



2020 Impact Report

A YEAR IN REVIEW



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Introduction

At the beginning of 2020, things were looking bright. The year held lots of promise, it was the beginning of a new decade, an election year, a census gathering year, a year claiming to have “perfect vision.” Suffice it to say that hardly ANYTHING went according to plan, thanks to COVID-19. While 2020 will not go down as the world’s greatest year, it was pretty great here at Food Equality Initiative.



Winter



January

Emily Brown gave testimony in Houston for the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to help ensure the dietary guidelines represented people with food allergies in all future guidelines this Committee would declare.



Early March

Emily went to Washington, D.C. to advocate for increased food labelling in the FASTER Act. The FASTER Act calls for the update of allergen labelling laws to include sesame and requires the federal government to analyze the most promising research opportunities in hopes of a cure for food allergies.





Spring



Late March

FEI closed all of our pantries in favor of a direct-to-door delivery service, packing the boxes ourselves and shipping them with Knoq.



May

FEI partnered with Smart Warehousing for both storage of our inventory and packing of our boxes. This move positioned us to scale to nationwide delivery.





Summer



June

Emily Brown's open letter to the food allergy community in response to the tragic death of George Floyd illustrated her experience as a Black mother raising Black children with food allergies.

The team at Food Equality Initiative organized a series of webinars to discuss the racial and economic disparities in public health, particularly in regard to food allergies. Our first installment was For the Health: Notable Black Voices.

We also introduced the Seven Percent Fund & Coalition, to raise money and create change in the food and healthcare industries.

Early July

Our second webinar conversation was For the Health: How To Be An Ally. Our moderator, Karen Palmer, said it best: "We would like for people to look at folks in [the food allergy/ceciac disease with limited resources] space as being worthy of support just because we are fellow human beings that need it."



Late July

The FEI team transitioned to a completely remote office to be the most cost efficient, given the current state of the pandemic. That means we are able to put more of our budget into our mission, serving people like you.



September

The For the Health: Institutional Change session asked some vital questions about the past, present, and future of the industries of healthcare, food manufacturing, and research.





Fall

Early October

FEI marketing team gained Sofia Gillespie (copywriter and editor) and Kenneth Johnson (social media manager).



Late October

We launched the Free-From Magazine, a lifestyle resource from Food Equality Initiative. It is published once a month, in print for FEI Family Members and digitally for everyone.





Expanding Our Reach

As always, we are continuing to expand our audience and homebase through all the interviews Emily Brown makes across the (virtual) map. Just in the fall of 2020 her list of appearances included, but was not limited to:

- FAACT's Teal Love Shines Bright Food Allergy Summit 2020
- Texas Children's Hospital's Food Allergy Symposium
- Harvesters' Hunger Free Healthcare Summit
- FARE's Living Teal Global Summit

Emily was also a guest on the Gooder podcast: *The Unseen, Unheard and Misunderstood* Naturals Consumer featuring Emily Brown.

The Year 2021

In 2021, we are excited to explore the potential of the Seven Percent Fund & Coalition. By gaining more members and raising more funds, together we will be able to make an impact in remedying the disparities in race and financial status in food allergy and celiac disease.

We are also planning to take significant strides in establishing our FEI Chapters Program across the United States. These chapters will be able to increase FEI's reach and serve more people than ever before.

Since our For the Health webinar series was such a success, we intend to continue planning webinars in 2021. Through these webinars, we hope to simultaneously increase our audience and educate about important issues in our community.





*FEI Family
Member*

Meet Mary Garcia Ellis

As a child, there wasn't enough. The oldest of five kids, she went to work at age 10, picking cotton in the Texas sun. Despite the back-breaking work, her family didn't always have food.

As an adult, her food story was not much better. While she had access to more, the food she ate made her sick.

She also didn't have much time to think about it. As a single mother of two, she was working, going to college, and raising her own children. She worked in administrative positions and as a tax examiner with the IRS. Just recently she began a new job at a call center at SS&C Technologies. Because she is bilingual (Spanish/English), she also volunteers in the Hispanic community helping friends and neighbors complete forms such as food stamps, SSI, and Medicaid. So you could say that Mary is a busy person used to helping others before helping herself.

As service-oriented as Mary is, life has not treated the grandmother of three kindly. She struggled with mental health issues and, no matter what she did, her health was always poor. Mary says she figured that this was just the hand she was dealt.

Her daughter wasn't so sure – at least about her mother's health. She suggested she might be allergic to gluten. But Mary wasn't even sure what gluten was. (Gluten is a protein naturally found



in wheat, rye, and barley that helps bread and cakes maintain their shape. It is also one of the Top 9 allergens.)

Finally, about six years ago at age 57, she began to suspect that her daughter was right and that there was something going on in her body. It took two more years of tests, surgery for a hiatal hernia, and surgery to help control reflux that she learned that she had celiac disease and a peanut allergy.

“I know it sounds silly, but I was so thrilled to know why I was always sick,” she said. Now she began searching for foods that she could safely eat. Mary laughs when she remembers the day she put “Food Allergy” and “Celiac Disease” into the Google search bar.

“That’s when I found Emily and the food pantry!” she says. “I was like a kid in a candy store, seeing all the food I could eat and not get sick. I love the SunButter, pasta, almond and

soy milks.” Although Mary now receives food delivered to her home (a new service provided by Food Equality Initiative), she says she would go to the “ends of the earth” for the food she receives from FEI.

After fueling her body with the right food for her needs, her health immediately took a turn for the better. Not only did she learn about the variety of foods that she could eat safely, but she also learned how to listen to what her body was telling her and therefore take better care of her health.

“Emily taught me how to read food labels,” she says. “Now I research everything.” Although Mary relies on the deliveries for about half to 3/4 of the food she eats, she is safely able to get food from the grocery store to supplement what she gets from FEI.

“I did the best I could, but no one had taught me anything about food,” she said. “I didn’t know anything about food allergies.”

One of her favorite dishes is Caldo de Res, a Mexican soup with beef and vegetables. There is nothing in there with peanuts or gluten!

Mary says she has never felt better since learning how to control her disease. And she’s lost weight! “I’m down to 158 from almost 200 pounds,” she says gleefully.

Her advice to others who may be suffering from food issues? Don’t give up! Research your symptoms; don’t accept that you have to feel bad. Listen to your body and mind. There are resources to help.

Her thoughts about FEI? I love Emily Brown. I’m sorry she had to learn [about food allergies] because her own children were sick, but I thank God that she created FEI to help her children and everyone else.



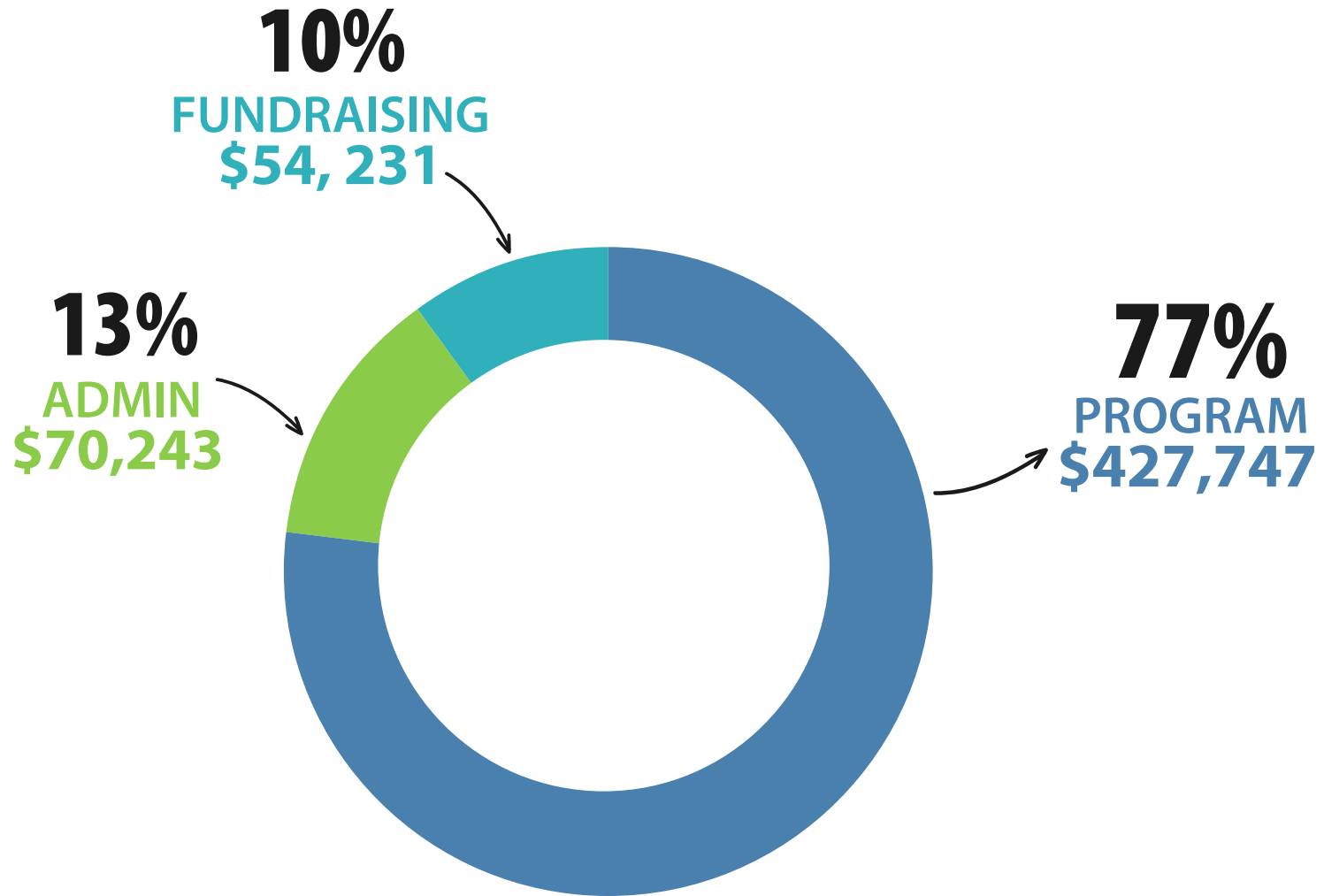


Financials



Total income \$552,221 (does not include in-kind donations)

In-Kind Donations \$122,545





Leadership



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Winnie Dunn, *President*
- Lydia Butler, *Vice President*
- Sally Everhart, *Treasurer and Secretary*
- Bradford Warner
- Leigh Wagner
- Scott Akeson, *Client Representative*
- Linda Berry
- Cheryl Coon

FEI STAFF

- Emily Brown, *CEO and Founder*
- Erin Martinez, *Director of Operations*
- Amelia Richard, *Marketing and Creative Director*
- Tonya Conway, *Programing VISTA*
- Kathy Downing, *Development VISTA*

MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD

The Medical Advisory Board is a group of licensed physicians, nurses, and dietitians that meet twice a year to review educational material, advise FEI's Board of Directors and staff, and provide input on research projects.

- Molly Krager, *MD, Chair*
- Marissa Love, *MD*
- Selina A. Gierer, *DO*
- Julia M. Bracken, *MD*
- Bridgette L. Jones, *MD*
- Brandy Holderby
- Nakita Raje, *MD*
- Barbara Warady, *MS, RD, LD*
- Nahir Mallorquin Saer, *BSN, RN*

TEEN ADVISORY BOARD

The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) is a growing group of teens and college students who work together to bring awareness about FEI, food allergies, and celiac disease to those in their communities.

Anna Stover: *Chairperson*

FEI FRIENDS

These are the valued individuals and organizations who gave FEI their time, talents, and donations. We could not do the work we do without them.

- Sarah Shipley
- Sarah Guthrie
- Grace Guthrie
- Steve Guthrie
- Brit Kreutzer
- Kenneth Johnson
- Sofia Gillespie
- Scott Akeson
- Hilary Kass
- Jamie Merriman
- Javier Evelyn
- Tim Brown
- Stephanie Page
- Lakiea Wright
- Carrie & Mike Raaf
- Leigh Wagner
- Sadie Scheffer
- Rachel Chevalier
- Madison Oxford
- Stella Los
- Denise Woodard
- Dana Stone
- Lianne Mandelbaum
- Amy Sullivan
- Vivian & Tom Stock-Hende
- Susie Hultquist
- Laurie Bomba
- Kevin Trapp
- Heather Heah
- Gwendolyn Watson
- Sara Star
- Sam Milner
- Steve & Liz Witthuhn
- Sally Everhart
- Winnie Dunn
- Jennifer Jobrack
- Louis & Joanne Giorgi
- Elizabeth Sittenfeld
- Benevity
- United Way of Greater KC
- Health Forward Foundation
- REACH HC Foundation
- Parents of Allergic Kids
- Pledgeling Foundation
- Menorah Heritage Foundation
- Jewish Foundation of Greensboro
- Greater Kansas City Community Foundation
- Thermo Fisher Scientific
- DBV Technologies
- Humana
- Weaver Family Charitable Fund
- Mission Mighty Me
- Scheels
- Walter and Alice Hoyt Family Fund
- Wendy and Lee Pake Family Foundation
- The Moll-Kaesgen Family
- SunButter
- Vanguard Charitable
- O'My Foods
- Natalie Giorgi Sunshine Foundation
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- Waddell & Reed Companies
- Your Cause
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City
- Marsh & McLennan Companies
- Guthrie Donor-Advised Fund

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