



**COMMONWEALTH
KITCHEN**

**2022
ANNUAL REPORT**



Carolina Salinas, Carolicious.
Photo: Flavio D. Photography and Linda Campos.



LETTERS FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



Dear friends and supporters of Commonwealth Kitchen:

In the hit musical *Hamilton*, one of the Secretary of the Treasury's last lines is:

"Legacy. What is a legacy? It's planting seeds in a garden you never get to see."

Here at Commonwealth Kitchen, we know that we're planting seeds that will yield fruit many years from now, but we also have the privilege of watching people and businesses flower today. Every day we plant seeds, and every day we get to watch our garden grow as the determined dreamers we have helped cultivate from their earliest days reach new milestones, take on additional challenges, and touch more people. As Executive Director, watching this figurative garden grow and flourish is one of the great joys of my job. I know it is what fuels me, our staff, our Board, and our tremendous community of supporters to keep doing what's needed to build an equitable, sustainable food economy in our region.

As we reflect on 2022, I am so proud of the growing abundance emerging from our Commonwealth Kitchen garden. Our intrepid member business community of over 250-strong - many of them once mere seeds - are blooming, our burgeoning network of values-aligned partners are providing the fertilizer, and our Board and staff is expanding to tend the soil and keep up with this growth. With the acute challenges of the pandemic largely behind us, Commonwealth Kitchen finds ourselves at a critical inflection point - we are cultivating a new landscape for a regional food economy truly grounded in social, racial, and economic justice - and seeing the fruits of our collective labor blossom and multiply.

This impact report is a reflection of the cultivation and fertilization that has gone into our Commonwealth Kitchen garden over these past twelve+ months - so much of which was made possible by enthusiastic and generous supporters like you.

Thank you for everything that you do to lift up Commonwealth Kitchen and our member business community. I look forward to continuing to enjoy the fruits of our harvest together in the new year.

Sincerely,



Jen Faigel

Executive Director, Commonwealth Kitchen



Dear friends and supporters of Commonwealth Kitchen:

It is an honor to chair the Commonwealth Kitchen Board of Directors at a time of such exciting growth and opportunity. Challenging the food system to ensure racial, social, and economic justice at every turn is more important now than ever, and the team at Commonwealth Kitchen is leading the charge.

As you read our 2022 annual report, I hope you will take note of the multi-pronged approach CWK takes to cultivating the seeds of success for its member businesses and the seeds of fundamental social change. The extraordinary team at CWK is working hard to design and deliver relevant programs, offer resources, and broker relationships necessary to help our entire garden of diverse entrepreneurs soar. We know that different seeds have different needs, and have worked hard to put together the programs, resources, and relationships necessary to help our entire garden thrive.

Is it easy? No. But few things worth doing ever are. To truly change a broken system, you can't just hack at the leaves; you also have to dig up the roots.

Commonwealth Kitchen has always been and always will be committed to doing the hard, complex and necessary work required to build an equitable food economy - work that we are able to do in large part because of our generous and steadfast supporters.

Thank you for always being in our corner. Here's to continuing to harvest change together in 2023 and beyond.

Sincerely,



Lori Smith Britton
Board Chair, Commonwealth Kitchen

*Nathalie Lecorps and the
Gourmet Kreyol staff.
Photo: Richard Howard.*



*Saba Wahid Duffy, Kush by Saba.
Photo: Richard Howard.*

ABOUT COMMONWEALTH KITCHEN

CommonWealth Kitchen is Greater Boston's only nonprofit food business incubator. We believe in the power of inclusive entrepreneurship to change the world. In fact, we prove every day what is possible when we remove barriers and level the playing field: talented, passionate individuals from all backgrounds are able to pursue their dreams and together move society to be more equitable, resilient, and just.

Planting the Seeds of an Equitable, Sustainable Food Economy: Our Tools for Success

Business Education

Cranking out a delicious product is one thing. Knowing what it takes to grow your business is another. That's why we provide business education and technical support along with coaching and peer mentoring to **200+ diverse entrepreneurs annually (over 75% BIPOC-owned).**

Classes Include

✔ **Virtual Tour and Info Session**

✔ **Food Biz 101**

How to Start a Food Biz Workshop (in English & Spanish)

✔ **Ready to Start**

Product and Production, Business Administration

✔ **Ready to Launch**

Sales and Marketing, Permitting

In collaboration with Lawyers for Civil Rights

✔ **Santander's Cultivate Small Business**

In-depth training for specially-selected entrepreneurs with a focus on early-stage food businesses in low-income areas

In collaboration with Babson College and ICIC.

Shared Kitchens

Our commercial kitchen is bustling with **53 businesses** from food trucks to caterers, bakers to product companies - **78% BIPOC-owned & 94% BIPOC and/or woman-owned.**

Small Batch Manufacturing

For emerging companies who outgrow our shared kitchens, but not quite ready to venture out on their own, we fill a crucial market gap. CWK provides **outsourced manufacturing** to help product companies scale. We also offer product development and processing for farms and institutions.

Market Access

Think of CWK as a food business matchmaker. We **forge industry partnerships** with retail and wholesale buyers, food service management companies, distributors, event planners, caterers, office managers - making matches in order to drive market access and sales for our businesses.



CommonWealth Kitchen uses these tools and more to customize the ways in which we cultivate growth and success for the businesses we serve.

SOWING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE

Changing a system as complex, multifaceted, and deeply rooted as food is enormously challenging. Supporting and empowering diverse entrepreneurs who have historically been left out of that system to be at the epicenter of that structural change necessitates taking a comprehensive approach. We meet people where they are, and customize the path to get them where they want to be.

At an individual level

We empower diverse entrepreneurs with the information, infrastructure, and industry connections essential to start and build great food companies.

At the community level

We cultivate connections amongst our diverse member businesses in order to build strong networks and encourage peer learning, mentoring, mutual support, and resilience.

At the ecosystem level

We forge values-aligned partnerships to catalyze access, opportunity, shared understanding, and new ways of working to build a sustainable food economy where all of us can participate and prosper.



WE WORK WITH ENTREPRENEURS FROM START-UP TO ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES & EVERY STEP IN BETWEEN.

CUSTOMIZED CULTIVATION

CommonWealth Kitchen knows what it takes to cultivate a small business seedling and nurture its growth. No business - or seed - requires the same amount of sunlight, water, or fertilizer. But when we tailor CWK's programs to meet each business as they grow, we can fortify them with the nutrients essential for success. Here are just two examples of our customized support in action:

Yang's Dumplings



Liping Yang, Yang's Dumplings.
Photo: Michelle Davidson Photography.

Liping Yang is a true master of the art of dumplings, but needed help transitioning from her informal home-based business into a fully permitted, established company. That's where CWK came in.

Making It Work

Big contracts are exciting - and also a heavy lift. After we helped Liping get her USDA license and then helped her secure a contract with Encore Casino we partnered with her to calculate pricing and packaging.



Stretch Out

If you're going to make and sell lots of dumplings, you need lots of space. We made sure Yang's Dumplings had access to a commercial kitchen so she could expand production.



Packaging & Labeling

Helping make the packaging upgrades needed to get dumplings directly to hungry customers.



Market Access

Opening up our Rolodex to connect with distributors, food service providers, and institutions.



Visibility

You may recognize Liping from her star turn on WCVB's Chronicle!

Liping and her team now have the systems, tools and confidence necessary to secure additional foodservice and retail contracts. And CWK is here to assist with any future steps as they grow and thrive.

For Paulette Ngachoko, her introduction to CommonWealth Kitchen was an educational one. She came to CWK through our Food Biz 101 class starting with our programs in 2018. Like many of CWK's member businesses, Paulette launched her business with a single product - a traditional jarred peanut sauce which she sold at farmers' markets. She has since pivoted, adjusted, expanded and now has an entire line of sauces, frozen meals and spice blends that are available at multiple specialty stores. In 2022, Paulette pitched her frozen meal kits to the new CEO of Whole Foods, who was visiting CWK, and is working to place her vegetarian and vegan meals in the freezer section later this year. CWK met Paulette where she was, empowering her with the tools she needs and a path to successful small business ownership.

Hapi African Gourmet



Paulette Ngachoko, Hapi African Gourmet.
Photo: Karen Gowen Photography.



Access to Education

Paulette joined the very first cohort of our 13-week Food Business 101 course.



Make the Cut

In March 2018 Paulette was selected from approximately 200 applicants to officially become a CWK member business.



Heavy Equipment

Paulette has access to CWK's Industrial filler and kettles.



Provide Full Support Ahead of Launch

CWK helped Paulette with a business plan and early production.



Connections to Customers

Paulette participated in our Table Top Show, Friday Night Bites, and CommonWealth Kitchen Food Show.



Shifting to Meet Demands

CWK helped Paulette produce an allergy-friendly product and was featured on the menus at Harvard University and UMass.

Paulette and Hapi African Gourmet are primed for future growth with CWK in their corner.

OUR HARVEST

53

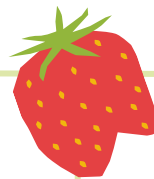
Current member businesses cooking up a storm of sweet and savory treats in our shared kitchen that celebrate culture and community from across the US and around the globe.



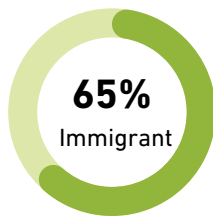
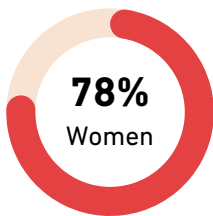
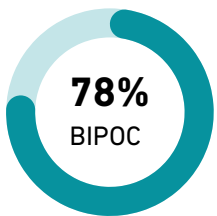
Teresa Maynard, Sweet Teez Bakery.
Photo: Flavio D. Photography and Linda Campos.

600+

Entrepreneurs reached through our Business Education Programs in 2022



CWK Member Business Ownership is...



250

Diverse Food Companies Launched
Over the past 10 years including food trucks, caterers, bakers, restaurants, and product companies. More than 65% of them are still in business.*

*pre-COVID



\$75M

Per year in combined gross revenue

650

New permanent jobs created

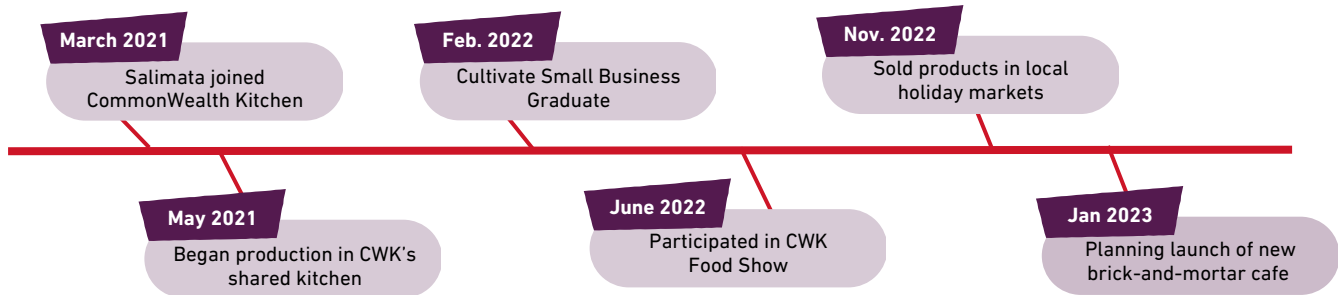


Ernie Campbell, Jamaica Mi Hungry.
Photo: Drew Katz, Graffito.

MEET OUR MEMBERS

Salimata Bangoura began her food entrepreneurship journey as a seven-year-old selling fried plantains outside of her home in the Ivory Coast. When her family immigrated to New York, 14-year-old Salimata helped out by making and selling traditional West African ginger-based juices from a push cart in neighborhoods in the Bronx and Harlem. In 2021, she launched Yamacu, to share her traditional family recipes and culture with the world.

Using her mother's recipe, Salimata's juices contain a base of fresh ginger root, lemon and pineapple, combined with beet, carrot, and cranberry, celery and spinach, or lemon for delicious and nutritious health benefits. Gradually, the business has begun introducing a line of soup, stews, spice mixes, and traditional West African snacks to their product offerings. A passionate advocate of anti-hunger and social justice work, this proud mother of three believes in sharing the beauty of West African culture and giving back to her community. A portion of her business proceeds supports projects in Mali including Mama Kasso—a shelter and resource center for young adults in Bamako.



In 2023, Salimata opened a catering business and production space in the heart of Boston's Nubian Square. Looking ahead, Salimata hopes to open a full-service restaurant to provide food and drink as a means of cultivating community and cultural awareness.



“ I believe that I am where I am today because of the support CWK has provided to me in both technical assistance and kitchen and storage space to grow and expand my business. It also gave me the opportunity to bring food back because I had access to everything I needed in one space. The most it has given me though, is the community of hard working, smart and successful entrepreneurs I can call on for advice and mentorship and the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. Even some of the future plans of Yamacu I am currently working on are all because of CWK. My business would not be alive today if it weren't for their support. ”

-Salimata Bangoura



Salimata Bangoura, Yamacu.

Margarita Carreto, Mr. Tamale.
Photo: Michelle Davidson Photography.



MEET OUR MEMBERS



Andres Medina-Carreto and Margarita Carreto, Mr. Tamole.
Photo: Hornick/Rivlin Studio.

Andres Medina-Carreto and his mother, Margarita Carreto, whose roots are in Puebla, Mexico, started Mr. Tamole as a mobile food cart when Andres realized that it was difficult to find authentic tamales in Boston. Their tamales are steamed in corn husks and loaded with traditional fillings, including their signature mole sauce. Originally their abuela's recipe, the savory sauce brings a touch of heat balanced with rich dark chocolate that reflects her region's distinctive style. Though the original recipe had over 40 ingredients, the duo trimmed it down to create an allergen-friendly, shelf stable, vegan version with "just" 22 ingredients that was on the menu at Harvard University dining before COVID hit. CommonWealth's team helped them work through the formulation and scale their production. Then, we found local distributors to help bring those products to campus.

Working from CWK's kitchen, the mother-son team are now perfecting the recipes to scale production for a line of jarred salsa and mole sauces. Check out mrtamole.com to see where where their products are sold.

Andres and Margarita are on a mission to share their culture through food, and are hoping to one day have their own brick-and-mortar restaurant.

May 2017

Joined CommonWealth Kitchen and launched a mobile food cart selling tamales

June 2018

Cultivate Small Business Graduate

Sept. 2019

Launched new vegan, allergen-free mole sauce based on family recipe for Harvard University Dining Services.

Dec. 2021

Launched line of shelf stable salsa and mole sauces

April 2022

Introduced Mr. Tamole salsa at Morrissey Market

June 2022

Participated in CWK Food Show, Winner of Whole Foods Pitch at CWK

July 2022

Selected for SHIFT Fellowship with Associated Buyers (distributor to Whole Foods) to begin in July 2023

August 2022

Onboarded to co-manufacturing kitchen at CWK

Dec. 2022

Products sold in CWK Holiday Gift Boxes

Jan. 2023

Preparing products to launch in Whole Foods stores



Photo: Play Khunisor.

COMMONTABLE

Supporting our community in a time of crisis



CWK launched our CommonTable meals initiative in April 2020 in response to the COVID pandemic. Our focus has been on keeping our diverse food business community working, and our hungry neighbors fed. With generous support from the City of Boston, Liberty Mutual, The Boston Foundation, and so many others, we've continued this work throughout 2022.

Bringing CWK's work into the community lifts up our businesses, broadens our reach, and helps us build a truly equitable food economy.



Through Commonwealth Kitchen's CommonTable initiative, we provided well over **250,000 meals and grocery boxes** to feed families in need over the past 2+ years, putting more than **30 diverse food businesses to work** and engaging over 25 community partners.

More than Meals



CWK member businesses prepared and delivered more than **4500 culturally relevant meals** to refugees from Afghanistan and recent immigrants from Haiti, meals for families experiencing homelessness, veterans living in low-income housing, and grocery boxes for parents during school vacations.



Lots to be Thankful for

In 2022, the CWK team prepared over **1,000 Thanksgiving meals** for families, including products made by our members.

Photos: Richard Howard.



Larry and Martita Nieves, Lord Dawgz Entertainment.
Photo: Dominique Holliday.

Lawrence and myself took this opportunity to focus on the less fortunate that do not have the ability to have home-cooked meals in a family setting. Once again the gratitude that we received was amazing. The residents were extremely excited to receive familiar and comforting meals.

-Martita Nieves, Co-founder, Lord Dawgz Entertainment

SUPPORTING OUR FARM PARTNERS

By providing processing and custom product development, CWK has been able to help multiple farms across New England generate additional income, access new lines of business, reduce food waste, innovate new solutions to challenges facing farmers, and bring new products to market.



In 2022, we processed more than 15,000 pounds (roughly the same weight as an elephant or a school bus!!) of largely surplus produce from regional farms into pickles, pesto, and marinara for farms to sell at farm stands, CSAs, and other outlets.

We revolutionized the falafel!

No, really. We teamed up with Healthcare without Harm to develop a falafel that utilized New England-grown field peas as a core ingredient. It's an exciting way to maximize the use of a cover crop that otherwise would have minimal market value. Our game-changing falafel is being piloted in 5 local hospitals and should be fully integrated into their menus in early 2023!



Photo: John Rizzo.



Dave Dumaresq, Farmer Dave's

Customers today really want perfection. They won't buy a tomato if it has a slight blemish. The tomatoes are still great quality, but they maybe got knocked around during transport and got a bruise...We spent money planting, trellising, and harvesting. [CWK's small-batch processing] puts money back in our pocket.

- Farmer Dave's

SECURING MARKET ACCESS

By providing our member businesses with market access opportunities we make sure that our bounty reaches well beyond the four walls of CWK.

Photo: Flavio D. Photography and Linda Campos.



CWK lit up the Seaport with a packed day-long food show featuring 90 diverse businesses and over 1200 industry insiders and consumers.



Manjari Saha, Pariva, and Jason Buechel, CEO, Whole Foods Market. Photo: Courtesy Whole Foods Market.

We hosted 1:1 meetings and tastings with buyers from Whole Foods and Stop & Shop and helped 3 businesses pitch to the new CEO of Whole Foods when he visited us in June.



Photo: Opus Design.

We sold over 2300 holiday gift boxes filled with member products - roughly the equivalent sales volume at a farmers' market for an entire season.

We partnered with Eastern Bank to provide packaged desserts to feed 700 guests for their annual celebration of social justice gala.



Cupcakes made by: Sweet Teez Bakery.

Check out CWK products at stores near you like Whole Foods, Big Y, Stop & Shop, Morrissey Market, Formaggios, and The Cork and Board.



Jihyun Won, Bibim Box. Photo: Tory Preston-Djamboe.

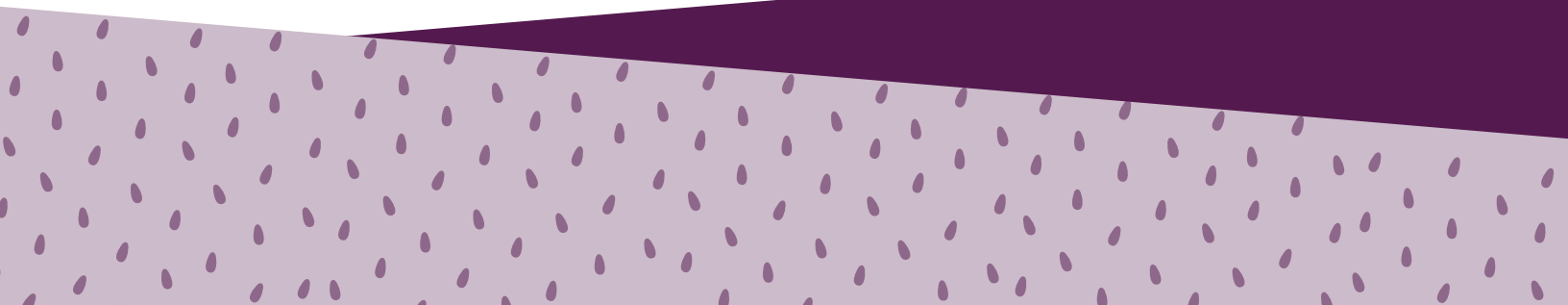
We renewed our CWK Launchpad at MIT contract, which provides turnkey retail kiosks to 3 of our member businesses inside the MIT student center. Students are able to use their meal plans to purchase delicious, culturally relevant food options.



WHAT WE ARE SOWING FOR 2023

The seeds have already been planted for a cornucopia of success in 2023. Here's a sneak peek:

-  Growing collaborations and purchasing agreements with great local businesses like Gourmet Caterers and City Fresh Foods to help our member companies scale.
-  Working with the City of Boston and the Boston Public Schools to increase local and diverse sourcing as part of their Good Food Purchasing initiative.
-  Scaling up/re-engaging in collaborations and purchasing agreements with anchor institutions, including Boston College, Boston University/Aramark; MIT; Colleges of the Fenway/Sodexo; Northeastern University; Boston Medical Center; Brigham and Women's Hospital/Sodexo; and Boston Children's Hospital.
-  Launching our Ready to Grow food business accelerator.
-  Scaling up Santander's Cultivate Small Business mini-MBA program to take root in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Newark, Philadelphia, Miami and Dallas, in partnership with Babson College and ICIC.
-  Hosting the 2023 CWK Food Show - for sponsorship details email info@commonwealthkitchen.org.
-  Supporting great community partners, including La Colaborativa, Roxbury Community College, and BAMS Fest, among many others!
-  Planning for the 2024 opening of the new Kendall Public Market Food Hall, immediately adjacent to the bustling Kendall Square Red Line station.



HOME SWEET HOME

In 2022 we bought our building - the place where seeds are planted and the bounty is celebrated. This wouldn't have been possible without the leadership and support from the City of Boston, HUD, and MassDevelopment, along with generous funders like Cummings Foundation and Klarman Family Foundation. We couldn't be more excited for the future in our very own, permanent home in the neighborhood we love.

For 2024, we'll be focused on mapping out a building renovation and expansion phasing plan, including assessing options to build our own retail outlet in the heart of our beloved Dorchester neighborhood!

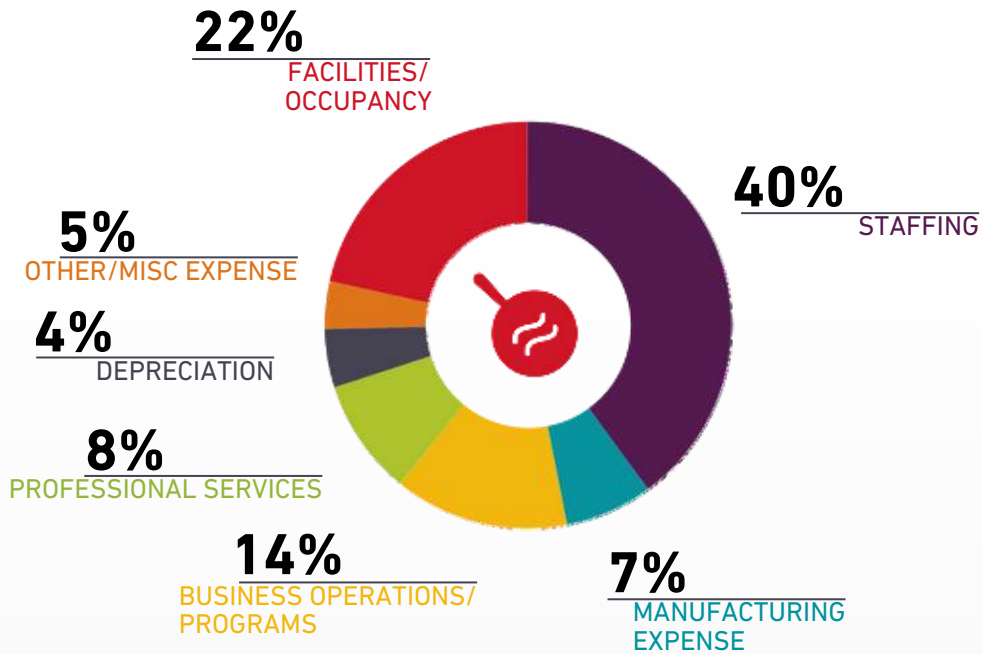


Photo: Richard Howard.

FINANCIALS

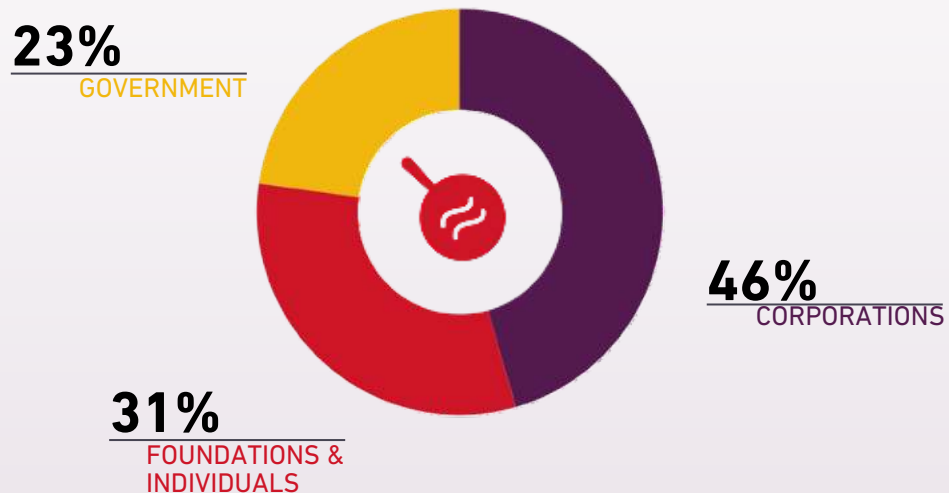
EXPENSES

\$3,630,584



REVENUE

\$4,899,459



*2022 revenue and expenses have not been audited.

**\$1 million in revenue is temporarily restricted.

THE TEAM

These are the people who make it all happen.

Staff

Abdirahman Abdulle, IT Coordinator
Camila Achury Rincon, Senior Entrepreneurship Program Manager
Rodney Beldo, Contract Manufacturing and Facilities Crew Member
Joshua Colon, Contract Manufacturing Crew Member
Ruben Colon, Contract Manufacturing Crew Member
Yonan Cruz, Contract Manufacturing Lead
Jennifer Faigel, Executive Director
James Farrell, Shared Kitchen Manager
Paul Garberson, Facilities Manager
Jeiko Kurama, Shipping & Receiving Specialist
Jorge Matias, Contract Manufacturing Crew Member
Pete Melly, Property Manager
Evandro Monteiro, Account & Customer Support Associate
Cristian Pena, Contract Manufacturing Crew Member
Edward Pena, Contract Manufacturing Crew Member
Collicia Rice, Contract Manufacturing Crew Member
Bonnie Rosenbaum, Director of Communications
Tyler Seever, Chief Operating Officer
Nicole Singleton, Facilities Crew Member
Lee Ann Song, Director of Institutional Giving
Daquan Straw, Contract Manufacturing Crew Member
Misha Thomas, Director of Business Development

Jorge Matias.
Photo: Bonnie Rosenbaum.



Rodney Beldo and team loading Thanksgiving meals for delivery.
Photo: Bonnie Rosenbaum.

Board

Lori Smith Britton, Chair
Jason Allen
Antoinette Coakley
Magnolia Contreras
Kara Fagan-Rayner
Raul Fernandez
Lesley Delaney Hawkins
Sheldon Lloyd
Yves Nau
Helene Solomon

Photo: Flavio D.
Photography and Linda Campos.



THANK YOU

From planting seeds of opportunity to reaping harvests of systemic change, none of what we do at Commonwealth Kitchen would be possible without the generous support and nurturing from our funding partners.

Corporate Partners

- ✦ Berkshire Bank
- ✦ Capital One
- ✦ Eastern Bank
- ✦ Goodwin
- ✦ Fidelity Foundation
- ✦ Gravestar Foundation
- ✦ Liberty Mutual
- ✦ Ocean Spray
- ✦ PNC Bank
- ✦ Polar
- ✦ PwC
- ✦ Sam Adams' Brewing the American Dream
- ✦ Santander
- ✦ TD Bank
- ✦ Toast
- ✦ Whole Foods Market
- ✦ WS Development

Foundations

- ✦ 1434 Foundation
- ✦ Ajana Foundation
- ✦ Barr Foundation
- ✦ Burnes Family Foundation
- ✦ Claneil Foundation
- ✦ Josephine and Louise Crane Foundation
- ✦ Cummings Foundation
- ✦ Findlay Family Foundation
- ✦ Hyams Foundation
- ✦ Kataly Foundation
- ✦ Henry P. Kendall Foundation
- ✦ Klarman Foundation
- ✦ The Boston Foundation
- ✦ The Rockefeller Foundation
- ✦ Smith Family Foundation

Government

- ✦ City of Boston
- ✦ Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
- ✦ Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
- ✦ MassDevelopment
- ✦ Mass Growth Capital Corporation
- ✦ USDA

Awards



Sabrina Vixama, Discover Vegans.
Photo: Photo: Flavio D. Photography and Linda Campos.



Karen Clarke and family, Clarke's Cakes & Cookies.
Photo: Photo: Flavio D. Photography and Linda Campos.



 Clarke's
cakes & cookies
The Bakery

Jeremiah Bonhomme
Clarke's Cakes & Cookies

Clarke's
cakes & cookies

Karen Clarke
Clarke's Cakes & Cookies

BAKE!
clarkescakesandcookies.com

Wendell Bonhomme
Clarke's Cakes & Cookies

Clarke's
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 Clarke's
cakes & cookies
Clarke's Cakes & Cookies, established in 2003, is Boston's best kept secret! We offer guilt-free, vegan treats that are delightfully delicious! As a woman-owned, family-supported business, our mission is to provide ethical plant-based products that do not compromise flavor. What we bake in our kitchens is ready for your home and is sure to satisfy any sweet tooth. At the heart of it all, we are the new generation bakery with good old-fashioned taste!

PLEASE INFORM
YOUR SERVER IF
YOU OR YOUR
PARTY HAS A
FOOD ALLERGY.
THANK YOU.



PASSION FOR PEOPLE.

HUNGER FOR EQUITY.

LOVE OF FOOD.



**COMMONWEALTH
KITCHEN**

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