



CASTANEA
FELLOWSHIP

BUILDING POWER,
BUILDING MOVEMENTS
WITH FOOD SYSTEM
LEADERS

AT CASTANEA, we are working to realize the potential of our communities by building a society that values intentionality, justice, and deep relationships. We stay on the edge, pushing into the potential of what can be - what are the emerging needs and questions from movement leaders? How can we move forward into a truly just and equitable food system? We provide a fellowship that is nimble, iterative, and reflective. Castanea creates a space where food system leaders have the time and resources to create a collective movement and camaraderie of innovators and leaders that understand the weight and joy of leading organizations and movements.

Castanea is an emergent fellowship that roots leadership development in liberatory practices. The fellowship grew out of the former Kellogg Food and Community Fellowship, a program with a deep alumni pool that has had tremendous impacts in the national food system. Castanea was initiated in 2017 to help catalyze the kind of transformational change that is essential to produce holistic solutions for our food system.

Our food system remains a key driver of some of our most entrenched societal problems: from widespread hunger and lack of healthy food access to an epidemic of diet-

related illnesses; from environmental impacts such as water and air pollution to the lack of competition in markets and devastated rural economies.

Changing systems of oppression requires us to change how we view and do leadership development work. We aim to support diverse, Black, Indigenous, and other leaders of color to ensure they have the time, space, and support for the creative and generative work needed for transformational change. Recognizing that food issues cannot be solved in isolation, this fellowship builds strong connections among leaders from a range of interest areas, regions, and strategies—to address more effectively the complexity of food system change.

The Castanea Fellowship offers:

- A 2-year fellowship program
- A hybrid model of virtual and in-person, place-based immersions
- Leadership development and skill building
- Peer support, mentorship, and movement community
- \$40,000 stipend over 2 years
- Robust alumni network and program

We offer transformational change through a liberatory food systems leadership fellowship.

WHAT WE OFFER

HOW

Supporting fellows to more effectively move power, policy, and capital.

Program design rooted in actionable learning and co-learning

Practical leadership development through co-learning, mentorship, and peer support

Fellows are resourced through direct stipend support, connections with funders, and links with other forms of capital and resources through networking and community building

Creating a life-long power and movement building community across sectors.

A deep alumni network to support continued learning, relationships, mentorship, and collaboration

An organization that effectively function as a convener, connector, and amplifier

Curated cohorts of strong leaders that catalyze movement and power building spaces and collaborations

Restoration and resilience for diverse, Black, Indigenous, and other leaders of color.

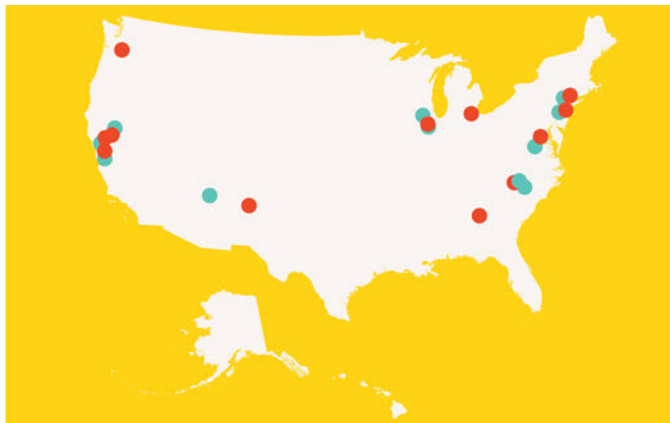
A fellowship community rooted in values of restoration, community care, and rejuvenation

A program and network that builds individual and collective resilience

A collective of allies and partners that understand the need for sustained support for all leaders, particularly leaders of color

COHORT 1

Aileen Suzara
Erika Allen
Geeta Maker-Clark
Leonard Melvin Diggs
Lilian Hill
Ma'raj Sheikh
Martin Lemos
Rowen M. White
Emily Moose
Mark Winston Griffith
Shorlette Ammons



COHORT 2

Alex Askew
Tavia Benjamin
Shane Bernardo
Shantell Bingham
Kelly Carlisle
Anthony Chang
Helga Garza
Deepa Iyer
Jose Oliva
Esperanza Pallana
Bren Smith
Chris Newman

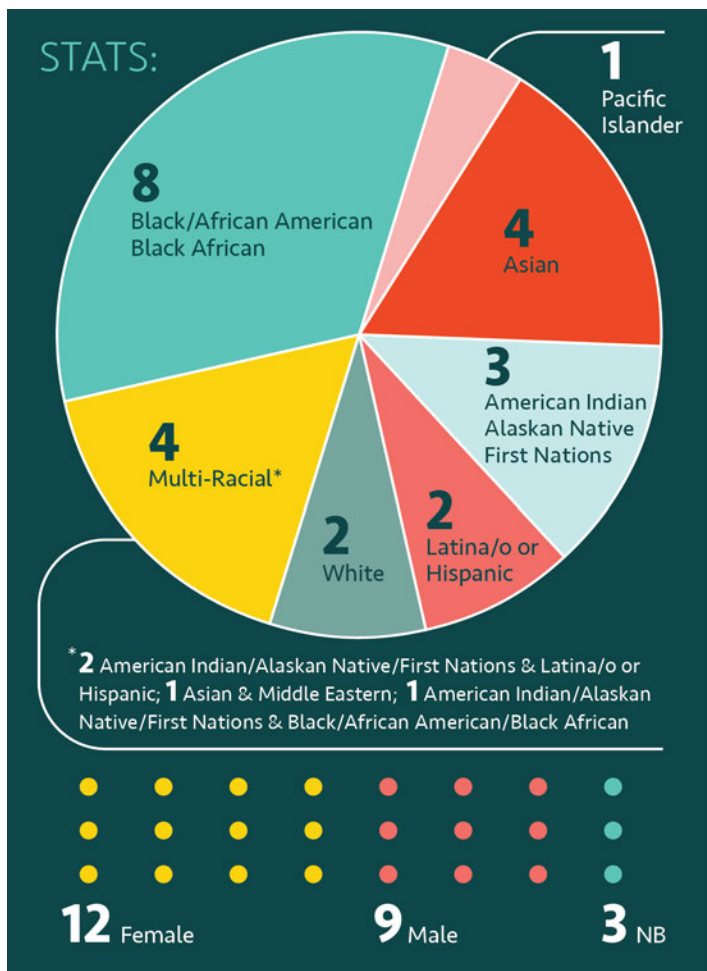
WHAT OUR FELLOWS DO

Climate and Environmental Justice
Indigenous Sovereignty
National Food Policy
Health/care
Land and Ocean Farmers
Food Chain Workers Justice
Just Transitions
Cooperatives
Black Food Justice
Sustainable and regenerative agriculture
Funding Justice
Shifting Capital for Racial and Economic Justice

PROGRAMMING

Castanea's programming adapted to fully virtual platforms over the past two years. In addition to direct one on one support and technical assistance, program topics included:

- Organizing Funders Toward Racial Justice
- Creating a Castanea Policy Platform
- Upholding regenerative mutual-aid economic models post COVID-19
- Cultural Somatics + Spiritual Self-Care
- Black and Indigenous Solidarity



Future programming for Castanea will be a hybrid of in-person place-based immersions and virtual gatherings and trainings. This hybrid model will balance the needs of sharing space to build relationships and mitigating the impacts of travel on communities and the environment. Place-based immersions will center solidarity and movement building with groups and people on the ground, expanding the networks across the food system. Upcoming programming includes:

- Resilience & Collective Care
- Leadership Transitions
- Transforming Organizational Culture
- Strategies for Sustainable Funding
- Building a broad & powerful movement
- Decolonizing our Movements: Structures and strategies to create transformative change

"The fellowship space always feels very sacred and important, and the things that we talk about seem to be manifesting. We've built relationships and we've had so many powerful shared experiences, it feels very much like I'm much clearer on what to do together. Being able to just be and learn and listen to one another is what I've been craving from the beginning, and I just want more of this fellowship."

Erika Allen
2019-2022

"I'm always astounded by how, at the end of our time together, how necessary these moments are and how they feel so needed."

Martin Lemos
2019-2022

CONNECTIONS AND COLLABORATIONS

Part of the magic of Castanea lies in creating the space for connections and collaborations between leaders from diverse sectors and geographies. We bring together visionary leaders who are building shared analysis and skills, inspiring and building with each other to push forward innovative projects and ideas.

Castanea brings together people who otherwise may never have met, and through their meeting we know the world will be a better place.

Chef Alex Askew, Ocean Farmer Bren Smith, and sustainable ocean farming in Puerto Rico. Alex and Bren are building partnerships across sectors and within communities to further opportunities for regenerative ocean farming in Puerto Rico and to create a sustainable model for the food economy of the island.

Geeta Maker-Clark, M.D., and Erika Allen created collaborative workshops for communities focused on healthy immune systems and holistic health.

Chef Alex Askew's podcast *Stirring the Pot* hosted fellows Kelly Carlisle and Bren Smith.

The 2021 Oxford Real Farming Conference 2021 Panels had fellows collaborating on several panels, including:

- California Farming Resilience in the Face of Climate Disaster: Kelly Carlisle, Rowen White, Leonard Diggs, Anthony Chang
- Indigenous Farming and Land Stewardship on Turtle Island: Rowen White, Helga Garza, Chris Newman

Castanea fellows Anthony Chang, Kitchen Table Advisors, and Esperanza Pallana, Community Vision, worked with several other partners to move almost \$1 million in Covid rapid response funds to farmers of color through the People's Land Fund.

Fellows Anthony Chang, Mark Winston Griffith, and Helga Garza joined other BIPOC leaders and organizations in the food system to write an open letter to hold philanthropy accountable to communities of color, amplifying work in the food system to organize money in a just way through the newly formed LIFE group (Liberating Investment in the Food and Farm Ecosystem).

THE POWER OF TRANSITIONS

We understand that humans are part of the natural world and that transition and growth can and should be a nourishing, revitalizing natural occurrence. We support leaders as they move through organizational, personal, and professional growth. Castanea provides a mycelial network of support as fellows take their learning, skills, and leadership to new realms, taking up positions at new organizations or creating new entities from the ground up, all the while leaving their previous organizations in strong, sustainable positions.

Since the launch of the Fellowship, members of the first two cohorts have taken up new and exciting challenges, including:

Shantell Bingham: Program Director at Cultivate Charlottesville ▶ Director of Organizing at Climate Justice Alliance

Anthony Chang: Founder and Director at Kitchen Table Advisors ▶ Co-Founder and Director Manzanita Capital Collective

Lillian Hill: Co-Founder Hopi Tutskwa Permaculture Institute ▶ Executive Director at Native Food Sovereignty Alliance

Ma'raj Sheikh: Systems and Strategy Manager at Chicago Food Policy Alliance ▶ Grassroots Director at National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Esperanza Pallana: Director of Strategic Initiatives at Community Vision ▶ Executive Director at Food and Farm Communications Fund

Emily Moose: Director of Communications and Outreach at A Greener World ▶ Executive Director at a Greener World

Mark Winston Griffith: Founding Executive Director at Brooklyn Movement Center ▶ full-time Journalist and producer/host of award winning podcast School Colors

Aileen Suzara: Sariwa Kitchen Founder ▶ Program Director at Stupski Foundation



PARTNERS, GUESTS, HEALERS

Part of movement building in the field includes creating relationships with partners and bringing in their expertise. In addition to their content-specific expertise, the connections built amplify the diverse and deep networks between sectors, strengthening the fellowship and the food system. Past partners have included:

Elandria Williams
Dara Cooper
Holiday Simmons
Christine Cordero
Malkia Devich-Cyril

FELLOWS RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

Erika Allen - 2022 James Beard Leadership Award; appointed to the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education; appointed to the Farm Service Agency Committee for Illinois by the Biden Administration; named one of the 2020 26 Most Influential Chicagoans

Bren Smith - 2022 James Beard Media Award for his book *Eat Like a Fish*

Geeta Maker-Clark - 2021 Pollan Food Journalism Fellow at Mesa Refuge

Shorlette Ammons - 2022 USDA Equity Commission

Shantell Bingham - It Takes Roots delegation to COP26

Shane Bernardo - named one of the 2020 Grist 50

Mark Winston Griffith - producer/host of School Colors, an award-winning documentary podcast that examines race, class and power in American cities and schools that will be distributed through NPR's Code Switch in the spring and summer of 2022.

Lilian Hill - Hunter College NYC Food Policy Center 23 Indigenous American Food Activists, Educators, and Other Figures to Know 2021

Jose Oliva - Food Tank 14 Latinx Food Change Makers 2020

Martin Lemos - Food Tank 14 Latinx Food Change Makers 2020

PODCAST

Rooted Wisdom is a fellows-led podcast that explores universal values rooted in ancestral wisdom. Fellow Aileen Suzara hosts fellows throughout the series to share personal stories and first-hand insight about local food communities. From organizing neighborhoods, holding an international mindset, and advocating for local food systems, the podcast aims to strengthen and heal relationships with food, and sow a future of sovereignty, resilience, and equity.

Since the first and second episodes were released in September, 2021, we have had

- 778 unique listeners
- 1121 downloads
- with most listeners from US, Canada, India, Spain, UK, Australia, Italy, Taiwan

"We make our path. We decide what's best for us."

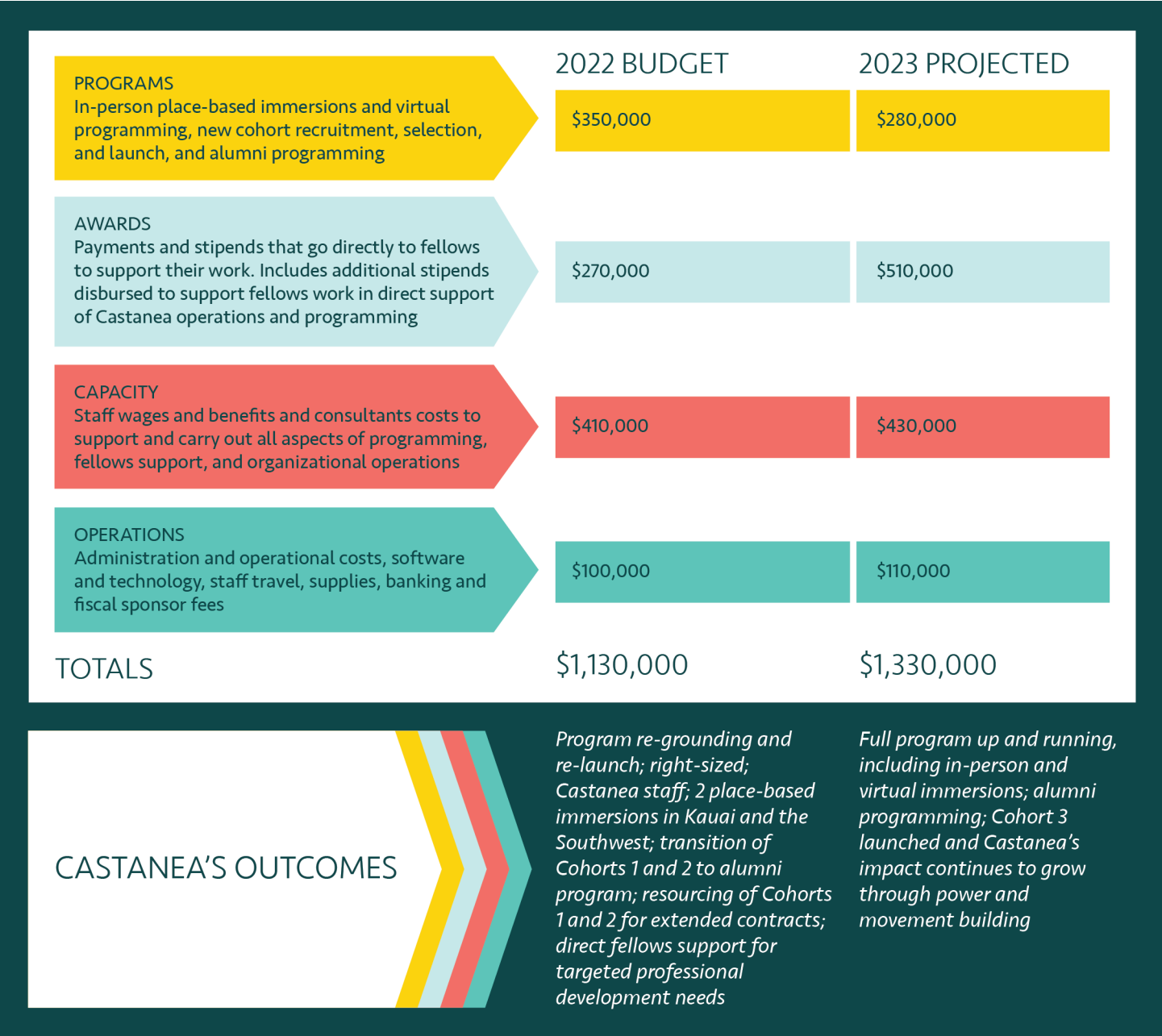
Helga Garza
2020-2022

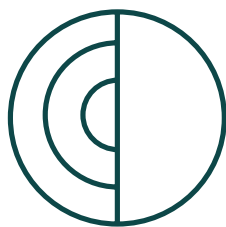
"Our mission is greater, our work is more humane, our vantage point is much broader. We want to make sure that for the next 7 generations, there will be a place for people to live, and food for them to eat, a life for them to enjoy."

Kelly Carlisle
2019-2022

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

In an average year of full programming, almost 40% of Castanea’s budget goes directly to fellows in the form of stipends to support their work on the ground in communities across the country. We identify those leaders doing the work in communities through an intensive and strategic cohort selection process.





CASTANEA FELLOWSHIP

COMMUNITY. POWER. JUSTICE.



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