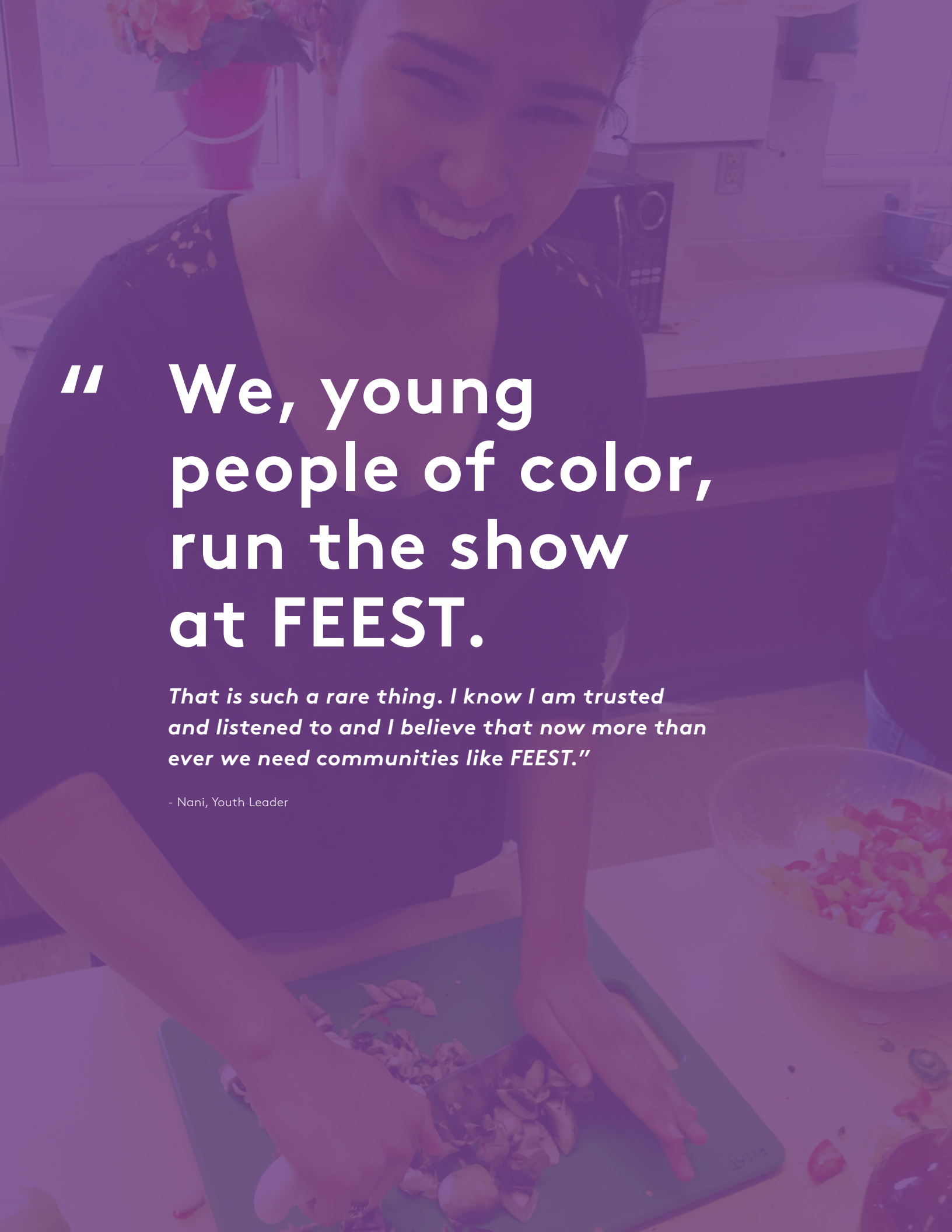


2017-2020

Strategic Plan



“ We, young people of color, run the show at FEEST.”

That is such a rare thing. I know I am trusted and listened to and I believe that now more than ever we need communities like FEEST.”

- Nani, Youth Leader

Executive Summary

FEEST began a strategic planning process in March 2017, bringing together our youth leaders, staff, Board of Directors, founders, committed donors, organizational partners, and food policy leaders in a collective reflection and visioning process. This was an opportunity to **reflect** on FEEST’s unique impact; **identify** strategies that will deepen our roots in youth leadership development and food justice; and **pivot into a new model** of grassroots organizing that builds a long-lasting movement for health justice led by and for low-income youth and youth of color.

This strategic plan is a living document. It will be referenced regularly at all levels of the organization and its implementation will be evaluated routinely and re-tooled if necessary.

Our Process

Our strategic planning included a series of youth-only listening sessions, staff and Board retreats, one-on-one community interviews and stakeholder surveys.

Together, we gathered input and ideas on four core strategic questions:

1. How do we improve our systems change work?
2. How do we grow and deepen the learning at our community dinners?
3. How do we talk about our work so that it resonates with all our key stakeholders?
4. How do we assure that we have resources and capacity for current and future programs and staff?

Strengths

In the collective reflection it became clear one of FEEST’s core strengths is the leadership development of high school youth most impacted by systemic oppression, namely youth of color and low-income youth. The way we uniquely infuse arts and culture with policy systems change work, while fostering radical joy and community building was a common theme in the feedback.

Challenges & Opportunities

Youth feedback clearly showed they wanted to continue deepening their leadership development, expand the reach of dinners and win bigger and bolder gains in holistic health for their peers. However, it also became clear that our dinners felt siloed from our campaign work and vice versa. This affirmed an internal tension surrounding what took priority: the vibrant youth development and safe space created at dinners, or the campaign work that advanced holistic health. Under our new strategic plan FEEST does not choose either/or, but deeply invests in both equally and seeks to redefine what it means to build a sustainable, long lasting movement for health justice that centers youth power.

Why Now?

FEEST recognizes we are in a political moment nationally where those most impacted by systemic oppression are experiencing an unprecedented attack on our livelihood. For low-income youth of color in our region, the recent funding disparity for public education and school nutrition are unacceptable and the widening opportunity gap creates a compounding threat. FEEST believes that a successful and thriving student is intricately related to being a healthy student. Oppression depends on us being disconnected from our emotional and physical bodies. FEEST not only wants to cultivate that re-connection, we want to organize and ensure that our schools and neighborhoods cultivate it too.

Strategic Direction

Our overall priorities for the next three years will be to focus on school based organizing campaigns to increase the holistic health of students, expand FEEST into 1-2 more South King County high schools, refine dinners to inspire action in young people’s daily lives and FEEST campaigns. To sustain this growth, FEEST will align organizational structure, strategic communication and partnerships to match current values and future vision.

“ We want to build a movement that encourages us to slow down, cook our people’s food and eat together

...at the dinner table. We want to build a movement that sees silliness, vulnerability, personal growth and creativity as key ingredients to building community power. We want to build a movement that authentically centers youth, fundamentally changes how schools and neighborhoods function in our collective health, and shifts power and solution making to those most impacted by systemic oppression.”

- Lisa Chen, Executive Director

FEEST's Special Sauce

In every delicious dish there is a special sauce. Our special sauce is rooted in the value that systemic change must occur hand-in-hand with culture shift work, and that young people most impacted by systemic oppression must be at the center of creating schools and neighborhoods that are healthy, thriving spaces for all.

Being led by and for people of color

Unapologetically rooted in social justice and equity

Centering youth power

Fostering long-lasting leadership in youth of color and low income youth

Simultaneously working to shift both culture and policy for health and food justice

Creating an infectious and dynamic community at every program offering

Integrating the creative-making process, arts and culture and joy at all levels of the organization

Cultivating a work culture that honors and uplifts the intersections of all identities

Community Dinners

Through our youth-led improvisational dinners we fundamentally change young people's relationship to food and promote creative risk-taking and connection through community building. We gather youth to cook an entire dinner from scratch using fresh fruits, vegetables, and halal meat from local markets. These dinners foster skills and appreciation for healthy cooking, cultural sharing, and experiential learning centered in our principles of holistic health and creativity. We strive to reclaim ancestral and traditional ways of cooking and eating together. Our dinners are currently hosted at Chief Sealth International High School (Delridge) and Evergreen High School (White Center) and periodically in community centers as a pop-up dinner. FEEST's model has been successful at cultivating a dynamic, engaged community of young leaders, and it has been replicated across the country in over seven cities.

Food Justice Leadership Cohort

Dinners serve as a pipeline to recruit and develop emerging youth food justice leaders. Youth leaders receive over 400 hours of mentorship, leadership training, health education, and organizing skills. Throughout the school year FEEST youth lead the community dinners and organize their peers and families in a food justice campaign. Successes from these campaigns have included an expanded school salad bar, new, culturally-relevant school lunch items, and a youth-led marketing campaign to promote healthy eating. Recently, we established an unprecedented youth advisory committee with the Highline School District Nutrition Services Director.

Youth are involved at every level of FEEST operations: youth select community projects and help hire FEEST staff, FEEST alumni serve on the Board of Directors, and youth leaders have been centrally involved in the development of our strategic plan.



Strategic Recipe for 2017-2020

Youth Leadership Development

FEEST will continue to deeply invest in the long-term leadership development of low-income youth and youth of color and ensure that those most impacted by systemic oppression are empowered and supported to self-determine solutions for the health and equity of our community.

KEY INGREDIENT #1

Youth-led organizing to advance holistic health in Highline and Seattle Public Schools

KEY INGREDIENT #2

FEEST dinners cultivate radical joy, an inclusive and vibrant community, and inspire action in our daily life

KEY INGREDIENT #3

Communication tools that reflect our unique impact and bold vision

KEY INGREDIENT #4

Align organizational structure to current values and future vision

KEY INGREDIENT #1

Youth-led organizing to advance holistic health in Highline and Seattle Public Schools

FEEST leaders will lead grassroots organizing campaigns to win tangible gains directly in their high schools that advance holistic health. This includes increasing access and consumption of healthy, wholesome and culturally-relevant food, access to clean water, and spaces that foster social and emotional health. We recognize that schools are where young people spend an overwhelming majority of their time, yet have the least agency and power in the decision making process.

💡 STRATEGIES

- Build work plan that expands FEEST into 1-2 more high school sites in South King County
- Expand leadership model to increase skills in: community organizing, campaign development, storytelling, and political education
- Build a broader base of low-income youth and youth of color to engage more young people in FEEST campaigns through one-on-one recruitment, tabling, classroom outreach, etc
- Integrate community building and culture and arts with campaign development
- Increase youth peer-to-peer learning and facilitation in all areas of our work
- Staff monitors and leads neighborhood based policy work and engages youth leaders when there is a strong interest and aligns with existing youth-led campaigns
- Explore models of formal youth governance (ex. membership model, youth advisory board)
- Engage with educational equity and health justice coalitions that advocate in Highline and Seattle Public Schools

☆ HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL

- Develop a work plan for expansion in new schools by Quarter 4 of 2017
- 90% of youth leaders feeling equipped to lead a campaign, increased confidence, social justice analysis and identifying as a leader in their community
- Increase in youth engagement in FEEST campaigns
- Increase in youth retention in FEEST activities
- Increase in short term and long term campaign wins
- Increase in youth leaders facilitating: leadership cohort orientation, summer camp, and general meetings
- Increase in youth interest and connection to neighborhood based policy work
- Present options for formal youth governance to Board of Directors by Quarter 4 of 2019
- FEEST is present and a leader in relevant educational equity and health justice coalitions

KEY INGREDIENT #2

FEEST dinners cultivate radical joy, an inclusive and vibrant community, and inspire action in our daily life

FEEST dinners will continue to be a creative and joyful space while simultaneously inspiring low-income youth and youth of color to create change in their daily lives and take action on FEEST campaigns. FEEST dinners includes school dinners, intergenerational community gatherings and pop-ups.

💡 STRATEGIES

- Develop new curriculum for school dinners that: fosters leadership development and self-determination, honors and exchanges cultural and ancestral food knowledge, cultivates a holistic health and social justice analysis, and inspires action on FEEST campaigns
- Refine school dinner structure to increases youth engagement and retention at dinners
- Develop a pop-up dinner series that increases youth engagement and expands FEEST's reach in Highline and Seattle Public Schools

☆ HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL

- New school dinner curriculum developed by Quarter 1 in 2018
- New school dinner structure developed by Quarter 4 in 2017
- Dinner participants can articulate social justice, cultural and ancestral knowledge of self and others, and healthy cooking skills
- Increase of dinners with holistic health and social justice content
- Increase unduplicated youth participation at dinners
- Increase frequency of youth participation at dinners
- Develop and implement pilot pop-up dinner series by Quarter 2 in 2018

KEY INGREDIENT #3

Communication tools that reflect our unique impact and bold vision

💡 STRATEGIES

- Develop a new evaluation toolkit to better articulate FEEST's impact
- Develop a strategic communications plan that utilizes new evaluation toolkit
- Identify and utilize distinct communication strategies that are effective and relevant to multiple stakeholders
- Develop tools and talking points for board, staff and youth leaders on FEEST's impact and vision
- Create a working document of shared definitions commonly used in our work (ie. holistic health, food justice, health equity)
- Build out an outreach plan to increase partnerships with school districts, teachers, parents, and educational and health justice coalitions

☆ HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL

- Evaluation toolkit developed and implemented by Quarter 4 of 2017
- Strategic communication plan is developed and implemented by Quarter 3 of 2018
- Increased recognition of FEEST's impact by school district leaders, youth and other key stakeholders
- Organize youth leaders, staff, and board FEEST storytelling workshops
- Develop a working document of shared definitions by Quarter 2 of 2019
- Increase in participation by teachers, parents and community members at FEEST events

KEY INGREDIENT #4

Align organizational structure to current values and future vision


Leverage our strengths and restructure our organization to maximize impact on our strategic vision.

💡 STRATEGIES

- Increase professional development for staff and youth to deepen facilitation skills, community organizing skills, and connection to food justice and holistic health
- Hire an Organizing Director to support and sustain campaign growth
- Create recruitment plan to assure a diverse Board of Directors that reflect the experiences and neighborhoods of youth leaders
- Cultivate a culture of fundraising across the organization
- Retain current donors and increase individual donor base (with a specific focus on grassroots donors and monthly donors)
- Grow participation and giving at flagship fundraising events (Fresh Flavor Cocktail Party and Make Food, Make Fam community event)
- Create a quarterly organization-wide reflection tool that increases transparency, accountability, and buy-in in strategic direction
- Develop succession planning for Executive Director and founding board members

☆ HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL

- Annual staff and youth evaluation reflects new skill development
- Hire Organizing Director by Quarter 4 of 2017
- Grow Board of Directors to 12-14 members with focus on identity, class, and neighborhood
- Have 100% participation in fundraising asks by youth, staff and board by Q2 2019
- Increase individual donor base to 30% of annual budget by Q4 2020
- Conduct quarterly organizational-wide reflections by Quarter 3 of 2018
- Develop executive succession plan by Quarter 2 2018



// FEEST stands out from other organizations in their ability to be real in their approach to young people.

It's a whole different way of thinking about health; they affirm different cultures and make sure young people feel valued and have experiences that will build long lasting leadership."

-Sili Savusa, Executive Director of White Center Community Development Association

Thank you.

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