



Accelerating Solutions for Systemic Change

**HUNGERTO
HEALTH**
COLLABORATORY

Fall 2024 Summit

November 21, 2024 | The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston



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H2HC Fall Summit participants at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston on November 21, 2024

NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear friends,

As we face the uncertainties of a new administration, our collective work to advance health equity becomes more important than ever. We are certainly all in this together, whatever shape things may take both at home and abroad, so let's recommit to building on one another's work to strengthen our shared impact.

Under President Biden, we enjoyed the tailwinds of a renewed national focus on ending hunger and improving health and well-being by 2030. A parallel United Nations strategy to address hunger and much more through its 17 Sustainable Development Goals is also geared toward a target of 2030.¹

As new U.S. leadership makes changes to our international and domestic partnerships, policies, and responsibilities, we all have an important role to play in stewarding and strengthening this important national and international momentum. We also face sharply escalating social and economic costs related to health inequities; a September 2024 report by the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions estimated the cost of health inequities in the U.S. at almost \$320 billion a year.²

The additional systemic challenges of persistent poverty and unprecedented levels of wealth inequality also endanger both our society and our democracy, and our collective work to make our country healthier and our democracy stronger must address all the social and structural drivers of health.

At our 2024 Fall Summit, *Accelerating Solutions for Systemic Change*, we talked about these issues and more in an inspiring day of compelling discussions and new connections. The energy of the speakers and participants, along with exciting examples of creative solution seeking from around the country, left many of us with a renewed sense of our collective agency and shared purpose.

I look forward to collaborating with you in 2025 and beyond.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicolene". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N".

Nicolene Hengen

Executive Director

Hunger to Health Collaboratory

Mark your calendar for H2HC's next Fall Summit on Thursday, November 6, 2025, at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.



Stephen Ritz, Green Bronx Machine, and Fall Summit participants



“I have one goal, to get teachers growing food with kids all around the world.”

Stephen Ritz, Founder, Green Bronx Machine

1 | Accelerating Solutions for the Next Generation

Healthy Students = Healthy Communities

Stephen Ritz, an educator in the South Bronx and founder of the Green Bronx Machine (GBM), encourages teachers around the world to grow food with their students. Students at C.S. 55 in the South Bronx, where Ritz teaches, contend with high poverty rates and few supermarkets.³ **Ritz believes that “...children will never be well read if they are not well fed.”**

Green Bronx Machine is one of many school garden-based education programs in New York City and around the country that are effectively advancing health equity through hands-on learning and entrepreneurial skill building. A host of studies clearly indicate the benefits of garden-based school programs, especially those that incorporate nutrition education.⁴ Benefits include positive changes to attitudes about eating fruits and vegetables as well as improved academic performance.⁵ Ritz said that GBM’s successes include significant increases in attendance rates, test scores, and graduation rates.

Today, GBM is a global movement with programs throughout New York City Public Schools as well as in several states and countries.⁶ GBM's K-12 curriculum integrates food and nutrition lessons across all subject areas, with a mission to build healthy, equitable, and resilient communities through inspired education, local food systems, and 21st century workforce development.

School Spotlight

Summit participants virtually met students, teachers, and Principal Jonathan Lonshein of P.S. 993Q in Queens, NY, a special education school with nine sites that has partnered with GBM to advance hands-on garden and nutrition education. Ritz introduced Student Government President Kevin Ayala Miranda, a high school student who champions increased access to healthy, fresh food for students. Together with GBM, Kevin, fellow students, and school staff developed a year-round indoor gardening program and student-run café.

Kevin and his classmates now operate a school café serving smoothies, salads, and healthy entrées daily using fresh produce grown on site in GBM-provided school garden towers. Their efforts are helping to promote healthy living, learning, and community engagement with support from fellow students and educators across schools citywide.⁸

“This whole experience has been like a dream for me. When I learned about Mr. Ritz and the Green Bronx Machine, I knew I wanted to do more for my school. When we wrote to him, and he wrote back, we could not believe it. It got me and my classmates even more excited. Now we have the coolest classroom in the school and all of us are eating better, working harder, and LOVE coming to school. I hope students everywhere get to have Green Bronx Machine in their school too!”

Kevin Miranda Ayala,
student, P.S. 993Q

2023 GBM Impact Report⁷

GBM and its education partners conduct data analysis through student and teacher surveys collected pre-, during, and post-program implementation. Results showed that in 2023:



275,000+
students received
GBM instruction.



**GBM students
in The Bronx
consumed
867,310
servings of fruit
and vegetables.**



**Schools grew
17,000
pounds of produce
in New York City.**



**Before starting
the program,
935
students reported
eating zero or one
serving of fruits
and vegetables
daily.**



**After participating
in the program,
100 %
of students
increased their
daily consumption
of fresh fruits and
vegetables.**



(L-R) Gordon Reid, Stop & Shop; Cecelia McKenney, Quest Diagnostics; Emily Yu, Newman's Own Foundation; Nishant Roy, Chobani; Nicolene Hengen, H2HC

MODERATOR

Nicolene Hengen, Executive Director, H2HC

SPEAKERS

Cecilia McKenney, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, Quest Diagnostics

Gordon Reid, former President, Stop & Shop

Nishant Roy, Chief Impact Officer, Chobani

Emily Yu, Chief Partnerships and Program Officer, Newman's Own Foundation

2 | Accelerating Solutions through Corporate Action

When H2HC Executive Director Nicolene Hengen introduced the first panel of the day, she called attention to the fact that the new Administration adds a sense of both uncertainty and urgency to the work of reducing food and nutrition insecurity and advancing health equity. She reiterated former Vice President Kamala Harris's mandate, "Now is not the time to throw up our hands. Now is the time for us to roll up our sleeves."

All of the panelists strongly agreed that this is the time to focus on corporate social responsibility commitments, pursue mission-driven goals, and continue to develop community support.

Nishant Roy, Chobani's chief impact officer, said that Chobani has existed through both Democratic and Republican administrations, and politics would not change either their business model or their commitment to the communities they serve.

Food insecurity is a big part of health equity, noted Cecilia McKenney, senior vice president and chief human resources officer at Quest Diagnostics. McKenney emphasized that no matter what has changed at the federal level, Quest will not deviate from its mission to advance health equity through critical testing and health services.

Quest Diagnostics, the world's leading provider of diagnostic medical testing, created Quest for Health Equity (Q4HE) in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to close health gaps in underserved communities through collaboration, testing, education, and financial support. Q4HE currently works with community partners in seven cities: Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Newark, and Paterson (New Jersey).

“Look for the opportunities,” advised Gordon Reid, former president of Stop & Shop, a more than century-old regional grocery retail business based in five northeastern states. Instead of dwelling on the November presidential election, he suggested that organizations find ways to influence the national conversation around food and nutrition.

At the same time, Emily Yu, chief partnerships and program officer at Newman’s Own Foundation, encouraged the group to check in on their nonprofit partners that have had to contend with multiple challenges during the past five years including COVID and its aftermath, the divisiveness of the recent presidential election, and increasing effects of climate change, to name a few.

The Long Haul

Too often, hunger is seen as something that can’t happen here in one of the world’s wealthiest countries, but the statistics prove otherwise. In 2023, food insecurity in the U.S. affected 47 million people, including 14 million children, according to the USDA’s *Household Food Security in the United States in 2023*.¹⁰

Newman’s Own Foundation has a rich legacy of “giving it all away,” donating 100 percent of the company’s profits and royalties to improving children’s lives.¹¹ “Whether you’re in philanthropy, in a business, or a payor, there’s a real need out there for amazing projects,” said Yu. Newman’s Own Foundation received more than 500 grant applications on the topic of food justice for children in the U.S. in their 2024 prize cycle.

As a food business, Stop & Shop is also in the nutrition business, and combating hunger, especially in schools, is part of its mission. “We’re in it for the long term,” said Reid. “We’ve opened up 250 school-based food pantries across our footprint, where the kids can go and get food in the morning and also take some home in the evening.”



“Hunger in this country has a marketing problem.”

Nishant Roy, Chief Impact Officer, Chobani



“Our commitment is to be here, irrespective of who is in the White House, figure out how to find common ground, and continue to pursue our mission-critical work to create a healthier world, one life at a time.”

Cecelia McKenney, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, Quest Diagnostics



(L-R) Gordon Reid, Stop & Shop; Cecelia McKenney, Quest Diagnostics; and Emily Yu, Newman’s Own Foundation



“A hungry child has no chance of getting a good education.”

Gordon Reid, former President, Stop & Shop

The Magic of the Community

Newman’s Own Foundation focuses on participatory grantmaking, and one way that Yu includes community members is to step back and “...make the table a little longer.” She challenged the audience to do that, whether that’s through an advisory group, community focus groups, or a grantmaking decision group.

In Baltimore, Quest for Health Equity, in partnership with the Green Bronx Machine, is investing in a local YMCA to create a nonprofit coalition that addresses food insecurity in the city. “At the Y, we offer access to testing because that allows us to have a conversation with people about their health, which invariably leads to what they’re eating and education on how to eat healthy,” said McKenney. “And part of that formula is, we invest in community health workers.”

Roy shared several inspiring stories about Chobani’s founder, chairman, and CEO, Hamdi Ulukaya, who built the company based on the commitment that it would do well by doing good.¹² Much of that “good” is expressed through local investments in community programs that increase access to nutritious food, with the goal of fighting hunger where employees live and work.

In 2016, Ulukaya started the Tent Partnership for Refugees, having learned through his own experience that “...the minute a refugee gets a job is the minute they stop being a refugee.” More recently, Chobani launched Super Milk, a nutritionally dense, shelf-stable product distributed in partnership with the American Red Cross to support communities affected by natural disasters.

Stop & Shop employs nutritionists who are available to advise customers in marginalized communities. For example, the Grove Hall store located in Dorchester, MA, includes a





(L-R) Emily Yu, Newman's Own Foundation; and Nishant Roy, Chobani



“If we work together, and if we leverage our dollars together, one plus one really can equal three. And the reason that I’m here is that I’m trying to make one plus one equal five.”

Emily Yu, Chief Partnerships and Program Officer, Newman's Own Foundation

dedicated community wellness space (built at no cost to the community) and a registered dietitian who offers free nutrition programs including one-on-one consultations, community classes, grocery store tours, and more.¹³

Stop & Shop’s substantial investment in school food pantries ensures that students in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island can learn without being hungry. Reid said that students participate in both setting up and running the pantries, creating a space that students are proud of, feel a sense of ownership in, and help manage.

Business for Good

Hengen acknowledged the panelists’ willingness to work together and encouraged them to continue sharing ideas on how nonprofits can be more effective partners in moving from short-term interventions like emergency food relief and grantmaking to long-term solutions that advance health equity.

“If there’s less funding from the new administration for social services, perhaps that will force nonprofits and private employers to work together more,” said McKenney. “That’s one of the reasons we’re here [at the Summit] for the first time.”

Reid, a longtime H2HC supporter, spoke about Stop & Shop’s commitment to improving the health of the people they serve. Stop & Shop is working with its six largest suppliers to establish more school pantries, with an ultimate goal of establishing 400.

Roy commented that while there are challenges, he has learned to approach solutions from a private sector perspective. For example, instead of focusing on individual food pantries, Chobani “acts as a force multiplier in the community,” by building thoughtful coalitions and partnerships.



Clare Higgins, Community Action Pioneer Valley; Sharon Scott-Chandler, Action for Boston Community Development; Marybeth Campbell, Worcester Community Action Council; and John Erwin, UMass Chan Medical School

MODERATOR

John Erwin, Vice Chancellor for Government Relations, UMass Chan Medical School

PANELISTS

Marybeth Campbell, CEO, Worcester Community Action Council

Clare Higgins, Executive Director, Community Action Pioneer Valley

Sharon Scott-Chandler, President & CEO, Action for Boston Community Development

3 | Sixty Years of Fighting Poverty in America: Community Action Agencies

Sixty years after the War on Poverty began, “It’s safe to say that we have not won,” said John Erwin, Vice Chancellor for Government Relations at UMass Chan Medical School, in his introduction to the discussion. He noted, however, an important legacy of that effort was the creation of the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) of 1964.¹⁵

The EOA created and funded a series of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) that now number more than 1,000 across the country. Through the Community Services Block Grant, the federal government entrusted CAAs with the unique responsibility of reducing the causes and conditions of poverty in communities throughout the U.S.¹⁶



In his State of the Union Address on January 8, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a War on Poverty.

“This administration today here and now declares unconditional war on poverty in America. I urge this Congress and all Americans to join me in that effort [...] Poverty is a national problem, requiring improved national organization and support. But this attack, to be effective, must also be organized at the State and local level. For the war against poverty will not be won here in Washington. It must be won in the field, in every private home, in every public office, from the courthouse to the White House. Very often, a lack of jobs and money is not the cause of poverty, but the symptom. Our aim is not only to relieve the symptoms of poverty but to cure it—and above all, to prevent it. No single piece of legislation, however, is going to suffice.”¹⁴

Meeting Communities Where They Are

The founding idea was simple: local communities are better suited to addressing poverty than a top-down, one-size-fits-all federal program. Massachusetts is home to 23 of these agencies, each of which responds to their particular community needs. Programs focus on support for early childhood, housing, food insecurity, job education, family planning, energy, fuel, and more, depending on needs.

The panelists spoke about how the aspects of poverty are unique in their respective regions: a large city, a gateway city, and a more rural area.

The deep disparities between high-and-low income lives in Boston are glaring, noted Sharon Scott-Chandler, President & CEO, Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD). She emphasized that current poverty rates in Boston are higher than in decades past and that rising housing costs are insurmountable for people with low incomes. Although Back Bay, a wealthy neighborhood in Boston, and Roxbury, one of the lowest-income neighborhoods in the city, are only two miles apart, residents have a difference in life expectancy of 23 years, exemplifying the profound impact of poverty on health and well-being.⁷

Clare Higgins, Executive Director, Community Action Pioneer Valley, said that the public perception of poverty is that it primarily affects people of color. In the Pioneer Valley in western Massachusetts, however, poverty is mostly White. Rural life presents additional challenges because of the lack of public transportation and the need for a car.



“Boston is a tale of two cities between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots.’”

**Sharon Scott-Chandler,
President & CEO, Action
for Boston Community
Development (ABCD)**

MA Community Action Agencies at Summit



Action for Boston Community

Development (ABCD) started in 1962 as a pilot program funded by the Ford Foundation to address neighborhood issues during an extremely segregated and tumultuous period in Boston and continues to address these issues and more today.

The Worcester Community Action

Council (WCAC) is the federally designated anti-poverty agency for central and south-central Massachusetts.

Community Action Pioneer Valley

(CAPV) provides services to both rural and urban areas including Springfield, one of the poorest communities in the Commonwealth.



“Systemic racism is baked into a lot of the Federal regulations that we are required to abide by, and we are required to force our clients to jump through hoops [to receive assistance]... If we could reduce this burden, we could get more money into people’s pockets.”

Marybeth Campbell, CEO,
Worcester Community
Action Council

In contrast to the rest of the state, Worcester, the second-largest city in MA, has experienced significant economic growth. But that prosperity, said Marybeth Campbell, CEO, Worcester Community Action Council, has put pressure on outlying communities. Families with low incomes are migrating to the southern Worcester County area. The housing supply does not meet the demand, and as a result, rents are high and the quality of housing is low.

The Big Picture

The panelists agreed that addressing poverty via a system created 60 years ago is not realistic. Racism, bureaucracy, and a lack of sustainable funding are consistent barriers. The group urged business leaders to advocate for reducing burdensome regulations that harm nonprofits and their ability to get more money in people’s pockets. For example, the amount of paperwork that an individual must complete to get not even a full year’s worth of heating oil can be overwhelming.

On the agency side, funding is a persistent challenge. The agencies must knit together multiple sources to deliver services—a complex process that requires time and costly business and accounting systems. Higgins compares the funding mechanism to a cafeteria tray where the “...peas can’t touch the potatoes.”

While the CAAs have existed through more than a dozen administrations, their work does not necessarily transcend politics. More than 60 years ago, the federal government created these agencies to help people move toward wealth, yet poverty still exists, and the wealth gap has grown dramatically, especially in communities of color. The three leaders agreed that in addition to the work of CAAs, finding non-governmental solutions is essential, especially in the wake of the November 2024 election.

In the short term, their focus is on improving staff morale and retention, looking for different ways to do their work, and, as best as possible, meeting the needs of their communities. Yet as the agencies continue to feed, house, and care for people, they want to make sure that they do not lose sight of their primary mission—to move people out of poverty and stop “the normalization of need.”



“We’ve been here for 15 elections, 11 presidents. We’re still here. And we’re still going to be here.”

Clare Higgins, Executive
Director, Community
Action Pioneer Valley



Natalia Guevara,
Office of the Assistant
Secretary for Health
(OASH), Health and
Human Services
(HHS); and Sheila
Hanley, Centers for
Medicare and Medicaid
Innovation (CMMI)



Corby Kummer, Food & Society at the Aspen Institute; and Shannon Huneke, Accenture

4 | Accelerating Food Is Medicine Solutions

The Federal Food Is Medicine Toolkit

Following the 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) led the development and implementation of a federal strategy to reduce nutrition-related chronic disease and food insecurity to improve health and racial equity in the U.S.

In September 2024, HHS released a new interactive Food Is Medicine (FIM) toolkit to accelerate collaboration across the public and private sectors.¹⁸

Food Is Medicine Framing Language

Food Is Medicine encompasses a broad range of approaches that promote optimal health and healing and reduce disease burden by providing nutritious food—in conjunction with human services, education, and policy changes—through collaboration at the nexus of health care and community.

MODERATOR

Sheila Hanley, Senior Advisor, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation

SPEAKER

Natalia Guevara, Senior Public Health Advisor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), Health and Human Services (HHS)

MODERATOR

Shannon Huneke, Business Development, Health Equity and Strategic Partnerships, Accenture

SPEAKER

Corby Kummer, Executive Director, Food & Society, Aspen Institute



“Developing the Food is Medicine Toolkit was the biggest assembly of agencies coming together for one project that I’ve seen in 18 years of service.”

Natalia Guevara, Senior Public Health Advisor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), Health and Human Services (HHS)

Key Opportunities of the Federal Food Is Medicine Initiative

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 BUILD PARTNERS
Expand the partners and systems engaged in and that understand their relationship to FIM Interventions | 2 PROVIDE ENABLING TOOLS
Provide resources that create greater unity, expand understanding of impact, and increase permanent FIM efforts |
| 3 CREATE A SHARED ETHOS
Unify and advance shared definitions and principles | 4 DEVELOP COLLABORATIVE ACTION
Support greater coordinated learning and action to support FIM |

Natalia Guevara, senior public health advisor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, HHS, one of the major contributors to the toolkit, said that with so much FIM energy in the private and public sector communities, HHS wanted to unify and advance collective action through a “whole of society” effort that provided a central organizing point.

Unprecedented Collaboration

Guevara said that one of the very first steps that HHS took in the process was to agree on a common language that would serve as framework for aligning and collaborating FIM efforts. To capture the diverse ways that FIM touches people, the framework is purposely “big tent.”

This first-ever national inventory of FIM initiatives and innovative bright spots required an unprecedented level of collaboration across federal agencies such as the Social Security Administration; Departments of Commerce, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, Veteran’s Affairs; and the National Endowment for the Arts. External partners included the Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, Tufts University, the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Heart Association, Instacart, the Aspen Institute, and many more.

Sustainability

Priscilla Wang, MD, a Mass General Brigham medical director and primary care physician, brought up a concern about the sustainability of the Food Is Medicine approach. For this approach to succeed, she noted that FIM must be institutionalized in the same way that other standards of care are institutionalized, funded, and reimbursed by payors.

Guevara and Sheila Hanley, Senior Advisor, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, commented that one of the limitations is a lack of good data and evidence. Efforts are under way to build a database that can support wider reimbursement and funding along with several legislative efforts to fund more pilot projects.

Advancing Food Is Medicine at the Aspen Institute

HHS is partnering with Food & Society at the Aspen Institute as part of a shared commitment to advance unified Food Is Medicine policy and practice. This partnership enables HHS and Aspen to exchange research and implement programs and policy priorities.¹⁹

Corby Kummer, executive director of Food & Society at the Aspen Institute, spoke about the 2024 Food is Medicine Research Action Plan, a one-stop shop created by the Aspen Institute that includes the latest peer-reviewed research on medically-tailored meals, medically-tailored groceries, and produce prescriptions; an overview of Food is Medicine interventions; and a roadmap with simplified recommendations to advance the field.²⁰

Future goals focus on community-based organizations (CBOs), including developing a practice guide and holding listening sessions to understand their challenges, especially around billing and technology.

Kummer also described the Food Leaders Fellowship Program, launched in 2022, that supports emerging leaders to increase their individual and group capacity for change and work toward lasting impact.²¹



“The main question about the future of Food Is Medicine is, ‘What are the metrics by which FIM results can be measured?’”

Corby Kummer, Executive Director, Food & Society, Aspen Institute

Core Elements of FIM Interventions



NAVIGATION

Provided in a range of reinforcing contexts to maximize food access and information that supports individualized healthy food choices aligned with personal health needs and economic resources



FOOD ALIGNMENT

Food provided that aligns with the treatment of diet-related health states, cultural sensitivity, age and stage abilities, and economic resources



CLINICAL/CARE TEAM

Care and navigation provided by a range of professional relationships that support understanding of the value of healthy food in treating diet-related health conditions and connections to access healthy food as a healthcare intervention



EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS

Intergrated with food receipts and provided through a range of intervention types including behavioral health, nutrition education, cooking skills, and other forms of enabling skill building opportunities



5 | 2024 H2HC Prizes for Innovation Winners

H2HC introduced **StreetCred** and **The Giving Grove** as the 2024 winners of H2HC's \$100,000 Prizes for Innovation. H2HC also welcomed back its 2023 winners, Recipe4Health of Alameda County and DC Central Kitchen.

The visibility of the Prizes has expanded significantly in the program's second year, as evidenced by the increase in both the number and geographical diversity of nominations. In 2023, its inaugural prize year, H2HC received 72 nominations from 22 states, and in 2024, received 98 nominations from 36 states.

About StreetCred

Boston Medical Center (BMC) launched StreetCred in 2016 to help families build nutrition security through enhanced economic security.²² StreetCred offers families comprehensive financial coaching, helps access services like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits, and provides free assistance with tax preparation and paid family leave applications.

Data show that although these economic tools are associated with better health for both parents and children, they are complicated to navigate and chronically underused. To overcome this, StreetCred financial navigators meet with families throughout a baby’s first year of life with the opportunity to continue services as the child grows.

StreetCred also founded the Health by Wealth Collective, a coalition of health systems in 13 states working to integrate economic mobility services into medical settings by sharing best practices and technical support. Since 2016, Health by Wealth Collective organizations have returned more than \$16.8 million to 7,700 families.

Why would a pediatric clinic even offer financial services? StreetCred Acting Director Rachel Sagor, MD, explained that they do it because the evidence supports that the services make both children and their families healthier.

“We know that poverty and financial strain lead to poorer physical and mental health outcomes for children and their families,” she said. “And so, by offering anti-poverty medicine in our clinic, we know we’re improving child social and emotional development.”

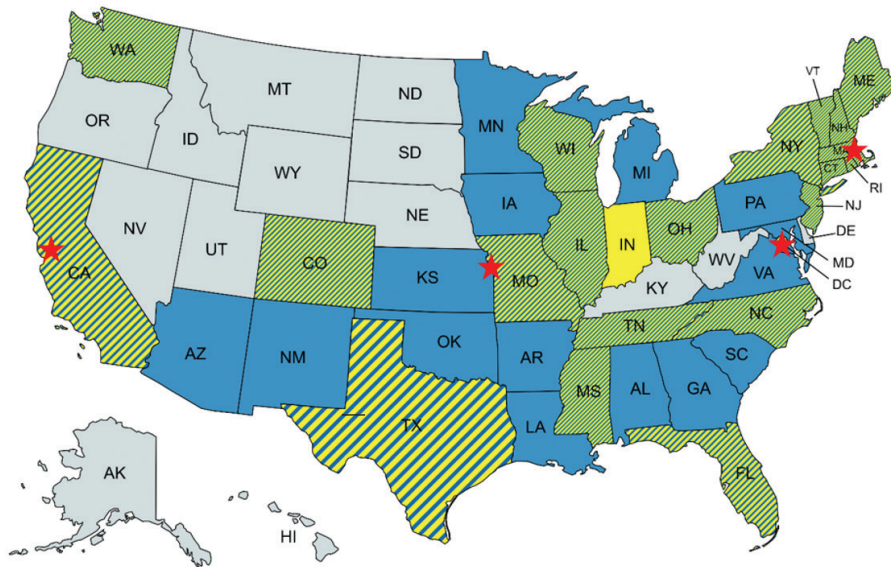
“This prize from the Hunger to Health Collaboratory will allow us to expand our program to another community and support another city. It will also help us meet new potential partners, grow the network of organizations we’re working with, and continue to contribute to thought leadership...around food access and health equity and nutrition.”

Erica Kratofil, Co-Executive Director, The Giving Grove

National Prizes for Innovation

In 2023, H2HC established its national Prizes for Innovation with a five-year, \$1 million commitment. The Prizes celebrate innovative, systemic work in food and nutrition that advances health equity in the U.S.

The reach and visibility of the Prizes have expanded significantly in its first two years, as evidenced by the increase in both the quantity and geographical diversity of nominations.



2023: **72** nominations from **22** states
 2024: **98** nominations from **36** states

■ 2023 Nominations
■ 2024 Nominations
▨ 2023 +2024 Nominations
★ Prize winners

Dr. Sagor pointed out that pediatricians are in a unique position to help families because of their access to patients and patients' trust in them: 80% of children see a doctor annually, and in the first year of life pediatricians see infants at least seven times. At Boston Medical Center, 85% of patients are Medicaid insured, and 50% live at or below the poverty level.

But their work does not end there. Over the past year, as part of Boston Medical Center's Economic Justice Hub, StreetCred has expanded to include prenatal patients in family medicine, obstetrics, and gynecology. The team conducts research to demonstrate the program's impact on health, healthcare use, and economic mobility while advocating for Medicaid coverage to support their services.

StreetCred Success Story

"A few years into StreetCred, I found the mother of two of my adolescent patients crying in our waiting room during my primary care clinic. The family had moved from Nigeria when the children were young. A few years later, the dad died from cancer. Beyond the emotional devastation and grief, his death left their family financially unstable.

So, when I saw her crying that night, I immediately thought of how hard the past few years had been for this family. She said, 'They're giving me \$12,000.' It turned out she was there in our waiting room that night accessing our tax services. She told me she had not filed her taxes in many years because it was something her husband had always done. She said she would never have sought out a tax preparer and didn't think she was eligible. But she saw our StreetCred tax prep team in our clinic waiting room that night and decided to learn more. Tax credits, which millions of families miss out on every year because they don't file, are strong evidence-based tools to reduce poverty."

—**Dr. Rachel Sagor, Acting Director, StreetCred at Boston Medical Center**

About The Giving Grove

Established in 2013, The Giving Grove is a national network that supports community-based partners in planting and caring for fruit trees, nut trees, and berry brambles that improve urban environments, increase the tree canopy, and provide sustainable sources of free, organically grown food in neighborhoods facing high rates of food insecurity.²³

"We are a network of fruit tree nerds with 650 orchards in 16 cities," said Ashley Williamson, co-executive director. "Our goal is 20 cities, and together as a national network, we have planted almost 10,000 trees. Now for a tree organization that may not seem like a very big number, but I want you to think about what an orchard is, and when you break that down we are thinking: little orchards, big impact."

2023 H2HC Prizes for Innovation Winners

Alameda County Recipe4Health is a nationally recognized, award-winning model that integrates food-based interventions into healthcare settings to treat, prevent, and reverse chronic conditions; address food and nutrition and other social determinants of health; and improve health and racial equity.

As the nation's first and leading community kitchen, **DC Central Kitchen (DCK)**, has taken on the root causes of hunger and poverty in Washington, DC for more than 35 years. DCK is an iconic nonprofit and social enterprise that combats hunger and poverty through job training and job creation.

A community orchard includes four to 10 trees. The Giving Grove collaborates with community volunteers who partner with places of faith, schools, and food pantries to help neighborhoods learn how to take care of the trees and manage orchards.

Each little orchard is a tool for bringing neighbors together, and each neighborhood puts its stamp on the use of the orchard. For example, one neighborhood organized their youth to create art in the orchard. Communities host harvest celebrations where residents pick, sample, and share the fruit. As residents interact with a purpose and enjoy the “fruits” of their labor, they develop new bonds and experience their neighborhood as a safer space where they have connections to neighbors and to their wider community.



Lizette Ritz,
Green Bronx
Machine;
and Beverley
Wheeler, DC
Central Kitchen

The Giving Grove Success Story

“I’ll share an example of one of these orchards in Kansas City. It was tucked into a mixed income neighborhood and installed in partnership with our local hub Kansas City Community Gardens and Hope Faith, a rehabilitation organization that supports people who are experiencing houselessness and addiction. I asked a graduate of the program why he was stewarding that orchard. I’m going to filter down what he said to three things—blackberries, purpose, and concrete.

Blackberries. He loves it when the blackberries are in season. Kids from the apartment complex across the street come over to pick berries. They have juice dripping down their faces and staining their fingers and clothes, and he is just joyful about their delight.

Purpose. He told me that he’s made a lot of poor choices that led him into some of his struggles. He had never taken care of a plant before, but when he started learning how to take care of these trees, it started to give him some sense of empowerment and purpose. This was his space. These were his trees. He knew how to take care of them, and he could teach other people.

And concrete. There was a really hot day where program participants had the opportunity to either go inside into an air-conditioned room or work outside with him. There was just one young, pregnant woman who raised her hand and said, ‘I want to go outside with you.’ And so, as they were walking to the orchard he asked, ‘Why did you want to come out here with me?’ She answered, ‘Well, sir, I’ve only had concrete beneath my feet.’

These are important spaces, spaces that matter.”

—Ashley Williamson, Co-Executive Director, The Giving Grove

The Giving Grove considers many factors when developing a new program, including:



DESIGN
to ensure that berries along the perimeters are reachable by little hands



HORTICULTURE
including what types of trees will grow best in which region so that trees are given a good start



EDUCATION AND RESOURCES
starting at square one. The Giving Grove provides education and resources that meet people wherever they are in their growing journey



THE ENVIRONMENT
teaching how to grow fruit in a holistic, organic way that protects the environment, enhances the soil and makes the fruit more nutritious



DATA
allows program leaders to look at their city through different lenses. Data drives decisions about advertising and recruiting, educates, and informs program evaluation



(L-R) Dr. Steven Chen, Alameda County Recipe4Health; Ashley Williamson, The Giving Grove; and Dr. Rachel Sagor, StreetCred



“Our mission is to use food as a tool to strengthen bodies, empower minds, and build community. In over 35 years, we have never, ever strayed from that mission.”

Beverley Wheeler, Chief Knowledge Officer, DC Central Kitchen

6 | H2HC Prize Winners as Changemakers

Collaboration

H2HC’s prize winner panel opened by emphasizing the importance of collaboration in advancing their missions. StreetCred’s first collaborators were patients, which is not unusual in the pediatric clinic that often develops innovative programs in response to patient needs. In this case, a patient’s mother was frustrated with barriers around filing taxes, asked for help, and StreetCred was born.

To describe the different stakeholders at The Giving Grove, Williamson used the term “a network of fungus” in the most positive way. Collaboration is a key part of The Giving Grove. As they add more cities, their collective network becomes more powerful as more members bring different skill sets, with expertise in everything from pawpaw fruit to muscadine grapes.

DC Central Kitchen’s partners are asset-based. Each member has value and together they work toward a common goal to strengthen bodies, empower minds, and build community. Collaboration is also about equity. Wheeler shared that in the District of Columbia, similarly to Boston, life expectancy varies as much as two decades between neighborhoods that have no grocery stores to those that are full of grocery stores. DCKK collaborates with corner stores to provide healthy culturally relevant foods that the neighbors enjoy.

MODERATOR

Julie Meyer, Co-Founder and CEO, AugMentors

SPEAKERS

Dr. Steven Chen, Chief Medical Officer, Alameda County Recipe4Health

Dr. Rachel Sagor, Acting Director, StreetCred at Boston Medical Center

Beverley Wheeler, Chief Knowledge Officer, DC Central Kitchen

Ashley Williamson, Co-Executive Director, The Giving Grove



“I use the acronym ‘FED’. F for funding, E for equity, and D for data. These are the three areas of challenges and the opportunities that bring together the ingredients together for success.”

Dr. Steven Chen, Chief Medical Officer, Alameda County Recipe4Health



In addition to the healthy corner store program, four other social enterprises move DCCK’s mission forward and fund the work: a culinary jobs training program; farm to school program; a community meals program; and three cafés and a catering program that provide living wage jobs and continued staff training for 30 staff members.

Alameda County Recipe4Health, a county-led ecosystem model, works with local BIPOC farmers to deliver food to patients’ homes as part of a prescription that Medicaid covers, combined with health coaching and recipe ingredients.

Alameda County Recipe4Health has five “ingredients” for health

- 1** Safety net health centers or federally qualified health centers
- 2** Food “farmacy” with food sourced directly from the farms
- 3** Behavioral pharmacy, which includes group health coaching
- 4** The Medicaid health plan in the local area, which funds this work
- 5** Hub for staff training and administration that makes it all possible

Measuring Impact

As chief knowledge officer at DC Central Kitchen, Beverley Wheeler focuses on data and their programs’ social return on investment (SROI), which demonstrate outcomes and impact beyond financial returns. For example, the SROI for the culinary jobs training program factors in government resources that are not needed because program participants gained skills and found jobs.

StreetCred tracks problems, healthcare use, attending appointments, vaccination rates, and other variables related to health outcomes. Because the program is housed in a hospital, an added bonus includes access to a research team. At the Summit, Dr. Sagor reported that the

program has three studies under way analyzing the health and economic impact of StreetCred.

Alameda County Recipe4Health uses a framework that considers human health, economic health, and soil or climate health. The framework tries to answer questions such as: What are the human health benefits to the farm workers? What are the health benefits of not having pesticides drift into communities? And how is this all tied together? For example, blood pressure medicines might be cheaper than healthy food, but cost is only part of the equation.

An economist is on the wish list for Steven Chen, MD, chief medical officer of Alameda County Recipe4Health, so that they can calculate, beyond creating economic opportunity, the impact of saving a farm and maintaining living wage jobs for 17 farmers.

Williamson echoed the need for a better way to measure the impact of the orchards. Calculating quantitative data, like counting trees, produce, and people, is easy. But information on how the neighborhood changed because of the orchards, or how the orchards impact social drivers of health, is more difficult to quantify.

7 | Conclusion

The Hunger to Health Collaboratory's goal is to continue to serve as a valuable hub of information and collaboration. The 2024 Fall Summit celebrated leaders and organizations that roll up their sleeves every day. Throughout the day, H2HC asked participants to contribute their ideas and recommendations for future H2HC work and collaborations.

Summit Themes and Recommendations

- + Focus on data, evaluating impact, and the social return on investment
- + Build more inclusive and sustainable local economies through food sector investments
- + Explore more sustainable sources of funding to continue and expand our work through the change of administrations
- + Use technology and AI for good to increase efficiency and make more of potentially reduced federal support
- + Engage the private sector on a deeper level as both funders and advocates of this work

2024 FALL SUMMIT SPEAKERS

Marybeth Campbell, CEO, Worcester Community Action Council

Steven Chen, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Alameda County Recipe4Health

John Erwin, Vice Chancellor for Government Relations, UMass Chan Medical School

Natalia Guevara, Senior Public Health Advisor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, HHS

Sheila Hanley, Senior Advisor, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation

Clare Higgins, Executive Director, Community Action Pioneer Valley

Shannon Huneke, Business Development, Health Equity and Strategic Partnerships, Accenture

Corby Kummer, Executive Director, Food & Society, Aspen Institute

Cecilia McKenney, SVP & Chief Human Resources Officer, Quest Diagnostics

Julie Meyer, Co-Founder and CEO, AugMentors

Gordon Reid, Former President, Stop & Shop

Stephen Ritz, Founder, Green Bronx Machine

Nishant Roy, Chief Impact Officer, Chobani

Rachel Sagor, MD, Acting Director, StreetCred

Sharon Scott-Chandler, President & CEO, Action for Boston Community Development

Beverly Wheeler, Chief Knowledge Officer, DC Central Kitchen

Ashley Williamson, Co-Executive Director, The Giving Grove

Emily Yu, Chief Partnerships and Program Officer, Newman's Own Foundation

Throughout the day, Fall Summit participants were asked to think about the following questions



2 What most resonated with you today?

- + The focus on healthcare and nutrition equity
- + Creative solutions and collaborative programming
- + Awareness about food choices at home and school, especially for students in special education
- + To always think outside the box about helping others
- + Reminders to listen, work together, and learn from one another
- + The importance of health multipliers
- + Discussion around the importance of program impact measures beyond qualitative
- + The notion that hunger has a marketing problem
- + The focus on collaboration, data, and innovation
- + The power of positivity



3 What ideas or topics should we explore further?

8 | About the Health Collaboratory (H2HC)

Connecting Thought Leaders, Celebrating Innovation, and Advancing Knowledge

HISTORY AND PURPOSE



In 2018, The Greater Boston Food Bank and Stop & Shop joined forces to answer the question: ‘How can we move beyond emergency and charitable food relief to address hunger in the long term?’ Keurig Dr Pepper joined H2HC in 2022.

H2HC advances health equity by accelerating innovative, systemic solutions to food and nutrition challenges. We do this by *collaborating with cross-sector leaders*, *uplifting innovative models*, and *advancing knowledge*, all through a focus on the social drivers of health.

COLLABORATORS

H2HC convenings and initiatives bring together **thought leaders from across sectors.**



Technology Foundations
Media Food Retail Nonprofit
Healthcare Research
Agriculture Government



Beverly Wheeler, DCCK; Steve Chen, MD, Recipe4Health; Nicolene Hengen, H2HC; Julie Myer, Augmentors; Samantha LeClerc, H2HC

H2HC Impact and Accomplishments

\$1M
PRIZES FOR INNOVATION



uplifting systemic work on food and nutrition challenges that advances health equity

1000+
CROSS-SECTOR THOUGHT LEADERS



have participated in the H2HC learning community

12
CONVENINGS



to explore innovative solutions to food and nutrition challenges

\$1.2M
GRANTED



to support innovative, community-based models and research

19
PROJECTS



funded with community-based organizations in CT, MA, and RI

9
FUNDED RESEARCH REPORTS



focused on food and nutrition challenges and health equity

“Join our cross-sector accelerator as we work to leverage shared learning and strategic opportunities to advance health equity and improve our national health and well-being.”

—Nicolene Hengen, Executive Director, H2HC

ENDNOTES

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Written by Jennifer Wells, Nicolene Hengen,
and Samantha LeClerc

Designed by Carolynn DeCillo

Edited by Nicolene Hengen and Samantha LeClerc

HUNGERTO
HEALTH
COLLABORATORY

INFO@H2HCOLLABORATORY.ORG

H2HCOLLABORATORY.ORG