



Anna Tracht, AMI Fellow, 2015-16

Phase I of AMI was a gift. It was a time to slow down, dig in, and pursue passions and skills I hadn't had time to explore – like working with two other Fellows to create an apothecary for my Capstone project.

Phase II was an exciting whirlwind; I spent the year working with [The Highland Center](#), developing and running a Culinary and Hospitality Internship Program, supporting the [Highland Farmers Market](#), and re-opening [The Highland Inn Restaurant](#) as a local food destination. I was energized and inspired by the Highland farming community, and how people were linking together different parts of the food system in new and innovative ways, especially given Highland County's remote location and the accompanying challenges. It was these connections- both personal and on a systems-wide level- that pushed me to pursue work with food hubs and increasing local food access.

When my time with AMI came to an end, I was motivated to continue the work of building local food systems. About a year ago, I accepted a position with [Cultivating Community](#), a food justice non-profit based in Portland, Maine. In my role as the Sales Coordinator and CSA Manager, I support a training farm and food hub for new American farmers. I work with refugee and immigrant farmers in providing produce to about 450 CSA members and numerous markets, schools, and food pantries throughout southern Maine. We aim to equip the farmers with skills and tools to graduate and become independent farm business operators.

As I begin my second season with Cultivating Community, I still draw on foundational experiences and lessons learned during my AMI Fellowship each day, and I'm sure I will continue to do so for years to come.