



GROWING  chefs!

2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT

THANK YOU FOR  
**HELPING US  
BUILD A HEALTHY,  
EMPOWERED,  
AND ENGAGED  
COMMUNITY.**





## LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Growing Chefs! Community,

Thank you for sticking with us after another year of the unexpected, or perhaps you recently joined our community and knew little about Growing Chefs! before the pandemic. We recognize the importance of pausing and reflecting at this juncture after so much daily uncertainty. We are now beginning to see the fruits of many new initiatives and we have an opportunity to learn from the many challenges we faced over the past year.

The Beet team continues to provide locally-sourced, fabulous lunches to more and more children and other community partners. Today, over 350 meals emerge from our kitchen daily, which is a nearly 100% increase in the last year. With the opening of the Grove kitchen, our capacity continues to grow. Our educational program team created over 100 recipe videos this past year, along with the delivery of live virtual programming to thousands of participants and their families from their home kitchens. Further supporting virtual programming, is our recently launched new website and YouTube channel. Our Events team created over a dozen new partnerships with other charities and non-profits by assisting with their virtual events and fundraisers. We are honoured by the willingness of our entire team to adapt and redefine everything about their day to day activities and could not be prouder of everything they've accomplished!



## LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Moving forward, the next year involves figuring out how to readapt everything we modified or initiated over the past year in preparation for a return to in-person programming and events, while keeping the virtual ones that people found valuable. Our mantra has been “you can’t waste a good crisis!” and we plan to take that message to heart. This is our opportunity to take a close look at all our activities to better understand our community. What work most directly accomplishes our mission? Where are we having the most impact? What came out of the past year that we should continue to build upon? What supports increased food literacy for the most children and families? The year ahead will involve planning and exploring the next stage of Growing Chefs! Ontario. A year from now, we look forward to sharing what we’ve learned, and our future plans with you.

Growing Chefs! Ontario continues to be motivated by the desire to lead Food Education across Ontario. We thank you for your belief in our mission and for helping provide us with the opportunity to do just that over the past year. We can’t wait to share more as we continue dedicating ourselves to changing how children and families learn about and develop healthy relationships with food!

Gratefully,



**Andrew Fleet**

Executive Director & Co-Founder  
Growing Chefs! Ontario



**Margaret Whitley**

President & Board Chair, 2018 - Present  
Growing Chefs! Ontario





Virtual Kid's Monthly  
Cooking Classes



Live Virtual Programming



Community Garden  
Workshops



Growing Chefs! At Home



Know Your Roots Camp



## 2020 - 21 Programming

Over the past year we dove head-first into the virtual world - adapting our many program streams to online platforms. The opportunity to work not just with children, but also their parents and caregivers, has been a highlight. Cooking together with so many families has been one of the biggest benefits we have found from this new virtual platform! Below are some of the programming highlights from 2020-21:

### Live Virtual Programming

We hosted over **32 classes** in partnership with nearly **20 community partners** including: Oneida Language Program with LDCSB, London Public Library and many more! We had over **1000 participants** and sold **214 Recipe Kits**.

### Agri - Ed Programming with The Western Fair District

The Agri-Education Experiences were some of our favourite programs. We worked with the Western Fair team to create a unique website to lead students through a tour of the food system. ([thegrovewfd.com/agrifood/intro](http://thegrovewfd.com/agrifood/intro))



PARTNERS IN FOOD & AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION





The experience, which followed a locally grown tomato through each stage of the food system, from production through to consumption and disposal, incorporated contributions from over **16 Agri-Food partners**.

Last year, we had **536 parent registrations**, and **384 teacher registrations**. During Agri-Education Week alone, we drove more than **1100 people** to our website.

### Growing Chefs! At Home

Our newest virtual offering, Growing Chefs! at Home, is a collection of free recipes and resource videos made for children and families to explore in their own kitchens.

Our Growing Chefs! At Home platform offers **over 100 recipe videos**, **dozens of Lesson Plans and Activities** for teachers, **Resource Videos** for grown-ups and over **50 additional recipes** with step by step instructions to help get your family cooking together at Home! Take some time to explore with your family at [growingchefsontario.ca](https://growingchefsontario.ca)



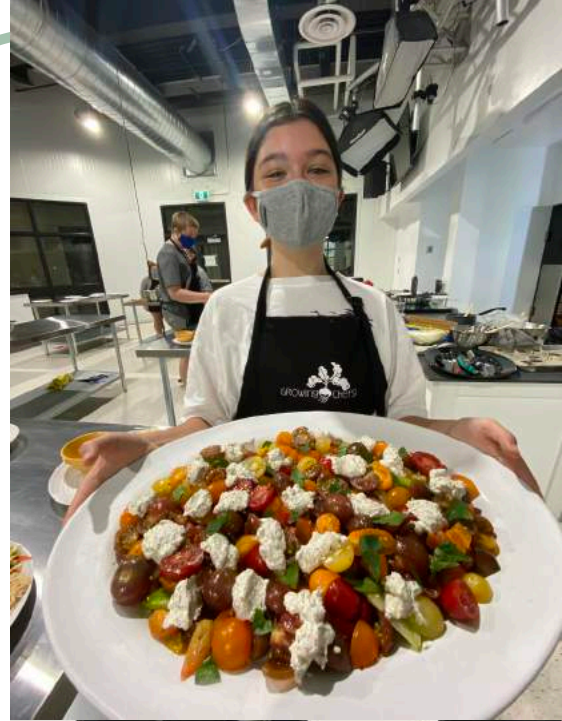


## Programming at The Grove

Our new programming space, Growing Chefs! at The Grove, offers the ability to work with children while maintaining social distancing and COVID safety procedures, but also gives us the ability to welcome larger groups and families to cook with us, once it is safe to do so.

The Grove is truly a one of a kind teaching kitchen! Once we are able to regularly welcome school & community groups into the space, it is going to give us the ability to deliver a more impactful cooking experience for everyone involved – our staff, volunteers and especially our participants! The space also allows us to run programming more efficiently than we can at Headquarters – which will make a huge difference in what we will be able to accomplish with your support!

Although we have been planning and preparing, and are ready to fully launch back into a full-time programming schedule, the rest of the world may not be. Therefore, we are expecting that at least for the remainder of 2021, you will see us continuing to deliver some virtual program offerings, as well as the in-person programming we are most known for. We cannot wait to have all of YOU in to see Growing Chefs! at The Grove in person!





## Social Enterprise

### The Beet Café Lunch Program:

In the Fall of 2020, The Beet Café team moved into our new commercial kitchen space at The Grove at Western Fair. This new, larger kitchen space allows for adequate distancing between our staff during the food preparation process. Income generated by The Beet Café enabled the Growing Chefs! Ontario team to return to work after the initial COVID-19 shutdown, and played a major role in the reopening of our partner childcare facilities.

Our team produced between **200-300 lunches** per day for **10 schools** and childcare centres across London last year. Now, we have added new contracts and expect to grow our daily production to over **400 meals** per day though the 2021-22 school year.

### (Takeout) Events at HQ:

With our signature venue closed for the entire fiscal year, we are lucky for the amazing community partnerships that helped pull us through. On top of our monthly pizza nights and take out pop-ups, our events team partnered with local charities and community groups to cater their virtual fundraisers and events. Throughout the year we partnered with over a dozen organizations to cater **20+ events**, raising over **\$200,000** for the community, while generating over **\$90,000** in revenue for Growing Chefs! A pretty incredible feat, considering the current climate.

As we work towards reopening our doors at Headquarters, hopefully in early 2022, we are excited to build further on these community partnerships as we focus on rebuilding this space as a premier small-events facility here in London.

### Social Enterprise Total Revenue 2020-21: \$407,687

Revenue generated during these events is used to cover Growing Chefs! Ontario's overhead and administrative expenses, which significantly lowers the operating costs of our education programs. If you have attended any of our events, we sincerely thank you!



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATIONS  
OF CANADA





## Financials

TOTAL REVENUE  
\$1,087,958

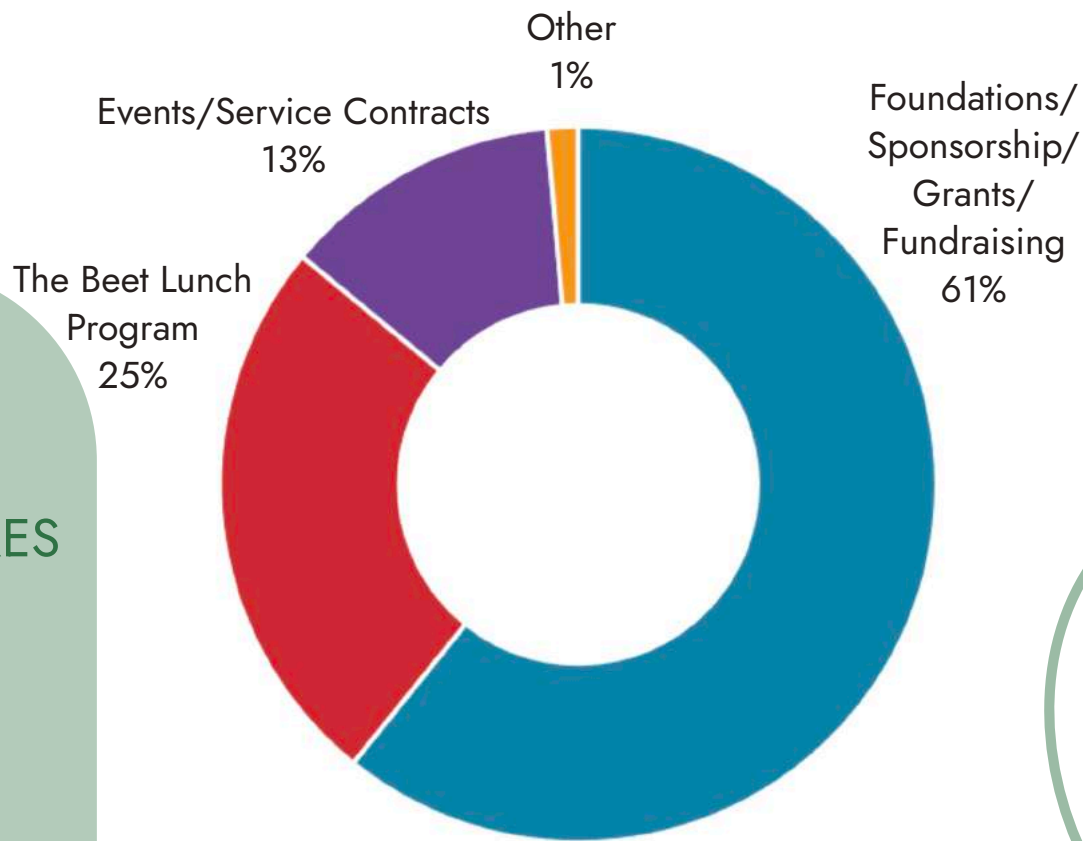
TOTAL EXPENDITURES  
\$1,110,179

COVID-19  
GOVERNMENT  
ASSISTANCE  
\$83,753

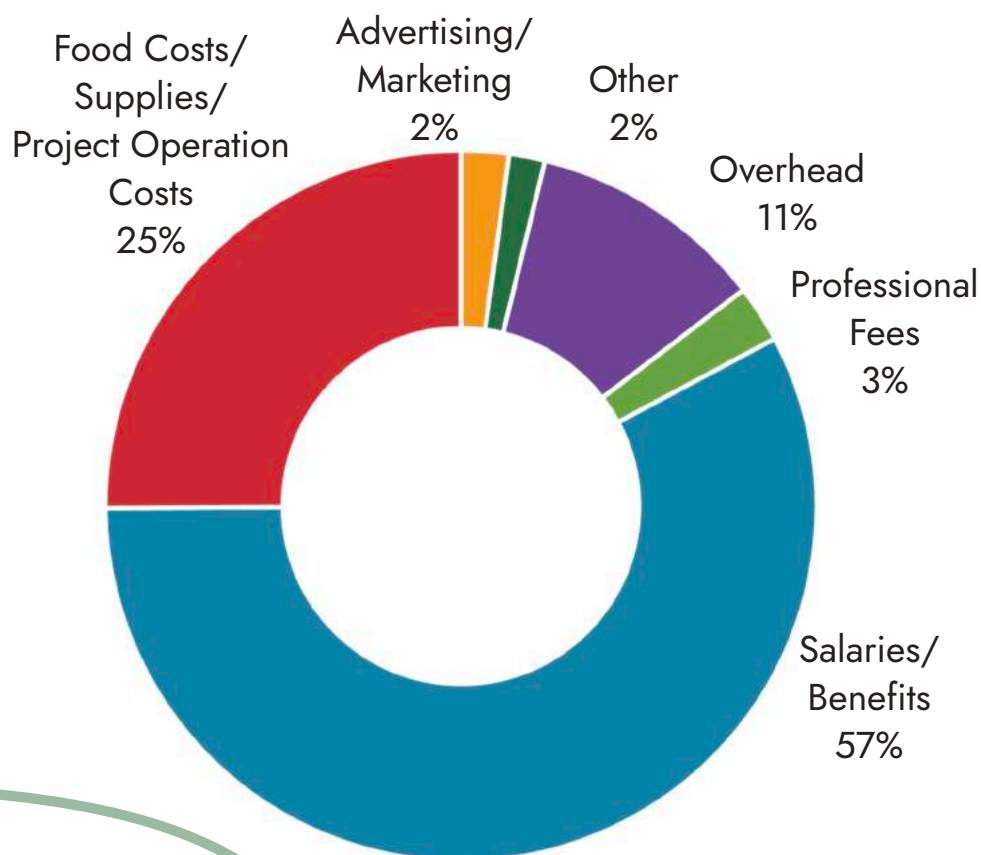
TOTAL REVENUE  
OVER EXPENSES  
\$65,654

INTERNALLY  
RESTRICTED INCOME  
FOR FUTURE  
OPERATIONS  
\$50,000

## REVENUE



## EXPENSES





## Partner Profile: Indigenous Education Program at The London District Catholic School Board

The mandate of Indigenous Education in the London District Catholic School Board is threefold: to engage with and support Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, to provide learning and professional development to teachers, and to engage with our local Indigenous communities. Working with Growing Chefs! has given our team a chance to meet all 3 mandates in the most impactful way imaginable. Before Covid, we met with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students within the Board at various schools in after-school cooking programs. While students learned to cook Indigenous foods, they also learned to speak one of the local Indigenous community's languages, Oneida, from the London District Catholic School Board's Indigenous Cultural Advisor, Ray John Jr. Ray also provided ideas for recipes which Chef Ryan adapted to a level where all students could participate. When Covid hit, the Chefs pivoted, and we started giving virtual cooking class/ Oneida language lessons to students at home. For one of the sessions, we focused exclusively on culture and invited teachers and recipes from across Turtle Island: a Cree bannock recipe and teaching Jamie Chalifoux from High Prairie Alberta, a Métis soup recipe and teaching from Kathleen Anderson whose father hailed from the Métis's original Red River settlement in Manitoba.





## Partner Profile: Indigenous Education Program at The London District Catholic School Board Continued

The unexpected silver lining of going virtual was not just an increase in the territory we were able to cover, but also that we found ourselves in students' homes. While we supported and engaged with students, we were able to do the same with their families. Teachers who participated learned all of the lessons around language and culture and got to engage with their students' families in their own homes. The LDCSB's partnership with Growing Chefs! has been one of the most successful programs within the Indigenous Education program.

Tammy Denomme  
Indigenous Education Lead  
London District Catholic School Board

### Kôhkum's World-Famous Bannock

#### Ingredients

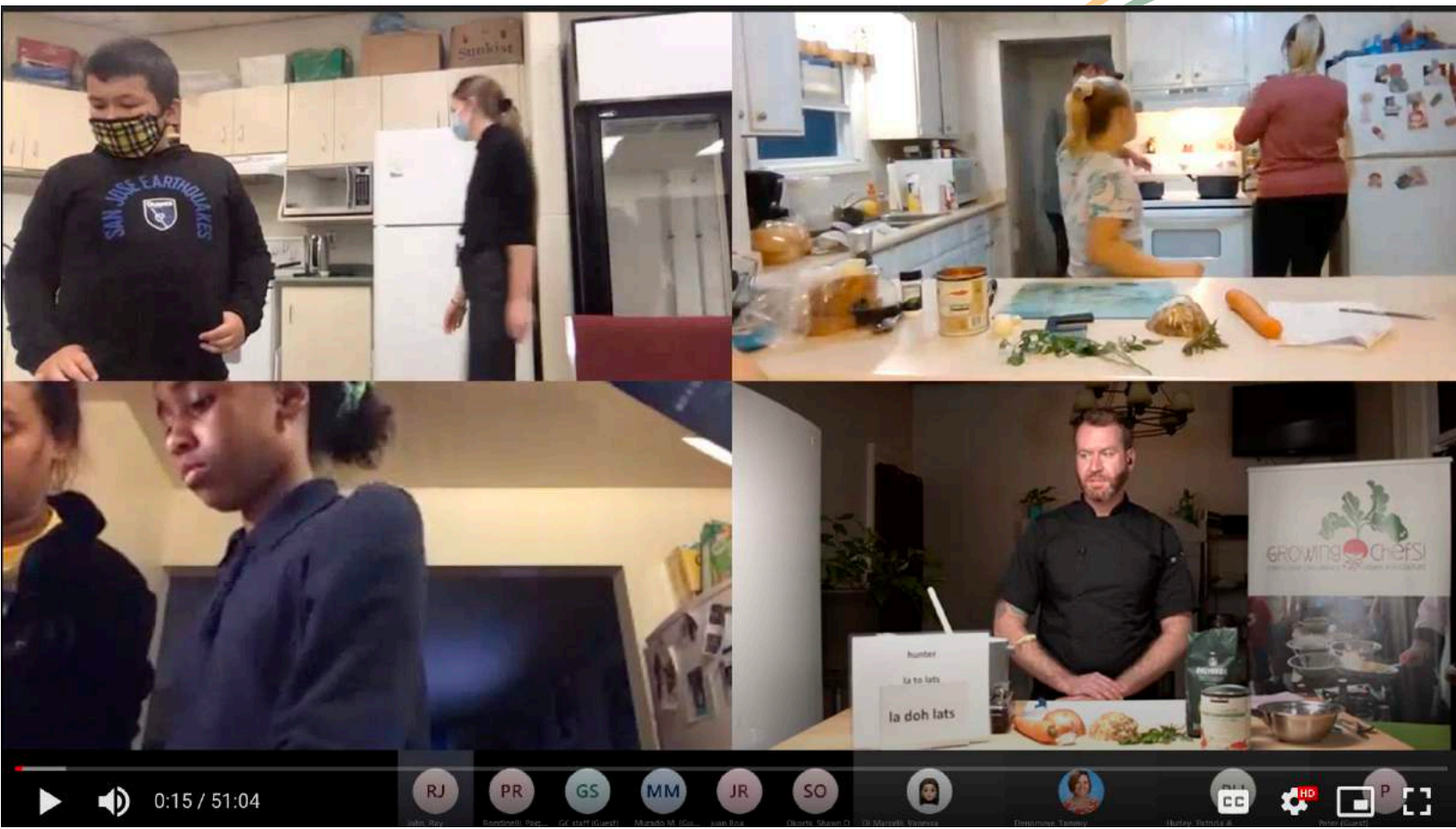
- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 cup tohtosapopimehkan (margarine)       | 2 tablespoons siwinikan (sugar) |
| 5-6 cups askipahkwesikan (flour)          | ½ teaspoon siwihtakan (salt)    |
| 3 tablespoons opihkasikan (baking powder) | 3 cups tohtôsâpoy (milk)        |

#### How to Bake

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (205°C).
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Mix with hands. Add more flour if dough is too sticky.
3. Roll or spread out dough on a flour-dusted counter. Make sure dough is approximately half an inch thick.
4. Make biscuit shapes with a cup.
5. Poke top of bannock with the back of a spoon.
6. Bake for 20 minutes or until top begins to brown.
7. Now you have some pahkwesikan (bannock). Be sure to share it with your friends!



**LONDON DISTRICT  
Catholic School  
BOARD**





## 2020-21 School Project Sponsors/Supporters

A HUGE thank you goes out to each and every one of you who has helped us continue our work over this past, tumultuous year. This year has presented one of the toughest challenges we've ever faced - and thanks to these generous sponsors, donors and supporters, we continue to be in a strong position to move our organization forward. Thank you!



*The Clark Family  
Foundation*

*The Alva  
Foundation*

*Klara and George  
Klein Fund*

*The Smibert Family*

*Renata and Damir Slogar*

*Cambia Development  
Foundation*

*Richard & Shelley Baker  
Family Foundation*

*Brian and Heather Semkowski  
Family Foundation*

*Wilson Family Foundation*

*Lynn Davis and The Verna  
D. Davis Family Foundation*

*Making a Difference -  
C. & J. Wright  
Family Fund*

*A.L. DeKay Law  
Professional Corporation*

*Auberge du Petit Prince Inc.*

*Larry & Susan Agranove  
Family Fund*

*Andrew Young*

*Gemini Investment Club -  
London, Ontario*

*Janet Fleet*



## 2020-21 School Project Sponsors/ Supporters Continued



**Mike Pope  
Plumbing**





## Help Us Grow

As I reflect upon the past year, in my newly created role as Executive Administrator, I am amazed with the changes our small organization has undergone. What a learning experience it has been for me! It has been an absolute pleasure working alongside Andrew to better understand and grow the Donor/Stewardship portfolio, and to assist him in securing much needed funding to continue to propel our organization forward.

The lingering effects of COVID-19 remain, as our Headquarters venue remains mostly closed, allowing for only very limited programming and few private events, resulting in a significant decrease in our revenues. This means we continue to experience a financial funding gap, with 25% lost annual income; thus, putting us behind schedule to achieve our goal of self-sustainability.

We will continue to explore viable options to outfit Headquarters within the updated safety guidelines, while finally allowing in-person classes to resume in our new space at The Grove! As research continues to show, and the pandemic continues to highlight, now is the time to invest in food literacy and food education programs as the need in our community has never been higher!

Building and maintaining healthy, empowered communities that are engaged with our food system is no small task. Each contribution from our donors helps to change the way children, youth, families and the greater community learn about and develop healthy relationships with food. We thank you for investing in children and families as they develop food literacy that can last a lifetime! We ask that you consider committing/recommitting your support at this time. Annual, monthly, multi-year, in-kind, and planned gift opportunities are available, and we would be thrilled to share further information about our work with you.

To donate, or find out more, reach out to me directly at any time.

Jen Wyant  
Executive Administrator  
[jen@growingchefsontario.ca](mailto:jen@growingchefsontario.ca)

[www.growingchefsontario.ca/donate](http://www.growingchefsontario.ca/donate)





# Our Growing Chefs! Ontario Team + Volunteers

## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrew Wolwowicz	Karen Conway	Margaret Whitley
Andrew Young	Kim Simpson	Mary Hajpel
Cecile Klerks-Janssen	Leah Derikx	Spencer Sandor
Jordan Hypes	Malcolm Scott	Tom Tao, Young Leaders

## STAFF

Our staff has gone above and beyond this year to deliver food education and healthy, wholesome food to thousands. We appreciate everything they've done and the challenges they've overcome in order to come into work everyday with a smile.

Alyssa Lampkin	Ipek Aydin	Lexi Magder	Ryan Wishak
Andrew Fleet	Jen Wyant	Magda Masciantonio	Steven O'Quinn
Anna Carroll	Jordan Greene	Mason Buchko	Tim Drew
Chris St. Laurent	Karla Conde	Morgan Gibbens	Umama Karim
Christy Cook	Katherine Jones	Nick Paus	
Hannah Danneneberg	Kathleen Milani	Peter McIntosh	
Ilana Guslits	Laura Hattayer	Rob Lewis	



## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers were strongly missed this year! We look forward to welcoming them back soon and introducing them to our new space at Growing Chefs! at The Grove. We hope to see some familiar faces return from their volunteering hiatus and make new memories exploring the food system with kids. To everyone who volunteered virtually, thank you!





# CONSIDER SUPPORTING OUR EFFORTS!

**Visit**

[www.growingchefsontario.ca](http://www.growingchefsontario.ca)

**or email**

[jen@growingchefsontario.ca](mailto:jen@growingchefsontario.ca)

Growing Chefs! Ontario  
460 King Street  
London, Ontario N6B 1S9

519.679.4769

[www.growingchefsontario.ca/donate](http://www.growingchefsontario.ca/donate)

Charitable  
# 85895 9026 RR0001

