



Dear Friends,

Last year, our community faced the COVID-19 pandemic and the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. We came together to persist through the pandemic and stand against systemic racism while working toward health and real social change. Together, we leaned into the adaptability, tenacity, and innovation needed to navigate the challenges and changes of the year. **We doubled down on our commitment to youth as they gain the work, life, and leadership skills needed to be successful during and long after 2020.**

In March, our Program Team adapted nearly all of our in-person youth engagement into online classes and trainings. The shift to virtual work allowed us to **innovate our class offerings and provide more than our traditional Cookie Cart curriculum.** Youth Employees embraced the opportunities of virtual classes and trainings, demonstrating great tenacity as they juggled online school and work. **Because activities were no longer specific to shift and location, youth formed a larger community that spans both Minneapolis and Saint Paul bakeries.**

We maintained our bakery operations thanks to our Bakery Staff, including a key group of Bakery Assistants - an advanced leadership position for young adults. This outstanding team fulfilled **thousands of orders** from across the state and country throughout the year, including the **busiest holiday season ever for Cookie Cart!**

With the cancellation of large events and gatherings, we pivoted our marketing efforts towards individuals, including creative initiatives such as Cookies for Good in which **customers purchased more than 550 dozen cookies for us to donate to frontline healthcare workers.** Our community also answered the call to support mindfulness activities for youth employees in the wake of the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, **contributing more than \$34,000 in materials and financial gifts.** Additionally, our community joined us virtually for our first-ever online fundraising events – More than a Mixer and the 12th Annual Chefs’ Dinner – to celebrate the accomplishments of Cookie Cart and invest in the bright futures of Twin Cities youth. **Both virtual fundraising events raised more net income than our 2019 in-person events!**

Although the year looked different than we had planned or hoped for, the adaptability, tenacity, and innovation of our youth, staff, board, and community supported us in surpassing most revised goals for the year in all departments.

We are deeply touched by your generous, unwavering support and partnership through the many unknowns of 2020. Together, we have demonstrated our commitment to our community’s youth, and the bright futures they are paving. **We are optimistic about the opportunities the new year holds, both for our youth employees and for Cookie Cart, and eagerly anticipate the better days ahead.** Thank you!

Matt Halley
Executive Director

