



# 2013 YEAR END REPORT



## MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIR

Happy New Year to you all. Thank you for contributing your time and ideas to SAFSF. We begin 2014 with 80 member organizations, new regional projects, and new staff. Our *Creating Common Ground* continues, and we are launching new projects in 2014—an annual Policy Briefing and work with regional and state funder networks. In September we hired a new Operations Manager, Richard Stull, with a background in finance and information technology. In 2014, we plan to hire a Special Projects Coordinator.

Building on the success of the 2013 Providence Forum, the 2014 Forum in Denver, June 17-19, titled *Stronger Together*, recognizes that the food systems puzzle contains a striking variety of pieces spanning disciplines, nations, and passions—and they must all fit together to create a cohesive, dynamic whole.

Beginning with a special breakfast at the 2013 Forum titled “Broadening the Palette,” SAFSF has committed to making our core value of embracing diversity more visible and more explicit in our work.

We welcomed four new members to the SAFSF Steering Committee: Stacey Barbas from the Kresge Foundation, Kyle Datta from the Ulupono Initiative in Hawai’i, Livia Marques from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and Michael Roberts of First Nations Development Institute. Tim Crosby, Thread Fund, steps into the Co-Chair role as of January 2014.

We thank our outgoing co-chair, Scott Cullen—the world’s most joyous environmental warrior-dude—for his service to SAFSF. He remains on the Steering Committee and is actively helping to organize the first SAFSF Policy Briefing in December 2014 in D.C.

If you haven’t already, join a study group and some conference calls. We look forward to learning with you throughout the year.

Happy New Year!

Cecily Kihn, Agua Fund, Inc.

## NEW MEMBERS IN 2013

Please help us welcome:

Clif Bar Family Foundation  
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation  
Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation  
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation  
Park Foundation  
Rasmuson Foundation  
The Vatheuer Family Foundation

**Interested in becoming a member?** Call Virginia Clarke at 805.687.0551 or email her at [vclarke@safsf.org](mailto:vclarke@safsf.org).

## SAFSF STEERING COMMITTEE

SAFSF is fortunate to have a strong, very capable and engaged leadership team, which includes:

Stacey Barbas, The Kresge Foundation  
Tim Crosby, Thread Fund, *Co-Chair*  
Scott Cullen, GRACE Communications Foundation  
Kyle Datta, Ulupono Initiative  
Andrew Kang Bartlett, Presbyterian Hunger Program  
Cecily Kihn, Agua Fund, Inc., *Co-Chair*  
Ron Kroese, McKnight Foundation  
Livia Marques, W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Michael Roberts, First Nations Development Institute  
Mailee Walker, Claneil Foundation

## SAFSF STAFF



From Left to Right: Huyen Nguyen, Program and Membership Associate; Virginia Clarke, Executive Director; Bridget Dobrowski, Program Manager; Richard Stull, Operations Manager

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As 2013 closes, I look back to where we started the year with a much smaller staff, smaller office, fewer projects, and fewer connections. How things can change in 12 months. I want to extend my gratitude to our staff, interns, and many consultants for their amazing skills, fortitude, good humor, patience, and grace as the workload expanded and changed directions. To the members of the various SAFSF planning and leadership committees, particularly the Steering Committee, thank you for your energy, unfailing support, and even for your 'wild hair ideas,' which somehow continue to pan out. To the staff at New Venture Fund, we appreciate the support you provide as our fiscal sponsor. And to our many members—new and long-term—I so value your curiosity to learn more and your desire to really make a difference.

Our travels this year—both physical and mental—have been extensive. We wandered through little known but gem-like urban gardens in Miami in January, and dished-up good food Memphis-style in March. We explored fisheries and culinary training programs (among many other things) in Providence in June, and met with food bank leaders in Tucson in September. We closed out the year exploring the overlapping issues of equity, immigration, agriculture, environmental health, and smart growth in communities in the San Joaquin Valley.

My assumptions about what is and what is *possible* have been blown wide open this year. I have met hundreds of successful, amazing, committed individuals working against huge odds. I am reminded repeatedly that the need for action is absolute and that the need for increased funding is critical. I want us all to celebrate our many efforts and encourage us all to dig deeper and reach higher in the coming months. As the saying goes, "this is not a dress rehearsal."

Peace and Blessings to each of you,  
Virginia Clarke

## CREATING COMMON GROUND (CCG) – MOVING FORWARD

Our CCG work began nearly four years ago as an effort to link funders working at the food-ag-health nexus. Today, the impact of this work has had far greater reach than we envisioned at the outset. 2013 was a very busy year with lots of strong programming, thanks in part to the great work of consultant Becca Klein. CCG sponsored several learning calls across an array of topics from GMOs, to the Food Safety Modernization Act; Water as Part of the Commons; and What Natural Disasters Could Mean for Water, Agriculture and Health. Nearly 150 funders took part in these calls, many of them new to CCG and to SAFSF.

Under CCG, SAFSF took the lead to pull together a rare opportunity for funders to explore the challenges and opportunities of California's San Joaquin Valley. Entitled *Exploring the San Joaquin Valley: A Land of Change and Promise*, this event was held December 4-6, 2013 in Fresno, California. Our partners in this important event included CCG partners Grantmakers In Health and Convergence Partnership, as well as The Funders' Network, the Health and Environment Funders Network, and Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees. Over the three days, funders were exposed to a vast array of issues. They toured Fresno and surrounding agricultural lands on site visits dedicated to immigration and agriculture, building community leadership, and addressing environmental contamination and health risks in the Valley. The event also included a funder roundtable on philanthropic engagement in the Valley, sessions on some of the critical factors at play in the Valley, and time for sharing reflections, observations, and lessons learned. The more than 40 funders who participated were able to explore the connections between their issues and to engage with other funders in discussions about key opportunities and strategic priorities.

New health funders active in our work in 2013 include: Sierra Health Foundation; Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation; Colorado Health Foundation; and Newman's Own Foundation.



## **POLICY BRIEFING – A NEW INITIATIVE**

Over the years, SAFSF has explored, discussed, and highlighted aspects of food and agricultural policy by including policy discussions at our annual Forum, facilitating a policy study group, organizing a series of policy-related calls for funders, and providing input to help shape policy briefings organized by other agencies and individuals. These efforts have often resulted in effective but singular events. Short-term policy education gains have been followed by little sustained longevity in fostering ongoing communication, collaboration, and competency development around policy formulation.

Beginning in December 2014, SAFSF will host an annual policy briefing designed to promote greater understanding of policy at various levels—local, regional, federal, and international. We hope to help funders gain knowledge about different types of policies and their potential impact and reach. We expect the briefing series to provide opportunities for sustained coordination and capacity building among philanthropic organizations. An Advisory/Planning Committee is leading the event development, chaired by Carol Pickering at Dietel Partners. We hope you will join us in Washington, DC for our inaugural briefing, December 10-11, 2014. To learn more about how to get involved please contact either cpickering@dietelpartners.com or vclarke@safsf.org.

## **BROADENING THE PALETTE**



Over the years, SAFSF has made deliberate efforts to be inclusive, diverse, and equitable in our work. Whether it was considering new Steering Committee members, staff recruitment, annual Forum or ongoing conference call speakers, site visit hosts, or issue topics, we feel proud of our work in this area. We are now taking strides to dig deeper on the importance of diversity in the philanthropic world and how we, as a network, can engage together on this multifaceted subject. We each have an abundance of expertise and knowledge that is vital to our collaborative efforts. Through our newly launched *Broadening the Palette* work, our aim is to be more explicit and intentional as we strive to maintain a safe environment for uncomfortable realizations and learning. This coming year, we will be working to develop an organizational strategy that will enable us to implement thoughtful action. We have a very active Advisory Committee guiding this work. If you would like to learn more please contact huyen@safsf.org.

## **STUDY GROUPS**

Study Groups provide a virtual meeting space for funders with common interests to collaborate by sharing resources, asking questions, and developing new ideas. There will be four active study groups in 2014: **Finance & Investment; Regional Food Economies; School Food; and Urban Agriculture**. The study groups have been very beneficial for those who have participated. We will be using Adobe Connect's online meeting rooms as a new tool to help share information and data in real time. The new technology will make it easier for everyone to participate and stay up to speed on group conversations.

We are pleased to learn these study groups are having an impact: *"There was a call about a year ago at the time when I was trying to figure out how our foundation could support and "seed" more community garden activity in our region. I asked the group on the call for input on how to help the gardens connect and build more of a movement, and people had great suggestions. Three people volunteered to have follow-up conversations with me. We ended up making some grants as a result of these calls and the ripple effect from the group and that call in particular is continuing."*

To learn more and get involved, contact [bridget@safsf.org](mailto:bridget@safsf.org)

## **NOT A MEMBER YET?**

Our members often speak to the value of SAFSF membership. Special member-only calls and activities; registration discounts; annual Member Directory; and more.

*"I feel more confident in the directions we take because of the knowledge I've gained through SAFSF over the years."*

*"Seeing organizations we support highlighted at [the Forum] helped reinforce for our Board that they are making good choices and supporting good works."*

Interested in membership? Contact Virginia Clarke (805-687-0551 or [vclarke@safsf.org](mailto:vclarke@safsf.org)).

## **SAFSF FINANCES**

Overall, 2013 was another year of strong financial health, which included an infusion of new members and increased support for our newer programs, *Creating Common Ground* and *Policy Briefing*. Going forward, we will use this strong financial position to set aside a prudently-sized reserve, fund spending that increases our operational strength and capacity, and support more activity in our program areas. Funds earmarked as a reserve will be increased from \$150,000 in 2013 to \$300,000 in 2014.

### **FY13 End of year Financial Snapshot (as of October 31, 2013)**

Total Revenues to date: \$622,121  
Total Expenses: \$465,370  
Beginning Balance: \$303,886  
Net operating surplus (deficit): \$156,751  
**Total Funds: \$460,637**  
\* Reserve Fund: \$150,000  
Adjusted Net Assets: \$310,637

\* Reserve will increase to \$300,000 in FY2014.

## 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL EAT HERE DINNER

At **The Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities** annual meeting, join us for the 12<sup>th</sup> annual *Eat Here* dinner.

**March 17-19, 2014**  
**The Fairmont Copley Plaza**  
**Boston, MA**

Register at [www.fundersnetwork.org](http://www.fundersnetwork.org)

## NEW OPERATIONS MANAGER – RICHARD STULL

Richard joined SAFSF in September. We welcome his experience and expertise in finance and operational management. He loves food and cooking and wants to see that all children have access to healthy food and environments. Richard and his wife have a 13-year-old son, two birds, and a dog. You can contact Richard at the office or by email at [richard@safsf.org](mailto:richard@safsf.org).



## NEW! ONLINE RESOURCE LIBRARY

SAFSF has been sharing resources from the field (reports, briefing papers, etc.) for years, but now we are making them more easily accessible in a searchable format on our website. Check out the new **Resource Library**, you'll find lots of useful information there.

[www.safsf.org/resources/resourcelibrary](http://www.safsf.org/resources/resourcelibrary)



## REACHING RESILIENCE

### FOOD AND FARMING IN THE UPPER MIDWEST

**April 9-10, 2014**

**Renaissance Blackstone Chicago Hotel**  
**Chicago, IL**

SAFSF is excited to be co-sponsoring this convening with **Fresh Taste**. It will bring together funders working in the Upper Midwest to explore ways to develop a more robust, regional food system—from production to distribution to cooking, processing, and marketing.

For more information, contact Karen Lehman at [karen@freshtaste.org](mailto:karen@freshtaste.org)

## 12th ANNUAL FORUM

**JUNE 17-19, 2014 in DENVER, COLORADO**

### STRONGER TOGETHER

The food systems puzzle contains a striking variety of pieces spanning disciplines, nations, and passions—but they must all fit together to create a cohesive, dynamic whole. We each bring a different perspective to this work, and we also know that we are *stronger together*.

Some of us use investment dollars to support food enterprise and build new infrastructure and markets, while others convene and build networks to support collaboration and community. Still others take on the thorny transnational issues of seed supply, genetic ownership, trade, and food aid. Our work includes grassroots, community, state, national, and global perspectives.

We recognize the value of creative, responsive, and strategic funding. Working together—whether as partners, collaborators, or cooperators—takes commitment and innovation. At SAFSF's 2014 Annual Forum in Denver, we will explore how the multiple puzzle pieces fit together and how funders and others can work together toward shared goals. Join us!

**Registration and preliminary program available in March 2014**

**PLAN AHEAD! Save the Date! 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum, June 23-25, 2015 in Chicago, IL**

