



LAWSON VALENTINE FOUNDATION

Dear Grantees and Partners,

July 20, 2020

Greetings. I hope this letter finds you healthy and secure professionally. This time is a whirlwind of uncertainty and sadness for me, yet I am relatively sheltered as a retiree in good health. I can only imagine the stress and hardships that millions of Americans face today and this year. I hope our foundation can continue our partnership with you through the months and years ahead.

I write with news of transitions during 2019-2020 for our foundation. In general, these transitions will be seamless to our grantmaking and relationships. Check out our new website, www.LawsonValentine.org.

The biggest news is that Valentine retired in June after about two decades in that role. Her trust-building through honest questions and deferring to the expertise of changemakers on the ground has established our foundation as a small-but-mighty champion for food systems, and against environmental racism in the Northeast, and with some international impact as well. She has gently guided us to best practices with general operating support and occasional multiple year grants to slow the proposal windmill, allowing our colleagues more time with their direct services. Her presence has helped our board and grantmaking mature, and we look forward to decades ahead. Valentine will remain as a trustee on the board. We will be celebrating Valentine's leadership and transition when it is safe to do so once again.

This winter and spring we developed a succession plan, and the board selected Beth Corsa as Valentine's replacement. Most of you know that Beth has served as our administrator for 15 years. She will take on both program advising and administration as our first Executive Director and solo employee. Beth has attended countless site visits, board meetings, conferences, and is already stepping into leadership and guidance this spring, especially needed during this health and economic crisis. What a way to start out!

We also have a new board member, Kolu Zigbi. She was Program Officer with the Noyes Foundation for many years, and a leader in Food Systems strategies and grantmaking. We are incredibly delighted to have her expertise, talent, and heart added to our ranks.

Finally, and least perceptibly, I have succeeded Lucy Miller as Chair of the Board. I am grateful to serve during this time as we enter our fourth decade and look to grow our impact and empower lasting social change to protect quality of life and the environment in the Northeast and beyond. Should you have questions or interests in new partnerships or initiatives, feel free to reach out to Beth or me.

Most Gratefully,

Allen Doyle
Board Chair