soil, preventing erosion, making the soil healthier, and fighting off weeds. One of the primary ways in which Sudan grass aids in soil improvement is through its extensive root system, which helps to break up compacted layers and improve soil structure, aeration, and water infiltration – all of which support diverse microorganisms and the roots of the crops we'll plant. In addition, Sudan grass converts atmospheric nitrogen into a plant-usable form, subsequently enriching the soil with this essential nutrient. As a result, Sudan grass acts as a natural fertilizer, enhancing soil fertility and supporting the growth of subsequent crops. By harnessing the soil-improving properties of Sudan grass and additional cover crops, we are adopting sustainable agricultural practices that prioritize our farm field's health and fertility.

Berms and hedgerows are native buffer plantings found along the edges of agricultural fields. Acting as a barrier at the perimeter of crop fields, they are another important component to building up the farm's soil quality, reducing erosion, and promoting biodiversity. The deep root structures of hedgerows help to keep soil firmly in place, reducing risk of it being blown away and eroded during dry months and periods of high winds. These native buffers around the crop fields also increase habitat for pollinators (i.e. bees, ants, flies, moths, and beetles), which will nourish the crops we plant at Frogfoot Farm.



All About Community

It's going to take a community of support to dramatically increase the amount of fresh produce for our neighbors across Southeastern MA. Partnerships and collaboration are helping make this happen.



BioBlitz

A BioBlitz brings together scientists and subject matter experts with families, students, teachers, and other members of the community to learn about the biological diversity of a place and conduct a count of plants, animals, fungi, and other living organisms that exist there. In the process, this "citizen science" exercise empowers community members with skills and knowledge to develop a stronger connection to natural spaces.

We'll host a BioBlitz quarterly at Frogfoot Farm to monitor and inform our decision making and crop plans. By tracking and documenting changes over time, we hope to show how our agro-ecology practices can promote biodiversity and improve the natural landscape.

9

Animal
Species

75

Types of
Plants

5

Types of
Mosses

3

Types of
Fungi

Boogie at the Bog

In October 2023, we hosted our inaugural Boogie at the Bog event to introduce the work of Frogfoot Farm to our Southeastern MA community and to raise funds for farm operations. The sold-out event featured live music, a (very fun) cocktail hour in a cranberry bog, and a variety of local food businesses showcasing their regionally sourced fare.



What's Next?

We anticipate making meaningful strides over the next year as we establish a strong foundation for Frogfoot Farm.

Establishing an Advisory Committee

We look forward to working with these experts in soil and agriculture to restore the land and grow nutrient-dense produce at Frogfoot Farm.

Sarah Cogswell - Cluck & Trowel Farm

John Duke - Northeast Organic Farming Association

Kim Houdlette - A.D. Makepeace Company

Glenn Reid - A.D. Makepeace Company

Keith Wilda - The Livestock Institute/Meatworks and Bluestream Aquaculture

Sara Wuerstle - Ocean Hour Farm

Growing our Farm Team

We are thrilled to be hiring both a Farmer and Farm Program Manager who we anticipate starting in spring 2024. We are looking for experienced individuals that are passionate about sustainable, diversified farming practices and committed to engaging and energizing community volunteers.



GROW EDUCATION

FARM-TO-SCHOOL

Connecting Students and Schools to Agriculture, Education, and Locally Grown, Nutritious Food

Anchored by outdoor garden classrooms that serve as microcosms of regional farms, our elementary school Grow Education Farm-to-School program connects students and schools to enrichment science lessons on plant lifecycles, our regional climate, and the health benefits of eating fresh produce.

Empowering Students to Know Where Their Food Comes From and its Impact on Their Health and Environment

Designed for 3rd grade students and adaptable for other grades, the Marion Institute's Grow Education Farm-to-School (Grow FTS) program provides enriching classroom lessons and two years of intensive teacher and cafeteria support to help the program take root permanently within a school community. Our Grow FTS Program Manager works closely with each school to introduce and lead implementation of the programming in year one. In year two, teachers and cafeteria teams are supported by Grow FTS's FoodCorps service members who assist the school-based teams as they further integrate the program into the school's culture and on a path to sustainability.

District administrators, teachers, cafeteria team members, students, families, and the community all have a role to play



1 A Grow FTS Professional Development Day on a working farm lays the foundation for Marion Institute to develop relationships with teachers and cafeteria teams, modeling the powerful experience of outdoor, hands-on learning.



2 Fall outdoor garlic planting lessons are followed by winter taste tests and classroom presentations that feature local beekeepers and lessons on seed saving, herbology, food waste and composting, and animal husbandry.

3 Spring planting of peas, cilantro, radish, lettuce and more includes lessons on the benefits of healthful eating. The year culminates in garden harvest events and field trips to farms that connect all that students have learned to their broader community and region.

FoodCorps members support year two of Grow FTS programming

FoodCorps Members are part of the national AmeriCorps service team. In communities across the country, they serve alongside educators and school nutrition leaders to provide kids with food education, and culturally affirming experiences that celebrate and nurture the whole child.



School Year 2022-2023 FoodCorps Members: Oliva Rother, Jennifer Frates, and Shalynn Brooks.



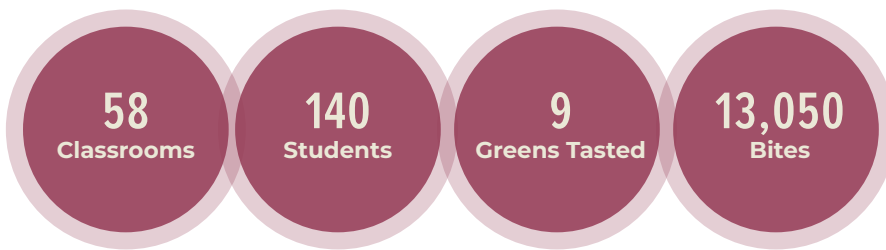
School Year 2023-2024 FoodCorps Members: Andrea Watkins, Hazel Kent, and Paul Costa.

Celebrating New Tastes and Enduring Cultural Connections Through Food

During the winter months, Grow FTS programming complements hands-on outdoor garden classroom learning with exposure to new foods and enriching, vibrant, and engaging lessons on nutrition.

Taste Tests – sometimes the simplest actions make the biggest difference

Mindful taste tests are integrated into Grow FTS programming throughout the school year and are prominently celebrated each spring during Harvest Day events. Our daily food choices matter. Yet, how often do we stop to really experience the foods we eat? What impact does it have on our minds and bodies when we slow down and appreciate food with our senses, bite for bite? Grow FTS team members, teachers, and students explore these questions and discuss the mind-body connection in support of well-being as they sample foods they've planted and grown in school gardens.



Soul Food meal and lesson celebrated in honor of Black History Month

Last January, Grow FTS teammate and FoodCorps member Shalynn Brooks, introduced a soul food meal and a special classroom lesson highlighting connections between Black history and some of America's most iconic foods. Students learned that the macaroni and cheese they have come to enjoy was originally called macaroni pie and was pioneered by James Hemings, a chef and slave of Thomas Jefferson.

The now annual Soul Food lesson starts with a history of Frederick Douglass, who escaped enslavement in Maryland in 1838, first arriving in New York and later settling here on the Southcoast in New Bedford, MA with his wife. It then moves onto other icons of Black history including Fannie Lou Hamer, a civil rights activist who started the Freedom Farm Cooperative, an organization that sought to make African American farmers self-sufficient in order to alleviate poverty and economic disparities between races. Lesser-known figures like Henry Blair were also studied. Did you know that Mr. Blair was the second Black man in American history to hold a patent for his 1834 corn planter? This revolutionary development sped up a daunting task in the farming industry at a critical point in time.

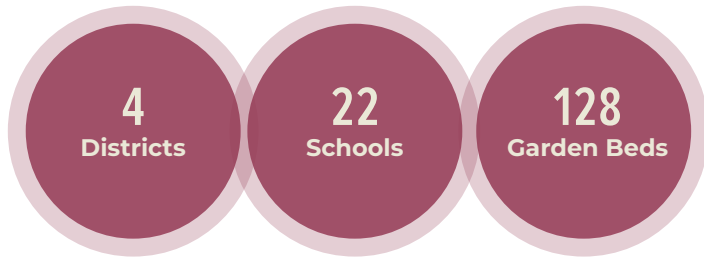


“The connection between food and Black history just wasn’t taught when I was growing up in schools. It’s wonderful to be able to educate young minds through their bellies with this important and tasty lesson.”

SHAY BROOKS, SY22-23 FOODCORPS MEMBER

Expanding Grow FTS Programming to More Elementary School Communities in our Region

This year, we continued to support New Bedford's 19 elementary schools and Westport's elementary school. We also added two new districts as we launched Grow FTS programming at Wareham's Elementary School and Marion's Sippican Elementary School.



Welcome Wareham and Marion

Wareham's Elementary School

Wareham Elementary chose to repurpose their existing garden beds and integrate Grow FTS's hands-on learning into their existing Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) curriculum for grades 1-4, as a way to enhance student understanding and retention of STEAM subjects. Generous support from A.D. Makepeace Company and Arcadia Charitable Trust helped us bring the program to Wareham, and you can be sure that plans for a field trip to Frogfoot Farm are on the horizon.

Marion's Sippican Elementary

Newly built garden beds were constructed over the summer at Sippican Elementary School with generous support from the Town of Marion's Community Preservation Act Fund. Before the first frost, third grade students participated in garden mapping exercises, followed by garlic and cover crop plantings that will kickstart the biology of the soil for spring.

"Our principal and STEAM teachers are so excited to implement the Grow FTS program and take our existing garden to the next level. Research shows that the curriculum connections made by school gardens enhance academic performance. Garden classrooms cross over three key pillars of wellness: nutrition, physical activity, and emotional well-being. Our students live in a world filled with flashy, highly processed foods with questionable ingredients. We are excited for them to experience planning, planting, tending, harvesting, preparing and tasting organic whole foods. Every school needs this program and we can't wait to get started!"

LISA OTTAVIANO, SCHOOL COUNSELOR, WAREHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

What's Next?

Slow and steady progress will lead to sustainable change among our region's schools.

Winter Presentation Re-Fresh

With USDA funding, we created new agricultural videos on beekeeping, food waste, composting and more. Produced in partnership with New Bedford's award-winning filmmaker, Ethan de Aguiar, students and adults alike are in for some great lessons and quite a show!

Regional FoodCorps Partnership

For the first time ever, FoodCorps will support a regional cluster of schools! In recognition of the Marion Institute's high quality Grow FTS programming, and sharing in the vision to transform food systems in our region, FoodCorps will support our expanding cohort of Grow FTS schools in the upcoming 2024-2025 year.





SOUTHCOAST FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

Leading a Diverse Coalition of Food System Stakeholders Across Southeastern MA

The Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council convenes, connects, and advocates for our regional food system, improved food and nutrition security, and a culture of personal and public health that takes root in an environmentally sustainable and equitable way.

Our Community Advisory Board and Four Working Groups Move the Southcoast Food Policy Council's Work Forward

The Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC) works diligently to maintain engagement of community members who serve on our Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Working Groups. We intentionally foster relationships with Food Equity Advisors, individuals with lived experience of hunger, to be a part of this community of practice. Collectively, these cohorts help set priorities and move the work forward.

What is a Food Policy Council?

A Food Policy Council (FPC) drives improved coordination among food programs, producers, and stakeholder groups. It educates public officials and shapes policy. **Successful FPCs operate on a continuous learning and communications loop, engaging multiple stakeholders as the collective work moves forward.** Strong FPCs have their finger on the pulse of the local food system, are tapped into, and help inform larger regional and national conversations.

SFPC Working Groups and current priorities:

Education & Communication

- Create public awareness of, and support for, our regional food system.
- Launch and reinforce a regionally focused, multi-year, branded educational campaign.

Food Policy

- Establish an engaged and informed coalition of food system advocates to support equitable policies.
- Strengthen relationships with elected leaders, track legislation, and provide ongoing advocacy training to our members.

Food Access

- Increase availability of healthful, culturally relevant, local food for all.
- Address increased rates of food insecurity through new programs and partnerships.

Capacity Building

- Build networks and infrastructure critical to a vibrant, regional food system.
- Map out food system assets, identify value chain intermediaries, strengthen distribution channels, support food system efficiencies, and increase composting and food waste solutions.



"Being a part of the SFPC and witnessing the successful establishment of the Food Access Working Group's vision for a farm-to-food relief program (Frogfoot Farm) fills me with immense pride. This program will not only increase the availability of wholesome and culturally relevant food for food pantry guests, but also addresses the broader issue of food insecurity in our communities. It is truly fulfilling to see the positive impact we are having to ensure that our neighbors have access to nutritious food."

PAULINE LALLY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DAMIEN'S FOOD PANTRY, WAREHAM

Community Education Takes Center Stage

To grow support for our regional food system, people need to know about it. That's why our CAB and Working Groups have identified the need to focus on a comprehensive, multi-year, multi-touchpoint, community education and outreach campaign. This effort kicked off last August and will be a mainstay of SFPC activities going forward.



**103 Public Meetings • Across 9 Cities/Towns
1,192 Individuals • 1,348 Stakeholder Hours**



Sign up here
for the 2024 Eat
Local Southcoast
Challenge

Eat Local Southcoast Challenge

With funding from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) we launched the Eat Local Southcoast Challenge as a fun way for residents to support healthful eating habits by consuming foods that come from a 200-mile radius of their homes. Participating in the challenge meant signing up to learn new ways to purchase and eat more local food, for a whole month.

Eating local food may sound trendy, but in reality it is becoming a priority to strengthen our local economies, increase access to healthy food, reduce harmful environmental impacts, and support our food producers' (farmers and fisheries) businesses.

The challenge included weekly emails full of tips and resources on: where to find local food, recipes for cooking it, and information regarding "The Journey of Food on the Southcoast."



Hunger Action Month

Each September, SFPC participates in an annual nationwide campaign to elevate Hunger Action Month locally. Food advocates come together to raise awareness about hunger across our region and inspire action.

"The reality of hunger in our communities is staggering. Local pantries and schools have seen a significant increase in the number of residents struggling with food insecurity over the past few years. I am proud to be part of the Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council and applaud the work we are doing collectively to combat these problems, raising awareness, and pushing for improved nutrition security for everyone."

VICTORIA GRASELA,
UNITED WAY OF GREATER NEW BEDFORD

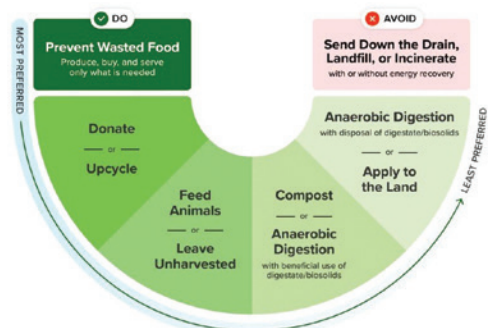
Virtual Food Summit 2023: Food recovery and food waste and its impacts on climate change

Hosted by the Marion Institute and the Office of Senator Mark Montigny, this year's summit referenced the EPA's newly launched, Food Recovery Hierarchy. The keynote speaker and panelists shared perspectives and challenges to food waste and recovery and what people can do in the face of increasing food needs and the urgency to mitigate food waste's harmful environmental impacts.



Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



Food Policy Affects Us All

Food policy is integral to our food system. Decisions by policymakers at all levels – federal, state, and local – can have a significant impact on everything from what crops are grown to how much food costs, and what we do with the excess. In addition to the Farm Bill at the federal level, the SFPC is focused on the following policies at the state level. We encourage you to learn more and engage with legislators in your hometown on these issues as well.

- An Act Establishing Farm-to-School Grants
- An Act to Promote Food Literacy
- An Act to Codify the Healthy Incentives Program
- An Act Encouraging the Donation of Food to Persons in Need
- MA Food System State Budget

SFPC Community Advisory Board and Food Equity Advisors FY23

Diana Bullard, Dartmouth

Cassie Canastra, New Bedford

Sarah Cogswell, Little Compton, RI

Vanila Silva-DaRosa, New Bedford

Larry DeSalvatore, Fairhaven

Marissa Perez-Dormitzer,
New Bedford

Judi Duveen, East Bridgewater

Darlene Dymysza, New Bedford

Emily Fidanza, Wareham

Joana Goncalves, New Bedford

Victoria Grasela, New Bedford

Deirdre Healy, Dartmouth

Jane Howard, Mattapoisett

Tracy Ibbotson, Fall River

Katlynn Kisla, Rochester

Pam Kuechler, New Bedford

Sarah Labossiere, Fall River

Dale Leavitt, East Falmouth

Allison LeBert, Fairhaven

Tom LeClair, Winthrop

Wendy Garf-Lipp, Fall River

Leimary Llopiz, New Bedford

Chairwoman Cheryl Andrews-
Maltais, Aquinnah

James McKeag, Fall River

Philip Messier, Sharon

Susan Murray, Dartmouth

Stephanie Perks, New Bedford

Gioia Persuitte, New Bedford

Lisa Rahn, New Bedford

Marlene Cerritos-Rivas,
New Bedford

Erik Rousseau, New Bedford

Adele Sands, Marion

Karen Schwalbe, East Falmouth

Robert Shaheen, New Bedford

Dana Siles, Pawtucket, RI

Laura Smith, Dighton

Stephanie Taylor, Taunton

Food Equity Advisors

Sarah Buck, Fairhaven

Alicia Cortez, New Bedford

Diane Morency, Fall River

Bernadette Oliveira, Fall River

What's Next?

Marion Institute staff, with input from the SFPC's Community Advisory Board, will continue to drive our equitable food system work forward. Here's what you can expect to hear more about from us in the year to come.



Increasing Capacity for USDA Commodities

Food pantries in Southeastern MA have neither the storage capacity nor the staff power to keep their shelves stocked, which contributes to hunger in our communities. The SFPC is exploring partnerships to address these challenges while improving nutritional quality of the foods available among our area food relief providers.



Empowering the Community to Advocate for Food Justice

With funding from Project Bread, be on the lookout for ongoing policy and advocacy training from the Marion Institute's SFPC to support Greater New Bedford organizations as they engage in food justice advocacy and develop skills to advocate for their specific needs.



BIOMED PROGRAMS

BioMed Starts with the Individual

Our BioMed programs promote a root-cause, holistic approach to health based on the foundation of food as medicine. As our longest running program, the pillars of BioMed – nutrition, detoxification, and immune building – inspire and are woven into all our other programs at the Marion Institute.

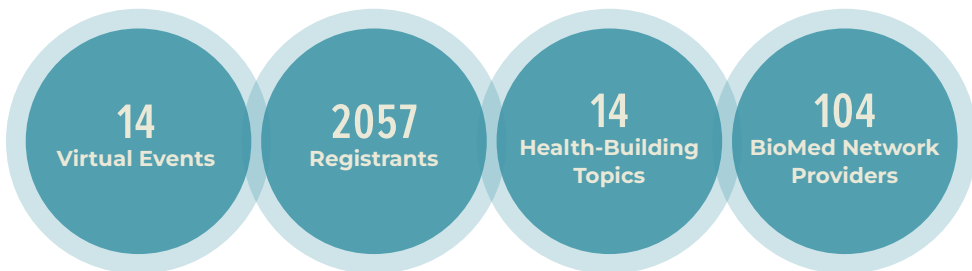
BioMed Programs Embrace a Holistic Approach to Health that Focuses on the Individual as a Change Agent to Heal and Thrive – Naturally

Our BioMed programming has its origins in the practice of Biological Medicine, a comprehensive and holistic approach to health and well-being. This individualized practice is known to incorporate the latest scientific and technological advancements of western medicine with time-honored healing modalities including homeopathy, naturopathy, Chinese medicine, acupuncture, and chiropractic care. There is no one-sized prescription of care, and food and nutrition are foundational as they both impact the body's ability to rid itself of toxins and bolster immunity.

The broader culture of health that the Marion Institute is working toward in our communities starts here. Our free, expert-led, health and wellness events aim to increase access for everyone to this **"common knowledge but not common practice"** approach to well-being.

BioBites

On the first Tuesday of every month, we host a **"Virtual House Call for Your Health"** through the Marion Institute's BioBites webinars. This online opportunity provides an indispensable connection between a wide range of wellness experts and the general public. During each hour-long Zoom event, practitioners share timely, vital health-related information with a global audience. Our moderated Q&A segment provides a unique opportunity for the public to interact with specialists in real time. Each of these virtual house calls is recorded and cataloged on our website along with an accompanying BioBlog that further explores featured topics.





21-Day Reset

January marked our third annual 21-Day Reset, a New Year's trove of daily emails delivered to your inbox with the overarching goal of creating natural balance, ease, and health throughout a lifetime. The content and topics that we curate are evergreen, meaning they are not time sensitive and enable you to re-engage with the Reset each year to discover the one or two new practices that you are ready to add to your daily repertoire. Reset themes include something for everyone, such as deep breathing, functional fitness, nebulizing, probiotics/fermented foods, meditation, and stocking your natural medicine cabinet.

The Mary Shands Scholarship Fund

Established in honor of Mary Norton Shands, a visionary whose efforts helped bring Biological Medicine to North America, this scholarship fund provides financial assistance to patients seeking biomedical treatment.

"I want to thank everyone who took the time to consider my situation for assistance. I am beyond grateful. This support has given me hope and security in knowing I have the availability to get help with my illnesses."

ANNA CAMPBELL, SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Supporting Communities on a Path to Health

Most of us spend a significant portion of our days at work or in school. Building a daily practice of mindfulness and health into these working and learning communities yields both individual and group benefits.



"This course brought me back to my father, who has passed. I have always loved my father, but was never able to forgive him until now. This course brought my mind to the process that I had to go through to forgive him."

PARTICIPANT, PATH OF FREEDOM WORKSHOP



Well-Being Among Youth Workers

Adults working to support youth across the City of New Bedford play a vital role in the ecosystem of health. Key to the development of children, adults wellness too, must be fortified. Under the guidance of Creative Lives' Executive Director Maureen Burford, and informed by Ellen Tadd's Framework for Wise Education®, event attendees learned strategies to promote focus, clarity, and well-being for personal and professional use.

Path of Freedom®

MA releases over 60,000 individuals from its prisons each year. Path of Freedom®, a mindfulness-based emotional intelligence model, helps these individuals reclaim their own potential as they prepare for reentry.

The Marion Institute's BioMed Program led three cohorts of incarcerated individuals through this intensive 11-week course at the Old Colony Correctional Center in Bridgewater, MA.

Empowering Young People

Today's youth are deeply affected by the state of our global health ecosystem.

With teen anxiety and depression at an all-time high, it's important to support our young adults with emotional self-regulating skills. In partnership with Tabor Academy's Health and Wellness Day, the Marion Institute shared simple and easy-to-incorporate habits on self-care with hundreds of students and faculty members.

Increasing Accessibility to BioMed

To support growing interest in the benefits of Biological Medicine, the Marion Institute continues to offer a series of accredited BioMed certification courses. While developed to support healthcare practitioners, these courses are open to anyone interested in incorporating BioMed principals into their holistic health practices.

BioMed Courses

A pre-requisite for all other offerings, our **Introduction to Biological Medicine** course serves as the foundation for anyone interested to learn the core theories and practical wisdom of this healthcare modality.

Two additional courses target practitioners from a variety of disciplines including conventional medicine, naturopathy, nursing, dentistry, acupuncture, and physical fitness.

Interpreting Lab Results with BioMed helps participants gain insights from lab and chemistry screen data while applying BioMed theories to improve client health.

Biological Medicine for Practitioners includes a series of online modules followed by a four-day in-person training held each spring at The BioMed Center in Scottsdale, AZ, where participants learn to implement and integrate an array of diagnostic technologies and therapies to support optimal patient outcomes.

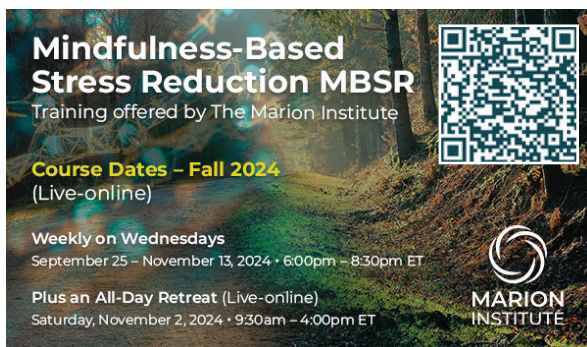
BioMed Bulletin

Complementing our BioMed courses, this quarterly e-newsletter further builds, grows, and supports a community of practice among our BioMed Network (BMN) providers.



What's Next?

The BioMed approach to health is rooted in the fact that the mind and body are not separate. When we experience stress, insomnia, anxiety, fear, depression, or are suffering from a chronic illness, it is often the mind's influence that is overlooked as a pivotal factor in wellbeing. To support this mind/body connection, we'll be rolling out two new programs in our next fiscal year.




Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction MBSR
Training offered by The Marion Institute

Course Dates – Fall 2024
(Live-online)

Weekly on Wednesdays
September 25 – November 13, 2024 • 6:00pm – 8:30pm ET

Plus an All-Day Retreat (Live-online)
Saturday, November 2, 2024 • 9:30am – 4:00pm ET



Health Begins with Awareness

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is a comprehensive course in mind-body awareness taught over eight weeks. Classes are highly experiential and include mindfulness meditation, the science behind mindfulness, and its effects on physical and mental health.



MARION INSTITUTE BIOMED PROGRAMS

Health the Natural Way

Worksite Wellness Reset

5 Weeks to Wellness

Bring a Wellness Reset to Your Organization or Business

Meaningful employment transfers to increased retention and employee upward mobility. Find out how you can use eligible grant funding from Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) to bring worksite wellness programming to your organization. If your company submits payroll taxes in MA - you are eligible for this funding!



GREENHOUSE INITIATIVES

Our Greenhouse Initiatives Program provides fiscal sponsorship to visionary projects at home and across the globe

Throughout our history, the Marion Institute has incubated ideas that have impact. By doing so, we enable an impressive array of leaders to build healthy communities through strategic programs that meet people where they are.

What does fiscal sponsorship mean?

Instead of starting a new nonprofit, fiscal sponsorship allows a group with a related social mission to work under the umbrella of an existing 501(c)(3) public charity through a formal “fiscal sponsorship arrangement.” The new entity is thus able to receive grants and tax-deductible donations under their sponsor’s exempt status.

The Marion Institute oversees approximately a dozen fiscal sponsors at a time, and charges a fixed amount for the administrative services we provide.

“Transforming community health requires a continuous loop of learning and innovating. By supporting emerging groups to do work in their communities, we serve our mission and expand our footprint. The Marion Institute’s fiscal sponsorship program allows us to have outsized impact, reaching people where they are in order to build health in Southeastern MA and across the globe.”

JAMEY SHACHOY, MARION INSTITUTE
BOARD MEMBER

Coalition for Health Equity & Early Development

New Bedford, MA

Kyaro Assistive Tech

Arusha, Tanzania

Lawrence Arts House

Lawrence, MA

The Nourishment Economies Coalition

Bath, ME

S.A.F.E.

Nairobi, Kenya

STEAM The Streets

Hercules, CA and New Bedford, MA

Taktse International School

Sikkim, India

The Himalayan Project

Kathmandu, Nepal

The Mastate Charitable Foundation

Mastatal, Costa Rica

The Mindful Collaborative

New Bedford, MA

The Norma G. Canner Foundation for Voice Movement Therapy

Marion, MA

Ubumuntu Arts Festival

Kigali, Rwanda



The Marion Institute gratefully acknowledges the individuals, families, corporations, foundations, and organizations that have so generously supported our mission. Our work would not be possible without your steadfast support. Thank you!

\$50,000+

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Planned Giving

Our donors may now craft a meaningful legacy at the Marion Institute through planned gifts, impacting our mission in perpetuity.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

"I am proud to include the Marion Institute in my will and to know that the mission of this wonderful organization will continue on after I'm gone. Having been a part of numerous nonprofits throughout my life, I find the work here to be grounded and transformative for myself and our community."

KERRY SALTONSTALL, MARION INSTITUTE BOARD MEMBER

Most often created as a part of an estate plan, the instruments you or your lawyer use to distribute assets to the Marion Institute may include a simple bequest in your will or assigning the Marion Institute as a partial or total beneficiary of a donor advised fund, retirement fund, or life insurance policy. Other options include donating real estate or other appreciated assets into charitable trusts. Whichever vehicle you choose, your commitment will help the Marion Institute fulfill our mission to create healthy communities for all.

To execute your planned gift, please use our IRS-registered name "The Marion Institute, Inc." and EIN number 04-3206583.

If you designated the Marion Institute for a planned gift, thank you! Please consider letting us know by contacting legacy@marioninstitute.org. We'd like to invite you to our Inaugural Legacy Society luncheon to take place in summer 2024.

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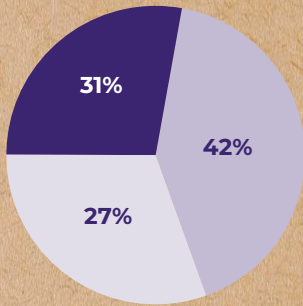
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Financials FY'23

FISCAL YEAR 2023 (OCTOBER 1, 2022 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2023)

Income:



- Programs
- Greenhouse Initiatives
- Unrestricted

Programs

\$592,959

MI Unrestricted

\$531,043

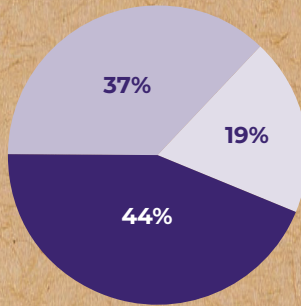
Greenhouse Initiatives

\$804,124

TOTAL

\$1,928,126

Expenses:



- Programs
- Greenhouse Initiatives
- Admin/Fundraising/
Program Support

Programs

\$831,929

Greenhouse Initiatives

\$686,705

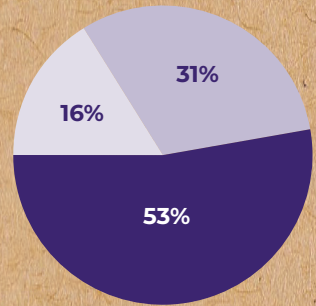
**Admin/Fundraising/
Support**

\$351,969

TOTAL*

\$1,870,603

Net Assets:



- Without Donor Restrictions
- With Donor Restrictions (Greenhouse Initiatives)
- With Donor Restrictions (Programs)

Without Donor Restrictions

\$613,559

**With Donor Restrictions
[Greenhouse Initiatives]**

\$353,819

**With Donor Restrictions
[Programs]**

\$189,696

TOTAL

\$1,157,074

*The Total Expenses does not include the Unrealized Losses on Investments.



**MARION
INSTITUTE**

CONNECT WITH US:

Marion Institute

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