

ANNUAL REPORT

2017/2018



FOOD MATTERS MANITOBA

We believe in good food for all.

Our Approach

MISSION

We work with communities across Manitoba to create opportunities for people to be able to eat good food.

VISION

We envision a Manitoba where good food nourishes strong communities and healthy people.

HOW WE WORK

We are building up a province where good food nourishes strong communities by:

- Partnering with communities to increase access to good food.
- Providing food skills education that incorporates culture, tradition, and nutrition.
- Championing a better food system through food policy work and community engagement.

OUR VALUES

WE ARE COMMUNITY DRIVEN

We believe that successful initiatives must have the active participation and ownership of people most affected by the issue, and build on their shared knowledge, skills, and capacity.

WE ARE COLLABORATORS

We work together with many communities, partners, and stakeholders to elevate our collective impact.

WE ARE UNRAIDERS

We are unafraid to take risks in order to develop creative programs that respond to community needs.

WE ARE SYSTEMS THINKERS

We understand and approach food issues as part of a complex and interconnected system of people, practices, and processes within multiple scales.

WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE

We take responsibility for our intent and actions. We are open, honest, clear, and timely with each other, our partners, and our stakeholders.

WE ARE RESPECTFUL

We recognize and celebrate the inherent worth, dignity, history, diversity, relationship to the land, capacity, and ways of knowing of all people and life.

We strive to be compassionate, provide the highest quality supports, learn from each other's mistakes, and trust people to rise above challenges before them.



In the past year we have...

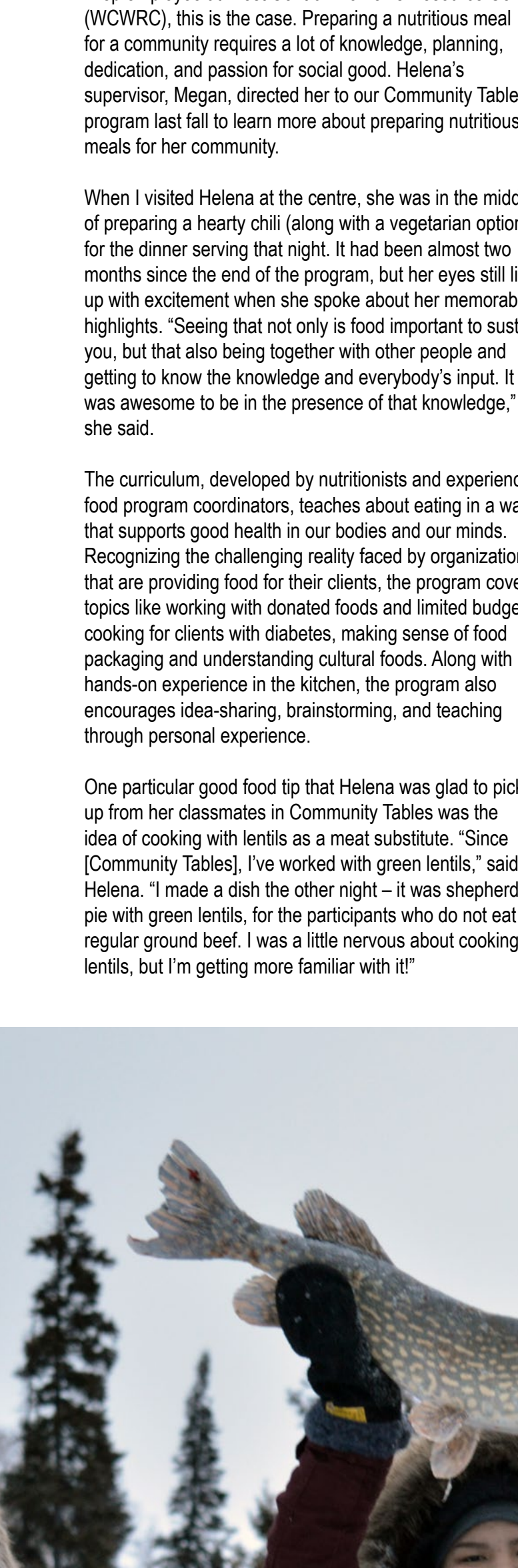


HELD **165** YOUTH COOKING CLASSES, WITH **1507** YOUTH PARTICIPANTS.

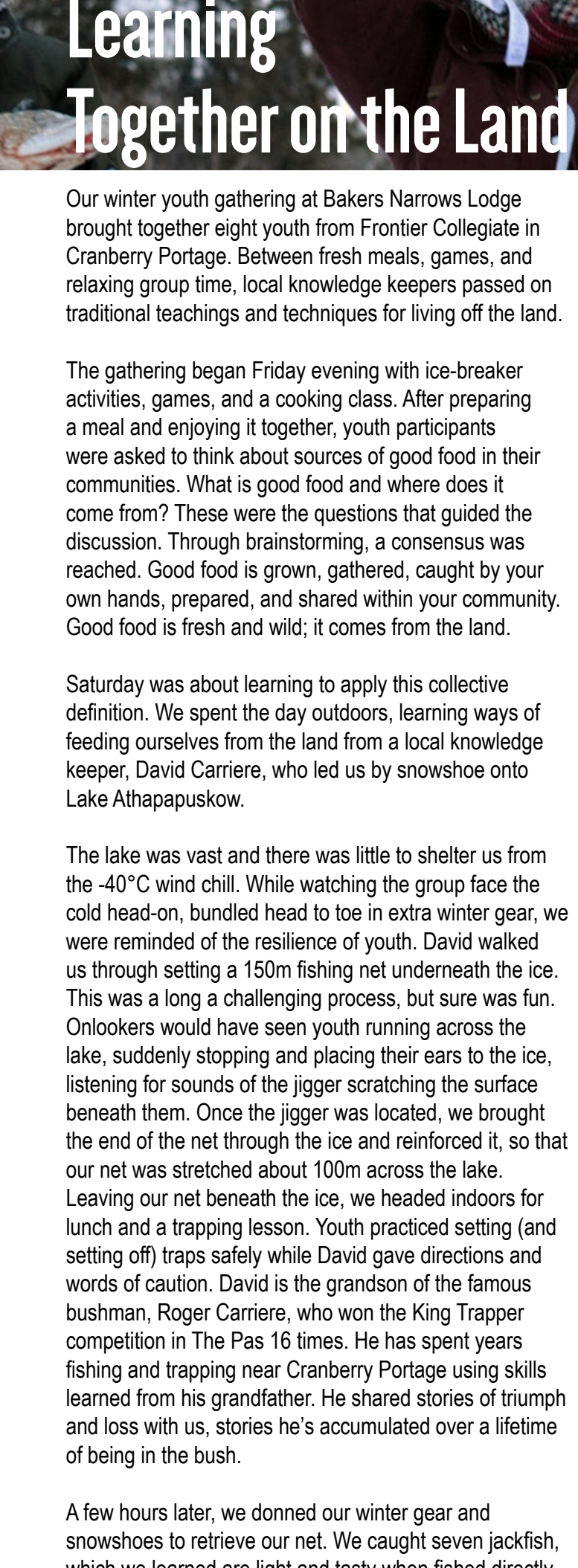


"They are more confident helping out, cooking in the kitchen"

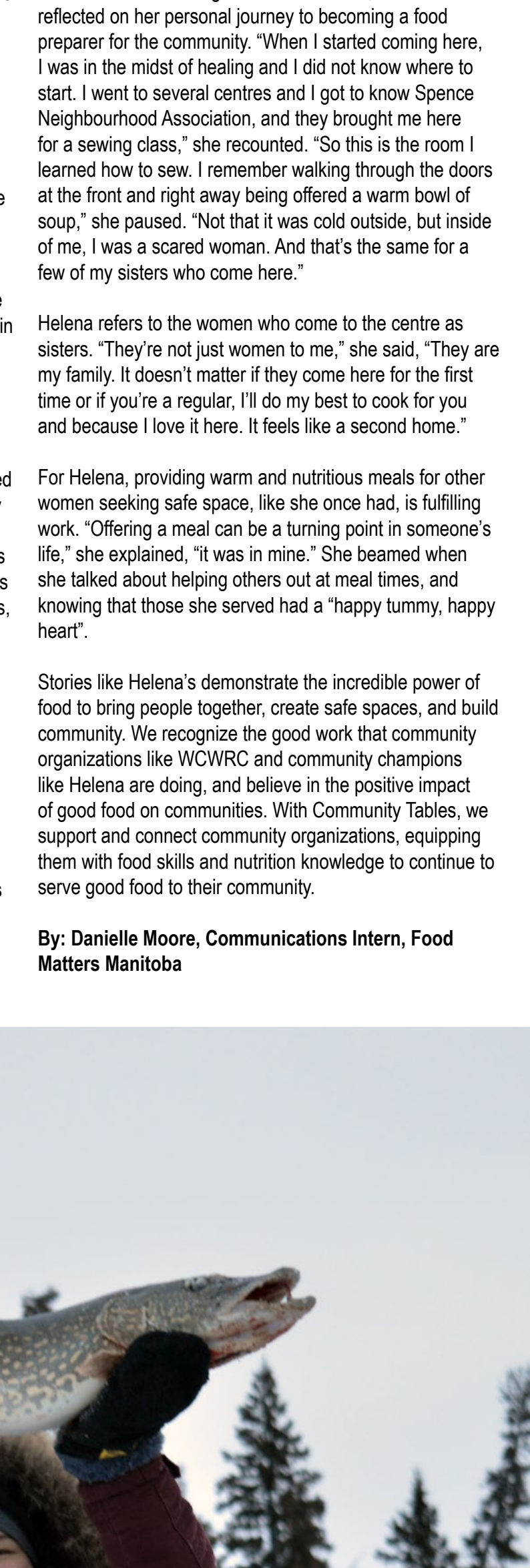
- PARENT OF YOUTH FOOD SKILLS PARTICIPANT



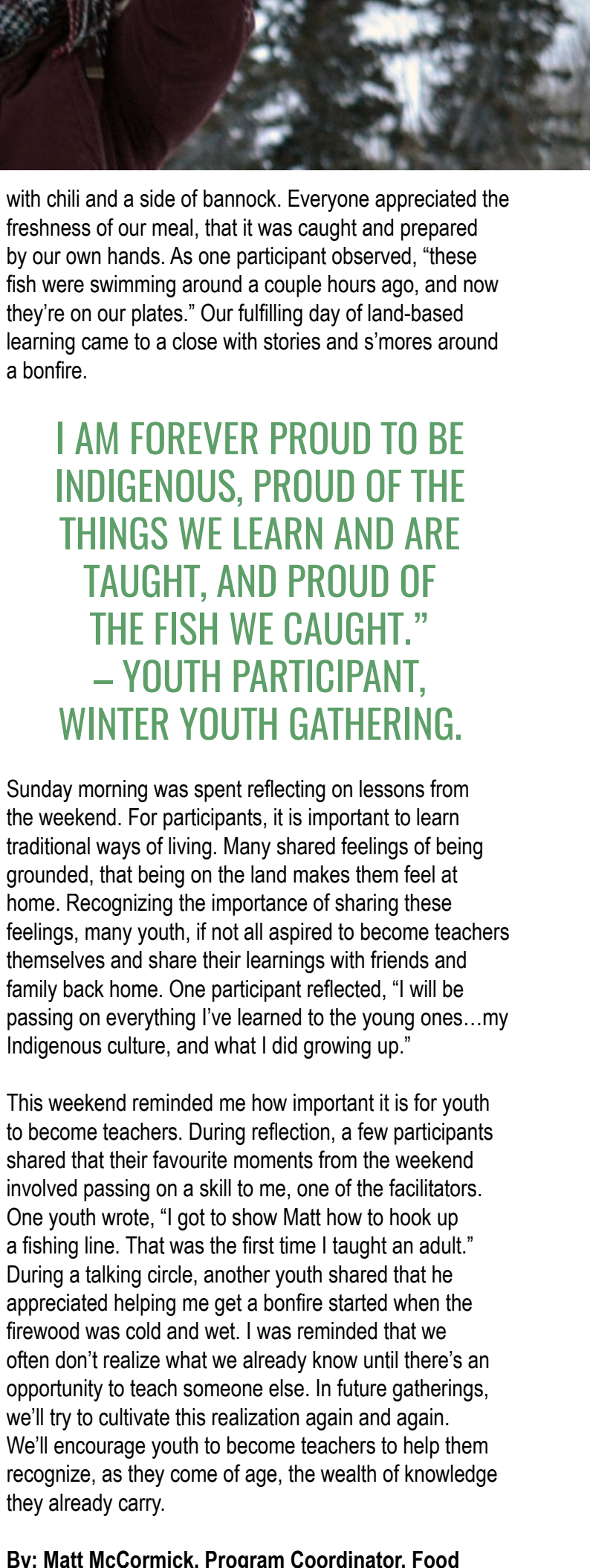
WE PARTNERED CLOSELY WITH **17** COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE PROVINCE.



WE FACILITATED DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH TO ESTABLISH MUNICIPAL FOOD COUNCILS IN BOTH **WINNIPEG AND BRANDON, MB.**



Some of our Northern Community Food Champions at a farm tour



WE SUPPORTED THE DELIVERY OF LAND BASED EDUCATION FOR OVER **1050** YOUTH, IN **16** COMMUNITIES AROUND THE PROVINCE.

Highlights from Our Year



Caring for a Community by Serving Good Food

"HAPPY TUMMY, HAPPY HEART"

As we sat in the sewing room at the centre, Helena reflected on her personal journey to becoming a food preparer for the community. "When I started coming here, I was in the midst of healing and I got to know where to start. I went to several centres and I got to know Helen Neighbourhood Association, and they brought me here for a sewing class," she recounted. "So this is the room I learned how to sew. I remember walking through the doors at the front and right away being offered a warm bowl of soup," she paused. "Not that it was cold outside, but inside of me, I was a scared woman. And that's the same for a few of my sisters who come here."

Helena refers to the women who come to the centre as sisters. "They're not just women to me," she said, "They are my family. It doesn't matter if they come here for the first time or if you're a regular, I'll do my best to cook for you and because I love it here. It feels like a second home."

For Helena, providing warm and nutritious meals for other women seeking safe space, like she once had, is fulfilling work. "Offering a meal can be a turning point in someone's life," she explained. "It was in mine." She beamed when she talked about helping others out at meal times, and knowing that those she served had a "happy tummy, happy heart".

Stories like Helena's demonstrate the incredible power of food to bring people together, create safe spaces, and build community. We recognize the good work that community organizations like WCVWC and community champions like Helena are doing, and believe in the positive impact of good food on communities. With Community Tables, we support and connect community organizations, equipping them with food skills and nutrition knowledge to continue to serve good food to their community.

By: Danielle Moore, Communications Intern, Food Matters Manitoba



Learning Together on the Land

Our winter youth gathering at Bakers Narrows Lodge brought together eight youth from Frontier Collegiate in Brandon Portage. Between fresh meals, games, and relaxing group time, local knowledge keepers passed on traditional teachings and techniques for living off the land.

The gathering began Friday evening with ice-breaker activities, games, and a cooking class. After preparing a meal and enjoying it together, youth participants were asked to think about sources of good food in their communities. What is good food and where does it come from? These were the questions that guided the discussion. Through brainstorming, a consensus was reached. Good food is grown, gathered, caught by your own hands, prepared, and shared within your community. Good food is fresh and wild; it comes from the land.

Saturday was about learning to apply this collective definition. We spent the day outdoors, learning ways of feeding ourselves from the land from a local knowledge keeper, David Carriere, who led us by snowshoe onto Lake Athapappuskow.

The lake was vast and there was little to shelter us from the -40°C wind chill. While watching the group face the cold head-on, bundled head to toe in extra winter gear, we were reminded of the resilience of youth. David walked us through setting a 150m fishing net underneath the ice. This was a long and challenging process, but sure was fun. Onlookers would have seen youth running across the lake, suddenly stopping and placing their ears to the ice, listening for sounds of the jigger scratching the surface beneath them. Once the jigger was located, we brought the end of the net through the ice and reinforced it, so that our net was stretched about 100m across the lake. Leaving our net beneath the ice, we headed indoors for lunch and a trapping lesson. Youth practiced setting (and setting off) traps safely while David gave directions and words of caution. David is the grandson of the famous bushman, Roger Carriere, who won the King Trapper competition in The Pas 16 times. He has spent years fishing and trapping near Cranberry Portage using skills learned from his grandfather. He shared stories of triumph and loss with us, stories he's accumulated over a lifetime of being in the bush.

A few hours later, we donned our winter gear and snowshoes to retrieve our net. We caught seven jackfish, which we learned are light and tasty when fished directly from cool winter waters. We feasted on the fresh catch

with chili and a side of bannock. Everyone appreciated the freshness of our meal, that it was caught and prepared by our own hands. As one participant observed, "these fish were swimming around a couple hours ago, and now they're on our plates." Our fulfilling day of land-based learning came to a close with stories and a shared around a bonfire.

I AM FOREVER PROUD TO BE INDIGENOUS, PROUD OF THE THINGS WE LEARN AND ARE TAUGHT, AND PROUD OF THE FISH WE CAUGHT."

- YOUTH PARTICIPANT, WINTER YOUTH GATHERING.

Sunday morning was spent reflecting on lessons from the weekend. For participants, it is important to learn traditional ways of living. Many shared feelings of being grounded, that being on the land makes them feel at home. Recognizing the importance of sharing these feelings, many youth, if not all aspired to become teachers themselves and share their learnings with friends and family back home. One participant reflected, "I will be passing on everything I've learned to the young ones...my Indigenous culture, and what I did growing up."

This weekend reminded me how important it is for youth to become teachers. During reflection, a few participants shared that their favourite moments from the weekend involved passing on a skill to me, one of the facilitators. One youth wrote, "I got to show Matt how to hook up a fishing line. That was the first time I taught an adult." During a talking circle, another youth shared that he appreciated helping me get a bonfire started when the firewood was cold and wet. I was reminded that we often don't realize what we already know until there's an opportunity to teach someone else. In future gatherings, we'll try to cultivate this realization again and again. We'll encourage youth to become teachers to help them recognize, as they come of age, the wealth of knowledge they already carry.

By: Matt McCormick, Program Coordinator, Food Matters Manitoba

Towards a Brandon Food Council

The process towards creating a Brandon Food Council has spanned three years. On January 24th, 2018 Food Matters Manitoba traveled to Brandon, MB to present the results regarding what the community wants to see in a food council. The groups and individuals at the presentation have had different levels of involvement in the process so far, some who began their involvement that night, while others have been involved since the beginning, in 2014.

The evening of the 24th began with a presentation of results from stakeholder discussions by Food Matters Manitoba's Brandon correspondent, Olivia Boyce. City councilors Jan Chaboyer and Lonnie Patterson also contributed to the presentation and voiced their support for the creation of a Brandon Food Council. Once the presentations were over, community members had the opportunity to discuss with each other what they envision as the next steps for the creation of the Brandon Food Council. After sitting amongst many passionate and dedicated community members and organizations, it's clear that everyone can agree to increase the momentum towards the creation and coordination of a Brandon Food Council.

"ALL THE PIECES ARE IN PLACE... WE NEED TO COME TOGETHER!"
- RICK CHREST, MAYOR OF BRANDON

As a visitor to Brandon, it was very informative to hear and engage in vibrant discussions with such a motivated

and passionate community. Central to most discussions was who the community was hoping to be key players in establishing and providing leadership for the council as well as who would provide potential funding opportunities. Some named organizations that they are either a part of, or organizations that have been involved in the process so far, include: the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC), Global Market Brandon, as well as the City of Brandon Poverty Committee.

Although these organizations have been involved in the process so far and people have expressed their interest in seeing these organizations' continued involvement, the resources required to take leadership on the food council need to be prioritized. The community wants to see steps taken towards securing funding for a Brandon Food Council. With the right amount of funding, individuals stressed that the future food council should hire a coordinator to continue facilitating the conversations, the people, and the work.

For the time being, as funding and leadership decisions of the Brandon Food Council are underway, it is crucial that every participant stay motivated, and from what I gathered from my evening spent in Brandon, they will. There was an air of excitement at the idea of strengthening networks between pre-established, cross-sector, food organizations in hopes of starting a Brandon Food Council that uses existing knowledge, expertise, and resources to begin implementing new food initiatives.

By: Rebecca Black, Visual Communications Coordinator, Food Matters Manitoba

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Remembering Emily



This past January, our friend and team member, Emily Ruston Mann, died suddenly. We knew her as a calm, insightful, and devoted young person working to help people grow and eat food all around Canada.

Despite her calm nature it was her explosive, hearty laughter that so many people will remember. "She worked hard and learned voraciously but what we'll always remember about having Emily on our farm is the laughter!" Amy Ochterlony, Fiddle Foot Farm.

Ray Solotki from the Community Greenhouse in Itanuk remembered her fondly at her first day below deep in a fish canning workshop "Sitting on the floor, using a long saw to hack apart a frozen white fish," underlined she stayed on to see their most successful year growing food north of the Arctic Circle. In her honour they are planning an "Emily Mann Demonstration Plot" that will focus on new methods for increasing growing yields.

She took great care in working with community members, always putting their needs first. "Her contributions were outstanding and meaningful, whether she was writing a thought-provoking thesis, spending extra-long hours mentoring students [...], or volunteering in the community" Mary Louise McAllister, University of Waterloo.

She worked hard to help communities become a little more just and sustainable. To honour Emily, our mission will be to continue to carry her vision forward.

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www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca/donate-now

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