

July 2017

Dear Friend,

For the past decade, BerkShares have passed from hand to hand, reminding people at every exchange that *where they spend their money makes a difference*.

Education has always been a big part of our job. Extensive press coverage, combined with our **BerkShares Business of the Month** series, has allowed us to share our “local first” message both here and abroad. But this year we have intensified our efforts, building programs that bring the BerkShares message to more people, in more corners of the Berkshire region, than ever before.

- This winter we helped nine young people develop locally focused business plans in the third edition of our **Entry to Entrepreneurship** program. Their work was enriched by speakers and mentors from throughout our business community and their final presentations were applauded by a hundred community members at Dewey Hall.
- Last fall we went on the road in Berkshire County with a **series of workshops** designed to engage diverse members of the community in economic development: eliciting ideas for Berkshire businesses and teaching basic business concepts at the same time.
- This summer we are launching an initiative called **BerkShares Ambassadors**, an opportunity for 16-30 year-olds to become “community economists” who can advocate for our locally owned businesses and community banks, helping to shape a future for this region based on cooperation, regional self-reliance and environmental stewardship.

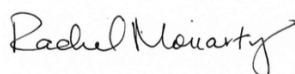
Please, become a part of this work. **Renew your membership now, or become a member for the first time!** BerkShares, Inc. is a membership-directed non-profit corporation and voting membership is open to any resident of the Berkshires. Dues are 25 BerkShares or \$25 per year. Additional donations are always appreciated.

As a member you will have the opportunity to elect or even run for the Board of Trustees at the Annual Meeting on October 19th. Visit www.berkshares.org/become_member to find out more. Dues and nominations must be received by October 2nd to be valid for 2017.

Appreciatively,



Alice Maggio



Rachel Moriarty

And the BerkShares, Inc. Board of Trustees: Dan Bellow, Michael Bloomberg, Kate Chebatoris, Catherine Chester, Gillette Conner, Tim Geller, Jon Greene, Brian Hailes, Abe Hunrichs, Jennifer Tabakin, Michael Tesoro, Sierra Watson, & Susan Witt