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After 15 years away, I returned to Oshkosh because I believe in this community and want to offer my skills to grow our local food system. In 2013, I received my Masters Degree in Health and Human Development with an emphasis in Sustainable Food Systems from Montana State University. I spent the next 4 years in New Mexico immersed in the restaurant industry. I was the Operations Manager of a new cold press juice company, where we purchased over 2000 pounds per month from local farmers in season. Additionally, I helped open a craft ice cream shop, using only local dairy and seasonal ingredients. I understand the buying power that food businesses hold for communities. I also know the growing pains that local farmers and buyers go through when building something from the ground up, including the importance of finding and keeping excellent staff.

Personally, I am passionate about health, cooking, and downtown Oshkosh. I lead a monthly cooking class for teens at the Oshkosh Boys and Girls Club, and can be found almost every Saturday at the Oshkosh Farmers Market. I value clear, open communication and accountability. I believe that local food is the most powerful way to transform personal and community health. I am also an excel spreadsheet fanatic- numbers drive decisions. Also of importance, is that I am Serv-Safe certified and have taught classes on food safety.

Currently, I am the Culinary Manager of the exciting new project at The Howard in downtown Oshkosh. Our grab and go café will focus on fresh, seasonal ingredients and we hope to show that Oshkosh is ready for something new. The Oshkosh Food Co-op has similar aspirations: to bring a fresher, more sustainable approach to food in our community through accountability and courageous action.

The Oshkosh food scene seems to be gaining momentum, and a Co Op will be an amazing addition to this energy. I was a dedicated Co-op member in Bozeman, MT and Santa Fe, NM because they offered the best one-stop shopping options for local food. Farmers markets are excellent social scenes, but are not always the most convenient places for families and busy professionals to purchase their food. Plus, transparency is not always their number one priority. A Co-Op will provide a convenient, one stop shop with clear sourcing

information. It will also provide those local farmers an additional place to sell their produce- in much larger quantities than weekly market. Finally, Co Ops provide a place for those who desire to shop and eat local, but perhaps don't know how to do so. Well-trained, welcoming staff seems to be a part of every Co Op I walk into. That's a powerful way to educate and grow our movement, and this educational element is why I love Co Ops of all facets.

My dream for our Co-Op would be for us to also function as a place to eat the delicious local food we will be selling. Locally roasted coffee? A salad and hot food bar offering local meat and produce? Pop up dinners featuring local chefs? Cooking classes teaching simple meal prep ideas? More and more, people are eating out of the home- how can we also capture this market while supporting our mission? I also envision our Co Op providing good jobs for our community. Standard service industry wages are often far below a living wage. How can we work this into our business plan and cash flows? Sustainability has a social responsibility as well.

Oshkosh has amazing potential. The people who tell us we aren't ready for a Co Op, or healthy food, or change- they are wrong and we are here to prove it through action and courage. I would love to offer my skills to the Co Op- I live and breathe local food. It is in my blood, just like Oshkosh.