

Milwaukee Food Council BOD Nominations 2017

Nominations are listed in alphabetical order. Note that we did not significantly alter nomination information, therefore the formatting and length of each is variable in order to preserve the original voice of the nominee.

David D. Berka



Volunteer Engagement Coordinator, Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin

I hold a Master's degree from Duke University (2016, summa cum laude), where I studied ethics, politics, and theology for three years. Much of my research was related to ethical issues in food economy and ecology from faith-based perspectives. I have long worked with churches around the country, and most recently in North Carolina churches with their food bank and pantry partners in Ashe County. In my spare time I am an independent scholar of religion and ethics, and I also work with local Milwaukee pastors to promote faith-based community organizing with Common Ground.

I recently began working with Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin (FAEW) in Milwaukee, which is how I learned about the work of the Milwaukee Food Council. At FAEW I get to further my work both in Milwaukee's food system and its broader civic institutions by promoting nonprofit volunteerism and food system awareness. After attending my first MFC meeting on Nov. 17th, I'm confident I would be able to contribute my skill and insight for the benefit of MFC.

As a member of MFC's Board of Directors, I would bring key qualities to my work on behalf of MFC: perspective, commitment, and integrity. First, my perspective spans both professional and academic settings, and my awareness of faith-based perspectives on and motivations for improving food systems would be a major asset to MFC. Having worked in interfaith settings previously, I'm experienced in building common cause within a community of varied religious perspectives and commitments. Food security and sustainability is something essential for many religious faiths represented in Milwaukee.

Second, my commitment: I am committed to the work of food system improvement and growth in Milwaukee and surrounding areas, which was a major motivation behind my seeking work with Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin. As an eastern Wisconsin native, I have a strong desire to see my neighbors and surrounding communities flourish with nutritious, sustainable food. Combining my work with a major food-focused nonprofit with that of MFC would be an effective long-term partnership.

Third and finally, I have the integrity to perform my service to MFC with care, confidence, effort, transparency, and a desire to listen and learn from those whose needs are more salient than my own, and whose perspectives are more enriched than my own. I am committed to thorough work, to collaborative work, and to effective work. I would be delighted to offer these commitments and skills on behalf of the MFC.

Given these commitments, I am able to attend Milwaukee Food Council meetings for the required times over the next two years. I live and work in Milwaukee, and intend to concentrate all my professional efforts here on behalf of food sustainability, security, and food system development. This will allow my service to the MFC Board of Directors to be consistent and focused.

Nayla Bezares



I am an advisor (teacher) at Escuela Verde, a student-led, environmentally-focused public charter school in Milwaukee's South Side. I have presented my work with Milwaukee youth at the North American Association for Environmental Education Conference both from a Food Justice standpoint as well as from the standpoint of marginalized populations and their involvement in the environmental movement.

With regards to the MFC, I have visited the Milwaukee Food Council meetings since April 2015 and have volunteered for a number of work groups that have formed since. I also facilitated the Escuela Verde

building as a meeting space for the MFC July meeting.

My involvement with the Milwaukee food systems started six years ago when I moved to this city from Puerto Rico, where I was born and raised, to join General Mills as a Manufacturing and Engineering Associate. I worked with the food giant for four and a half years and decided to leave the company when differences between my values, lifestyle and beliefs and the company's main goals were more than any other motivations to stay in that environment.

Opportunely, my work as a Math volunteer at Escuela Verde resulted in an offer to join their team and I am currently in my second year with the school. My work focuses on addressing diversity from a food standpoint by studying different cultures through the foods they eat and comparing that to the American diet. Understanding the food system and touching on topics of food justice locally is one of the initiatives I have led with the entire school.

Like with many of us, my conscious relationship with food started with my mom in the kitchen and, while I have burn marks that confirm I am an experienced cook, I came to learn how detached I had been from the food I consumed when I moved to Milwaukee. I realized that Puerto Rico has access to a fraction of the produce available in the mainland and that complicated politics behind perpetuate this reality. I have a commitment with the food activist community to untangle the obstacles that prevent food access to people of all races, incomes and geographic location. I believe food sovereignty has many layers of empowerment and it should be something every living being claims. Thus, I consider myself a good candidate for the Milwaukee Food Council Board of Directors because I will bring to the group the perspectives of the communities I serve and belong to as well as a relentless desire to make progress in this arena. While I may not have experience in some of the focus areas of the Council, I do have curiosity and drive to further our impact.

As a teacher my work schedule is fixed 9-4pm Mon-Fri. Making time to attend the MFC meeting will require asking for time off work. This is not impossible and I count with the support of my colleagues, but it may result in my absence from some of the general meetings. As far as board meetings I have a work conference the week of Feb 13th and may not be able to attend the Feb 16th meeting.

Stephanie Calloway



Program Manager, CORE/El Centro; Board member, Outpost Natural Foods;

I've been involved with the MFC since 2009, a steering committee member since December 2013 and the board president since June 2016. In addition to supporting a number of community gardens and small scale farming projects, I launched my own sunflower oil business in 2016 and plan to farm 2 acres in 2017. As a board member of Outpost cooperative, I've also gained experience in the retail side of the food system, understanding the impacts of the increasingly competitive market in

Milwaukee and recognize the impact of the inequitable distribution of healthy retail outlets. I connect to food through a spiritual relationship to Earth and reverence/respect for her role in shaping our histories, cultures, families and health. Since spring 2014, I took initiative to facilitate a collective impact process for the MFC, looking to engage a wider diversity of participation in the Milwaukee Food Council and position the MFC to hold/lead a vision for a more just and sustainable food experience in Milwaukee. I am passionate about the power of food to break down cycles of oppression and support cultural pride and cross-pollination. I see the potential for MFC to continue building on its 10 year history to bring a wider representation

from residents, businesses, and industries (healthcare, housing, transportation, etc) and am excited for the possibility to continue being involved.

I have missed only 1 meeting in the last year, with the birth of my second child. I am committed to the work of the MFC and have a flexible schedule at my other jobs to be able to accommodate meetings, whether morning, afternoon or evening, given enough notice.



Karin Mary Conway aka “KC” aka “Organic Growth Coach”

Education includes;

- US Health Center – Health Coach Certification (in process 2016)
- Victory Garden Initiative - Permaculture Design Certification -12/2013
- Victory Garden Initiative – Food Leader Certification - 12/2013
- Cardinal Stritch University- Milwaukee, WI -

12/2003 Bachelor of Business Management. Graduated with Academic Distinction.

- Coach Training Alliance, Certified Coach - 2010- 4/2011
- Waukesha County Technical College, WI. Associate Marketing - 12/2000

Work experience includes;

*Healthy Cooking Show Host (2/2016-Present) I build relationships with local individuals at events where I demonstrate how to prepare healthy food with great taste. People learn how to keep the nutrients and flavor in their food. I regularly have children devouring fruits and vegetables.

*Garden Supervisor/Nutrition Education (2/2015-present) Tippecanoe Presbyterian Church, Facilitated grant-funded rooftop garden plus 38 raised bed gardens to efficiently grow 1,500 lbs of produce for the under-served in Bayview. Trained and managed staff in the garden as well as at the Community Center where we demonstrated and distributed the produce. Recipients were given an opportunity to taste a recipe, learn how to prepare it, and take home the ingredients at no charge. Tracked all stats for grant requirements.

*Coaching/Training/ Marketing Consultant (1/2008-present) KMC Marketing, LLC Organic Growth Coach. I teach and coach people to make better food choices including how to grow their own food organically and reduce toxic exposure. Marketing tasks performed for clients include; Deployed CRM marketing, revamped company website, Facilitated training and networking events, Formed Business Partnerships, etc.

*Senior Buyer/Department Manager (1989-2001) Pick 'n Save, Oconomowoc, WI

- Event Organizer for Milwaukee Holistic Health Expo since 2011. We host a spring and fall event each year to help educate families on nutrition, alternative health choices, holistic treatments, mindfulness, etc.
- Organic Farming Volunteer and Food Leader Mentor at Victory Garden Initiative. We educate local families how they can grow their own healthy food. As a mentor, I help support the future Food Leaders so their projects make a difference in the local food system and health of the community.
- School Garden Coordinator for Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful. We encourage and facilitate the implementation of raised bed gardens at local schools. I manage a demonstration garden at KGMB, plus train the teachers how to build and manage their own gardens on-site at the schools.
- Events Committee and volunteer for Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee
- US Health Centers Health Coach Certification Mentor
- Active Member of the Milwaukee Food Council
- Steering Committee volunteer of the CIUAN (Institute for Urban Agriculture & Nutrition)
- Race Director for Badgerland Striders Lakefront Discovery Run 2007-2010. Responsible for coordinating budget, permits, course, venues, volunteers, pre-planning, registration, race day management, follow-up, planning future improvements as a consultant to new RD.
- Race Director for Komen Milwaukee Race for the Cure 2003-2004. • Completed first full marathon in June 1999 with Team in Training. I raised \$3800 for the Leukemia Society of America. I worked full time while training for the marathon, fundraising, and attending night school. To present, I have completed 3 full marathons and am an active volunteer coordinator in the Badgerland Striders Running Club.
- Bilingual skills in Spanish and English
- Past volunteer at Sweetwater Organics in Bayview
- Past Garden Coordinator/Volunteer for New Beginnings Are Possible. I taught at risk children the joys of gardening and facilitated growing a garden on-site. 2005-2006
- Organic Gardener since birth. I learned everything I know from my Mother. Completed Ending Racism Training with Growing Power.

I have been attending meetings for the past 4 years. I have volunteered for the set up and clean up crew and also participated in the CIUAN steering committee.

I have been working to help end hunger and teach basic gardening skills to those who are highest at risk of hunger.

I have been training with victory garden initiative and most recently a mentor for the food leader program. I receive my permaculture certification through victory garden initiative and organized numerous in-person as well as online events to connect people around food.

I am a wonderful candidate especially because of my willingness to step up and help wherever health and food is involved. I truly believe that having access to real clean food is more important than anything else. If people do not have the nutrients they need it makes it very difficult to do anything else in life. Everyone deserves equal access to real food.

I work as a health consultant and teach people how to grow and prepare healthy food. My latest endeavors are focused around teaching more classes related to food. How to grow food anywhere...How to keep maximum nutrients intact during food preparation...

Vermicompost...Micro green growing, etc.

I have partnered with a local MD and am co-authoring a cookbook focused on utilizing foods rich in phytonutrients.

I am a natural connector and have put so many resources towards connecting like-minded people around food. I currently organize numerous Meetup groups and can easily help spread the word about the Food Council. Because I am business and tech savvy, I can be very useful with utilizing technology to our advantage.

I am a certified coach and have extensive experience organizing events. My marketing and business management degrees always come in handy.

I travel a lot for my job but I can control my schedule and can easily make the meetings.

Kristen Fledderjohn

I have a deep passion for human rights and the potential of food for healing self and community.

I have been a member since I moved to the mid-west in 2014 and have attended every membership meeting since. In February 2016 I filled the Treasurer position on the board of the MFC and have helped fulfill the many tasks to become an independent and functioning organization.

Personally, as the Treasurer this past year, I have continued to show up, take on responsibility, and follow through on my commitments. Organizationally I have played a pivotal role in the formation of the MFC as a nonprofit and would like to continue to nurture our growth.

Monthly third Thursdays are reserved for the MFC commitment.

Marie Jewell

Marie is a tenured Hunger Task Force employee with great experience in food systems work with us and with Outpost Natural Foods.

Hunger Task Force is an anti-hunger public policy organization. Hunger Task Force operates an independent, Free&Local food bank; the Pick and Save Fresh Picks Mobile Market and the Farm. Maries has played an active role in all of these aspects of Hunger Task Force.

Marie is trained to manage and direct people; she is an excellent communicator and has strong marketing background. Her work in food systems with Outpost had her designing and implementing community education programs. Her work at Hunger Task Force, first managing volunteers and events and later recruiting and managing 6000 volunteers annually could be of great support to the Milwaukee Food Council.

Marie is a seasoned leader and has the time to devote to board membership. As her employer, I agreed to nominate her and provide assurance that she can faithfully participate on the Board of Directors.

Dawn Powell

I am a regular attendee to the Food Council meetings during the NEW administration and look forward to being a leader at the table of strategic planning to help improve our Food system in Milwaukee.

I feel that my background in entrepreneurship, gardening and Horticulture will help the Food Council Board of Milwaukee provide hands-on experience with NEW and exciting engagements at the neighborhood level.

At the neighborhood level of recognition of my work are:

Gardening Award – Borchert Field Cares – 2013

Fruit & Nutty 5 Contest Winner – 2013

City Grant – 8th & Concordia Garden – 2013

Outstanding Leadership & Stewardship – District Strategist, 2016

I do not foresee a conflict with attendance to upcoming board meetings.

Dawn Powell BIO

Entrepreneur – Urban Gardener and Horticulturist

Dawn to Dusk Forever Garden Group LLC

I grew up in Milwaukee and graduated from Washington High School. After attending Milwaukee Area Technical College for a year and a half, I joined the family business on North Avenue for 15 years. My hands-on entrepreneurial background and customer care skill sets started early on and were honed in my exposure through my family's business located on North Avenue – Powell's Gift Shop, one of the first African-American stores in Milwaukee.

For the past 12 years, I have been fortunate to work with well-known practitioners in Agriculture and Garden Management. This includes first-hand and hands-on creation of gardens for food, case study education as well as gardens for beautification - landscaping.

My background has provided a wealth of information that involved collaborative work with different age groups (including youth), nurseries, schools, community and private organizations, and the City of Milwaukee, in hands-on creations for Community Gardens.

My hands-on In-service work with Will Allen, Growing Power, for 3 years, has proven to be one of the most rewarding in working with Compost.

My experience working in Borchert Field Neighborhood, District 6, in the construction of 4 Community Gardens include the following: 3200 N. 9th (2005), 9th & Ring (2009) – It is now known as "We Got This Community Garden"; 9th & Concordia (2013) – Tree Orchard Garden;

and 8th & Concordia (2013) - The Heritage Garden. Some other gardens I have had hands-on in Borchert Fields are: 11th & Burleigh – named Borchert Fields Garden and 9th & Burleigh – The Story Garden (working with students of Robert LaFollette School).

And, my work has also been with 3 gardens in the Harambee Neighborhood. They are located at: 7th & Locust - “Children of the Sun” Garden, 5th & Locust - the “Peace” Garden and at Dr. Martin L. King Drive & Clark Street - Victory Over Violence Garden (next to CYD).

In 2015, I provided landscape design for Neighborhood House Community Garden.

Our work at Dawn to Dusk Forever Garden Group LLC has grown in its outreach partnerships. Last year, we held our first annual summit, “Planting for SPRING, Designing for SUMMER”, at Havenswood State Forest, 6141 N. Hopkins Street, Milwaukee, WI 53209, with Guest Speaker, Senator Lena Taylor, District 4. The advisory group and event team partners were: Amazing Architecture, Love Foundation Inc, and Milwaukee Professionals Association LLC. Presenters, attendees, and sponsors included: Auriea Mosley, Clarke Graphics, Kompost Kids, Milwaukee Urban Garden, Ratke Nurseries, Regal Enterprises, Two Girls and a Farm, Victoria Bodor, Victory Gardens Initiative and Wells Fargo Bank. We also had two Interns from Mount Mary College and the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Barbara A. Richards

Permaculture Design Certificates –(2011 VGI, 2013 Regenerative Leadership Institute); Founding member of Reflo: Sustainable Water Solutions; Interfaith Earth Network: Steering Committee, Secretary 2011 to present; Milwaukee Environmental Consortium Board, Secretary 2016 to present.

Growing up, my family were home gardeners, canners and raised milk goats for about 6 years. As a pre teen I had a 4-H garden Project. I have continued to grow food on home plots and now am establishing a permaculture yard on Milwaukee’s west side. I have volunteered with VGI Blitz and Kompost Kids events. I have urged the development of three sustainable food sites since 2011: ref. Lisbon Food Village for one. My current project is Friends of Milwaukee’s Downtown Forest.

I have a commitment to the broad range of needs that a sustainable Food System encompasses. I have a commitment to Milwaukee. I have three grandsons who live in Milwaukee. The meeting times and venue is a match for me as a west sider.

Erika Villafuerte

*Unitedhealthcare- Multicultural Community Engagement & Provider Relations Specialist -

*Salud First- Health and Wellness Guide *Wisconsin Institute For Healthy Aging- Living Well With Diabetes Leader *Professional Amistad Network- Administrator

I've been attending MFC meetings for about 2 years now and immediately at my first meeting I found that the ideas and goals shared by many participants of the meetings greatly spoke to me. I was hooked, and have looked forward to each meeting ever since.

Unfortunately, as my role with UnitedHealthcare has grown, I have been doing a lot more traveling and that means I cannot commit to a set expected attendance schedule for the upcoming year. However, I can commit to try my best to make as many meetings as possible and to pitch in anywhere I can once I am updated on any missed meetings. I will try to give as much notice as possible to not being able to attend a meeting but once in a while there are unexpected mandatory UHC meetings from my management that may arise, but that would be rare. I understand this doesn't sound too promising, given the expected attendance of board members, but I believe I can make a great contribution even with my limited time.

I am very passionate about sharing information and resources to educate communities to reach their dreams for a better tomorrow. I greatly feel this is best achieved by starting with health first, but it's difficult to get healthy in environments without access to healthy food. In both my roles at UHC and my personal business, I have the opportunity to connect with people and organizations that share the same goals as the MFC. I'm eager to work together with as many organizations as possible and connect them MFC's mission to help our underserved populations get the health education to eating well they need and want. I'm also hoping to bring aboard organizations that can aid other personal issues many face that make putting health first less of a priority. My personal vision and that of MFC align well; I will be glad to help raise more awareness of the council and identify community opportunities as able.

Pahoua Xiong



I am a passionate supporter of local food and reforming a food system that is healthier for all people and the planet. I have worked with entities that address food insecurity and production, and the promotion for better health and nutrition. During my time at Feeding America food bank, I organized volunteers to help pack and get food into the hands of those who need it most. In an effort to maximize Feeding America's produce donations while working to minimize wasted product and resources, I spearheaded the creation of their Fresh Rescue produce sort. The program ensured that donated fruits and vegetables, received from grocery stores and producers, would be thoroughly inspected and correctly stored before entering the distribution system, so that clients would receive only the best kinds of foods, safe and nutritious. Recently, my current role is public health associate and market manager with the Greenfield Health Department, using food and nutrition knowledge to promote and improve the health of the community. Also, as market manager for the Greenfield Farmers Market, I oversee the operation of the market, maintain the market token program for EBT access, and create content for the market's Facebook page and newsletters.

Since having joined the Milwaukee Food Council in 2014, I've attended most meetings and have helped with refining the goals and metrics of the council's collective impact initiative. Should I be given the opportunity to serve on the board, I will be dedicated towards furthering the Council's vision of creating greater access to healthy foods and strengthening Milwaukee's local food system.