

**ANNUAL  
REPORT 2021**





Hi Friends,

2022 is a very special year for us, it's our 20th anniversary. Whether you joined us last month or 20 years ago, your partnership has been invaluable. I'd like to personally thank our founders, the Baker Brothers (Justin and Evan) and our dear friend Gavin Levy for creating the strong foundation. Throughout the year we will be planning opportunities to celebrate with us.

We are sharing this report with you because you believe in the Conscious Alliance and make our work possible. 2021 was a tough year for nearly everyone I know, yet there is also so much to be grateful for including all the great work we accomplished. Together, we provided 1,743,249 meals to people in need, and contributed \$6,995,056 to much-needed programs and initiatives. We did all of this while keeping our administrative and fundraising expenses below 9%.

We supported communities across the United States, from Brooklyn, New York to Long Beach, California, with large-scale food donations. We moved nutritious food to rural areas, neighborhoods, and cities left reeling from natural disasters and coping with Covid peaks.

We also moved ourselves! Our new National Distribution Center in Broomfield, CO increases our physical capacity and brings our team closer together. We welcomed new staff members, new food makers, and new friends, like Cavanaugh Bell, a young community leader of today. We worked with old friends, like Widespread Panic, to bring meaningful donations to communities we have supported since our inception, such as Pine Ridge Reservation. I'm motivated by the forward momentum that collectively we are bringing into 2022.

One thing we know for sure is that we need to continue strengthening communities and that having each other's back is critical. We are fortunate to live in a country with enough food to feed everyone, but a substantial amount of it goes directly into landfills – before it ever has a chance to feed people in need. The majority of the meals and snacks that we distribute would be wasted if we didn't have the resources to identify, gather, and distribute them effectively.

As you read through this 2021 annual report, please know it could not have happened without your continued support. We have a big year ahead of us and this 20 year milestone inspires us; we rededicate ourselves to our mission to support communities in crisis.

As Jesse Aratow would say, "Thank you for keeping the dream alive."

Love,  
  
 Justin Levy, Executive Director

WATCH HOW OUR WORK SHIFTED IN 2021



In 2021, Conscious Alliance spent \$6,995,055.97 to support children, families, and others in need across the U.S. Our combined administrative and fundraising expenses were below 9%.



In-Kind Food (55%)	\$4,568,447.69
Private Contributions (14%)	\$1,212,189.47
In-kind Goods (12%)	\$994,274.45
Corporate Donations (9%)	\$732,117.27
Grants (8%)	\$681,162.38
Produced Events (1%)	\$81,397.72
Membership (1%)	\$69,759.00
Other (<.31%)	\$26,341.50

**TOTAL: \$8,365,689.48**



Programs (92%)	\$6,995,055.97
Administrative (6%)	\$424,558.13
Fundraising (2%)	\$195,362.66

**TOTAL: \$7,622,453.35**

Conscious Alliance is committed to sound fiscal management and financial stewardship of every dollar raised. When you donate to Conscious Alliance, you can be sure your contribution will be used to responsibly fulfill our mission.

Help prepare us for every challenge and let us plan for the future by naming Conscious Alliance as a beneficiary of your will or trust, life insurance policy, retirement plan, or stocks. Please reach out if you are interested in making a legacy gift.





**REMEMBERING OUR GOOD FRIEND & SUPPORTER**

We were deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Jesse Aratow.

For more than 20 years, Jesse was a partner, manager, and booking agent in the music industry with Madison House. He worked closely with The String Cheese Incident, Leftover Salmon, JJ Grey & Mofro, Keller Williams, Lotus, and others.

Deeply respected for his integrity and authenticity, Jesse was also passionate with an amazing sense of humor. He was a tremendous ally of Conscious Alliance. He believed in our work and advocated for our place in the music scene since our first food drive with The String Cheese Incident in 2002. A true friend, he helped us grow as a young organization learning the ropes of the music industry.

Jesse was dear to so many; hundreds attended his memorial. He was a husband, father of two daughters, a sibling, and a son, and a great friend. His sudden death leaves a huge hole for all who knew him.

Jesse's iconic phrase was "Keep the Dream Alive."

We will, Jesse, we will.



# KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE







### RECOGNIZING AN EXTRAORDINARY YOUNG LEADER

Our hero of the year is not only a big dreamer, but also a major doer.

At just 5 years old, Cavanaugh Bell had the strength to take the darkness and pain of being bullied and transform it into light and love for himself, his community, and the world. He founded the anti-bullying nonprofit Cool & Dope (Considering Others' Obstacles in Life & Dish Out Positive Energy) in hopes to end all bullying worldwide by his 18th birthday.

During the shutdown, he became concerned about access to food for his grandmother and her neighbors so he started making care packages with groceries for local senior citizens. He began with the goal of reaching 1,000 elders, then took his message and dream beyond his own community. He shared a call-to-support video on social media that was met with generosity by people around the globe. He well-exceeded his first goal and soon opened the Love Is Greater Than COVID-19 Community Pantry.

Months later, he visited South Dakota with his family. While there, Cavanaugh decided he wanted to help the residents of Pine Ridge Reservation. Conscious Alliance was able to collaborate with this dynamo – now 9 years old – to collect food donations for distribution on the reservation. Cavanaugh won the heart of Hormel Foods who, along with other brands, donated to help him fulfill his vision. When Conscious Alliance began receiving food for his delivery, Cavanaugh was on-site to help unload and reload the trucks – all the while dishing out his positive energy.

His dedication and drive has helped more than 17,000 people to date. Cavanaugh's boundless ambition and steadfast commitment prove you're never too young to be a leader. We are all inspired by him!

"I'm just trying to help as many families as I can."

-Cavanaugh Bell

LEARN MORE  
ABOUT OUR  
HUNGER HERO:





**NEW NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION CENTER INCREASES OUR IMPACT**

In 2021, we opened our new National Distribution Center in Broomfield, Colorado, creating a permanent home for Conscious Alliance.

The 10,593-square-foot building has ample space for the millions of meals and goods we receive and distribute every year. The building includes two warehouses, an 'Art That Feeds' poster archive room, staff offices, and 1.4 acres on which we can plant gardens and host outdoor community events.

Our vision is that it will become a community hub where Conscious Alliance, our partners, and volunteers can dream big, grow together, and continue to have significant impact improving the lives of others. We are working on architectural plans for expanding our site including a vision for a 20,000 square-foot warehouse to think bigger, do more, embrace wider.

*"We've found our niche, leveraging the natural food industry to serve communities while also diverting healthy foods that would otherwise be wasted and providing them to kiddos and communities in need. Our National Distribution Center has revolutionized how we work. We have gone from a building with no forklift and no loading dock, to a home where multiple semi loads come in and out in a single day. We are able to serve even more families and ensure great food is at the right place at the right time."*

*-Cathryn Folkestad, Operations Director*







## BRANDS WITH HEART JOIN CONSCIOUS ALLIANCE

ALOHA, makers of plant-based protein bars, joined Conscious Alliance as a food brand partner in 2021 and hit the ground running!

They set a goal to send love to students and families in the Chicago Public School System, where 1 in 6 children are food insecure.

They issued a call-to-action encouraging other food brands to join Conscious Alliance in gathering healthy foods. More than 15 other food brands jumped on board. They sent their products to our National Distribution Center where we held a volunteer event to make family boxes filled with great items from Bada Bean Bada Boom, Banza, Bimbo USA, Cloud10, Del Monte, Enlightened, Justin's, Kodiak Cakes, Lily's Sweets, Little Secrets Chocolates, Partake Foods, Purely Elizabeth, popchips, Quinn Snacks, Super Coffee, and Thrive Market.

“Day in and day out the Conscious Alliance team puts out unequaled energy and kindness. They inspire us each day and we are proud of our partnership to support the Chicago Public School program as well as contribute to their overall mission.”  
-Tricia Leone, Director of Partnerships and Marketing at ALOHA



SEE US ON THE NEWS:







'ART THAT FEEDS'  
FOOD DRIVES  
RETURN

 **13**  
COMMUNITIES SERVED

 **458**  
HOURS OF VOLUNTEERED TIME

 **49**  
'ART THAT FEEDS'  
FOOD DRIVES HOSTED





**A LOVE FOR MUSIC BRINGS OUR ALLIANCE TOGETHER**

After living without live music for so long, we were thrilled to once again host a benefit party at the MacMillan estate in Colorado. Our line-up made the evening that much more spectacular. After an outstanding performance by David Shaw of The Revivalists, our all-female All-Star group featuring Drin Elliott, Jennifer Hartswick, Judith Hill, Karina Rykman, Kim Dawson, Mimi Naja, Natalie Cressman, and Nikki Glaspie took the mics. The phenomenal supergroup kept the groove and smiles going all night. Through ticket sales, auctions, raffles, and donations, we raised funds that provided more than 200,000 meals to children and families in need.

In this virtual world, we also created two online concerts for Hormel's employees. These "Concerts of Hope and Thanks" gave employees from around the world a chance to login and experience music together. The first featured specially recorded musical performances by Judith Hill and David Shaw. The second was filmed the day after the MacMillan event and included the entire all-star, all-female group and was filmed in Cervantes' Masterpiece Ballroom.

Through their series of virtual concerts, Hormel brings brands and community together to enjoy music and giving back.

Born out of a love for music, we are immensely grateful for ALL the musicians who continue to be a part of our lives and mission.

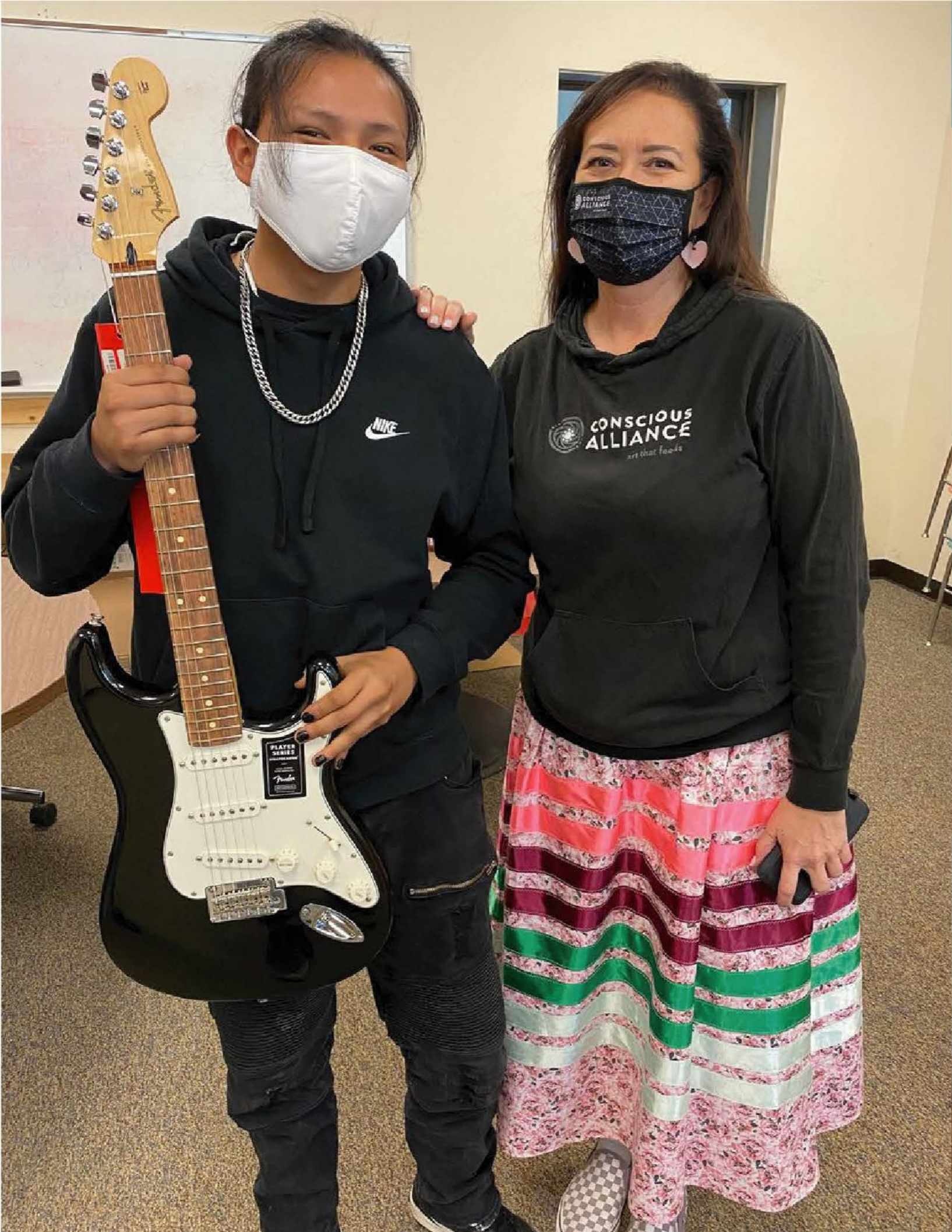
We hope you will join us this August for our next MacMillan event!



**CATCH THE 2021  
ALL-STARS  
LIVE FROM  
CERVANTES!**







**PARTNERSHIP WITH TUNES FOR TOTS & WIDESPREAD PANIC BRINGS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS TO PINE RIDGE RESERVATION**

In 2019, Conscious Alliance was given the opportunity to collaborate with Widespread Panic and Tunes for Tots to distribute new musical instruments on the Pine Ridge Reservation. As we were asking music teachers to create their dream lists of instruments, Covid was making its way into our lives.

When the shutdown happened, the band’s ability to host their annual benefit show was canceled and the reservation’s borders closed.

The wait was over on June 24, 2021. Widespread Panic held its first, post-shutdown show at the Mission Ballroom in Denver to benefit music education on the reservation, and it was a tremendous success.

Since then, we have delivered over \$216,000 worth of new musical instruments and music education materials. The teachers chose instruments representing a full range of musical styles, from electric guitars and tubas to culturally-resonate items like Lakota flutes and drums.

The gifts were allocated through all four public high schools across the reservation, the Lakota Flute Society, and the Rock the Rez youth music program. In this way, every youth on the reservation can benefit from the instruments purchased by Tunes for Tots, and we can’t wait to see how they empower generations of students to come.

“While earning their [Lakota] flutes, the young people also learn to become powerful spokespeople for their generation as effective spiritual healers through music.”  
-Will Peters, Lakota Flute Society and Pine Ridge School Lakota teacher



IN THE NEWS:







### TEXAS POWER CRISIS

In early 2021, a major power crisis in Texas left millions of people without water, food, and heat. Conscious Alliance was able to send over \$87,000 worth of Happy Family baby food as well as \$33,000 of Boulder Clean products to support those in need.

### HURRICANE IDA

In the aftermath of Hurricane Ida, as grocery stores across Louisiana struggled to keep up with demand for food and water, we rallied our community to send two semi-trucks of food and supplies to New Orleans to serve families affected by the hurricane.

The first semi-truck was loaded with 10,000 pounds of non-perishable food items collected at 'Art That Feeds' Food Drives.

We then partnered with Naturally Boulder to put a call out to food brands to contribute product donations to fill a second semi-truck. Keen One Quinoa, Quinn Snacks, and Ripple Foods stepped up with donations. Our friends at We Don't Waste also contributed to the second truck and Convoy of Hope helped transport and distribute the food to New Orleans.

### MARSHALL FIRE IN COLORADO

On the second to last day of 2021, the most destructive fire in Colorado history destroyed more than 1,000 homes, traumatically displacing thousands of families – right in our backyard.

The Colorado community and our national partners immediately came together to help. World Central Kitchen flew in, offering to back more than 90 restaurants who jumped in to supply meals to those in need. Our staff and volunteers delivered those meals to displaced residents along the Front Range (10,000 meals in the first two weeks alone). Conscious Alliance handed out supplies to families as they picked up their kids from Fireside Elementary and Coal Creek elementary schools, where nearly 100 students and teachers lost their homes to the fire. In addition to meals, we distributed gift cards and care packages through our We Got This initiative as well as personal hygiene items, air mattresses, and duffel bags.

The heart and hustle is strong and we will be here for our neighbors for years to come.





## 3,000 FULL TURKEY DINNERS DELIVERED!

We hit the road for the 2021 holiday season!

We hosted a volunteer day at our National Distribution Center where our alliance came together to assemble and organize 3,000 meals in just seven hours. The holiday meal boxes included soups, cake mix, stuffing, beans, corn, potatoes, gravy mix, dessert and soap. We distributed in four communities where each family received a large turkey and fixings.

We provided meals to families on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota and families on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Montana. The team then headed to Chicago to hold a Thanksgiving Meal Giveaway with Discover, Gyrls in the H.O.O.D. Foundation, the Original Harlem Globetrotters, SocialWorks, and Taste for the Homeless, which doubled as a community block party for local residents.

Back in Colorado, we helped our neighbors on the Front Range by providing turkeys with take-and-bake sides to gig workers, food insecure families in our community, and held distributions in Denver with our partners at Street Fraternity and Wyatt Academy.

**“Conscious Alliance makes it possible for us to serve the best quality food to our community in need. Food is more than food; being able to provide good food on a daily basis is one way to show people you care about them and giving them their dignity back, where our mission is not to say no. Who are we as human beings, if we ignore the suffering of others?”**  
-Michael Airhart, founder of Taste for the Homeless.



**SEE US  
ON THE NEWS!**







### FOOD SUSTAINABILITY ON THE PINE RIDGE RESERVATION

Last year, Conscious Alliance contributed \$50,000 to native-led efforts and organizations that are building food sustainability and health on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The support resulted in gardening classes, workshops on harvesting and preservation of meats and vegetables, families gaining access to their own small poultry operations, as well as sharing information on Lakota-style foraging, hunting, and creating medicines.

Beyond the concrete outcomes, the synergy among the projects was powerfully interconnected.

We are also expanding our garden program on the reservation by building two walipinis –greenhouses built partly underground. The underground structure helps keep temperatures more consistent with geothermal cooling in the summer and warming in the winter. It's helpful in a place where it snows until June and temperatures are over 100 degrees in the summer. The food produced will be available to the community and the walipinis will be used as garden education sites.

“We are living in an era, where it is more apparent than ever, to be self-sufficient. We cannot simply expect grocery stores to always be stocked to meet our needs in this food desert. That is the reason behind the construction of the walipini (underground greenhouse). The walipini will allow us to expand our growing season to be able to offer more food to those in need in the community. Additionally, this greenhouse design will function as an outdoor classroom to empower community members, young and old, to grow their own food... for a healthier mind, body and spirit.”

-Natalie Hand, Conscious Alliance Pine Ridge Field Director







**REDUCING FOOD WASTE PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE**

Food insecurity and climate change are both pressing issues that negatively impact healthy living for all – and disproportionately impact people of color. While these overlapping problems are entrenched and complicated, there is also a way forward that addresses racial disparities, food insecurity, and climate change.

Food waste is a major contributor of methane, a potent greenhouse gas that advances climate change. Conscious Alliance specializes in preventing food waste at the level of the manufacturer.

Our robust relationships with food brands allow us to help identify quality food that is likely headed to the landfill, and act quickly to pick it up. Once we have the product, we move it to communities in need. We intentionally distribute food without barriers or applications, giving generously in communities that need the support.

While trucking is a necessary part of moving food to where it is needed, we carbon-offset all our trucking with our friends at Trees, Water & People to further support the planet.



“Not only is trucking a necessary part of moving food, it is also one of the largest unmet expenses for Conscious Alliance. We would welcome contributions to fund trucking and also welcome partnerships with trucking companies that would like to support our mission.”

-Kelly Shea, Shea & Associates







**NATURALLY BOULDER HONORS OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Naturally Boulder, the community for the natural products industry in Colorado, recognized Justin with its 2021 Industry Leader & Community Champ Award, presented to an individual who has advanced the Colorado natural products community through deliberate and considerate advocacy, mentorship, and leadership.

“Justin is a fierce lion,” said Justin Gold, founder of Justin’s, who presented the award. “He’s led an organization that in 2020 served 2.6 million meals alone. I can’t be more proud of Justin and to be associated with Conscious Alliance.”

“At Naturally Boulder we like to recognize community champions and that’s why we chose Justin Levy for our award last fall. The award winners embody the principles we value at Naturally Boulder and they are often people who give selflessly of their time to further the community, the people they touch and the world around them. Justin is an exceptional example of that and everyone who knows him benefits from his rising tide approach. We honor the work of Conscious Alliance and we respect the man behind it.”

-Bill Capsalis

Executive Director, Naturally Boulder











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Executive Director



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Program Director



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Systems Manager



**Cathryn Folkestad**  
Operations Director



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**Natalie Hand**  
Pine Ridge Field Director

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# YOU HELPED US DO IT!






## OUR GRATITUDE FOR OUR SUPPORTERS

One of our biggest highlights of 2021 is you – without your support we would not be where we are today, and more importantly, children and families across the country would not be thriving without you.

### THANK YOU!

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### WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

-  **Make a Financial Contribution:** Visit [ConsciousAlliance.org/Donate](https://ConsciousAlliance.org/Donate), use the enclosed envelope or the QR code below.
-  **Become a Member:** Visit [ConsciousAlliance.org/Membership](https://ConsciousAlliance.org/Membership); automatic monthly donations ensure people receive food and the easiest for your budget.
-  **Plan for the Future:** Name Conscious Alliance as a beneficiary of your will or trust, life insurance policy, retirement plan, or stocks. Please email [Support@ConsciousAlliance.org](mailto:Support@ConsciousAlliance.org) for more information
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