

Marquette, WARF: Announce 2021 'force for positive change' event

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MILWAUKEE — Marquette University and the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) have announced the finalists for the [2021 Force for Positive Change Awards](#). This is the fourth time the statewide competition will recognize social entrepreneurship as a model for solving social or environmental challenges in a way that is sustainable, just and generates impactful change in Wisconsin.

A total of \$80,000 in prize money will be awarded. The inaugural Force for Positive Change student fellowships, with up to five \$5,000 stipends for summer internships, will also be announced.

This year's event will feature an afternoon of social entrepreneurship workshops and speakers.

A keynote from David Bornstein, social entrepreneur and co-founder of the Solutions Journalism Network, will be followed by sessions for nonprofit organizations, for-profit social enterprises and students.

A special conversation between philanthropists John and Tashia Morgridge and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Secretary Missy Hughes will highlight rural resiliency in Wisconsin and the future of social impact in the state. The event will conclude with announcing the 2021 Force for Positive Change Award winners.

The event is free for attendees interested in learning more about social impact in Wisconsin. Registration is required for the event. Registration and a full event schedule are available [online](#).

"As a state, Wisconsin has a network of standout social enterprises, which made it difficult to select this year's finalists for the Force for Positive Change Awards," said

event co-producer Laura Heisler of WARF. “We are excited to announce the winners on April 7, and new this year, recognize organizations making an exemplary impact during the coronavirus pandemic, ensuring racial equity and inclusion, and promoting rural resiliency through their social enterprises.”

The following organizations have been named as finalists:

Bloom 360 Learning Community, Build-A-Bow, CEOs of Tomorrow, Commonwealth Development, Earthbound Environmental, Fifth Season Cooperative, Giant Jones Brewing LLC, Harambee Village Doulas, Islands of Brilliance, Inc., Little John’s Kitchens, Madison Area Urban Ministry Just Dane, Midwest Renewable Energy, MOSES Organic, Neu Life Community Development, New Leaf Foods, Operation Fresh Start, Public Allies Milwaukee, Riveredge Nature Center, Rosenholm Dairy LLP and Maydm.

The finalists were selected from more than 175 initial applications that were then narrowed to 20 finalists by an expert panel of judges from industry, academia and the social entrepreneurship sector.

“It is remarkable how many new social enterprises have emerged since the inception of the Force for Positive Change Awards and event in 2016. There are remarkable organizations making an impact in Wisconsin and for Wisconsin,” said event co-producer Kelsey Otero of Marquette. “This virtual event is an opportunity to celebrate social entrepreneurship and inspire more people and organizations to get involved in creating sustainable impact.”

Marquette University and WARF spearheaded the competition, in conjunction with John and Tashia Morgridge, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, American Family Insurance Institute for Corporate and Social Impact, Promega Corporation, Cardinal Stritch University, Ashoka, gener8tor, University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Discovery 2 Product and Division of Continuing Studies and Wisconsin Microfinance.

About the Force for Positive Change Awards

The Force for Positive Change Award Competition is sponsored by Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation and Marquette University. Entries were accepted Nov. 2, 2020, through Jan. 19, 2021. Entries were judged by a panel of judges selected by the sponsors. The odds of winning depend on the number and quality of entries

received. For more information, including a list of official rules, visit warf.org/PositiveChange.

Those with questions should contact [Laura Heisler](#) at (608) 316-4392 or [Kelsey Otero](#) at (414) 288-4990.

The photo accompanying this release was taken during the 2019 Force for Positive Change event.