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23



TasteWiseKids

ANNUAL REPORT

WWW.TASTEWISEKIDS.ORG



Greetings from the Executive Director!

2023 was a year of transition, resilience, and growth. It was also a year of success in program delivery, thanks to our skilled and dedicated team. We are very grateful for everyone in the community who has continued to support our work, including but not limited to volunteers, businesses, schools, chefs, farms, and community partners. It really does take a village to bring real lasting positive change. Our core programs, Days of Taste of the American Institute of Food and Wine, and Food Story Time for lower elementary were implemented fully in person, with each session full of laughter, joy, and learning.

Our new programs, Every Day is Earth Day and Exploring Foods, allowed us to fulfill our communities' desire for food literacy for the whole family, while elevating the emphasis of environmental stewardship as a necessary part of a healthy food cycle. New community partnerships have sprouted and flourished. We have connected with and aligned with partners that compliment and support each other's work, which allows for us to provide meaningful experiences for children and families in a more holistic way.

Kids are the future, and our programs provide them with seeds of knowledge and experiences that hold endless possibilities and opportunities for them to grow into healthy individuals, and together create strong, resilient communities. Our hope is that with these seeds, the next generation will be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to find solutions to the many challenges that exist surrounding equitable access to clean, nutritious food.

~Salina Duncan

About Salina:

Salina (she/her) took on the role of Executive Director for TWK in August of 2023, after learning the ins and outs of the organization as the Days of Taste Program Manager. Salina has 10+ years experience directing small nonprofits with education and food sovereignty focused missions, and holds an MPH from Morgan State University. Salina is proud to be leading TWK, as it brings together some of her favorite things- fresh local food, environmental stewardship, community gardening, and fun hands-on learning for all.

MISSION +

VISION TasteWise Kids inspires kids to explore and experience the world of food and its sources.

We believe every kid deserves to:

- Know where their food comes from
- Have the skills to prepare their own food
- Be empowered to make their own informed food choices

We work with local chefs, farmers, and other food professionals to teach our students about where their food comes from, help them to explore their own sense of taste, and to discover the value of fresh food from multiple perspectives:

- Health and nutrition
- Agriculture and environmental stewardship
- Career Awareness/Development
- Culinary - preparing food to individual taste preference
- Social aspects of eating with friends and family

As food enthusiasts and professionals, we know that **fostering healthy eating habits at a young age can lead to healthy, vibrant lives for adults**. And as educators, we know that **empowering kids to discover something for themselves is a much more exciting, fun, and memorable way to learn than reading a textbook**.

PROGRAMS

1 DAYS OF TASTE

- 3 session discovery-based program that introduces 4th graders to the basic elements of taste and teaches them the role of farms in producing the foods we eat.
- Kids go on a taste exploration and learn how to balance various flavors for good nutrition and taste.
- Kids take a tour of a working farm to see how food is grown.
- Kids work with a chef to make a salad and vinaigrette.
- Salad kits go home with kids to share new skills and flavors with their family.

2 FOOD STORY TIME

- Reading time for preschool and lower elementary age children integrates 3 focus areas:
 - literacy skills,
 - developing enjoyment of reading and listening to stories, and
 - developing food literacy knowledge.
- Each story is followed by a related hands-on food focused activity to help integrate these skills.

3 EXPLORING FOODS

- Customizable intergenerational family kitchen skills series: the number of sessions, times and recipes are planned with the community coordinators.
- During each session, a kitchen skill is highlighted and practiced along with a simple, seasonal recipe that families can try at home.
- Families prepare the recipe along with a food professional, and receive a recipe card, nutritional information, and substitution tips to take home.
- Sessions can include one pot meals, simple sautés, fun and healthy snacks, homemade dressings and salads, roasted veggies, and soups.

4 EVERYDAY IS EARTH DAY

- For lower elementary students, we read a compost themed story, followed by a vermicompost lesson and exploration session. Kids learn the full cycle of food from the earth where it grows, to the table, and back again.
- Upper elementary students are introduced to urban garden design, working in groups to imagine creative urban garden spaces with their neighborhoods in mind.
- Students plant seeds to take home. We discuss how edible plants can be grown and harvested right in a window, and in small or vertical spaces.

THE IMPACT

Days of Taste

- 822 Students Participated
- 13 schools- 8 Baltimore City, 2 Harford County, 2 Baltimore County, 1 Howard County
- 850 Take Home Salad Kits were enjoyed by approximately 3,400 family members

Food Story Time

- 12 locations
- 508 Participants

Exploring Foods

- 34 family members participated in 6 weekly cooking classes
- 70 community members attended the community dinner celebration.

Every Day is Earth Day

- 350 Students participated from 1 school.
- All classes participated from pre-K - 5th.

Weekend Backpack Activity Bags

- 900 bags received by 200 students.
- Created summer learning content, which was distributed to 1200 students (200 were the same recipients of the monthly food literacy bags).

THE IMPACT



Glyndon Elementary School,
Baltimore County



Dogwood Elementary School,
Baltimore County



Bakerfield Elementary School,
Harford County

Student Thoughts

"I give the salad a 13 out of 10!"
Federal Hill Preparatory School,
Baltimore City

"I tried some arugula, and I loved it!"
Havre de Grace Elementary School,
Harford County

"Our dressing is amazing!"
Dogwood Elementary School,
Baltimore County

"These were the best 3 days of my life, except
getting close to the bee was a scary part."
Guilford Elementary School,
Howard County



Hall's Cross Elementary School,
Harford County



Talbott Springs Elementary
School, Howard County

ENGAGEMENTS + EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

Our annual fundraiser, **Flavors of Maryland**, was a celebration of all that we do and support at Taste Wise Kids. We were honored to partner with 6 local chefs, as well as several restaurants and farms. Guests enjoyed cocktails, conversation, and delicious bites that highlighted Maryland's Fall harvest. We were honored to have so many local chefs and farmers attend the event as guests. Their attendance speaks to the dedication our community has to our mission and work.



Newsong Community Dinner- At the closure of our Exploring Food program with Newsong Academy, we hosted a community dinner. The dinner had over 70 members of the community attend. States Attorney Ivan Bates attended and spoke about the importance of community. Children received gift bags with food related items and a book of recipes.

"Market to Market" Tours- TasteWise Kids partnered with the **Baltimore Family Alliance** at three of their Spring family events. The "Market to Market" tours highlighted local food market halls around the city. Taste Wise Kids provided a food related craft and engaged families at the tables through conversation and food literature. Our participation at the Whitehall Market, Cross Street Market, and Mount Vernon Market gave us the opportunity to meet with over 300 families.

TWK led a salad and dressing making demo for **Pompeian** staff during their monthly Wellness event series. Participants enjoyed creating their own fresh bowls and blends.

We proudly continue our partnership with the **32nd Street Market**. TWK hosted a pop-up table. Families went on a food scavenger hunt around the market and were invited to read a food story with us.

TasteWise Kids was one of the main events at the **Baltimore Health Expo!** We took the main stage of the expo and made two recipes with a crowd of over 200 people. Children worked with us on stage to make sauteed vegetables for salad and salad dressings. We spoke about the importance of eating a balanced diet and shared ways for kids to join in cooking at home.

ENGAGEMENTS + EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

Salad Month- National Salad month continued with our restaurant partners. Guests dined for a cause by choosing salads that would support our food literacy work.

Boys and Girls Club Summer Food Story Time- In July, we had a full day of Food Story Time at the Waverly Y through a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club, meeting with 125 campers. Students listened to a story, tried a variety of tomatoes, and discussed healthy summer snack options.

Chef Jerry Edwards and Chef's Expressions hosted a Valentine's Wine Dinner benefiting our programming. TWK discussed the mission of our organization and ways for the community to get involved.



We participated in the **Baltimore Herb Festival**, providing children's activities with a focus on ginger.



Volunteer Summary

In 2023, our dedicated volunteers generously donated a total of 495 hours to TasteWise Kids. They supported the Days of Taste program as Chefs, Farmers, and classroom assistants, assembled activity bags for Weekend Backpacks, and provided invaluable help during TWK events and more. Volunteers are crucial to the success of our programs, and we are pleased to report that our volunteer program is regrowing after being put on hold during the 2020/2021 pandemic. The commitment and effort of our volunteers is instrumental in ensuring the continuity and success of our initiatives.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AMBER PERRY

Board President

Amber(she/her) joined the TasteWise Kids board in 2021 and now acts as President of the board. She is Vice President, Regulatory Strategy & Services for Pepco Holdings, Inc. Amber and her family live in Silver Spring, MD and love food festivals, traveling, and tennis. A true foodie, Amber is always looking for new, creative ways to elevate her favorite vegetable: Brussels sprouts.

NEAL CROWLEY

Board Vice President

Neal (he/him) joined the TasteWise Kids Board of Directors in 2020. He is Director of Global Insurance Management at Franklin Templeton. He enjoys being active, traveling, cooking, discovering new foods, and listening to music. His favorite vegetable is a nod to his southern upbringing: collard greens!

MICHAEL ABBOUD

Board Treasurer

Michael (he/him), MBA, PMP, joined the board of TasteWise Kids in 2018. He is the Program Manager of the Eastern Region for Mesa Associates, Inc. He now lives in Harford County, MD with his wife and two daughters. As a family, they enjoy being outdoors, cooking wonderful meals, and traveling to new destinations. Michael's favorite vegetable is sweet potato

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DAVID + TONYA THOMAS

Chefs David Thomas (he/him) and Tonya Thomas (she/her) both joined the board of TasteWise Kids in 2021. Together they have served at the James Beard House, appeared on The Today Show, and more. Chef David Thomas was crowned Food Network's Chopped Grand Champion in 2020. The chefs are currently part of a group working to establish the Muloma Heritage Center in St. Helena Island, SC.

TELA BOONE-HURTE

Tela (she/her), PMP, joined the board of TasteWise Kids in 2021. She is an IT Business Relationship Manager at CareFirst BCBS. Tela lives in Harford County, MD, with her husband and three children. She and her family love to travel, volunteer in the community, and explore new recipes and restaurants. Tela's favorite vegetable is spinach because of its versatility.

KIMBERLY BARKER

Board Secretary

Kimberly (she/her) serves as the board secretary for TasteWise Kids. She is Director of Marketing Operations at M&T Bank and a faculty member of the American Bankers Association School of Bank Marketing and Management. Tomato is her favorite vegetable—even though she knows it's a fruit!

RUSSELL JOYNER

Russell (he/him) joined the board of TasteWise Kids in 2022. He is an Executive Partner with Gartner providing strategic advisory work for mid-sized enterprises. Russell and his wife live in Crofton, MD and enjoy travelling, spending time with family and discovering new local restaurants in Annapolis and Baltimore. Russell's favorite vegetables are spinach and brussels sprouts.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ROBERT HOFFMANN

Robert (he/him) joined the board of TasteWise Kids in 2023 after serving a year on the TasteWise Kids Communications Committee. Currently he is the Corporate Director of Digital Marketing with Live! Casino & Hotel. Robert and his girlfriend live in Bluffton, SC and enjoy travelling, hiking, playing pickleball and spending time with family and their dog Ruby. Robert's favorite vegetables are asparagus and acorn squash.

NATALIE ESTELLE

Natalie (she/her), our newest Board Member, is a Baltimore City Public School College and Career Readiness + Leadership Teacher with over 20+ years of experience in graphic design, marketing in various industries, food photography and education. She has experience in running a non-profit organization in addition to being a published author. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in the culinary space and we are excited to welcome her aboard. Her favorite vegetables are english cucumbers and potatoes.

STAFF

JULIE EUGENIO

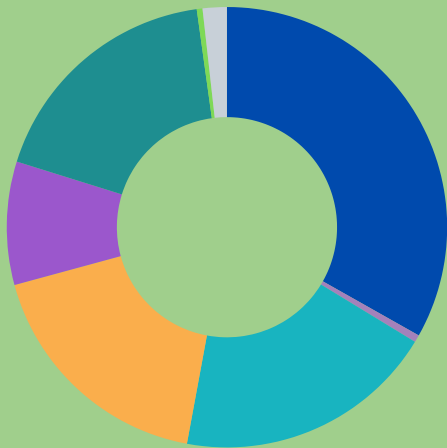
Community Programs Manager

Julie (she/her) brings TWK programs to life through the creative development and delivery of in-person programs throughout Baltimore and the surrounding counties. Julie is a former Howard County teacher, and the mother of three boys. She understands the importance of teaching children about healthy food choices and food sources. Julie is active in her South Baltimore community, and in her down time enjoys spending quality time with her family.

2023 Financials

2023 Revenue- \$139,563

- Direct Program Support
- Fee for Service
- Corporate Support
- Special Events
- Individual & Board Donati...
- Foundation Support
- Restaurant Contributions
- Other



2023 Expenses- \$154,914

- Days of Taste/Programs
- Development
- General and Administrati...



2023 Summary

In 2023, our expenses exceeded our revenues due to various factors, including increased costs across several program areas such as transportation, storage, and supplies. Additionally, we experienced a decline in individual donations and grant awards compared to previous years. Despite these financial challenges, we remain committed to our mission and actively seek new funding opportunities to ensure the sustainability and growth of our programs.

SUPPORTERS + PARTNERS

- [Pompeian Olive Oil](#)
- [United Healthcare Community Plan](#)
- [M&T Bank](#)
- [Fells Point Wholesale Meats](#)
- [Live! Casino & Hotel](#)
- [Kramon & Graham Attorneys at Law](#)
- [KBST&M](#)
- [CareFirst](#)
- [Mesa Associates](#)
- [Michele's Granola](#)
- [32nd Street Farmers Market](#)
- [BIC Educational Foundation](#)
- [BGE](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Health Systems](#)
- [Kiwanis Club of Ellicott City](#)
- [MileOne Cares](#)
- [South Baltimore Gateway Partnership](#)
- [United Way of Central Maryland](#)
- [Weinberg Foundation](#)

Days of Taste Host Farms-

- Filbert Street Community Garden
- Thirdway Farm
- Mary's Land Farm
- Balt County Ag Center
- Great Kids Farm
- Plantation Park Heights

Days of Taste Chefs-

- Rey Eugenio- Heritage Kitchen
- Jerry Edwards- Chef Expressions
- Ruth Adelstein- Our Time Kitchen
- Kiah Gibbons- Wilde Thyme
- Mike Fuggitti- The Local
- Deward Ray- Water Street Seafood
- Rosalyn Vera- Cocina Luchadora
- Jon Kohler- Pairings Bistro

Days of Taste Schools- Baltimore City

- Dickey Hill
- Govans
- Charles Carroll Barrister
- Armistead Gardens
- Southwest Baltimore Charter
- Federal Hill Preparatory School
- Hazelwood
- Patterson Park

Baltimore County

- Glyndon
- Dogwood

Howard

- Talbott Springs

Harford

- Halls Cross
- Bakerfield

THANK
YOU



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