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Images available upon request.

Newfields redirects funds for Community Meal to support neighborhood partners *Artist Seitu Jones helps address food insecurity*

INDIANAPOLIS, August 4, 2020—Last year, Newfields invited artist and community organizer Seitu Jones to join it in hosting *At the Crossroads: A Community Meal* to kick-off the inaugural *Harvest* festival. The dinner brought together 250 Indianapolis residents around a 400-foot-long table to discuss food inequities in Indianapolis over a nutritious meal. Due to COVID-19, Newfields will not be hosting a large meal gathering this fall, and instead is redirecting funds to assist five partner organizations whose missions support the health and wellbeing of the communities of central Indiana.

“Last year’s *At the Crossroads: A Community Meal* was a first step in engaging our partners to provide a platform for discussion about the intersection of food insecurity and systemic racism. This Social Practice work by Seitu Jones was always meant to be responsive to the needs expressed by our surrounding communities. It will continue to be

shaped by our partners and the communities they serve, centering on our partners’ efforts to improve the quality of life in Indianapolis through educational initiatives, intergenerational skill sharing, and lowering the barrier of access to fresh, nutritious food,” said Bryn Jackson, Assistant Curator of Audience Engagement and Performance at Newfields.



LaShawnda Crowe Storm, *redLINES* (detail), 2019. Commissioned by the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields. © LaShawnda Crowe Storm.

“In addition to focusing on the ways in which historically racist housing and environmental policies continue to impact access to food and other resources, we at Newfields acknowledge that Black and Brown communities have now also been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Flanner House, Groundwork Indy, Growing Places Indy, Lawrence Community Gardens, and the Riverside Regional Park Foundation have worked hard to meet the elevated need for affordable produce in the face of widespread social and economic hardship. We are proud to support these organizations’ responses to this crisis and grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the sustainability of our community,” said Jackson.

Prior to the pandemic, one in six of our neighbors faced food insecurity and COVID-19 has exacerbated the problem. In response to the pandemic, and to support neighbors and partners, Newfields has refocused financial commitments that were going to be used for the 2020 community meal to five programs helping our community access fresh nutritious food during this time of crisis.

“The pandemic and the murder of George Floyd exposed the many cracks along lines of race and class in our society,” said Jones, an artist and resident of St. Paul, MN. “One of those cracks is access to food in communities of color. The long lines for food giveaways have underscored the glaring and egregious disparities in food access, health and safety among Black and Brown citizens. Our times have revealed injustices that have been there all along, as well as the generous spirits that rise to fulfill various needs. Now more than ever we need to support and enhance the work of those growing, harvesting and distributing quality food.”

"My mother passed away in the middle of this pandemic, so I've been grieving the loss of my mother, the loss of all those we've lost to the pandemic and now I'm grieving the loss of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and Rayshard Brooks," continued Jones. "We have experienced and are experiencing incalculable losses of life and livelihood. This grief opens possibilities to reflect, to sit with each other in compassion, listen and respond creatively to what people need. We first need to listen and, through listening, seed and plant an artistic response."

Newfields is proud to partner with all five organizations to help mitigate food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic and looks forward to hosting each during this year's *Harvest* on October 17 and 18 for a hands-on educational farmer's market experience. Visitors will be able to purchase locally grown produce and learn from the growers themselves.

Five organizations and the projects they are pursuing to address food insecurity in Indianapolis are:

Flanner House of Indianapolis has, for 122 years, been at the epicenter of helping people move to a place of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The organization strives to improve the quality of life for residents on the Northwest side of Indianapolis. Focusing on Education, Employment, Wellness, Peace and Safety, Economic Development, and Food Justice, Flanner House is prepared to serve the evolving needs of area residents.

COVID Response Project: In order to maintain the health of their bee colony, Flanner Farms will expand their hive as well as provide materials for necessary maintenance to care for the growing colony.

Groundwork Indy's mission is to bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement and management of the physical environment by developing community-based partnerships which empower people, businesses and organizations to promote environmental, economic and social well-being. Groundwork Indy engages in community-based strategies for revitalizing neighborhoods with initiatives in Youth Development, Greenways and Parks, Brownfields and Vacant Land, and Community Health.

COVID Response Project: In response to food shortages and school closures, Groundwork's youth employees will grow food at home with their families and will be provided a garden kit including a raised bed or container, garden soil, tools and plants of their choice. Newfields support will cover the costs of 14 comprehensive garden kits.

Growing Places Indy is a nonprofit in Indianapolis, Indiana, on the Near Eastside with a mission to cultivate wellness through urban agriculture, access to fresh local food, and mind-body education. Growing Places Indy operates four urban farm sites and is the co-founder and host of the Indy Winter Farmers Market, one of the largest winter markets in the state of Indiana.

COVID Response Project: To support a 50% increase in SNAP usage, Growing Places Indy is launching the Double Up Food Program, which doubles program participants' spending power by giving SNAP recipients an extra \$20 to spend on fruits and vegetables throughout the growing season. Newfields support will cover the costs of 200 participants of the program.

Lawrence Community Gardens is committed to improving access to fresh food and advocating for food equality for low income residents living in food deserts through direct donations to neighbors, donations to area pantries, and through their "you pick for free" area at the garden. LCG's participation in farmers markets, its roadside stand, and its mobile farm stand provide affordable access to neighbors on the Far Eastside of Indianapolis. They educate the community on organic agriculture practices and work to increase vegetable and fruit consumption while raising food and health awareness. Lawrence Community Gardens is engaging people with hands on experience through programming, volunteerism, and educational workshops.

COVID Response Project: Newfields support provided materials to outfit the mobile farm unit with refrigeration to increase produce quality and shelf life. Additional in-kind donation includes 30 cubic yards of compost that will support garden health.

Riverside Regional Park Foundation centers on providing assistance to the Riverside Regional Park with programming and fund development initiatives as it relates to both the park and family center. The foundation's mission is to offer volunteer and supplemental financial support to enhance and endorse quality recreational services and programs.

COVID Response Project: To meet the growing need for youth, families and senior citizens to access healthy food, The Riverside Regional Park Foundation has been providing free lunches to youth in the park to supplement the Indy Parks food program. Support provided by Newfields will help to cover costs related to the procurement and distribution of healthy youth snacks, non-perishables for families, and fresh produce for senior citizens.

About Newfields

Newfields: A Place for Nature & the Arts, offers dynamic experiences for guests of all ages. The 152-acre cultural campus features art galleries, lush gardens, a historic mansion, performance spaces, a nature preserve and sculpture park. From inspiring exhibitions in the Indianapolis Museum of Art Galleries, to concerts in The Toby, and a stroll through The Garden with a glass of cheer, guests are invited to interact with art and nature in exciting new ways. Newfields is home to the Indianapolis Museum of Art, among the ten largest and oldest general art museums in the nation; the Lilly House, a National Historic Landmark; The Garden, featuring 40 acres of contemporary and historic gardens, a working greenhouse and an orchard; and The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres, one of the largest art and nature parks in the country. The Newfields campus extends outside of Indianapolis with Miller House and Garden in Columbus, Ind.—one of the nation's most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist architecture. For more information visit www.discovernewfields.org.

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