



2020

# Annual Report



*Where Transition Begins!*

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION



## **Our Mission**

**To transition individuals & families experiencing homelessness to self-reliance!**

***“As a church family, we get to show each guest that they matter & are loved.”***

*~ Jenny Jaroneski,  
Social Ministry Coordinator,  
Trinity Lutheran  
Church - Utica*



*Where Transition Begins!*

***Our church partners are integral to our mission.***

# Marking a year of challenge & growth

On March 16, 2020, when Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued a “stay-at-home” order in response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Macomb County Rotating Emergency Shelter Team (MCREST) was faced with a unique challenge: The individuals and families we serve have no homes in which to stay, and the churches that typically would shelter our guests were closing.

At MCREST, we had to continue to shelter our guests experiencing homelessness while keeping them safe from the deadly virus. We made the crisis decision to transition immediately from a rotating church shelter model to a hotel model.

Today, I can report to you that the vulnerable men, women, and children MCREST serves were protected. Not a single person developed COVID-19 in MCREST’s program in 2020.

Through the help of new and ongoing funders and community supporters, MCREST weathered the emergency and made the hotel model work. Our church partners rose to the occasion, continuing to feed MCREST’s guests even as the numbers we served grew to nearly 275 individuals per month in the winter of 2020-21, an increase from a regular caseload of 60, as we took on guests from the Macomb County Warming Center, which closed due to COVID-19.

MCREST management worked remotely, continuing essential functions of the organization, including our innovative Learning & Resource Center, which assists with job readiness and job placement, while our case managers remained on the ground, assisting those most in need.

It was our dedicated case managers who worked with Roseville Community Schools’ homeless liaison to make sure that every child in our program had a laptop or iPad to attend school remotely, providing a measure of stability and normalcy for the children.

We now pivot to the future. Thanks to the help of supporters like you, MCREST will finish a permanent women and children’s shelter in Mt. Clemens in Fall 2021. This building will provide the comprehensive wraparound services necessary to enable women and children to transition to housing, reducing the traumatic impact of homelessness on children.

MCREST’s mission of transitioning individuals and families experiencing homelessness to self-reliance remains the same since our founding in 1988, but we will accomplish it in new and innovative ways over the coming years. I ask for your continued support and friendship as we pursue this mission together on behalf of Macomb County’s most vulnerable.



*April R. Fidler*

*Executive Director & CEO*



SANTA CLAUS BRINGS GIFTS



CHURCH SUPPORT



DOING HOMEWORK

# STEPPING UP

## Our COVID-19 Response

This past year was challenging for us all... But MCREST stepped up to the plate on behalf of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

### THE CRISIS

On April 16, 2020, Crain's Detroit reported that more than one million Michiganders made unemployment claims in the past month, over 20 percent of the state's workforce, shattering all past records. Macomb County saw a surge in individuals and families seeking housing and food assistance, especially families with children experiencing homelessness for the first time. Meanwhile, the churches that MCREST relies on to host its rotating emergency shelter temporarily closed in response to the spread of COVID-19.

### A QUICK RESPONSE

MCREST quickly responded to the crisis, sheltering individuals and families experiencing homelessness in a local motel since March 15, 2020. Our congregations, even though they could not host, continued to provide three meals per day, feeding approximately 200 guests every day, compared to 60 before the pandemic.

Close to half of the guests at the motel are families. The kids attend Roseville schools virtually. Our dedicated staff assured that each student had a laptop or tablet to attend school. The students are completing homework and studying, working hard towards high academic performance.

Thanks to the generosity of Michigan foundations, our church members, service organizations, our loyal supporters, and the Macomb County Emergency Management, and Macomb Community Action, MCREST was able to keep our guests safe and warm throughout 2020.



# You did it!

**Thanks to you, MCREST will finish women and children’s shelter**

**B**ecause of you, we have been able to raise enough funds to address the critical and growing needs of local mothers and children experiencing homelessness. Because of you, we will finish a permanent women and children’s shelter right here in Macomb County!

## **RETURNING HOME CAMPAIGN MEETS GOAL**

Thanks to your generous support, MCREST’s Returning Home Campaign met the goal of raising \$400,000 for renovations to a Mt. Clemens building that will allow a stable location for homeless children and families to receive support services as they transition to self-reliance. We also raised an additional \$65,000 to furnish the shelter. More than 1,000 children experience homelessness in Macomb County each year.

The new shelter will assist up to 45 women and children transition from homelessness back to housing and self-reliance. Men will continue to be welcomed through MCREST’s church network.

MCREST’s shelter will assist with providing emergency shelter and meals in partnership with our member churches. Through the new shelter, MCREST will offer women and children supportive services including transportation and child-care assistance, self-improvement classes, student tutoring, and job readiness and job placement assistance.

MCREST’s goal for each and every family is a successful transition to housing and self-reliance.

“Children who become homeless long for stability, and it’s traumatic for them to move multiple times,” said April Fidler, MCREST’s executive director & CEO. “We are deeply grateful to our church members, our dedicated supporters, the community, and our sponsors for supporting our efforts to provide greater stability for families experiencing homelessness.”

### **GENEROUS SPONSORS**

*PNC Bank  
Weingartz  
Christian Financial Credit Union  
The Children’s Academy  
Sabiston Building Supply*

*Gardner-White  
The Joy Family  
Merkle-Gliesman  
MCREST Board of Directors  
PARTNERS in Architecture, PLC*

### **MAJOR DONORS**

*The Carls Foundation  
Robert & Rhea Corrión  
Appletree Hill Foundation  
The Scheper Family  
Jesse Chatelle  
Robert & Rachelle Shippy*

# 2020



## Finding Solutions for Macomb County Families

Since its founding in 1988, MCREST has provided year-round safe emergency shelter and three meals a day for homeless individuals and families for up to 90 days. MCREST has housed individuals, families and children in local churches with the generous support of congregations across Macomb County. During our guests' stay, case managers work with each individual and family to develop and implement a personalized housing plan that concentrates on overcoming barriers to self-reliance.

Many of these churches had to largely close their buildings due to the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020, though some of them have reopened their doors to be able to serve as a shelter in 2021. Since the onset of COVID-19, MCREST adapted, temporarily sheltering homeless individuals and families in rooms at a local motel. In early 2022, women and children will be sheltered at the new facility in Mount Clemens.

### SUPPORTING FAMILIES DURING COVID-19

Last year, MCREST sheltered a total of 601 adults and 154 children, compared to 422 adults and 118 children the previous non-pandemic year of 2019. Additionally, in winter 2020 and again in winter 2021, the organization has assumed operations of the Warming Center in Macomb County, resulting in a monthly increase from serving 60 individuals to more than 275 people. In this effort, MCREST successfully partnered with the Macomb County Emergency Management Team, which supplied MCREST weekly with personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep guests safe from COVID-19. The critical decision, made in the midst of crisis, to transition to a hotel model protected the vulnerable, transient population we serve: Not a single person contracted COVID-19 in MCREST's program during 2020.

During the pandemic, the homeless people served by



MCREST were especially impacted by the slowdown of the economy and experienced greater job losses. The shutdown of community spaces, including public restrooms, also negatively affects housing-insecure people. MCREST responded by expanding delivery of case management services (phone meetings, email communication with guests, etc.) and enhanced collaborations with other agencies in the community to increase the level of support available to clients.

The slowdown in the economy also resulted in many families losing their homes for the first time. MCREST successfully implemented its rapid-rehousing dollars for many of these families: Of the total number of guests we served in 2020, 18 percent were successfully rehoused through our rapid-rehousing funding.

Children experiencing homelessness long for stability and routine. When schooling became virtual during much of 2020, MCREST case managers assisted every school-age child in our program to obtain an iPad or laptop through Roseville Community Schools and to successfully attend school remotely in the safety and quiet of the motel. This provided stability and a sense of normalcy for children in the midst of the chaos of family homelessness and the larger pandemic, reducing overall trauma on vulnerable children.

Though no longer hosting, MCREST's church partners were critical to the success of the hotel model that kept MCREST's guests safe in 2020. Even though most of them were temporarily closed, congregations continued to supply meals to guests, sometimes to as many as 275 people per day during the winter months of 2020-21. We continue to be deeply grateful for our church partners, which have

been so foundational to MCREST's mission since our inception in 1988.

### THE "WALK TO WORK"

A critical piece of MCREST's wraparound, highly individualized support for individuals experiencing homelessness is our Learning & Resource Center (LRC), which enables guests to transition to an independent life by becoming more marketable in the work world through assistance with job placement and job readiness.



*Jessica moves in!*

**“When people get back to the work world, it’s their path to an independent life.”**

*~ Janet Peplin,  
Learning & Resource  
Center Director*

The LRC also is focused on helping guests secure training and education that will make them more competitive in their job searches. To this end, the MCREST Board extends shelter stays on an as-

needed basis to enable guests attending school to remain in a stable, nurturing environment to complete programs. In 2020, the LRC served 87 guests, assisting 23 of them to secure

employment and transition to stability.

A highlight of the work of the LRC in 2020 was a guest, who, with the support of the LRC and through MCREST funding, became a graduate of the Administrative Certificate Program at Macomb Community College Workforce Continuing Education. At the time she entered MCREST’s shelter, she was working three low-wage, food-service jobs, but was unable to make ends meet or to provide for her children. After successfully completing the six-month administrative certificate program, she transitioned to a professional career, new and stable housing, and was reunited with her children.

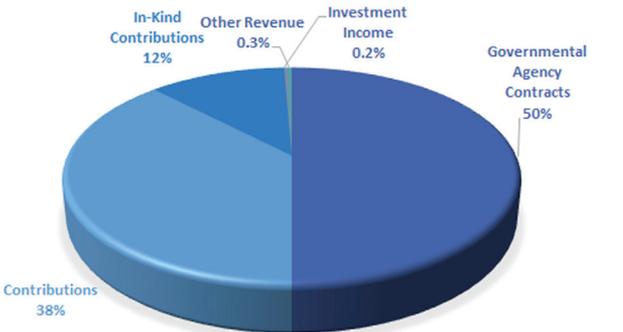
The mission of MCREST is to assist individuals experiencing homelessness to transition to stability and housing, and, as an organization, we successfully continued this mission on behalf of the Macomb County homeless population in 2020, despite the challenges of the pandemic. We did so through our commitment to empower each and every individual experiencing homelessness to better their own lives by leveraging our wraparound services on their personal journey home.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## 2020 Financial Summary \*

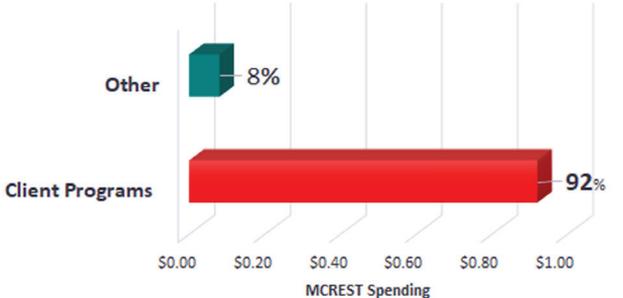
<b>Revenue</b>	
Governmental Agency Contracts	\$1,357,287
Contributions	\$1,024,333
In-Kind Contributions	\$315,213
Investment Income	\$7,440
Other Revenue	\$10,169
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,714,442</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Program Services	\$1,160,305
In-Kind Facilities & Materials	\$315,213
Fundraising	\$73,321
Management & General	\$53,293
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,602,132</b>
<b>Increase in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,112,310</b>

\* Numbers from audit for 2020 fiscal year



2020 EXPENSES

### Your Dollar Spent



**Give with Confidence**

**92 CENTS OF EVERY DOLLAR SPENT AT MCREST SUPPORTS CLIENT PROGRAMS.**

**T**oday, Victoria lives in a nice neighborhood in a college town in Texas. The married mother-of-six works full-time and spends her weekends in the kitchen, baking from scratch, or on her laptop, designing flyers, running her own cake and cupcake business. It is a happy, stable, and fulfilling life—far from a life on the streets.

### A SPIRAL DOWN

But after Victoria lost her young daughter to leukemia in September 2012, the mother, who was single at the time, spiraled downwards, struggling to cope.

In February 2016, the family hit rock bottom. Victoria had moved from Texas to Michigan to care for her great-grandmother. She was working a couple different jobs trying to make ends meet but struggling to find child-care for her children and living with family members. In February 2016, she and her children became homeless after making the heartbreaking decision to leave her family's home.

Now, today, she often asks of herself, "What would have happened to us if I didn't go to MCREST?"

### FINDING HELP

At first, Victoria, together with her newborn son and other three children, the oldest of whom was six, were scared in the unfamiliar environment of MCREST's emergency shelter. She didn't talk much. She prayed a lot.

Then she met with her case manager. Victoria confided that she wanted to find a higher-paying job to support herself and her children but lacked education.

"We can make this happen for you," the case manager, who still checks in on Victoria today, said—"if you're willing to put in the work."

"I reached deep down and found willpower I didn't know I had," Victoria says now. "I found it for my kids. I had no choice."

### SUCCEEDING THROUGH WORK

MCREST's Learning & Resource Director Janet Peplin enrolled



# Homeless to Entrepreneur

Victoria in a certified nursing assistant's program—Victoria's dream job. She spiffed up Victoria's resume and helped Victoria land a job working the night shift as an aide at an assisted living center.

The pastor of a local church gave the family a minivan. Another church arranged child-care.

Victoria found the strength within herself to attend school, work full-time, care for her children, and still look for housing, all while living in a homeless shelter. When Victoria graduated from her CNA program, Janet attended the graduation.

### MCREST'S STORY

This is MCREST's story: In our program, individuals and families transition from homelessness to self-reliance.

*They do the work. We support them on the journey.*

In late 2016, Victoria bought a duplex in Texas with savings. She no longer needed MCREST. And that makes us very proud.

**"I reached deep down and found willpower I didn't know I had."**

**~Victoria**

# MAJOR DONORS

*We are very grateful for our committed and dedicated supporters, who strongly believe in our mission work of transitioning families experiencing homelessness to self-reliance. We extend our deepest thanks to every one of you for your aid in 2020, and this list is not inclusive.*

## \$250,000

*The Carls Foundation*

## \$100,000 - \$249,000

*Robert & Rhea Corrion*

## \$25,000 - \$99,999

*Ballmer Group  
Co.act Detroit  
Consumers Energy Foundation  
Weingartz*

## \$15,000 - \$24,999

*Citizen's Bank  
DTE Foundation  
Elizabeth Allan & Warren Shelden Fund  
Flagstar Bank Foundation  
Motown Soup  
PNC Foundation  
Tamer Foundation  
United Way for Southeastern Michigan  
Vera & Joseph Dresner Foundation*

## \$5,000 - \$14,999

*Appletree Hill Foundation  
Big Lots  
Robert Boccomino  
Jesse Chatelle  
Christian Financial Credit Union  
CSO, Inc.  
Four County Community Foundation  
The Joy Family  
Merkle-Gliesman  
Richard Thompson Foundation*

*The Scheper Family  
Shepherd's Gate Church  
Robert & Rachelle Shippy  
Sozo Companies, Inc.  
St. Blase Catholic Church  
St. John Vianney Catholic Church  
St. Kieran Catholic Church  
St. Michael Catholic Church  
TCF Bank  
Trinity Lutheran Church - Utica*

## \$2,000 - \$4,999

*Brookside Fellowship Church  
Charles & Tamara Albright IV Family Fund  
Christ United Methodist Church  
Citizens Bank Foundation  
Club General Motors  
Comerica Foundation  
Congregational United Church of Christ  
Cornerstone Baptist Church  
Grace Episcopal Church  
Mark & Patricia Henning  
Immanuel United Methodist Church  
Karl S. Heinzelmann  
Lakeside Assembly of God  
Macomb Charitable Foundation  
Marjorie & Henry DiLaura Fund  
MEI - Total Elevator Solutions  
Neighbors United  
PARTNERS in Architecture, PLC  
Richard Thompson Foundation*

*Rule 62 Cafe  
St. Clement's Catholic Church  
Rotary Club  
St. Hubert Catholic Church  
St. Isidore Church  
SS. John & Paul Catholic Church  
St. Louis Catholic Church  
St. Lucy Catholic Church  
St. Mary Queen of Creation Catholic Church  
St. Thomas Community Presbyterian Church  
Spencer & Elizabeth Seufert  
David & Susan Smith  
Stella Matutina O'Connor  
Ross & Ann Stuntz  
TCF Bank  
Thomas Joseph Charitable Foundation  
Randal Tomko  
Warren Woods Baptist Church*

## 2020 Board of Directors

- David Austin, *Vice President*
- Hank Luks
- Cindy Gliesman
- John Johnson, *President*
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- Larry Rocca
- Sue LaTour
- Steve Pytelski
- Diane Royer, *Secretary*
- Kristina Malcolm, *Treasurer*
- Richard Twarowski
- Janice Donahue
- Tara Nysen
- Stephanie Jackson
- Scott Zemens

**Our  
Leadership**

## 2020 Executive Staff

- April Fidler *Executive Director*
- Heather VanDenburg *Shelter Manager*
- Janet Peplin *Learning & Resource Center Director*
- Debbie Warren *Church Recruiter*
- Eneida Hajiou *Development Director*

**MCREST**  
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Roseville, MI 48066





[www.mcrest.org](http://www.mcrest.org)  
586-415-5101

## **Our Vision as a Community**

A place where men,  
women and children  
experiencing the trauma of  
homelessness find  
emergency solutions &  
housing resources.



*Where Transition Begins!*