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## Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation donates \$20,000 grant to Root NS

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Salem, MA Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation has presented a \$20,000 grant to Root NS for their culinary job training program. Root NS is committed to helping address food insecurity while offering training opportunities for individuals interested in gaining real-world kitchen experience. Through the culinary job training program, up to 40 individuals work alongside a professional chef and learn how to prepare food and cater events. The program also helps participants build important personal finance skills.

Each week, Root youth employees produce more than 500 meals for seniors, families, and children experiencing food insecurity and for clients served by LifeBridge, Salem Pantry, Beverly Bootstraps, and many more North Shore agencies. Root trainees complete an externship at one of Root's 40+ partner restaurants to experience another kitchen culture and professional environment.

“Root works to address two critical issues – job training for young people facing barriers to employment and local food insecurity,” said Allison Caffrey, Root’s executive director. “The two are highly interconnected – if individuals don’t have the training and opportunity to earn a living wage, they have a significantly higher chance of facing food insecurity for themselves and their families.”

“The foundation is honored to support Root and their mission to help young adults gain independence by developing essential work and life readiness skills,” said, Andrea Borowiecki, vice president of charitable giving & community engagement at Rockland Trust and executive director of Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation.

“Root not only enables these young adults to secure careers, but the organization also provides an essential service to families and individuals experiencing food insecurity.”

Once the culinary job training program is completed, Root staff work with trainees to ensure they have a plan to enroll (or re-enroll) in school and/or secure employment. They also offer an Alumni Employment Program for advanced training and experience. To learn more about Root, visit [www.rootns.org](http://www.rootns.org).

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