



**METRO TRANS
UMBRELLA GROUP**
2020 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our Mission, Vision, Goals and Values.....3
A Message from our Executive Director.....4-5
Community Outreach.....6-7
Support Groups.....8-9
QTPOC.....10
Social Justice.....11
Advocacy and Awareness.....12-13
Financial Summary.....14-15
Our Board and Team.....16-17
Closing Statement.....18



OUR MISSION

To bring together the Trans, Gender Non-Conforming, and QTBIPOC*, communities and their support systems in the St. Louis metro area through equity, community, visibility, advocacy and education.

OUR VISION

To work together towards a united, uplifted, and empowered, Trans, Gender Non-Conforming, and QTBIPOC* community in the St. Louis metro area.

OUR GOAL

Maximize our programs by prioritizing community informed needs, and by determining the reach and impact needed to create positive change.

Improve our public financial support to ensure greater long term sustainability.

Strategically invest in our infrastructure by creating and updating our systems to strengthen our foundation.

**QTBIPOC - Queer Trans Black, Indigenous and People of Color*

OUR VALUES

Building equity

Fighting systemic racism

Resource sharing

Restorative justice

Creating systems

Empowering individual and community voice

Cultivating Leadership



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2020, the year of the pandemic, was pivotal for Metro Trans Umbrella Group (MTUG), and the Transgender Community overall.

For most of us, our circle of support centered around loved ones, friends, medical services, and access to basic needs began to dwindle to a handful of individuals given the threatening effects of the Covid virus, and the impending need to curb its spread. Many community members reached into MTUG seeking assistance in assorted ways, and our wonderful support staff and volunteers met this challenge by moving the organization to virtual support groups and an online food pantry ordering system. Safety, centered on minimizing the potential for transferring the Coronavirus was a top priority for all. We are especially proud of our team of volunteer delivery drivers who made porch deliveries to so many families this past year. We were determined to make certain that no one went without basic food and toiletries. We also provided tender support items like pots and pans, coloring books, and toys and games for families with children.

We are a thriving and empathetic community that leans into each other during times of crisis as was demonstrated this past year. As a community, we have proven to be quite resourceful, and our shared experiences and beliefs unite us. Our world will recover. Knowing how hard it has been on so many of us forced into involuntary isolation, as an organization we look forward to

socializing once again after the health experts say it is safe to do so. It is also so critical as individuals that we get vaccinated in the coming months. As most of the society does, many of the restrictions and other negative impacts from the virus should lift. The world will begin to recover from the loss of human life, ongoing lingering effects of related health complications, and the burden on our regional healthcare networks.

MTUG serves the needs of some of our most marginalized members of society, who are homeless, malnourished, and abandoned. We uplift them by serving their basic needs and assist with referrals to other partner network agencies when appropriate. Our mission also includes emotional support through our gender-affirming support groups that teach individuals to address their silent suffering and turn it into actions by finding themselves and taking the steps forward that are right for them. Through our advocacy and educational endeavors, we can create a deeper awareness and understanding with our messaging. For us, advocacy and education are synonymous with creating acceptance and liberation. During the pandemic and rolling into 2021, though tired at times, we never lost sight of our mission of serving the Transgender Community.

Our community is beautiful, resourceful, and has shown its resilience and adaptability this past year. As an organization, we would not have been able to achieve this success without the support of our community volunteers, leaders, and trans-friendly allies. **I personally would like to thank everyone who helped keep our community healthy.**



Sayer Johnson (He/Him)
*Executive Director,
Co-Founder*

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

MTUG's outreach programs include basic needs - defined as nutritious food, clean clothing, personal hygiene products, grooming accommodations, access to dependable public transportation, and housing placements for those without a permanent residence. Many times, those most in need are estranged from their family and have limited or no financial resources or emotional support in place. They may be homeless or live in abandoned cars. Whether extending support temporarily or long-term, our outreach programs are designed to help the most vulnerable. For us, positive outcomes include, but are not limited to, finding temporary and permanent housing accommodations, a place to shower or wash one's clothes, entering a reemployment program, and accessing other gender-friendly and non-judgmental service agencies.

From April to December 2020, MTUG volunteers made over 600 home deliveries and dispensed over 17,000 pounds of food. We frequently asked for food donations, fresh produce, canned and dry goods, along with toiletries throughout the year to replenish our pantry, and our requests were answered. Freezers and refrigerators were donated, which came in handy for properly preserving perishable inventories. Today, the first floor of our Community Center looks like a food distribution center rather than a gathering place.



FOOD PANTRY

MTUG's onsite food pantry operates two days a week (during official open hours) and offers a balanced assortment of canned and dry goods, limited fresh produce, and several protein choices. Under normal operating conditions when visiting the food pantry for the first time, assessments are done to identify the specific needs of new clients. Our approach is to evaluate everyone based on evidence-based practices and intake questionnaires. People are unique and their needs are too; therefore, we must consider the frequency of their needs, the severity of their needs, the potential duration of benefits, and their own perceptions. Many times, clients require additional support beyond services offered. In those situations, we offer referrals to other welcoming agencies.

Whether extending support temporarily or long-term, our outreach programs are designed to help the most vulnerable.

AROUND **600** DELIVERIES MADE

in the St. Louis metro area

17,000 LB OF FOOD

including fresh produce, toiletries, pantry & more

THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN MUTUAL AID

distributed through partnership with SweetAnd Fund



As part of our community outreach, MTUG partners with other local healthcare agencies to provide free or low costs HIV and STI services as part of our harm reduction program. Typically, these services are offered once a month at the Community Center or by appointment through our partner agencies.



ALIX'S CLOSET

To assist clients with clothing, MTUG accepts donations. We have a dedicated section of our community center called Alix's Closet. We lost Alix a few years ago and Alix's Closet is a memorial and constant reminder of how important our mission is to the Trans Community. We are about saving lives and reducing hardships. Clothing is free to anyone in need. Given the drastic shift in social interaction this past year, access to the clothing closet was restricted to consultations with staff over the phone and making individual appointments.

QTPOC:STL

QTPOC provides a safe and private space, open to discussing unique LGBTQIA+ topics of intersectionality which can include subjects such as racism, privilege, white supremacy, police interaction, homophobia, and more. Anyone who self-identifies as both a person of color and LGBTQIA+ is welcome to attend these closed meetings.

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SHIFTING AMONGST COVID

With the imminent threat of the Coronavirus, QTPOC pivoted their support group to an online venue. Within the online platform, QTPOC was able to invite Queer Trans Black Indigenous and People of Color (QTBIPOC) from St. Louis, those who were living away from the area due to the pandemic, and those who had moved but were still trying to find ways to keep in touch with their chosen St. Louis families.

During this time, gaps in care within the Black, Queer and Trans Community were highlighted, and community members were able to access support as needed. The co-facilitators of QTPOC used the remainder of the program funding that they raised through live events in 2019 to support their community by paying for and shipping essential items when needed. Virtual social and other fun events were held which included Netflix parties enjoyed by so many. The facilitators brightened the outlook of others with door-drop giveaway items, bringing joy and uplifting spirits. One of the giveaways included autographed copies of America Chavez, the groundbreaking Marvel comic book by QPOC author of Juliet Takes a Breath, Gabby Rivera.

We are ever grateful for our QTPOC allies, who, without request, planned and held fundraisers for us throughout the year. This made it possible for QTPOC to continue to support the QTBIPOC community beyond initial expectations with assistance around utilities, rent, housing, medication, and more. Through our volunteers, our support group co-facilitators were able to strengthen and build stronger relationships with white allies by having honest conversations on how to show up and fundraise in a healthy way with us.

ANTI-RACISM SERIES: UNTIL WE'RE ALL FREE

In 2020, we planned for a trans-led anti-racism series. We initially emphasized peer learning and connection over dinner at MTUG HQ. Amidst the pandemic, we re-envisioned our curriculum as four sections with synchronous and asynchronous components: "What is Race, Anyway," "Stereotypes & Bias," "Microaggressions & Accountability," and "White Privilege & Our Community." Each section was followed by a 90-minute zoom discussion. Our curriculum was created by white transgender peer educators and guided by Black queer and transgender accountability partners, and it was published on the ["Until We're All Free" website](#).

SOCIAL JUSTICE

MTUG is a firm supporter of the philosophy and practices of social justice and its four principles of equity, access, participation, and rights.

Our staff and volunteer facilitators willingly embrace the concepts of managing implicit bias, learning to become more inclusive, along with other diversity, equity, and inclusion practices. They all participated in anti-oppression resource training facilitated online by AORTA, an organization that teaches principles of Theories of Change; a training on Conflict Resolution hosted by Conflict Resolution Center in St. Louis, which teaches ways to reach a peaceful solution among disagreement; Survivor Support and Safety Planning 101 hosted by Safe Connections, an organization focused on reducing the negative impact and incidences of relationship violence and sexual assault; and lastly, Psychological First Aid concepts on reducing post-traumatic stress.



ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

Fundamental to fulfilling the critical needs of the Transgender Community, and part of our strategic plan is to develop support capacity around basic needs, affordable gender-affirming healthcare, harm reduction practices, and temporary housing. In 2020, MTUG Advocacy and Awareness volunteers forged or renewed relationships with several medical facilities in the metro area. Through these newly-formed partnerships with **Washington University Adult Transgender Clinic**, **Southampton Healthcare**, and **Planned Parenthood**, memorandums of understanding were developed to create a stronger network of local providers for the community. You will find links to these organizations on MTUG's website. We believe visibility leads to liberation, liberation to equality, and equality to societal acceptance of all forms of gender expression. We uphold the conviction that gender diversity is an inherent part of the natural world, prevalent in all societies, cultures, and demographics. We choose to exist and live our lives based on our internal identities and not the whims and gender norms of society.

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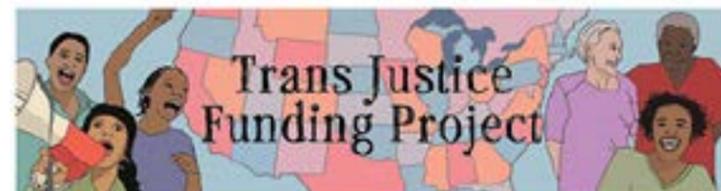
Rather than trying to build our own network of services from the ground up, we believe in inviting ourselves to the table of local not-for-profit organizations, local governmental bodies, housing placement groups, and healthcare providers. We vet these organizations and evaluate their level of acceptance towards our community. Each party pledges to support the other based on one's capacity and core competencies. Planned annual partner peer reviews and report-out sessions in the future will help us to further develop programs centered around



community. In the coming year, MTUG hopes to begin discussions with other support organizations in underserved areas, such as HIV prevention, living with HIV, risky sex practices, and harm-reduction around drug use.



OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The fiscal year 2020 was MTUG's most successful year of fundraising. Overwhelmed by the looming shadow of the pandemic, many of our sustainable donors increased their annual giving. We saw a surge in new donors, while several large foundations essentially underwrote our food and hygiene pantry needs for 2020. A significant portion of our operating costs shifted from other budgeted areas to meeting the critical needs of our community. Not surprising, we had to completely revise our operations and redirect financial resources to meet the rise of food pantry requests.

Budgeted projects and all live social events for the year were put on hold in conjunction with spending cutbacks. Although we expect renewed interest in such events this coming year. Coming into the fiscal year 2021, MTUG is in a good financial position to maintain current food pantry operation levels and to resume spending on last year's temporarily suspended initiatives. We were pleasantly surprised by the outpouring of support we received from different local not-for-profit and private foundations who helped us better serve our community.

We are ever grateful for the financial support of our generous donors during this time of crisis. Whether the donation was small or large, you made a difference.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

FISCAL YEAR 2020

Cash On Hand \$247,585
Number of Months Cash on Hand 15.4

Revenue

Grants	\$134,930
Fundraising	40,132
Contributions and Other Gifts	179,395
Total Public Support	354,457
Other Income	3,150
Total Income	\$357,607

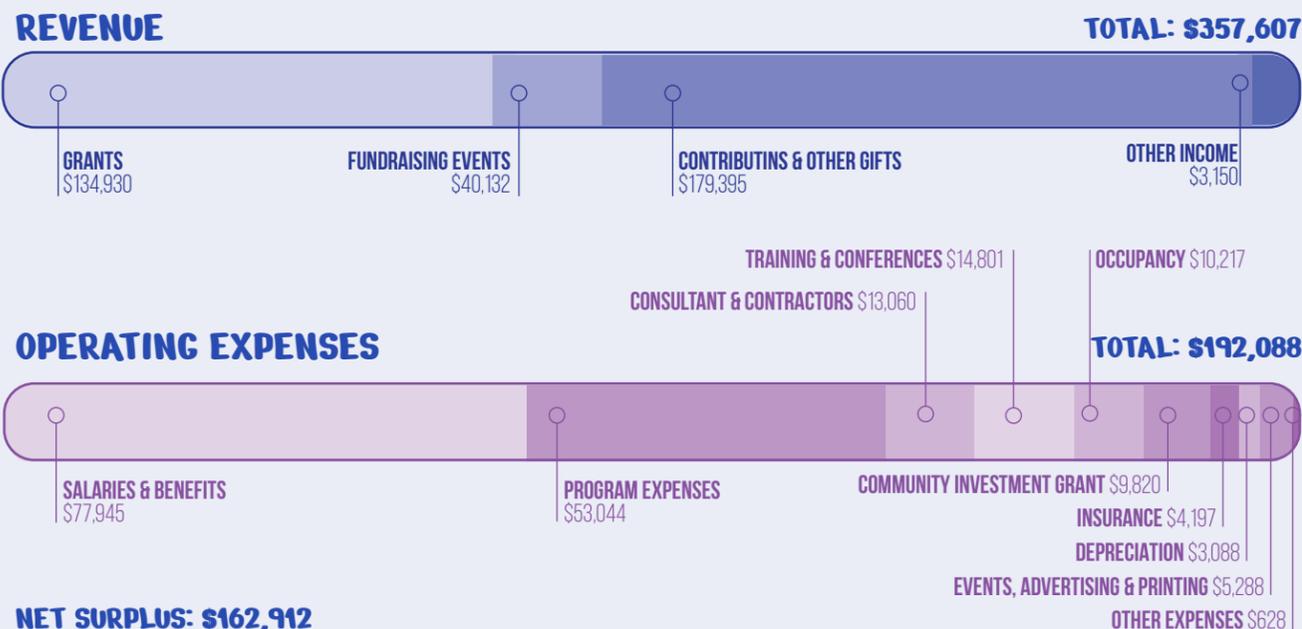
Operating Expenses

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 77,945
Program Expenses	53,044
Consultants and Contractors	13,060
Training and Conferences	14,801
Occupancy	10,217
Community Investment Grants	9,820
Insurance	4,197
Depreciation	3,088
Events, Advertising and Printing	5,288
Other Expenses	628
Total Operating Expenses	\$192,088

Net Surplus (Deficit)

\$165,519

OUR 2020 NUMBERS



OUR TEAM



SAYER JOHNSON (HE/HIM)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CO-FOUNDER



BETH GOMBOS (THEY/THEM)
HOUSING & OUTREACH
COORDINATOR



AMIYAH COLE (SHE/HER)
PEER ADVISOR



ELAINE BRUNE (THEY/THEM)
BOARD PRESIDENT



CJ (ALL PRONOUNS)
INTERIM FACILITATOR COORDINATOR



LINDA SCHWEITZER (SHE/HER)
BOOKKEEPER



ANNA BILYEU (SHE/HER)
LEAD GRANT WRITER



KURTIS SCHAPER (HE/HIM)
BOARD SECRETARY



TIM LUMPKINS (HE/HIM)
DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNICATIONS



LARRISSA MOOY (THEY/THEM)
BOARD MEMBER



**LADYASHLEY GREGORY
(SHE/THEY)**
BOARD MEMBER &
LEADER OF QTPOCSTL



**JAIME FILLINGAM
(SHE/HER)**
BOARD MEMBER



MIRA BELGRAVE (SHE/HER)
BOARD MEMBER

-  STAFF MEMBER
-  CONTRACTOR
-  BOARD MEMBER

CLOSING COMMENTS

Furthering public awareness and dialogue around unwarranted harassment, assault, violence, and loss of life experienced by the community is critical to our strategy. Equality and basic human rights mean applying the laws uniformly and consistently when it comes to acts of discrimination, civil rights violations, and violent crimes. The Transgender Community knows achieving equality starts with awareness, relationship building, liberation, along with educating and expanding the minds of others.

While a significant number of trans expansive humans live in the shadows of society, it is time to change this statistic. According to a 2015 Trans Equality survey, 84% of Americans claim to not know a trans person. By being visible and advocating for basic human rights for all, we can change society for the better. We recognize the Supreme Court win this past summer in regards to employment law. The recent change in the White House Administration should help further strides for equality. Unfortunately, the various state bills intended to block life-saving treatment of transgender youth, penalize doctors for providing gender-affirming care, and the passage of laws banning transgender athletes from participating in girls' and women's sports is an attack on the Transgender Community. Those who do not conform to social gender expectations are harmed. A free society cannot truly survive when such discrimination exists. Our community knows these concepts all too well, and we must collectively work together towards equality. We must ask our allies to show up for our community. We are all valid and worthy of love.

Only together will we find strength, share the wisdom of others, and gain acceptance.

Elaine Brune (They/Them)
Board Chair



VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Since MTUG's inception, our energetic and extremely talented volunteers have been the driving force of our successes. Our volunteers selflessly give their time and dollars, which has made us a successful organization. They are our most valued resource.

We are always looking for new volunteers to assist with the food pantry, facilitate support groups, deliver pantry items, and assist with social and fundraising events. So, once we get past the pandemic, do not be shy about volunteering your time. We promise you will have fun and find satisfaction in your work. If you are transgender or are an ally, you are encouraged to join our Facebook volunteer group MTUG Volunteers.



Join our MTUG Volunteers Group
facebook.com/groups/mtugvolunteers

SUPPORT OUR LIFE-SAVING WORK



Become a monthly donor
stlmetrotrans.org/#donate



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