

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



OUR 2021 FOCUS

Building Relationships ★ Strengthening Governance Business & Building Development



Dear Co-op Members,

In 2021, we saw there was more to be done. For us, 2021 was a delicate balancing act of two forces: moving closer to opening the grocery store, and wholly understanding how to nourish the community we all call home – Kingston, NY.

As a community-owned grocery store, these two forces are at the heart of all we do; and what 2021 revealed to us, was a fundamental imbalance.

At the start of the year, and the maturation of the COVID pandemic in our everyday lives, we took a hard look at reality. With hunger levels heightened, we began to learn much more about what it is to nourish outside of just providing a place for folks to purchase groceries.

Through listening and learning, we began to understand nourishment as not transactional (give us money, we give you food), but as relational. We then set our sights on ensuring the co-op is not only a place to purchase food, but actively takes part in transforming our food system into one that is equitable, thriving, and that truly nourishes our community. We then asked, “Are we equipped to do this?” – there is where the imbalance revealed itself.

While we made great advancements to understand how to open a successful cooperative grocery store, we did not have the proper infrastructure or know-how to participate in the greater transformation of our food system and truly nourish our community. So we took the time to focus on our foundations, and ensure we achieve that balance.

From that came a new mission and vision, a stronger organization structure, new council members, and exciting partnerships with members of our community who also aim to nourish. We are happy to say, we have now found that balance. Now in 2022, it’s time to push through. While there are lessons we are ready to apply, there is always more to be learned.

We invite you to join us on our learning journey. Get involved! Join a committee! We’ve got many open lanes of contribution as we search for a General Manager, work on the building design, and implement ways to radically integrate the community into all we are and do.

If you’re someone who likes to be in-the-weeds a bit more, this is the perfect time to start thinking about running for the council! Elections are in April and the new term starts in June. It’s a lot of work (5-10 hours a week), but it is rewarding – and there is a small stipend!

Whether being on the council is your thing or not, be sure to stay up-to-date on the latest and greatest. Come to the monthly meetings, or watch the recordings online and reach out to us for more ways to get involved, more information, or just to let us know how you’re doing!

We look forward to a ground-breaking 2022. (See what we did there?... because we’re breaking ground this year!)

Your Family,
Keyvious, Lyndsay, and the Kingston Food Co-op

P.S. Thank you for your patience and unwavering support. We’re just as ready as you are to be loyal shoppers at the Kingston Food Co-op!

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH AND COMMUNITY



\$4,876

in Solidarity Fund contributions
by co-op members and community members

In 2021 we welcomed
186
new co-op
members
including 53 solidarity
members
bringing us to
16% solidarity
membership

We held our **2nd Annual Meeting**
virtually with 60 of our members

April 2021

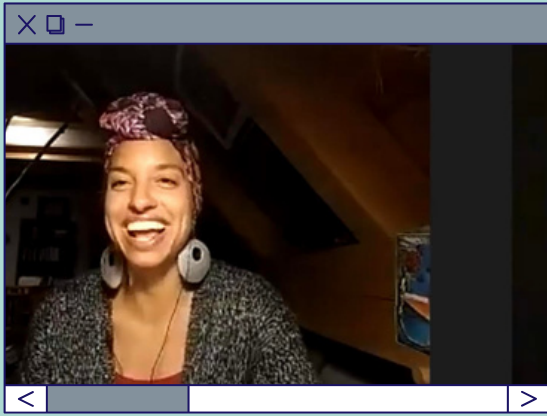
Members approved the
future home of the co-op
at 708 Broadway

37% of our
members
voted in the
2021 election



- Co-op staff collaborated with other local organizations to open a community fridge at the Arts Society of Kingston
- Our council members and Outreach Coordinator delivered roughly 600 meals in collaboration with KEFC

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING



20+ members spent a Saturday **cleaning up** around the co-op building at 708 Broadway
April 2021



We hosted Soul Fire Farm's **Leah Penniman** for a virtual keynote address called "Uprooting Racism, Seeding Sovereignty" to our members and community members
March 2021

50+ member volunteers

supported the co-op via working groups, phone banking, event support, writing postcards, and administrative support



We celebrated community, co-op members and organizations at our Summer Party - over 400 people came through to party with us!
July 2021



Ethan Scott Barnett
A.J. Williams Myers
African Roots Center



Inno Powell
Abundance Farms



Tyler Epps
Rise Up Kingston



Angela DeFelice
Co-op Hudson Valley

We strengthened relationships with mission-aligned community organizations, including holding live deep-dive conversations with community members doing exciting work in Kingston
May-September 2021

BUILDING + BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



Our Building Development Committee met biweekly to guide us through architect and grocery consultant selection, and all things related to the building at 708 Broadway.



We received architectural proposals from 11 local firms. **Our team interviewed 5 firms and asked for a concept design from our top 3.**



We hosted a concept design presentation from our top 3 architectural firms in Rotary Park in September. **200 community members and 62 members submitted feedback on presentations.**

Our Building Development Committee and council selected an architectural firm to partner with on building design. We are excited to announce that firm when the contract is finalized.

Business Development

- We worked with food co-op finance experts to create the co-op's business plan and financial projections for first five years of operations
- We continued to explore pricing equity options for our grocery store
- We launched our General Manager Search Committee
- We laid the groundwork for our 2022 work on community initiatives and programs for the store



Our General Manager (GM) Search Committee will lead us through the GM search and hiring process

December 2021

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE + WHAT'S NEXT



In 2021, our council:

- Codified governance processes in order to ensure a solid foundation for the long-term success of our community-owned grocery store including policy register, committee charters, council member handbook, member handbook
- Built relationships with other start-up and established food co-ops across the country through peer calls, attending conferences, and one-on-one conversations

Your council met for
3+ hours per week for 50 weeks out of the year

What's coming in 2022?

Equity & Access

- Continuing to explore equitable pricing models
- Developing community programming to ensure access to nutritive food at affordable prices

Community Engagement & Membership Growth

- More community-building events and new ways to engage in the process
- Reaching 1,500 members, with an emphasis on future members in the co-op's neighborhood becoming involved in our co-op
- Reaching 20% solidarity members

Building Development

- Transferring ownership of 708 Broadway to the co-op
- Designing the store with our community

Business and Financial Planning

- Finding, hiring and on-boarding our General Manager

Governance

- Continuing to strengthen our governance structures, and preparing to transition from working council to governing council

