

# Harvest Co-op Board Candidate Statements



## Adam Frost

I want Harvest to learn from the Rainbow Co-op in San Francisco, and provide basic staple food at or below cost, and use sales of the less essential but delightful food to subsidize the basics. I want to bring in new members from all walks of life, and have them work on a wide variety of co-op projects, including helping staff in the store, creating beautiful and educational signage, and creating events to teach people of all ages how to shop and cook for their own health and the health of the Earth.

As a board member, I will advocate for the vital principles of good co-op administration developed this summer by the Real Co-op Initiative, as follows:

- \*\*\*Employees are full members of the co-op. Board members will encourage employees to play a major role in the leadership
- \*\*\* The co-op will support the local economy and maintain vital connections to the larger community.
- \*\*\*Board/leadership members will make it their highest priority to help members get involved in deep and positive ways in the co-op.
- \*\*\* Board/leadership/members will ensure full, continuous sharing of all financial and operational information with all the members, excluding only confidential personnel information that is protected by law.
- \*\*\* All meetings are to take place, and all decisions are to be made, in public, excluding only confidential personnel matters that are protected by law. Members will be strongly encouraged to attend co-op board and other co-op meetings, and modern media will be used to make attendance possible for the widest group of members.
- \*\*\* All board and employees will work hard and continuously to communicate well, honestly, and thoroughly with members, staff, nonmember shoppers, vendors, and our larger community. Board members will maintain clear mechanisms for receiving communications from members.
- \*\*\* The by-laws of the Co-op may only be changed with the formal approval of the members.
- \*\*\*Board members will take a respectful, hands-on, and active role in helping the employees who work at the co-op, The board members will both respect the autonomy and need for independence of all employees, while continuously helping all employees grow and develop.

**Bio:** When I was a kid, magazines ran full page ads for an organization called CARE which, for each dollar you sent, would send a meal to a kid who was starving in Biafra. I loved being part of this nourishing process. Later, I learned that people aren't starving because of fate—they were starving because of lots of bad and sometimes evil decisions by politicians and administrators.

Right now, at the Archdale housing complex near the JP Harvest store, kids are going hungry. I want to work with others to make good and wise decisions to transform Harvest Co-op into a place that nourishes all the kids and grown-ups in our neighborhood.



## Alexander Klosterkemper

Even before moving to Boston six months ago I read about Harvest and have been intrigued by the mission of the Co-op. Since joining and shopping almost daily at the Coop I see huge potential to further improve the implementation of Harvest's mission.

Having worked as a project manager for major international events, the development and implementation of missions and strategies are very familiar to me. I feel that in the current, highly competitive grocer industry, Harvest needs strong and consistent leadership, fully supported by the board and members to differentiate itself

from other grocery stores, some of them now run by, or as, major cooperation. I believe we have recently hired a very competent and dedicated General Manager (Brian Peat) and through the concerted efforts of his management and staff, Harvest members, and the board, Harvest has an amazing opportunity to differentiate itself from such competitors.

We shall look into possibilities to give members the opportunity to support (but not release) staff, to relieve our budget and find incentives for members to get compensated for their work. We shall also find and create events focused around our mission, work closely with local farmers and gardeners and educate consumers.

Again most importantly at this moment is that we all need to support Brian in the best possible way to smoothly transition our Harvest Coop back into a successful and sustainable Coop that cares about our planet and community; is focused on healthy food available to all social classes; avoids food waste; and supports and promotes local and seasonal food.

I would hope to be able to motivate all people involved to, positively, cooperatively and in a coordinated way, make the Harvest a truly unique grocery store again that sets new standards in Boston, and could be an example both nationally and internationally for a food co-op in a major city.

**Bio:** Alexander has been the Head of the FIFA World Cup Office from 2003 to 2009 and oversaw the day-to-day operations of FIFA's World Cup operations, working with the different stakeholders (local organizing committees, TV stations, Sponsors etc.) to guarantee the successful implementation and operation of the FIFA World Cups (2006 and 2010 Men's World Cup, 2007 Women's World Cup, 2005, 2006 and 2007 Club World Cup). He has also been involved in the strategy planning of future World Cups, including the bid process and requirement gathering from the different FIFA departments, as well as the implementation and improvement of established FIFA processes, policies and procedures.

Before joining FIFA in 2003, Alexander had worked for seven years in various positions for a leading sports marketing agency, T.E.A.M. Marketing in Lucerne Switzerland, which, in 1992, rebranded the European Champion Clubs' Cup with the UEFA Champions League and established a new marketing and operations approach to the competition.

In 2009 Alexander took a 2-year sabbatical to study documentary filmmaking which gave him the opportunity to dive into various topics including food waste, social challenges for immigrant youth and adolescents in New York, and breaking down cultural stigma between Israeli and Palestinian children, among other things.

In the 27 years of working in major event management and filmmaking, Alexander has worked in more than 30 countries, with various stakeholders. While he has encountered many challenges (operational, organizational and cultural), he has always enjoyed trying to find effective and sustainable solutions, and has learned to plan in advance not to minimize such challenges.

Since 2009 Alexander works as a freelance consultant on project management services to major events and film productions. In 2014 he founded his own limited liability company, ppaXk to provide such services and to develop innovative tools to support event management.



### **Emily "Kaysey" Bergersen**

A sense of humor leads to happiness and a healthy lifestyle for young and old! Harvest shoppers share educational treats and become environmentally aware of their surroundings with new and old friends. Drawing families into Harvest through education, advertising and leafletting neighborhoods are critical for success. We must ensure our items are safe, no loss of items or money! My skills include Fundraising, Public Relations, advertising, including videos, photos and the national award winning "Children's Organic

Garden Science Project" for many years. My college years at the University of Michigan introduced me to co-ops and organics for my lifetime!

**Bio:** I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, dual USA citizenship. My father was in the grain business. Every Sunday after church our family would take a ride to see how the crops were growing. These drives influenced my love of the outdoors and nature's gifts. Also, studied Botany...at the University of Michigan, Boston Univ., College of Communication, Bachelor of Science, Journalism, Cum Laude, May 19, 1985.



### Jennifer Jensen

I would like to serve on Harvest Co-op Board because I will be a diligent, thoughtful, and honest caretaker of our Co-op. I will use every skill I have, and new skills I learn, as well as tons of elbow grease to show our members that I am serious about cooperatively leading Harvest on a path of change, growth, and renewed energy during its financial recovery. I have skills and experience in a variety of settings. I have done extensive outreach in the community for research projects, including enrollment of study participants, participant interviews, data collection and management, with attendant ethical issues. I have outstanding organizational skills and am well versed in most computer programs. I am and have been an advocate for disadvantaged people and animals. I provided private long-term care and companionship with impaired adults. I am raising a six-year old child alone. I am a skilled and frugal organic food consumer and advisor. I have exercised my skills in patience and consensus building during my teaching experience in early education. I am accomplished at interpreting the volumes of Harvest Co-op information related to this crisis. I love educating Harvest Co-op shoppers and members about the issues at Harvest that face us and the opportunity for making needed improvements. I am great at convincing people to become new members of Harvest Co-op. I took the initiative to form a relationship with the Boston Suffolk County Family Resource Center in an effort to start Harvest Co-op's outreach making their 700 client families aware of the Co-op as a resource. I have been flyer-ing in the community and signing up new members in front of Harvest Co-op JP for several months.

**Bio:** Jennifer Jensen has been a devoted Harvest Co-op shopper since 2001 and a member for the last six years. She is a full-time single mother from Roxbury who is raising her young daughter Anna on organic and vegetarian food strictly from Harvest Co-op. She has a strong interest in natural and herbal beauty products, teas, and in achieving health through herbs. She is proud to say that she has been heavily involved in the Harvest Real Co-op Initiative since its formation this Spring and supports their efforts to put Harvest back on a growth track, increase membership participation, and improve transparency and confidence in our Board.

Jennifer coordinated a nationwide multi-site study of women with posttraumatic stress disorder for the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Boston. She recently worked for the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Boston Nature Center Pathways to Nature Pre-school as an assistant teacher. She holds a B.A. and M.A. in Psychology and Italian Studies. She is a veteran of the U.S. Army. She is an ardent Grateful Dead fan.

Since 2005, Jennifer has volunteered time with feral cats practicing and teaching the gold-standard rescue method called Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). She has spent countless hours rehabilitating cats with wounds and medical needs. She has secured outdoor shelters and living space for needy ferals. She follows the cats daily with the help of a network of concerned Faithful Feral Caretakers who monitor and manage several feral cat colonies in the area year-round. She enjoys her role as an advocate and caregiver for animals and people.

Jennifer also serves as a long-time community gardening and healthy shopping companion to an elderly man in Jamaica Plain. She is a member of St. John's Parish in Jamaica Plain. She is a proponent of the

Montessori approach to education and is heavily involved in supporting local Montessori schools. Her daughter has attended Copper Beech, Pondview, and now attends Torit Montessori school.



### John Humphreys

I would like to serve on the Harvest co-op board because I believe as an employee of the organization, of the Jamaica Plain location, my opinion is of value. Sometimes decisions made without hearing the voices of those who are the eyes and arms of the company, those who manage, who stock the shelves, who prepare the food, who serve the customers on an eye-to-eye basis and for some part the only reason why certain customers even return. Aren't always the best decisions that can be made. As a board member I bring my will, my strong work ethic, a shining personality and my love for food

and great service.

I believe the troubles facing the co-op are mostly financial and with better planning of investments and profits from the owners, members, and board the stores can be aimed at newer and higher goals. Advertising for awareness of the co-op I feel are crucial here in Boston. Harvest co-op markets unique advantage for one is that it's the only co-operative market in all of the Boston area. We specialize in the economy of our local farms, and that's a big deal, especially to all the foodies out there who make it a point in their lives to spend more on the local choice. The organization has a great history too, starting at BU in 1971 as a buyers' club.

**Bio:** My name is John Alden Humphreys; my hometown is Dedham. I attended Catholic Memorial in West Roxbury but graduated Dedham High School in 2006. I'm 30 years of age, I graduated high school when I was 18 but I now live in Jamaica Plain. Since then I've been a mechanic professionally on and off for 8 years, even running a shop entirely by myself by the age of 26 in Roxbury. I've also worked at many restaurants and grocers including but not limited to Olivadi, Sky, Roche Bros., Starbucks, Whole Foods, Troquet on South, Pressed and Brassica as a cashier, dept. team member, cook, server, bartender, barista, bagger and fish monger. I'm a woodworker/artist and have sold many of my works at galleries and auctions to support myself, I use local wood for my artistic sculpture. Also I took an interest in Music and its production around 2012/2013 to help out a fellow artist who I believed in had a future with his lyrical capacity. On April 15, 2013 I was injured from close proximity to the 2nd bomb placed on the sideline at the Boston Marathon Bombing, which admittedly has changed my life, it's changed my values and some beliefs.

Shortly thereafter I left the city and headed for the rural woods of Dunstable Mass. where I worked for the local cemetery commission as a caretaker, which involved digging graves, setting markers and taking care of turf. I also took care of a couple scores of animals there ranging from chickens to sheep and a few others in between. About a year later I moved back to the city and have been focusing, slowly but surely on finding work that both feeds and nourishes my soul and that of others as well. Harvest does a good job I think of doing that for its community already so I'm trying to be a part of something that in my opinion has greater power than its experiencing at the current moment and I believe that a lot of positive change can and will come from my presence within the organization.

We are the change we want to see together.



## Joshua Anderson

I believe that Harvest's advantage as a cooperative is its membership. I joined Harvest because becoming a member is a way of demonstrating my commitment to the principle that everyone should be treated fairly, from the farmer to the cashier to the future generations who will have to live the consequences of how we grow our food today. Joining Harvest is certainly not the end of that commitment for me or the other members of Harvest. In my opinion, the members of Harvest will continue to rise to the challenge of living out their commitment to fairness in how we engage with each other. The greatest opportunity for the board is finding ways to cultivate the members' demonstrated commitment and providing opportunities for members to educate others and to lead us all toward the more just world we envision, even if we take only a baby step toward that new world.

One way that I envision that fairness in engagement playing out is by working through member forums to develop alternate presentations that supplement standard financial statement disclosures in order to increase members' engagement in fiscal oversight. I have experience providing supplemental financial presentations as the treasurer for my church. As an accounting professor, I believe that I have a foundation for thinking about financial information to begin and to facilitate these discussions. By increasing engagement about the business operations that form the basis for our community, we can have better discussions throughout Harvest about where we are, potential trajectories for the future, and how members can best to hold their representatives accountable for the state of the cooperative.

**Bio:** Joshua Anderson is an Assistant Professor of Accounting at Boston University's Questrom School of Business. He received his Ph.D. in management with a focus on accounting from the MIT Sloan School of Management in 2015. His thesis, "Investors' Response to Limited Disclosure in an Unregulated Market", examined the consequences of companies' minimal financial disclosures between 1926 and 1928. Without information to measure "core earnings", investors made wildly optimistic assumptions about future performance. Even before the stock market crash in 1929, investors in companies providing relatively less information lost 20% of their investment, on average. Prior to receiving his Ph.D., Joshua worked as an internal auditor with the Air Force Audit Agency at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Joshua also earned a Masters in Accounting from the Ohio State University Fisher College of Business and graduated from Swarthmore with a degree in Linguistics and minors in Mathematics and Chinese.

Joshua is an active member of Saint Peter's Episcopal Church in Central Square, Cambridge. He has served as St. Peter's Treasurer for three years. He also participates in St. Peter's CommonCare ministry, a feeding program open to the community twice a month. At CommonCare, Joshua often leads a team of four or five volunteers in preparing one of the five dishes from scratch that is served to the sixty or so people who come from as far away as Quincy for the food and community that CommonCare provides. Joshua is grateful for nearly always having something else to do when the three quarts of heavy cream needs to be whipped as the finishing touch on the dessert.

Joshua tries to take advantage of a number of the cultural opportunities available in Boston. You may find him at the Boston Ballet, a Handel and Haydn Society concert, or a science-themed play at the Central Square Theater. If so, feel free to say, "Hello" during intermission.



## Leslie Belay

I am volunteering to serve on the Harvest Co-op board because I believe in the mission of the co-op and because I feel that the co-op is facing an “.... If not now, when?” situation. The co-op has an important history in our community and is part of a small but influential movement of cooperatives in the U.S. and around the world. But, due to mismanagement and poor oversight, the co-op is failing and is facing financial ruin. I don’t know if I and the others who are volunteering to serve can “save” our co-op, but we have an obligation to try. We need to restore not just member engagement, but member democracy. We need to create an organizational culture that listens to its members and makes strategic decisions based on our shared values, which I believe include financial and political transparency, popular participation, economic justice, food sovereignty, worker empowerment and shared decision-making.

I was a member of the Boston Food Co-op when members ran the store and when the co-op was more than a grocery store – it had a child care program, free food, educational programming and many other dimensions. I have decades of experience as a non-profit management consultant and as a small business owner. Much of my work has been assisting foundations and agencies to support people to succeed in business, including co-ops. I started a farmers’ market in West Roxbury that was successful for several years, and have an educational background in economic development. I want to support local food options, but not at the expense of making healthy food available to all at a reasonable price. I feel as though our co-op has lost its way. Hopefully, it is not too late to help it get back on the track of financial solvency and true member ownership.

**Bio:** Ms. Belay is currently semi-retired, teaching English as a Second Language to immigrant adults in Boston and managing a small real estate business with her husband Girma Belay. She has three grown sons, two born and raised in Boston and the third adopted as a young teen from Ethiopia.

Prior to her retirement in 2015, Ms. Belay worked for three years for the quasi-governmental Mass. Growth Capital Corporation overseeing grants programs for small business assistance (including coops) in underserved communities. She ran her own independent consulting business for over a decade, advising foundations, faith-based and community based organizations in program management, organizational development, strategic planning and foundation relations. Clients called upon her expertise in the areas of executive coaching, dispute and conflict resolution, board training, personnel and executive recruitment, and development of work plans, proposals, and business plans, as well as fundraising and program design and development. As a trainer and educator, Ms. Belay developed and taught graduate seminars for Springfield College on Design of Community Based Ventures for human services professionals, and led workshops and training seminars on Board Development, Socially Responsible Investing, Strategic Planning, Outcome Measurement, Promotion, Marketing and Public Relations, Fund Raising, and Diversity Awareness. She is well known as a facilitator for retreats, workshops, and adult discussion groups. She is the former Director of Community and Economic Development Programs for the Episcopal City Mission, having served as founding CEO of the Pelham Fund for Economic Justice and manager of the Burgess Urban Fund. Under her stewardship, the Burgess Urban Fund awarded \$1 million in grants in support of community organizing initiatives which challenge unequal power relations in society. As CEO of the Pelham Fund for Economic Justice, Ms. Belay raised and managed over \$800,000 in assets. The Fund focused its investments in the areas of micro-enterprise, small and emerging businesses, and cooperatively owned businesses in low-income, urban communities in New England.

Ms. Belay conducted overseas consulting assignments on behalf of the American Jewish World Service in Ethiopia, Uganda and northern India. As a member of the AJWS Jewish Volunteer Corps, she provided management coaching, customized technical assistance, and training seminars to emerging national and local NGO's (non-governmental organizations) working in the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention, women's empowerment, community organizing, and economic development. Ms. Belay has Master's Degrees from Hebrew College in Jewish Intellectual Thought, Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, and from the UCLA African Studies Program. She currently serves on the board of directors of the Friends of the Egleston Square Branch Library in Roxbury and is active in numerous local civic initiatives. She has traveled and studied on five continents, including long-term sojourns in Africa and Europe. She has lived in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts with her husband Girma since 1984.



### **Marlene Archer**

I want to serve on the Harvest Co-op Board to help expand membership participation. The strongest skill I can bring to the Board is my creativity. When I see a need within a community, I have been able to find, or create, a solution. I believe the critical issues facing the Board are the need for strong leadership, fiscal accountability, and transparency. Harvest's unique opportunity as a cooperative is the opportunity for members to become actively involved in the sustainability of the organization. If I had a super power I would like it to be the ability to mediate differences on the Board, with the members, and with the staff.

**Bio:** I have been an active co-op member in several co-ops since 1977. I was born in Boston and lived in Washington DC and New Hampshire. I returned to the Boston area in 1995. I'm married with four grown children. As partner in Semi-New Computers, I work with autistic adolescents teaching them how to refurbish our donated computers. Once the computers are refurbished, they are sold to individuals, non-profit organizations, and groups who send the computers to third world countries.



### **Paige Clark**

I've spent the past few months building relationships with the wonderful employees and shoppers as Harvest's Front-End Manager, and I want to do everything I can to help our community thrive. I'm the Front-End Manager at the Arboretum location, so I have an extensive understanding of the Co-op and its day-to-day operations. I also have five years of professional fundraising experience and have served on two other boards in the past. I have a Bachelor's in Environmental Science from Colorado College and I'm currently working on my Master's in Social Responsibility from Phillips Theological Seminary. I started a program and publication in Colorado centered around food insecurity, and I currently serve as the President of their Board of Directors.

The most critical issues facing the Co-op in the next few years cannot be condensed into a single answer on a candidate's statement- we need to figure out how to live our values while getting back on our feet financially. There is a lot of work to be done, and the board should work on behalf of the members – employees and customers alike. Harvest's unique advantages are its locations and its people. Both have so much to offer!

If I could have any superpower, it would be teleportation. I could really speed up the farm to table process!

**Bio:** Paige is the Front-End manager at Harvest's Arboretum location. She has spent the past few months getting acquainted with the intricacies of Harvest's day-to-day operations while building relationships with the fantastic customers and staff who make it all happen. She received her Bachelor's in Environmental Science from Colorado College, and she's currently working on her Masters of Arts in Social Justice from Phillips Theological Seminary.

Paige loves working at the intersection of food justice and community-building. She started a program and publication in Colorado called Grits that highlights the lives of locals experiencing hunger and poverty. Additionally, she has spent the last five years working as a fundraising professional for non-profits, where she helped innovate programs to boost community involvement in strategic planning measures. Paige loves food and the community it creates. You can find her cooking for her friends or calling family members to find out their culinary secrets. She has a cattle dog named Squid who you might get to meet outside of the Arboretum location if you're lucky!

At Harvest, Paige helps ensure that customers and employees feel valued and taken care of. She is more than familiar with the current issues facing the co-op, because she experiences them first-hand daily. She loves the people and the food at Harvest, and wants to help in any way she can.



### **Peter Stokes**

I believe strongly in spending my consumer dollars where true costs become true value. Supporting Harvest has been an easy commitment to make given the co-op's explicit dedication to transparency, wholesome products, and social justice. I hope you will support an additional commitment, amidst our current challenges, to add my voice to our Board of Directors. I find our membership to be sincerely dedicated to co-op principles. But most of our customers are not members, and most of our product offering is not unique in the neighborhoods where we operate.

We must certainly do more to communicate our remaining differentiator, which is that we are built for community reinvestment in a way that no nationally focused profit-making enterprise can be. If all our customers really heard that, more of them might be members. In the meantime, we still have to be an excellent grocery store for all our customers, particularly those for whom our mission might never be top of mind. I think a Board continuing in partnership with our operations team to focus on improved products and service for the customers we already have is the best opportunity for immediate growth that lengthens our runway.

I will bring to that Board a practical appreciation for marketing, design, and human nature from 20 years of consumer and industrial product development, as well as an engineer's devotion to data-driven optimization. I also bring experience gained as a committee chair and Council member at Old South Church in Boston reviewing the work and financials of dozens of nonprofit grant recipients, helping streamline the complicated finances of a vibrant 350-year-old institution, and organizing new service projects. That last one is where I found a superpower might be most useful. I look forward to an enduring, stable Harvest Co-op and appreciate your consideration and your vote.

**Bio:** Peter grew up in London, Ontario, where summer-end bike tours bouncing among Great Lakes were an annual highlight of high school and university years. An Engineering Physics B.Sc. at Queen's was topped with an M.Eng. at Cornell, which was to be followed by a short stint working in the US that is now in its 27th year. An armchair urbanist since being turned on to the Jane Jacobs classics in high school, he landed not entirely by accident in Boston's North End after a short and unrewarding stint in a mushroom suburb of Chicago. His career in product development also started in Boston, and has touched products for Brine, Easton, Keurig, Oracle, Covidien, and Bio-Rad, among dozens of others.



Peter has also worked through neighborhood groups, ad hoc efforts, and city advisory committees to champion active, attractive public spaces, sustainable transportation, and robust local retailing that are essential for livable, living cities. A year-round bike commuter, he was honorably mentioned for the Pack Mule award in the 2016 Bay State Bike Week Commuter Challenge for one of his trips to Haymarket, two decades of which have often involved several cases of fruit, but have never involved bringing the purchases home with a car. Peter's grocery education, besides navigating Haymarket's stalls, include several months fed by the markets and street food of Southeast Asia and of Northern Europe, and professional engagement as a designer with the techniques of mass market merchandising. Peter is an active member of Old South Church in Boston where as a committee member and then Chair of the Outreach committee he refocused a languishing but essential part of the Church's social justice mission, organizing new service projects, coordinating thoughtful allocation of \$100,000 in annual grant-making to dozens of local organizations, and finding opportunities for efficiency and additional Outreach funding in the complicated finances of a very lively 350-year-old institution.

Peter lives in Inman Square with his wife and 4-year-old daughter, both Cambridge natives, Dennis the cat, too many records, and a rarely needed '86 Jetta.



### Thomas Moore

It would be an honor to be nominated as a Board member; I would take advantage of that position to better serve and understand my community. Over the last 10 years I have gained experience in retail, grocery, customer service and management. Using these skills, I would assist in addressing certain issues of the Co-op. One issue may be the location of the Arboretum store; with all the construction and detoured paths to the store, I believe a good marketing campaign can be set up to bring awareness to the community. I walk to this store often and hosting a marketing event would not only alert our community of how else to access the store but it would also help in bringing the community together.

One of the unique qualities of Harvest Co-op is that it is a great foundation for local business supporters and producers. The Co-op is one of the only places where such a wide variety of organic and bulk products are available. That together with our member discounts turns into quite a bonanza every month and that gives us a great advantage over other conventional retailers. A super power that I could reap tremendous benefits from would be cloning myself. Not only could I be in many places at once, but I could contribute to my family, my community and my job all while growing as a person. Thank you for your consideration!

**Bio:** Born in the Ft. Bragg Army base in North Carolina, I am a product of the South. I grew up, fourth of eight children (two girls and six boys), in North and South Carolina and Valdosta, Georgia. "Southern hospitality" is in my nature and nothing pleases me more than to take a stroll and greet everyone I meet. I have two children; Isaiah age 11 and Rosalee who will be two in January. I teach them every day to be considerate, polite and smile at everyone; You never know whose day you'll make. As part of the working class, I have been a diligent employee who is always aspiring to be great in my position, whatever that may be. I have worked retail from all perspectives; from building up commercial supermarkets as part of a construction crew, to being assistant manager at that very supermarket chain years later. I like to know what it is like from the ground up. I have also studied Business management and aim to continue earning my degree.

My pastime is filled with reading about different cultures and eras of History, photography and spending time with my family; fishing and football if there's time! All in all, my decisions in life have led me to

see many wonderful things, recently they have led me here to the many beautiful sights Massachusetts has to offer. I hope my family and I see many more.



### Vidya Sivan

I would love to serve on the Harvest Co-op Board, because I want it to thrive again. As someone who is committed to civic engagement, supporting local organizations, and buying local, organic, whole foods, Harvest Co-op is a very important organization in my life. Through my various work and volunteer experiences, I bring skills that I believe can be helpful to the Board. As a City Year Boston AmeriCorps volunteer, I learned the importance of civic engagement and community organizing. After my corps year, I helped organize and recruit influential speakers (including former Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Boston City Council Member Felix Arroyo) for a political rally to fight for AmeriCorps funding. I continue to be a part of various

types of civic engagement (tagging gas leaks with Mothers Out Front, starting a green team at work, organizing a group of colleagues to participate in a farm share, etc.)

I also bring skills such as print and digital marketing to the table. As a member of the Harvest Membership and Social Concerns Committee, I designed the membership business cards you see at the store checkouts and service desks. One critical issue facing Harvest is remaining relevant in the face of stiff competition with other natural foods stores. I see the Board's role as using its skills to help Harvest engage the community, showing them why they should shop at Harvest. Harvest has the unique advantage of being right in the city, catering not just to the haves, but to those who need an affordable local grocer with healthy, accessible options. This unique advantage is also one of our pain points. How can we be a grocer for all? That question is what the Board needs to contemplate in this season of financial distress.

**Bio:** Work experience: print and digital communications at Harvard Kennedy School Office of Alumni Relations and Resource Development (2008–present); program coordinator at Harvard Kennedy School Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative (2005–08); high school history teacher at Academy of the Pacific Rim Public Charter School in Hyde Park (2003–05).

Recent-ish volunteer experience: Gustavus Adolphus College Alumni Association Board of Directors (2015–present); Harvard Kennedy School Joint Council (2014–present); Beacon Hill Civic Association Green Committee (2011–present); Harvest Co-op Markets Membership and Social Concerns Committee (2011–12); Harvard Kennedy School Sustainability Initiative (founder and chair, 2008–12); City Year Boston (AmeriCorps volunteer, 2002–03) Education: MA in Counseling & Psychology from Lesley University (2014); BA in Social Studies Teaching (Secondary Education) from Gustavus Adolphus College (2002)