



2022 Board Candidate

Alison Foreman



Executive Director Alison Foreman has worked with Ypsilanti area non-profits as an employee and volunteer for more than 15 years.

She is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in juvenile justice and a master's degree in public administration. Alison worked with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and the Book Industry Charitable Foundation before joining YMOW in 2013.

Alison has served on the boards of the Ypsilanti Area Community Fund, Washtenaw Leaders Advisory and the Area Agency on Aging 1B Diabetes

Program Advisory Group. She is a former 8-year member of the SOS community services board.

In recent years Alison has shared her knowledge of senior services funding as a guest on NPR's "All Things Considered" and CNN's "The Lead" with Jake Tapper.

Alison lives in Ypsilanti Township with her husband, Nate, and their two Devon Rex cats, Ray and Jen. Alison and Nate enjoy hiking, fishing and spending time outdoors.

1. What role do you think the Ypsilanti Food Co-op will play in Ypsilanti's future?

I think, the future for the YFC has many options:

1. Grocery delivery
2. Working with local CSA's
3. Fundraising/grant writing to build the capacity and foot print for the organization as a vital sustaining provider for food security in our Ypsilanti community.

2. In what ways are you working to contribute to and improve the Ypsilanti community?

From work to every day life, my goal is to raise awareness about the needs of our Ypsilanti area that food insecurity and access to critical safety net services is key to lift up everyone who lives in our community. I do this by building capacity for Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels and in 7 years as the leader of that organization we went from serving 150 clients to serving over 250 clients daily. From serving one meal a day, five days a week to serving two meals a day, six days a week (with extra meals for Sunday).

In addition to supporting seniors, I also work with Ypsilanti Community Fund to help the youth in our community to access higher education as a way to build up our community for the future.

3. If you can find healthy, organic food at another grocery store, why choose the Ypsilanti Food Co-op?

Simple its local. Shopping local is important. Also, I know the staff and they are amazing and always can order special items. Not to mention the bakery is Amazing!

Additionally, as a vegetarian and the granddaughter of a farmer, I like supporting the local farmers to prosper. Eat local vegetables is just healthy for the body its healthy for my soul and I feel like, I am making a difference for more people that I know.

4. What issue within the food system is the most important to you, and how would you address it?

Access and cost. Many in Ypsilanti live below the 200% Federal poverty level and we need to ensure everyone has access to healthy food. Healthy food is expensive but we all deserve access and I think, the co-op is key for giving access to healthy food. Additionally, we need to educate the community that healthy eating will improve your life expectancy (did you know those who live in the 48197/48198 zip code die 11 years sooner that those who live in the Westside of the County).

5. What is your past experience with the Ypsilanti Food Co-op and cooperatives in general (working, volunteering, shopping, etc.)? Include what you have done to improve and support the Ypsilanti Food Co-op.

Include what you have done to improve and support the Ypsilanti Food Co-op. I strive to drive business to the co-op, include the co-op in funding conversations for the community and I am a life time fully vested co-op member.

6. What has the Ypsilanti Food Co-op done for you?

1) Provided me access to healthy food and new foods. 2) Is a great shopping experience. 3) The staff is inviting and friendly. 4) It is a hub for seeing neighbors and supporting the community. & 5) The co-op has been a longstanding supporter of other food/nutrition nonprofits. I am proud of this and so much more that the co-op supports for me and the community.

7. What skills and strengths would you contribute to the Board?

As a nonprofit leader in Ypsilanti supporting food security for older adults and the medically fragile, over the years my strength and contributions have been:

- 1) Building relationships with other nonprofit organizations
- 2) Accessing the wealth of knowledge and skills of our local Ypsilanti area residents and the Eastern Michigan University student and staff members to support a healthy community
- 3) Public speaking. I am in my element when, I can interact with others to learn about what inspires them, how we can work together and how we will reach a goal.