

THE WAY FORWARD

LEARNINGS FROM THE FALL 2022 SUMMIT

*"I believe the work you are doing here in Boston sets the standard for the entire U.S. community on how we can better work together to address these issues... While policy is important, **this will take a whole-of-society approach.** We will not solve this unless we bring together the private sector, academics, civil society, as well as the government, to address these challenges **on our way forward.**"*

AMBASSADOR ERTHARIN COUSIN, FOOD SYSTEMS FOR THE FUTURE

*"The 2022 H2HC Summit brought together many of the foremost leaders and advocates addressing hunger, nutrition security, and health equity. It was a privilege to take part in such a substantive conversation—**a true laboratory of collaborations!** A huge thank you to the Hunger to Health Collaboratory for putting together this 'can't-miss' event!"*

THOMAS DORNEY, THE ROOT CAUSE COALITION

*"The 2022 H2HC Summit was **an amazing way to learn** from national and state leaders working at the intersection of hunger and health. I was thrilled to see familiar faces and, more importantly, meet new people and make new connections."*

RICHARD SHEWARD, CHILDREN'S HEALTHWATCH

*"The 2022 H2HC Summit provided an opportunity to learn about important initiatives underway locally and nationally, across different sectors, to address food insecurity. We were able to establish valuable connections with attendees from other organizations and have met with them since the Summit as we further develop our nutrition access and equity programs. **We are all working toward the same goals, and the Summit enables us to be more successful** by promoting collaboration and shared learning."*

ANNE FOX, MASS GENERAL BRIGHAM

*"I had a wonderful day at the 2022 H2HC Fall Summit. The **convened stakeholders from diverse backgrounds** allowed me to learn about amazing work and projects in the public and private sectors related to equity and health. Moreover, this was a great opportunity to connect with presenters and participants from various organizations. I highly recommend it and look forward to attending their future summits!"*

YA XUAN SUN, GRADUATE STUDENT, HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Note from the Executive Director



On November 17, 2022, the Hunger to Health Collaboratory (H2HC) convened a broad coalition of thought leaders to share expertise, experiences, and innovative models of success around the challenges of identifying and implementing integrated solutions to food, nutrition, and health inequities. Generously hosted by the Museum of Science in Boston with support from Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Summit drew more than 75 national, regional, and local participants from the public and private, healthcare, nonprofit, and academic sectors.

Convened just seven weeks after the [White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](#) in September 2022,¹ the Summit offered a critical opportunity to consider questions raised at the Conference, with an eye toward implementable and effective national and regional solutions. Summit panels presented and discussed topics ranging from innovative entrepreneurship practices in the academic space, to groundbreaking work by the City of Chicago, to large health systems' intense focus on delivering more equitable care.

Our sincere thanks to our speakers and panelists:

- * **Sara Bleich**, Director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture;
- * **Ambassador Ertharin Cousin**, Founder and CEO, Food Systems for the Future;
- * **Catherine D'Amato**, President and CEO, The Greater Boston Food Bank;
- * **Ruby Ferguson**, Food Equity Policy Lead, City of Chicago and Greater Chicago Food Depository;
- * **Prof. Wiljeana Glover**, Director, Kerry Murphy Healey Center for Health Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Babson College;
- * **Julie Greene**, Director, Guiding Stars Licensing Company;
- * **Dr. Thea James**, Executive Director, Health Equity Accelerator, and Vice President of Mission & Associate Chief Medical Officer, Boston Medical Center;
- * **Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian**, Dean, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University;
- * **Dr. Elsie Taveras**, Inaugural Chief Community Health Equity Officer and Executive Director, Kraft Center for Community Health at Mass General Brigham; and
- * **David Waters**, CEO, Community Servings.

Note that all of our Summit panels and presentations are available to watch online; please visit our website, www.h2hcollaboratory.org, for details and links.

The vital conversations during our 2022 Fall Summit left us inspired and freshly committed to expanding, deepening, and furthering our collective work with diverse stakeholders across sectors. We look forward to ongoing learning and sharing as we move forward.

Warmly,

Nicolene Hengen
Executive Director



Fall Summit 2022: Learnings, Action Steps, and Sustainable Solutions

Chairman Jim McGovern (D-MA), leader of the House of Representatives Committee on Rules and long-time champion of the need to confront hunger and nutrition deficits nationally, was instrumental in garnering support for the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health held in September 2022. He addressed Summit attendees by video:

"I want to thank the Hunger to Health Collaboratory for bringing everybody together today and continuing the drumbeat of action coming out of September's White House conference... Everyone has a role to play in implementing this new roadmap, and action taken by the private sector is pivotal to our success... We can't afford to wait another moment to tackle these issues in a holistic way. The power to end hunger rests with all of us and we have to get to work implementing the National Strategy. The White House Conference was just the beginning—it was a jumping off point. We all have assignments on what we can do to improve health outcomes and reduce food insecurity, and that endeavor starts right now."

CHAIRMAN JAMES MCGOVERN (D-MA)

"The Museum has been a part of the Hunger to Health Collaboratory for four years. Our principal role has been the convenor that can bring thought leaders together to follow the mounting evidence of what we know about public health and about hunger as well. In these situations, what's most important of all is for us to get to know each other so that we can take collective action in ways that we might not have done had we not gathered together."

TIM RITCHIE, MUSEUM OF SCIENCE, BOSTON



Sara Bleich, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

The Collaboratory Advances the National Conversation: National Challenges and Opportunities

Sara Bleich, Director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity for the Food and Nutrition Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), discussed the [USDA's role](#) in addressing the complex challenges facing the country with respect to ending hunger, improving nutrition, and reducing diet-related chronic diseases.^{2,3}

In recent years, the USDA has shifted from focusing primarily on food security to now encompassing nutrition security within their approach as well. This new approach prioritizes equity and recognizes structural inequities that make it difficult for Americans to access healthy food and be physically active.

The [USDA's commitment to improving nutrition security](#) is anchored in four pillars:⁴

- 1. Meaningful Support:** Providing nutrition support throughout all stages of life
- 2. Healthy Food:** Connecting all Americans with healthy, safe, affordable food sources
- 3. Collaborative Action:** Developing, translating, and enacting nutrition science through partnership
- 4. Equitable Systems:** Prioritizing equity every step of the way

"If you remember one thing from today, it should be that our focus on nutrition security at USDA in no way means we are abandoning a decades-long focus on food insecurity. Rather we are building on, we are complementing, and we are widening our aperture to say: 'We don't just care about getting people food, we care about giving them food that is going to help their health and well-being.'"

SARA BLEICH, FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, USDA

USDA DEFINITION OF NUTRITION SECURITY

Ensuring all Americans have consistent and equitable access to healthy, safe, and affordable food essential for optimal health and well-being.

Current Challenges

Research shows the extent of the problems that need to be addressed in the next decade. According to a 2019 study from *The New England Journal of Medicine*, “**Projected U.S. State-Level Prevalence of Adult Obesity and Severe Obesity**,” by 2030 half of U.S. adults will be obese, with the most common BMI category for Black adults being severe—or morbid—obesity.⁵ Fifty-seven percent of today’s two-year-olds will be obese, including two-thirds of Black and Latinx children compared to half of White children of the same age.

Research also underscores the negative financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households with children, with the most serious impact on Black and Latinx households. Families reported struggles to afford medical care, a depletion of household savings, and difficulty managing debt. Going forward, USDA will address these challenges as priority areas.

National Pathways to Change

The USDA’s broad portfolio is largely focused on **food and nutrition programs** for children and income-eligible adults, with education as a key priority.⁶ Grounded by an acknowledgement of structural racism, USDA programs reach tens of millions of children and income-eligible adults. Half of all infants in the U.S. are served

by the Women, Infants, and Children Feeding Program (WIC), and 1 in 4 Americans is served by one of USDA’s 15 nutrition assistance programs.

School meals for all students nationwide are an integral part of the solution. While the USDA is pursuing dozens of action items, the agency’s most pressing priority is providing healthy school meals for all of America’s children. **Data show** that for many children, the healthiest meal they eat in a day is the lunch offered through school meals programs.⁷

The National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program:

- Provides nutritious meals to 30 million children each day.
- Supports children’s growth, learning, and overall health.
- Contributes to student academic success in the classroom.

WIC remains one of the country’s strongest public health programs and most effective tools. The program is highly impactful—and vastly underused: Half of Americans who are eligible for WIC do not participate. Program benefits include supplemental foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to health and social services. **Data show** significant decreases in childhood obesity rates among families supported by WIC.⁸

The USDA aims to modernize WIC by aligning food packages with updated dietary guidelines and by diversifying the WIC workforce, while also aggressively promoting its value as an essential public health program, but the agency needs help to increase enrollment.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation’s largest food and nutrition assistance program for low-income Americans. While 41 million Americans

receive SNAP assistance each year, 1 in 5 who are eligible for the program do not participate.

The USDA recently made two important changes to SNAP benefits. In fiscal year 2021, the USDA updated the Thrifty Food Plan, which determines SNAP benefit amounts. This update increased individual SNAP benefits by 21%, the first permanent increase in more than 45 years. With recent record high inflation, USDA also worked to increase the average SNAP benefit by an additional 12.5%, the largest inflationary increase in the almost 60-year history of the program. Despite these significant investments in SNAP, more support is required to ensure that this much-needed aid reaches as many eligible Americans as possible.

While 41 million Americans receive SNAP assistance each year, 1 in 5 who are eligible for the program do not participate.

SNAP-Ed, the nutrition education branch of the SNAP program, is also a **highly effective program**, but given its limited budget (compared to the entirety of the SNAP program), SNAP-Ed needs to be used in more innovative ways to reach more Americans.⁹

While the USDA makes substantial efforts to increase enrollment in these vital programs, cross-sector support is needed to help increase program use. **Commitments** made following the White House Conference by innovative leaders like Boston Medical Center, Community Servings, and Mass General Brigham, among many others, will make a tremendous difference in filling the current gap between program eligibility and use.¹⁰ (See page 15.)

USDA Priorities

Push Congress to renew the Child Tax Credit. The most successful anti-poverty program in U.S. history, the extended [Child Tax Credit](#), which reached more than 61 million children across more than 36 million households in December 2021, briefly slashed child poverty by 30 percent.¹¹ Those extended benefits will expire at the end of 2022 and revert back to \$2,000 per dependent under age 17.

Advance a pathway for healthy school meals for all. Linked to lower obesity rates and higher academic performance, school meals should be considered as integral to the school day as books and other critical resources. USDA support includes providing training and equipment for schools to cook healthy meals onsite from fresh ingredients, investing in a nutrition workforce, and expanding nutrition education for children.

Move from a sick care system to a healthcare system by creating a health system that doesn't just treat disease but prevents disease from happening. As pilot programs test coverage of nutritional meals in healthcare, we should call on government agencies and insurance companies to consistently screen for food insecurity on a national basis.

Suggested Action Steps from the USDA

- **Support school meal standards.** As the U.S. moves toward establishing school meal standards for the 2025 school year, USDA encourages the public to comment, share perspectives, and reach out with feedback.
- **Prioritize philanthropy.** Among other funding needs, USDA seeks partners to support research on key

questions that will advance change and health equity.

- **Help boost program participation.** 1 in 5 Americans who are eligible for SNAP, and 1 in 2 who are eligible for WIC, do not participate in the programs. We must help close these gaps in use, particularly among elderly individuals' use of SNAP and among families who are eligible for WIC but drop out of the program after their child's first birthday.
- **Keep USDA informed of your work.** Those working on the front lines have critical perspective and information to share with the agency about pain points and areas of success.
- **Find new ways to strengthen and build connections.** The White House Conference, H2HC's Fall Summit, and other powerful convenings highlight the need for opportunities to share ideas and strengthen connections.

RECENT FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE INVESTMENTS

- Increasing SNAP benefits to support healthy eating
 - Bringing SNAP and WIC shopping online
 - Modernizing WIC to improve reach
 - Strengthening evidence to inform Food and Nutrition Service policy and nutrition services
 - Supporting a diverse WIC workforce
 - Restructuring SNAP-Education
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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Another USDA program, [The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program \(GusNIP\)](#) brings together stakeholders from across the food and healthcare systems and funds programs including nutrition incentive products and produce prescription products. In addition to the program increasing participants' intake of fruits and vegetables, participants have purchased more than \$20M in produce from local retailers, and, through incentive spending, generated an economic impact of approximately \$41 million.

The National Congress of American Indians Tribal Food Sovereignty Advancement Initiative (TFSAI) supports tribal nation efforts to build and protect Indigenous food systems. TFSAI empowers tribal food sovereignty by creating a forum for tribal leaders to share best practices; assisting tribal governments with policy development; advocating for federal policy changes; protecting and sustaining tribal lands, waters, and natural resources integral to tribal food systems; and providing materials to build skills and knowledge among Native farmers, ranchers, and other food providers.

California, Colorado, and Maine have passed permanent [Healthy School Meals for All](#) legislation. Massachusetts, Nevada, and Vermont made free meals available to all students for the 2022–2023 school year, and many other states are considering Healthy School Meals for All legislation.¹²

“If you are a provider, it may not always be obvious which of your patients are on SNAP, which of your patients are on WIC, but you probably know their Medicaid status. If you know their Medicaid status and that person screens positive for food insecurity, the next question should be, ‘Do you happen to be enrolled in WIC?’ And then figure out the warm handoff to get them into our programs. It’s not enough to hand people a piece of paper and say: ‘Enroll in SNAP’.”

SARA BLEICH, FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, USDA

Summit Discussion: Questions, Goals, and Priorities

Summit attendees posed questions, shared observations, and identified the following goals and priorities:

- **Improve and expand nutrition education for healthcare providers.** The Massachusetts Department of Health and Human Services is finding new ways to lean into the new Biden-Harris Administration National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. There is more to be done, such as promoting food insecurity screening and [Medicaid 1115 waivers](#) that allow states to test new or different ways of delivering or paying for healthcare services through Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).¹³
- **Empower and encourage SNAP-Education agencies and community partners** to leverage SNAP-Ed dollars in more holistic ways that will reach more Americans. The USDA has made policy, systems, and environmental changes to the SNAP-Ed program to work toward this goal.
- **Bridge the gap between Medicaid and SNAP.** Many Americans who are eligible for both programs are enrolled only in Medicaid. Again, we must develop novel and holistic ways to support SNAP education.
- **Address the gaps that will emerge with the end of the current public health crisis.** As pandemic-year resources wind down and more people lose eligibility, many will drop out of Medicaid and other programs. What are the lessons learned from the pandemic that will help us with an easier transition both now and in future emergencies?
- **Push state agencies to improve their effectiveness.** USDA programs are state administered, and states have discretion on how the program is delivered. USDA cannot dictate how states operate but must work closely with them to guide program implementation. The agency spends significant time communicating with states and providing technical assistance.
- **Maximize best practices.** Getting connected with health systems that are already doing things well is essential in order to learn and adopt successful practices and avoid siloed approaches and duplicate efforts.

Dr. Tamara Baer, McKinsey & Co.





(L-R) Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian, Tufts; Ambassador Ertharin Cousin, Food Systems for the Future; and Catherine D'Amato, GBFB

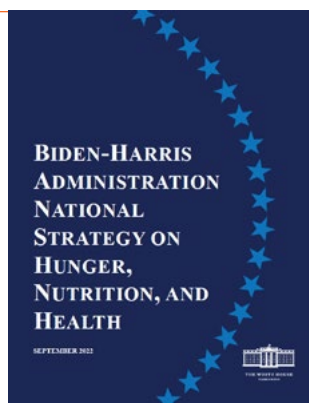
Implications for Thought Leaders

In the lead-up to the White House Conference, the National Task Force on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health played an instrumental role. Task Force co-chairs Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian and Ambassador Ertharin Cousin brought together national leaders and experts, including Catherine D'Amato, who represented the Collaboratory at these meetings. The Task Force recommended [actions](#) for federal agencies, Congress, and other stakeholders as the Biden-Harris Administration considered its new [National Strategy](#).^{14,15} Many of the Task Force's recommendations were incorporated in the National Strategy that was released in September 2022.

The Strategy identifies ambitious and achievable actions the Administration is taking across five pillars in pursuit of its goal to end hunger and reduce diet-related diseases by 2030.

NATIONAL STRATEGY FIVE PILLARS

1. Improve food access and affordability
2. Integrate nutrition and health
3. Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices
4. Support physical activity for all
5. Enhance nutrition and food research



“A takeaway for me from this National Strategy is that there is not one thing that will fix the system, but there are not 10,000 things either. There is a constrained list of reasonable priorities—30 or 40 things—that could really move the needle and push forward. So how do we as a community in this room make sure that it actually happens?”

**DR. DARIUSH MOZAFFARIAN,
TUFTS FRIEDMAN SCHOOL
OF NUTRITION SCIENCE AND
POLICY**

“We need our philanthropic community to understand that if we are going to build market-based solutions, we need to work together to ensure that the philanthropic distribution of healthy food doesn’t cannibalize the opportunity for market-based solutions to work... If it’s just about getting food out to people, then we’re not looking at the long-term, sustainable, resilient solutions that give people the opportunity to build their own food security... Getting more businesses into communities involves overcoming historic red lines for investment. Nobody starts more businesses in the food system space than Black women, but those businesses are not capitalized at the level necessary for them to scale up, and we need to change that dynamic.”

**AMBASSADOR
ERTHARIN COUSIN, FOOD
SYSTEMS FOR THE FUTURE**

At the Summit, Dr. Mozaffarian was joined by Ambassador Cousin for a panel discussion moderated by Catherine D’Amato, who, along with Stop & Shop leadership, founded the Collaboratory in 2018. Dr. Mozaffarian walked the audience through some [historic national events](#), like the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health, that led up to the 2022 conference.¹⁶ The follow-up exchange revealed a diversity of informed opinions and key observations:

- **We must make the economic argument to bring in key players.** Participants called upon H2HC to highlight the return on investment (ROI), a point echoed throughout the day. Participants across sectors agreed that building a powerful narrative around cost savings achieved through collective strategic action is critical.
- **In the food industry, awareness of food insecurity is increasing and change is happening.** The food industry is essential to addressing hunger and nutrition with engaged leadership emerging in the sector.
- **We must put financial support and resources into the hands of consumers.** Wage equity is essential for increasing the availability of dollars for consumers. When it comes to individual behaviors, people must be able to make their own choices.
- **Disincentives, shame, and punishment are ineffective.** Failed examples include the Cook County (Illinois) soda tax (supporters of which were all voted out of office) and SNAP limitations. Programs that put more money in the hands of consumers, such as [Food As Medicine](#) and [Produce Rx](#), have proven to be more effective.^{17,18}
- **Include nutrition science education as part of elementary,**

middle, and high school science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, to inspire national solutions.

Incorporating an understanding of nutrition, including how to read food labels to make informed choices, into STEM, from academics to research and educational initiatives like those in science museums, will promote knowledge, understanding, and innovation.

- **We must eliminate barriers and enable innovation among people with lived experience,** erase historic red lines to entrepreneurship, and increase the capital available in the private sector for Black and Brown entrepreneurs and business owners.
- **The messenger matters.** We need messengers who come from—and have a voice in—the communities we are trying to reach. Presenters and contributors illustrated the impact of this throughout the day, from Dr. Bleich speaking about her own lived experience to Stop & Shop highlighting the nutritionist it recently hired from within the Grove Hall neighborhood of Boston to lead community wellness initiatives in its store there.
- **Network building is essential.** It is our job to enable and promote collaboration, including across communities of allies, among those with lived experience, and with those living in and serving the communities we are trying to reach.
- **Change demands a diversity of agricultural solutions.** We must move toward a procurement model that doesn’t simply pursue the lowest price but accounts for social and wage justice, the health of the environment, and strong food systems. Solutions must not widen the equity gap but prioritize justice and equity for our nation’s 50,000 Black farmers.

Innovators in Action

The Summit panel on innovative work across sectors featured **Ruby Ferguson**, Food Equity Policy Lead for the City of Chicago and Greater Chicago Food Depository; **Professor Wiljeana Glover**, Director of the Kerry Murphy Healey Center for Health Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Babson College; and **Julie Greene**, Director of Guiding Stars Licensing Company, in a conversation moderated by Collaboratory Executive Director **Nicolene Hengen**.

Panelists highlighted their diverse and innovative approaches to advancing food, nutrition, and health equity and shared compelling examples of scalable model programs that are leading to change.

Started in 2019, the **Kerry Murphy Healey Center** applies **entrepreneurial thinking to the health sector**.¹⁹ The Center works to connect organizations seeking to achieve health outcomes with the business models they need to succeed.

“These innovations are exciting but the other part of our mission, the social piece, is sometimes missing. What we are really focused on is how do we get more health equity entrepreneurs, how do we get people who have lived experiences and have solutions that are in this space, and how can we support them?”

PROF. WILJEANA GLOVER, KMH CENTER FOR HEALTH INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

“With today’s emphasis on ESG—environmental, social, and governance—investors are looking to organizations that can demonstrate science-based standards.”

JULIE GREENE, GUIDING STARS

Guiding Stars, a subsidiary of Ahold Delhaize USA, supports healthier eating by helping people make informed decisions about the products they choose through a three-star nutrition navigation system.²⁰ Guiding Stars also works to help stores make good decisions, such as committing to offering 50 percent of their inventory as starred products. Launched 16 years ago, Guiding Stars is now available in more than 2,000 retail locations.

Chicago’s Food Equity Agenda is a private-public partnership built on an acknowledgement and understanding there were differences in the approach to **hunger and food systems**.²¹ The City recently established a Food Equity Council to create a unified approach focused on coalition-building and environmental sustainability.

“2020 was a time that a lot of organizations stepped back and thought about their practices toward equity, justice, or food sovereignty, and I think what is urgent now is to take that momentum that we felt then and really think about the solutions we’re implementing. How can we make sure that the communities that were often left out are central to it and generating wealth off of it? So often we’re doing work in service of and not building up, but I think it’s key.”

RUBY FERGUSON, CITY OF CHICAGO / THE GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY



“Keurig Dr Pepper’s partnership with Stop & Shop is a good example of how no one owns the entire story. We as a brand sell our products to Stop & Shop, so we don’t have total control over where they show up in the store, and Stop & Shop doesn’t have total control of the products we’re making. But we all got in a room and decided together that we wanted to try different ways in-store to promote our ‘Better-For-You’ beverages front-and-center in an under-resourced community. Showing that this pilot works means that we can be armed with that knowledge and take it to other retailers across the country to work together to provide meaningful impact.”

**MELANIE CONDON,
KEURIG DR PEPPER**

Leadership in Action: Stop & Shop and Keurig Dr Pepper

Based in Quincy, MA, the Stop & Shop Supermarket Company, a Collaboratory Leadership Council Co-Chair, is a northeast regional leader focused on innovations that address food insecurity and advance access to nutritious foods with data-informed initiatives.

Stop & Shop’s store in the Grove Hall neighborhood of Boston employs an in-house nutritionist who lives in and has strong ties to the community. The Grove Hall store provides information on the Guiding Stars program so that consumers can more easily find 3-, 2-, and 1-star products.²² In partnership with H2HC Leadership Council member Keurig Dr Pepper (KDP), the Grove Hall Stop & Shop is executing a healthy beverage pilot and giving priority placement to healthier products on end caps and in drop bins located near registers.

Andrew Archambault, KDP’s Chief Customer Officer, and Gordon Reid, President of Stop & Shop, discussed these initiatives at Partnership for a Healthy America’s 2022 virtual summit.²³ Archambault described KDP’s commitment to ensuring that 60 percent of their products would fit a definition of positive hydration by 2025. With Stop & Shop already investing heavily in the Grove Hall community to drive healthier outcomes, the company was ideally positioned to partner with KDP and examine how to merchandise those healthier products at retail to reach more customers.

Stop & Shop has also launched the app-based Flashfood program in several of its stores.²⁴ The program offers steep discounts on produce, meat, and dairy products that are nearing their expiration date; the products are located in a dedicated cooler at the front of the store. Using the mobile app, consumers are able to identify what products, at what cost, are available at which stores.

A strong community partner and program innovator, Stop & Shop is committed to collecting and sharing program data and lessons learned.

(L-R) Gordon Reid and Karen Mitchell, Stop & Shop





“A lot of times when we talk about communities that we serve we’re focused on the deficits, and so we show up in the community and we say, ‘We know what you need’, but we don’t think about what’s already happening and vibrant and thriving there.”

RUBY FERGUSON, CITY OF CHICAGO / THE GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY

Top: (L-R) Julie Green, Guiding Stars; Ruby Ferguson, City of Chicago / GCFD; Prof. Wiljeana Glover, KMH Center for Health Innovation and Entrepreneurship; and Nicolene Hengen, H2HC

Middle-Left: (L-R) Richard Sheward, Children’s HealthWatch; Catherine Lynn, GBFB; and Cindy Hall Kouré, H2HC

Middle-Right: (L-R) Jenna Mills, Eat Well Global and Thomas Dorney, The Root Cause Coalition

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Stop & Shop School Food Pantry Program

was founded in 2019 to address a critical need among students: consistent access to healthy food and personal care products. With 170 in-school pantries and counting, the program helps ensure no child has to go to school hungry – and that students are fueled for success in the classroom and beyond. The program is currently assisting an estimated 40,000 students and families in the Northeast, from pre-K to postgraduate. Stop & Shop’s goal is to expand the program to 400 pantries by 2027.

The Greater Chicago Food Depository, in partnership with Thierer Family Foundation, won a Chicago Innovation Award

in November 2022 for their technological development of a digital platform, Vivory.²⁵ The platform helps people locate food pantries, meal programs, and other support services. The Find Food search tool within the platform allows users to search in Spanish, find agencies with convenient hours, and determine where certain languages are spoken and hot meals are offered.²⁶



(L-R) Elizabeth Thompson, GBFB; Nicole Den-Ouden, Bristol-Myers Squibb; and Melanie Condon, Keurig Dr Pepper

Cross-Sector Collaboration Moves the Work Forward

Effective, integrated solutions require the collaboration of thought leaders from diverse sectors. Speakers and participants identified the following suggested best practices:

- **Connect product innovations with a social innovation and business model.** The Babson program strives for “innovation configurations” that help entrepreneurs integrate socially responsible innovation that incorporate community and collective needs into entrepreneurial business models.
- **Focus on assets versus solely focusing on deficits.** When evaluating community needs, one should consider first what is already happening and vibrant. A focus that builds on assets and reduces barriers shifts the dynamic and leads to building on what has already been shown to be successful. Consider existing programs, then in planning, identify near-term priorities, and identify how to move forward.
- **Join forces rather than duplicate work.** Increased information sharing will uncover opportunities to collaborate rather than duplicate. For example, when Guiding Stars learned that Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy was working on nutrient profiling, they chose to collaborate on advocating for a national standard.
- **Include agricultural solutions and sustainability.** Ensuring the food system is resilient and regenerative—not extractive—is essential to addressing food insecurity. One focus of the City of Chicago Food Equity Council has been to invest in urban agriculture and emerging land trusts to transform vacant city-owned lots into community gardens and urban farms. The City aims to help these hyper-local food systems flourish by investing in human capital and financially supporting independent growers to maximize use of urban space.

Health Equity and Pathways to Success

Discussing health equity and pathways to success from a healthcare and nonprofit perspective were **Dr. Thea James, Dr. Elsie Taveras,** and **David Waters.**

Launched a year ago under the leadership of Dr. James, Boston Medical Center's Health Equity Accelerator is a radical, system-wide transformation built to deliver health justice and wellbeing by bringing together leading-edge research, patient and community partnerships, and clinical operations.²⁷

Dr. Taveras provided details of Mass General Brigham's United Against Racism initiative, a long-term, multi-million-dollar commitment to address the many adverse ways that racism impacts MGB's patients, employees, culture, and the broader community.²⁸

David Waters discussed Community Servings' leadership in the national food as medicine movement, noting significant strides in recent years in both research and the healthcare system's support of medically tailored meals and other nutrition interventions in the management and treatment of diet-related disease.²⁹

"As H2HC works to catalyze solutions to national food, nutrition, and health inequities, we welcome your feedback on new perspectives and partnerships that our convenings have fostered."

NICOLENE HENGEN, H2HC

(L-R) Dr. Elsie Taveras, MGB; Dr. Thea James, BMC; David Waters, Community Servings; and Sara Bleich, USDA



All three organizations made substantial public health commitments following the 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health:

Boston Medical Center (BMC): Boston Medical Center, the largest safety-net provider in New England, will build farms at two new facilities in 2023 to supply fresh, local produce to hospitalized patients, facility cafeterias, and its prescription-based food pantry, where primary care doctors can refer their patients for free, healthy food. Among its own patient population, BMC also commits to close the “SNAP Gap,” the gap between those eligible and actively enrolled in SNAP, by expanding screening for food insecurity and streamlining Medicaid and SNAP enrollment in its primary care offices. Finally, BMC has invested in a local, minority-owned, healthy food market that will open in 2023 alongside an affordable housing development in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston. The market is expected to increase the availability of healthy, affordable food in a historically marginalized community.

“Pre-COVID, we talked about upstream and downstream and the determinants of health. When we came through COVID, we had a much deeper understanding of structural and systemic drivers of disparities and inequities. We developed much more intentionality around understanding and recognizing that inequities are so much the status quo that they appear normal.”

DR. THEA JAMES, BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER

“COVID laid bare what we already knew. We had trouble getting groceries—imagine what it’s like for those who don’t have our privilege and how the system sets them up to fail. The collaborations we built were so impressive—how do we institutionalize them going forward? None of us can do this alone. We need corporate, government, and healthcare partners.”

DAVID WATERS, COMMUNITY SERVINGS

Community Servings: Community Servings, a regional nonprofit organization, will provide 10 million medically tailored, home-delivered meals to individuals and families experiencing nutrition insecurity and chronic illness in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It will co-lead the national Food is Medicine Coalition’s Accelerator program to incubate 15 new medically tailored home-delivered meals programs in states that are unserved or underserved by existing programs. It will additionally expand a workforce development training program for individuals experiencing barriers to employment, so that they are trained in food service production, and provide resources to help trainees subsequently receive employment in the food service industry.

Mass General Brigham: The nonprofit integrated healthcare system Mass General Brigham will build two state-of-the-art teaching kitchens to increase access to fresh, healthy food by delivering “food is medicine” programs, healthy meals, nutrition screening and counseling, and healthy cooking classes to local communities. It will also invest \$6.35 million to build the capacity of 7 community-based organizations to reduce food insecurity, promote nutrition equity, and administer “food is medicine” programs and medically tailored meals in Massachusetts. Mass General Brigham also commits to expanding screening for food insecurity and maximizing SNAP and WIC enrollment among its patient population.

“We saw how much burden social risk factors contribute to health—how chronic disease and social risk factors contributed to severe COVID and death. Surprising and heartening was how much we started putting down our barriers and walls of where we work and who with—how much partnership could expand the impact of our work.”

DR. ELSIE TAVERAS, MASS GENERAL BRIGHAM

Themes, Insights, and Action Steps

The day concluded with new perspectives and innovative ideas for advancing our work to share, educate, and uplift innovative, scalable models from around the country.

A Whole-of-Society Approach

Throughout the Summit, as presenters and participants showcased innovative programs and shared ideas, the conversation returned to the core idea that moving from hunger to health requires a whole-of-society approach—with involvement and leadership from the private and public sectors along with those with lived experience. Presenters and participants identified several pressing goals:

- **Engage critical stakeholders, including from the corporate and healthcare sectors:** Moving from hunger to health requires broad involvement that emphasizes inclusion and leadership from those with lived experience as well as from corporations, the healthcare and food industries, and government.
- **Remove barriers to collaboration and shared learning:** We must build a shared language and awareness of the work others are doing and eliminate unnecessary duplication, such as developing food and nutrition insecurity screening tools. As with all initiatives, opportunities for collaboration must be created through a lens of equity and inclusion.
- **Transform the health system:** Create a health system that is not focused solely on treating disease but on preventing disease. This requires buy-in, active involvement, and innovative leadership from within the healthcare sector.
- **Prioritize equity:** We need to address inequities and inequalities by focusing on the social drivers of health, involving the community in seeking solutions, and challenging assumptions.
- **Demonstrate cost savings:** To bring in key players from the public and private sectors, increase research, and expand our reach, we must advance an economic argument and demonstrate return on investment (ROI). Building a narrative around potential cost savings is critical.
- **Convene and collaborate:** Opportunities to collaborate and share are essential for moving forward together. In that vein, plans for H2HC convenings in 2023 are under way.
- **Build a repository of innovative examples:** There is a pressing need for outlining criteria and developing a framework for success as well as tracking and sharing information on effective programs through a robust website and platform. Included should be programs that eliminate barriers and enable innovation among people with lived experience, put money and resources into the hands of consumers, and improve and expand nutrition education for healthcare providers.



“What do we each have to bring to the table? If you have the right people around the table and they are willing to share their assets, then you can cause and effect enormous change. That is what the Collaboratory is doing here today.”

**CATHERINE D'AMATO,
THE GREATER BOSTON
FOOD BANK**



Top: (L-R) Ché Anderson, UMass Chan Medical School, and Sara Bleich, USDA

Middle left: (L-R) Anne Fox and Lauren Lele, MGB

Middle right: (L-R) Nicolene Hengen, H2HC, and Ya Xuan Sun, Harvard T.H. School of Public Health

Bottom: (L-R) Diane Bevan, Thornberry Partners, and Caitlin Hodgkins, Congressional Staff to Congressman James McGovern



Participants

AHOLD DELHAIZE USA

Elizabeth Chace-Marino

THE ALLIANCE FOR BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

Molly Bartlett

BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER**

Thea James, MD

BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB

Ronda Copher

Nicole Den Ouden

Karl Magnussen

CENTER FOR HEALTH LAW AND POLICY INNOVATION, HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

Katie Garfield

CHILDREN'S HEALTHWATCH

Ana Población

Richard Sheward

COMMUNITY CARE COOPERATIVE (C3)

Kim Prendergast

COMMUNITY SERVINGS

Jean Terranova

David Waters

CONGRESSIONAL STAFF TO CHAIRMAN JAMES MCGOVERN

Caitlin Hodgkins

EAT WELL GLOBAL

Jenna Mills

EMMANUEL COLLEGE

Adam Silver

ETM MANUFACTURING

Betsy Scheffel

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, USDA

Sara Bleich

Christine Ruggieri

Cynthia Tackett

FOOD SYSTEMS FOR THE FUTURE

Ertharin Cousin

Jennifer Kelly

FRIEDMAN SCHOOL OF NUTRITION SCIENCE AND POLICY, TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Dariush Mozaffarian, MD

Meghan O'Hearn, Doctoral Student

THE GREATER BOSTON FOOD BANK***

Kate Adams

Pranita Amarasinghe

Catherine D'Amato

Caroline Flor

Catherine Lynn

Diana Powers

Cheryl Schondek

Elizabeth Thompson

Carol Tienken

Aprylle Wallace

GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY & CITY OF CHICAGO

Ruby Ferguson

GUIDING STARS LICENSING COMPANY

Julie Greene

**HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH**

Ya Xuan Sun, Graduate Student

HEALTH LEADS

Sarah Primeau

HUNGER TO HEALTH COLLABORATORY

Nicolene Hengen

Cynthia Hall Kouré

Richard MacMillan

Samantha Smith

KDEMPSEY CREATIVE

Karen Dempsey

**KERRY MURPHY HEALEY CENTER FOR HEALTH
INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP,
BABSON COLLEGE**

Michele Bernier

Wiljeana Glover

KEURIG DR PEPPER***

Melanie Condon

MASS GENERAL BRIGHAM

Lauren Fiechtner, MD

Anne Fox

Lauren Lele

Kristina McLoughlin

Maria Rios

Emma Steinberg, MD

Tracy Sylven

Elsie Taveras, MD

Anne Thornedike, MD

Priscilla Wang, MD

MCKINSEY & COMPANY*

Tamara Baer, MD

MUSEUM OF SCIENCE**

Jonathan Fanning

Susan Heilman

Sharon Horrigan

Tim Ritchie

David Sittenfeld

Lisa Urovitch

POINT32HEALTH FOUNDATION

Caitlin Sullivan

ROOT CAUSE COALITION

Thomas Dorney

SILK FIELDS

Kim Goldinger

**SLOAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT,
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

John Core

STOP & SHOP***

Karen Mitchell

Gordon Reid

THORNBERRY PARTNERS

Diane Bevan

UMASS CHAN MEDICAL SCHOOL

Ché Anderson

*H2HC Partner

**H2HC Advisory Council

***H2HC Leadership Council

Please note: Titles and organizational affiliations reflect accuracy at the time of the referenced event.

Hunger to Health Collaboratory: Thought Leadership in Action

Mission and History

Founded in 2018 by innovative leaders from Stop & Shop and The Greater Boston Food Bank, the Hunger to Health Collaboratory (H2HC) catalyzes integrated solutions to food, health, and nutrition inequities through a focus on the social drivers of health.

H2HC engages cross-sector thought leaders, uplifts innovative and effective models from around the country, and educates stakeholders. H2HC believes that everyone should have access to sufficient, affordable, nutritious food and seeks to include diverse voices in its work to address food, nutrition, and health inequities.

Leadership

The Collaboratory hired its first Executive Director, Nicolene Hengen, in July 2021. Leadership Council members include The Greater Boston Food Bank, Keurig Dr Pepper, and Stop & Shop. Advisory Council members include Boston Medical Center and the Museum of Science. Partnership support is provided by McKinsey and Company. Collaboratory members have extensive industry and nonprofit leadership experience.



Accomplishments 2018-2022

Collaboratory convenings, both in person and virtual, have brought together thought leaders and participants representing healthcare and public health, academia, the private and nonprofit sectors, government and social services, and philanthropy. Other successes include:

\$1.2M

granted in support of innovative, community-based models and research studies

19

funded community-based organizations

8+

food access and health equity research reports

800+

cross-sector thought leaders at in-person and virtual convenings

9

strategic convenings from 2018-2022

6

organizational members representing the corporate, healthcare, and nonprofit sectors

4

event partners that support convenings

Strategic Convenings 2018-2022

The Power of Collaboration (2018)
Mobilizing Healthcare for a Hunger-Free Massachusetts (2019)
Hunger to Health Summit: Acting Together to Address Food Insecurity (2020)
Addressing Community Inequalities During COVID-19 Recovery Townhall (2020)
Mobilizing Healthcare Grantee Forum (2020)
Hunger to Health in COVID and Beyond: Food Policy as Health Policy (2020)
Entrepreneurial Thinking in the Social Sector (2020)
The Economic and Health Impacts of Food Insecurity: The Business Community As Changemaker (2021)
H2HC Fall Summit: The Way Forward (2022)

H2HC-Supported Research 2018-2022

[\\$2.4 Billion: The Avoidable Cost of Hunger in Massachusetts](#) (2018)³⁰
[Gaps in Food Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Massachusetts](#) (2021)³¹
Food Access in Connecticut: One Year into the COVID-19 Pandemic (2021)
Food Insecurity, Consumer Habits, & Chronic Disease in the First Months of the COVID-19 Crisis (2022)
[Use of Food Assistance Programs during COVID-19](#) (2022)³²
[Creating a Dignified & Welcoming Environment in Food Pantries](#) (2022)³³
Poor Mental Health as a Consequence and Driver of Food Insecurity (2022)
[Addressing the Health Consequences of Hunger Through a Hospital-Based Economic Mobility Pilot](#) (2022)³⁴
[Opportunities to Improve Food Equity and Access in Massachusetts](#) (2022)³⁵

Grantmaking in CT, MA, and RI 2019-2021

2019

Food Bank of Western MA
Healthy Waltham
Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
Melrose Wakefield Healthcare
Northern Berkshire Community Coalition
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
The Greater Boston Food Bank
The Open Door
Waltham Fields Community Farms

2020

Africano Waltham
Children's HealthWatch
Ethos
Everett Community Growers
Food Bank of Western MA
Foodshare
Growing Places
Just Roots
Our Neighbors' Table

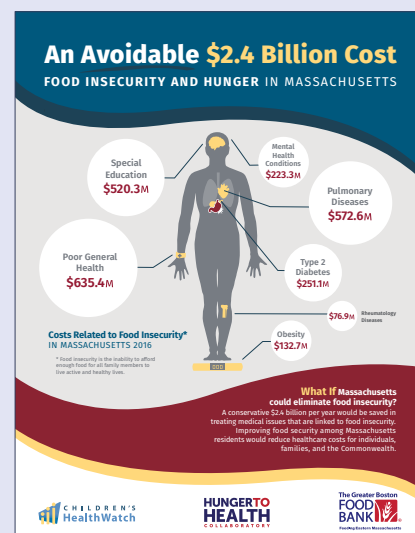
Quincy Asian Resources Inc.
Rhode Island Community Food Bank
The Food Voice
The Greater Boston Food Bank

2021

Children's HealthWatch
Foodshare
RI Community Food Bank
The Greater Boston Food Bank



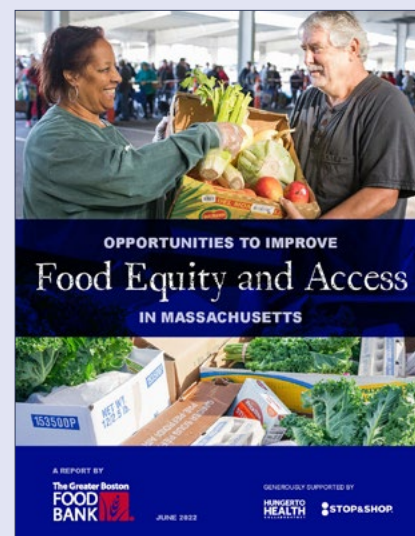
In July 2019, “Mobilizing Healthcare for a Hunger-Free Massachusetts” convened healthcare, government, and food access stakeholders to focus on whole person care and communities of practice, and featured speakers including Chairman Jim McGovern (D-MA).



Conducted by Children’s HealthWatch with collaboration from The Greater Boston Food Bank, this 2018 H2HC-funded study was the first state-level research to mirror the 2015 Bread for the World Institute’s study, “\$160 Billion: The Health Costs of Hunger in America”.



In November 2019, “Hunger to Health Summit: Acting Together to Address Food Insecurity” convened regional and national leaders and featured speakers including then MA Attorney General Maura Healey.



H2HC funded a second annual GBFB statewide survey, released in June 2022, that identified changes in food insecurity, documented food pantry use and SNAP enrollment, and made recommendations to improve food access and equity.

Endnotes

All H2HC Fall Summit 2022 presentations are available on YouTube: bit.ly/3ZecDtN

Read the H2HC Winter 2023 Newsletter: conta.cc/3ksDoMS

- 1 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health: bit.ly/3kO2zIR
- 2 Sara Bleich presentation – *National Challenges & Opportunities: USDA’s Actions on Food and Nutrition Security*: bit.ly/41DG4a6
- 3 Leveraging the White House Conference to Promote and Elevate Nutrition Security: The Role of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service: bit.ly/3SJz2MX
- 4 USDA Actions on Nutrition Security: bit.ly/3mb5uvw
- 5 *The New England Journal of Medicine*: “Projected U.S. State-Level Prevalence of Adult Obesity and Severe Obesity”: bit.ly/3KL7uFc
- 6 USDA Food and Nutrition Service Programs: fns.usda.gov/programs
- 7 Food and Nutrition Service – Lunches Consumed from School Are the Most Nutritious: bit.ly/3ETim02
- 8 CDC – Decline in Early Childhood Obesity in WIC Families: bit.ly/3ZgArgt
- 9 Food and Nutrition Service – SNAP-Ed Works: bit.ly/3Zbmoc6
- 10 The White House – Fact Sheet: The Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than \$8 Billion in New Commitments as Part of Call to Action for White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health: bit.ly/3lCk7zu
- 11 NPR – The expanded child tax credit briefly slashed child poverty. Here’s what else it did: bit.ly/3ZBFCYq
- 12 FRAC – Healthy School Meals for All Fact Sheet: bit.ly/3L8qT3d
- 13 Medicaid – About Section 1115 Demonstrations: bit.ly/3lI327q
- 14 Task Force Report – “Informing the White House Conference: Ambitious, Actionable Recommendations to End Hunger, Advance Nutrition, and Improve Health in the United States”: informingwhc.org/2022-task-force-report
- 15 The Biden-Harris Administration National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health: bit.ly/3y4MQZb
- 16 Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian presentation – History of the White House Conference: bit.ly/3mpbrVI
- 17 Food As Medicine: bit.ly/3ESS3qG
- 18 Produce Rx – Using Prescriptions to Improve the Affordability of Healthy Food: bit.ly/3EP1Cqr
- 19 Kerry Murphy Healey Center for Health Innovation and Entrepreneurship: bit.ly/3KV8Aya
- 20 Guiding Stars Licensing Company: guidingstars.com
- 21 Chicago’s Food Equity Agenda: bit.ly/3kCycFv
- 22 Stop & Shop Expands Efforts to Combat Food Insecurity with Grove Hall, ‘Wellness Space’: bit.ly/3lErM0o
- 23 Partnership for a Healthier America’s Food Equity Summit 2022: bit.ly/3Yk0vpV
- 24 Stop & Shop Flashfood Program: stopandshop.com/pages/Flashfood
- 25 Greater Chicago Food Depository and Thierer Family Foundation win Chicago Innovation Award: bit.ly/3mjoEQ2
- 26 Greater Chicago Food Depository – Find Food: chicagosfoodbank.org/find-food
- 27 Boston Medical Center – Health Equity Accelerator: bmc.org/health-equity-accelerator
- 28 Mass General Brigham – United Against Racism: bit.ly/3J7r25p
- 29 Community Servings: servings.org
- 30 *\$2.4 Billion: The Avoidable Cost of Hunger in Massachusetts* (2018): bit.ly/3JbfnT4
- 31 *Gaps in Food Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Massachusetts* (2021): bit.ly/3mglijr
- 32 *Use of Food Assistance Programs during COVID-19* (2022): bit.ly/3ZDO49y
- 33 *Creating a Dignified & Welcoming Environment in Food Pantries* (2022): bit.ly/3lQsKGS
- 34 *Addressing the Health Consequences of Hunger Through a Hospital-Based Economic Mobility Pilot* (2022): bit.ly/3mmB1Lg
- 35 *Opportunities to Improve Food Equity and Access in Massachusetts* (2022): bit.ly/3kLtSn6

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