

Chi FLoW People and Projects

The current version of this resource directory was created based on the registration form responses of Chi FLoW June 2022 Assembly attendees. We will continue to grow this resource as we collaborate with more people doing work related to food loss and waste across the Chicago Food System.

Please feel free to make edits to your entry either directly in this document as a comment or send them to us via email at wastedfoodaction@gmail.com. If you did not attend the June 2022 event but would like to be included in this directory, please fill out [this form](#) with your information.

NAMES

Ning Ai	Steve Ericson	Natasha Nicholes
Weslynn Ashton	Deepa Gupta	Elise Pelletier
Bret Carr	Jennifer Herd	Jonathan Pereira
Diane Chapeta	Harrison Horst	Alex Poltorak
Harold Chapman	Dakarai Howard	Cosmos Ray
Dane Christianson	Erlene Howard	Gavin Rosengarten
Rodger Cooley	Stephanie Katsaros	Howard Rosing
Sydney Coyle	Marta Keane	Julie Schilf
Amy DeLorenzo	Carolee Kokola	Zach Samaras
Estela Benavides Duhart	Candela Mena	Maura Shea
Ken Dunn	Wilson Mora	Thomas Strauss
Kevin Erickson	Jennifer Nelson	

PROJECTS / ORGANIZATIONS

Block Bins	Illinois Tech Institute of Design
Bright Beat	Loyola University Chicago School of Environmental Sustainability
Bronzeville Kenwood Mutual Aid	Maryland Institute College of Art
Bubbly Dynamics LLC	Northwestern University
Chicago Department of Public Health	Plant Chicago
Chicago Food Policy Action Council	Rescuing Leftover Cuisine
Chicago Public Schools	Resource Center
Chicago Sustainability Task Force	Seven Generations Ahead
Chicagoland Food Sovereignty Coalition	ShareFest Will County
City of Chicago, Streets and Sanitation	Steans Center, DePaul University
Collective Resource Compost	University of Illinois Chicago
The Community Food Navigator	Urban Canopy
DePaul University	US EPA Region 5
Feeding Illinois	Wasted Food Action Alliance
Illinois Farm to School Network	We Sow We Grow Proje
Illinois Food Scrap Coalition	
Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, University of Illinois	



Name(s): Ning Ai
Organization(s): [University of Illinois Chicago](#)
Title: Associate Professor
Email: ain@uic.edu

Related work: Waste quantification and characterization; Dual challenge of food wastage and insecurity; Balance environmental, financial, economic, and societal goals. View Ning's slides from the June 2022 assembly [here](#) and her website [here](#).

Name(s): Weslynn Ashton
Organization(s): [Illinois Tech Institute of Design](#)
Title: Associate Professor
Email: washton@iit.edu

Related work: [Multiscale RECIPES](#)



Name(s): Bret Carr
Organization(s): [Rescuing Leftover Cuisine](#)
Title: Chicago Fundraising Manager
Email: bret@rescuingleftovercuisine.org

Related work: Rescuing Leftover Cuisine (RLC) is a 501c3 nonprofit food rescue organization that aims to make hunger a thing of the past by being the critical link between excess food and the people who need it most. RLC uses a custom web application to crowdsource community members as volunteer "rescuers" to transport nutritious food from food donor partners to nonprofit recipients, feeding people instead of landfills.

Name(s): Diane Chapeta
Organization(s): [Seven Generations Ahead](#); [Illinois Farm to School Network](#)
Title: Program Manager
Email: farmtoschool@sevengenerationsahead.org

Related work: Farm to school work including connections with farmers, distributors, school and early childcare providers.

Name(s): Harold Chapman
Organization(s): [Chicago Public Schools](#)
Title: Career and Technical Education Cluster Manager
Email: hchapman@cps.edu

Related work: Part of the effort to align CPS policies with the Good Food Purchasing Initiative, Farm to School activities, as well designing labs where students can grow food intensively at their schools.

Name(s): Dane Christianson
Organization(s): [Block Bins](#)
Title: CEO/Founder
Email: dane@blockbins.com

Related work: Builds efficient food scrap recycling programs, particularly for cities and urban environments.

Name(s): Rodger Cooley
Organization(s): [Chicago Food Policy Action Council](#) (CFPAC)
Title: Executive Director
Email: rooley@chicagofoodpolicy.com

Related work: The Chicago Food Policy Action Council partners with a wide range of community partners and sectors to develop, advocate for, and support implementation of policy to create a sustainable, just, fair, humane, and healthy food system.

Name(s): Sydney Coyle
Organization(s): [The Community Food Navigator](#)
Title: Project Coordinator
Email: sydney@communityfoodnavigator.org

Related work: The Community Food Navigator is a set of tools developed by and for Black, Brown, and Indigenous food growers, mobilizers and educators and organizers and advocates in support of their efforts in Chicago. The Navigator seeks to create collaborative spaces where people, communities, and organizations connect and organize based on their shared interest in local, accessible, and healthy food for all. Using a set of tools starting with a mobile app, participants can share resources, knowledge, and connections to strengthen local food growing, mobilization, and education about growing and preparing food in culturally rooted ways.

Name(s): Amy DeLorenzo
Organization(s): [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition](#); [DePaul University](#)
Title: Food Waste Reduction Enthusiast
Email: amy.delorenzo@gmail.com

Related work: Studied the effects legislation may have on actors across the food value chain; recently completed a job at University of Illinois Extension and created a Compost Ambassador Program; involved with Illinois Food Scrap Coalition and Wasted Food Action Alliance committees; next job will involve researching food waste at the federal level.

Name(s): Estela Benavides Duhart
Organization(s): [Maryland Institute College of Art](#)
Title: Social Design Associate
Email: eduhartbenavides@mica.edu

Related work: Uses design methodologies to facilitate convergence within a network of researchers tackling wasted food across different levels (industrial and household); [Multiscale RECIPES](#)

Name(s): Ken Dunn
Organization(s): [Resource Center](#)
Title: President
Email: kdunn.rc@gmail.com

Related work: Operating projects on completing the circle of the food system. This includes growing food on farms in Chicago, selling the food to restaurants, picking up food waste from residents and restaurants, and distributing to composting facilities to complete the food chain locally.



Name(s): Kevin Erickson
Organization(s): [Loyola University Chicago School of Environmental Sustainability](#)
Title: Sustainable Agriculture Manager
Email: kerickson2@luc.edu

Related work: Manages the Loyola University Chicago Urban Agriculture Program and the Greenhouse Lab; is a Food Systems and Agriculture Instructor; leads agriculture production and training for 70 college students per year incorporating outdoor production, hydroponics, aquaponics, and mushroom production using sustainable and regenerative methods; leads the Food Recovery Network on Loyola's campus and Nourish LUC (a nutrition and food system cohort); conducts food system related research; collaborates with campus dining partners to improve food procurement and waste management.

Name(s): Steve Ericson
Organization(s): [Feeding Illinois](#)
Title: Executive Director
Email: steve.ericson@feedingillinois.org

See slides

Related work: Fosters healthier communities and a healthier planet by redistributing food and thereby helping reduce food loss and waste. By recovering and redistributing surplus, safe food, our network strengthens the food system and helps ensure that food is used as it was intended: to feed people. View Steve's slides from the June 2022 assembly [here](#).

Name(s): Deepa Gupta
Organization(s): [The Community Food Navigator](#)
Title: Project Director
Email: deepa@communityfoodnavigator.org

Related work: Community-stewarded project designed to establish collaborative spaces by, with, and in support of Black, Brown, and Indigenous food growers, producers, organizers, and mobilizers rooted in the Chicago food shed in support of food sovereignty, collective care, education, opportunity, circularity, and sustainability.



Name(s): Jennifer Herd
Organization(s): [Chicago Department of Public Health](#)
Title: Senior Health Policy Analyst
Email: jennifer.herd@cityofchicago.org

Related work: Works to assure healthy nutritious foods are available to all Chicagoans. Manages the City's Good Food Purchasing initiative, which strives for all city institutions serving food to the public to purchase local, fair, sustainable, human and nutritious foods.



Name(s): Harrison Horst
Organization(s): [DePaul University](#); [Wasted Food Action Alliance](#)
Title:
Email: harrison.horst@yahoo.com

Related work: Working with the Wasted Food Action Alliance as a graduate student fellow to map wasted food stakeholders in the Chicago area.

Name(s): Dakarai Howard
Organization(s): [Chicago Food Policy Action Council](#) (CFPAC)
Title: Equitable Supply Chain Development Specialist
Email: dakarai@chicagofoodpolicy.com

Related work: Food policy advocate in support of developing pathways for emerging farmers and food business owners entering wholesale/institutional markets



Name(s): Erlene Howard
Organization(s): [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition](#); [Collective Resource Compost](#)
Title: Board Member; Founder/Owner
Email: erlene@collectiveresource.us

Related work: CRC's education and services reduce the harmful practice of putting the valuable resource of food into landfills. Composting makes everything better - healthy soil is produced to grow more nutritious food, air quality is improved, and water is protected through non-chemical farming.



Name (s): Stephanie Katsaros
Organization(s): [Chicago Sustainability Task Force](#); [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition](#); [Wasted Food Action Alliance](#); [Bright Beat](#)
Title: President; Board Member; Founding Member; Founder/President
Email: steph@brightbeat.com

Related Work: Aggregating diverse information into a database and activating connections to bring more food into the local rescue system; mapping where donors and neighbors can get/give food; creating/identifying tools to work to resolve food inequity and access issues at the community level.

Name (s): Marta Keane
Organization(s): [ShareFest Will County](#)
Title: Board of Directors, Secretary
Email: martakeane@yahoo.com

Related Work: ShareFest Will County is a non-profit food pantry and food distributor to other food pantries in Will County and closely adjacent communities.



Name (s): Carolee Kokola
Organization(s): [Bubbly Dynamics LLC](#)
Title: Director of Enterprise Operations
Email: carolee@bubblydynamics.com

Related Work: Supports businesses at [The Plant](#) as we implement creative approaches to resource and energy efficiencies, including preventing wasted food, diverting excess food to neighbors in Back of the Yards, and recycling organic waste into compost. Owned and operated by Bubbly Dynamics LLC, The Plant is a former meat packing facility that has been repurposed into a research and production facility comprising a collaborative community of small food businesses.

Name (s): Wilson Mora
Organization(s): [City of Chicago, Streets and Sanitation](#)
Title: Program Director
Email: wilson.mora@cityofchicago.org

Related Work:

Name(s): Candela Mena
Organization(s): [Illinois Tech Institute of Design](#)
Title: Graduate Research Assistant
Email: cmena3@hawk.iit.edu

Related work: Research assistant to Weslyne Ashton in the Multiscale RECIPES project.



Name(s): Jennifer Nelson
Organization(s): [Seven Generations Ahead](#); [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition](#); [Wasted Food Action Alliance](#)
Title: Program Director; Founding Board Member; Founding Member
Email: jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org

Related work: Work with the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition advances food scrap composting infrastructure and policy; work with the Wasted Food Action Alliance supports connections between people, initiatives, technology, education, and policy while sharing resources to prevent food waste, rescue food to nourish hungry people or animals, and recycle food scraps to build healthy soil.



Name(s): **Natasha Nicholes**
Organization(s): [We Sow We Grow Project](#)
Title: Executive Director
Email: natasha@wesowwegrow.org

Related work: We Sow We Grow is a nonprofit that grows gardeners globally. They teach people how to handle their growing spaces from seed to table, and we include handling food waste to help make the garden richer.

Name(s): **Elise Pelletier**
Organization(s): [Seven Generations Ahead](#); [Wasted Food Action Alliance](#)
Title: Sustainability Program Associate
Email: elise@sevengenerationsahead.org

Related work: Work with the Wasted Food Action Alliance supports connections between people, initiatives, technology, education, and policy while sharing resources to prevent food waste, rescue food to nourish hungry people or animals, and recycle food scraps to build healthy soil; work with Seven Generations Ahead's Zero Waste Schools Program implements waste reduction strategies and education in Northern Illinois public schools.

Name(s): **Jonathan Pereira**
Organization(s): [Plant Chicago](#)
Title: Executive Director
Email: jonathan@plantchicago.org

Related work:

Name(s): **Alex Poltorak**
Organization(s): [Urban Canopy](#)
Title: CEO
Email: Alex@TheUrbanCanopy.org

Related work:



Name(s): **Cosmos Ray**
Organization(s): [Bronzeville Kenwood Mutual Aid](#); [Chicagoland Food Sovereignty Coalition](#)
Title: Neighbor
Email: cosray@gmail.com

Related work: Volunteers with other neighbors to reimagine a local community based food system based on mutual aid, solidarity and food sovereignty, equity and autonomy.

Name(s): **Gavin Rosengarten**
Organization(s): [Northwestern University](#); [Seven Generations Ahead](#)
Title: Student; Zero Waste Intern
Email: gavinfr36@gmail.com

Related work: Mapping of Chicago farmers markets.

Name(s): Howard Rosing
Organization(s): [Steans Center, DePaul University](#)
Title: Director
Email: hrosing@depaul.edu

Related work: Mapping of cold storage for food rescue; mapping existing community garden infrastructure.



Name(s): Zach Samaras
Organization(s): [Illinois Sustainable Technology Center \(ISTC\), University of Illinois](#)
Title: Technical Assistance Engineer, Sustainability
Email: zsamaras@illinois.edu

Related work: Works with municipalities, business/organizations, and institutions on waste reduction and diversion. Currently working on a project with Feeding Illinois, the Illinois Farm Bureau, and other partners on developing a statewide Farm to Food Bank Program - connecting farm surplus with food banks and food pantries. Co-runs the North Park Community Farmers Market, connecting residents with local businesses and urban farms.



Name(s): Julie Schilf
Organization(s): [US EPA Region 5](#)
Title: Environmental Specialist
Email: schilf.julie@epa.gov

Related work: Prevention and diversion of wasted food.

Name(s): Maura Shea
Organization(s): [Illinois Tech Institute of Design](#)
Title: Associate Professor and Co-Lead of Food Systems Action Lab
Email: mshea@id.iit.edu

Related work: Innovation lead in national non-profit networks (YMCA of the USA & Feeding America National Office). Food Systems Action Lab is focused on shifting local, regional and national food systems toward more equitable and sustainable practices and solutions.

Name(s): Thomas Strauss
Organization(s): [Urban Canopy](#)
Title: Compost Club Co-Lead
Email: tommy.straus2@gmail.com

Related work: Leads the operations for a residential and commercial compost pickup service in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.