



AT  
METRO  
CARING,  
WE...  
PURSUE  
EQUITY,  
CHAMPION  
THE  
MISSION,

RISE  
TOGETHER,  
FIND  
THE FUN,  
OWN IT,  
ARE  
BRAVE,  
THINK  
OUTSIDE  
THE BOX.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



**METRO CARING**

ENDING HUNGER AT ITS ROOT



If we were to summarize Metro Caring's 2019 fiscal year in just a word, we would vote for Transition or Foundation-Setting or Planning. You know that moment when you draw back a bow and squint before firing an arrow or you rev up a toy pull-back car? There's a charge of anticipation, preparation, and building energy and focus. Last year, Metro Caring vibrated with that same electrifying tension. As the organization's new leadership team wound up their second year, we moved into deeper partnership with our community, and we began aligning toward a vision for our next decade.

This past year, we focused heavily on shifting from doing this work *for* to doing it *with* the community. The frame for everything these days is letting go of our own power and sharing it with the community in which we work. I (Teva) completed the Listening Campaign and released a report on what we learned. And I (Doug) led the Board to new levels of ownership, equity work, and inclusion as we brought participants and former participants onto the Board and trained in Asset Based Community Development, equity, and community organizing principles. We are listening to what you have to say, encouraging and implementing community-led and -driven projects at every level.

This has led to new and exciting projects like the Cultural Cooking Clubs, our leadership development and Community Activation work (focused on policy and systems change), and innovative garden possibilities such as our new Freight Farm. We rolled out new core values, which can be seen on the previous page, and are aligning everything we do from hiring to performance management, and from Board and committee recruitment to every decision we make about operations and strategy. I (Teva) learned to make kombucha from community leader, Ria, at a Re-think Your Drink Class, and I (Doug) learned the value of bringing participants on the board, adding the perspective of their lived experience.

A diverse group of Metro Caring community members including staff, board members, volunteers, and participants engaged in an in-depth strategic planning process. Together, we looked to our past, present, and future to determine where we see Metro Caring going in the next ten years. We set a big, audacious goal which we articulate in a revised mission statement: to meet people's immediate needs for nutritious foods while building a movement to end hunger in Colorado. It was a vigorous and rewarding process, and I think we're just as pleased with the journey as the results.

We cannot accurately express how excited we feel about the chance to dream with our community about all the ways we can leverage our collective wisdom, creativity, and diverse skills to work, learn and create together. Together, we are launching our own moonshot: to end chronic hunger in our community by tackling the root causes. So, wind up your batteries, and pull back your bowstrings. We're going on this journey together!

See you soon!

Teva Sienicki,  
CEO

Doug Hock,  
Board President




# WE WORK WITH NOT FOR



**Last year we introduced the Metro Caring gardens – and this year they have grown exponentially.**

Families in the surrounding neighborhoods have adopted all 60 existing garden beds between Saint John's Cathedral, Saint Joseph's Humboldt garden, and the "Secret Garden" tucked away at 18th and Downing. So much more has happened too! The Morgridge Family Foundation donated a Freight Farm now located on Saint Joseph's Hospital property, and the Metro Caring greenhouse has been reformulated and organized and now functions as another space for special projects and gardening demos. Our staff gardener is also training enthusiastic garden participants to be leaders in both the gardens and in community activation – training and encouraging them to take the lead in community building events based in the garden spaces.



**"RED AND BLUE LED LIGHTS AND STATE-OF-THE-ART HYDROPONIC TECHNOLOGY MAKE IT FEEL LIKE YOU STEP INTO ANOTHER WORLD UPON ENTERING THE FACILITY." —9NEWS**



**This year we also launched an entirely new program we're calling Community Activation.**

This program is co-created with the community and aimed at addressing important issues while activating the strength and power of this diverse group of people. In February we hired a new staff person to lead this charge and we got right to work. In the first official meeting with community members, 17 individuals gathered with staff to get to know each other, discuss what Community Activation meant to them, discuss key issues they would like to work on, and how all of it connects to food equity. Everyone agreed that the top issues impacting our community right now are a lack of affordable housing, the high cost of health care and lack of a safety net, and the low minimum wage. One young woman, we'll call her Rachel, was in attendance that day and felt significantly impacted by the lack of health care and employment-related safety net. Rachel is an immigrant and was pregnant at the time, and one of her older sons was very ill with a brain tumor. While her ex-husband was trying to refuse her access to her older children, she was still spending hours a day traveling to visit her sick child. Because of this time and her pregnancy, she was fired from her job. The lack of protections for individuals like herself had her fired up and ready to make societal change.

Ever since that first meeting, the team has taken on family and medical leave, livable wages, better access to public transportation, and much more. We can't wait to see where this strategy takes us on the road to ending hunger at its root!



**"THE CLEAN ENVIRONMENT AND STRICT PLANT CONTROL ENSURES THAT PEOPLE CAN PICK A PLANT FROM ONE OF THE TOWERS AND EAT IT RIGHT AWAY." —LIFEONCAPHILL**

# FOOD IS OUR FRAME

**Each day, hundreds of people come through Metro Caring's doors to take part in the entry-point of our programs: the Fresh Foods Market.**

The Market is an opportunity for families living with food insecurity to get access to free, fresh, healthy foods, and a jumping off point for community members to get involved in our other programs. This year, in addition to keeping the Market stocked with fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and proteins, we also prioritized putting culturally relevant foods on the shelves. We surveyed market participants at the end of the year, and 75% agreed or strongly agreed that the market met their cultural food background or needs. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, Metro Caring was able to distribute food to approximately 75,000 individual community members.



In addition to the Fresh Foods Market, we are also proud of our Nutrition Education programs. In 2018, over 1,000 community members attended any of our variety of cooking classes. These include the weekly nutrition and healthy cooking classes, the Kidz in the Kitchen classes for families with children, and the diabetes management courses. For people like Ria, the combination of getting

healthy food from our Market and being in community with others in the kitchen is why she loves Metro Caring. Participants in these programs rave that they come out feeling more confident in their ability to cook and feed their families healthy meals. Ria says, "With the support of Metro Caring, I was able to get well again, and I want to pay it forward." She now volunteers and runs her own catering business!

Nutrition programs aim to level the playing field for individuals and families while simultaneously building a stronger community. According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), average health care costs for individuals with diabetes are nearly 2.5 times higher than those without the diet-related disease. In an attempt to combat the long-term effects of diabetes in our community, Metro Caring works with the local YMCA to provide Diabetes Prevention and Diabetes Self-Management courses that help families manage their health in a more practical and less expensive manner. In FY2019, Metro Caring hosted 65 participants in these courses. 100% of Diabetes Prevention participants lost at least 5% body weight and increased their physical activity to at least 150 minutes per week. At the same time, these participants build support systems within their small cohorts that far outlast their time in formal courses.

APPROXIMATELY  
**75,000**  
INDIVIDUALS  
RECEIVED  
FOOD FROM  
METRO  
CARING'S  
FRESH FOODS  
MARKET  
IN FY2019

OVER  
**1,000**  
ATTENDEES OF  
COOKING CLASSES  
(WEEKLY, KIDZ, &  
CULTURAL CLUBS)

 **432**  
OF WHOM  
WERE NEW  
ATTENDEES IN THE  
LAST YEAR

**65**  
PARTICIPANTS  
IN DIABETES  
PREVENTION OR  
SELF-MANAGEMENT

**100%**  
OF PARTICIPANTS LOST AT  
LEAST 5% BODY WEIGHT  
AND INCREASED WEEKLY  
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TO  
**150+**  
MINUTES  
PER WEEK



102  
SEEDS  
PARTICIPANTS  
25  
JOB  
PLACEMENTS  
\$15.56  
STARTING  
WAGE



21,035  
ID VOUCHERS



915  
HOUSEHOLDS  
RECEIVED UTILITY  
ASSISTANCE

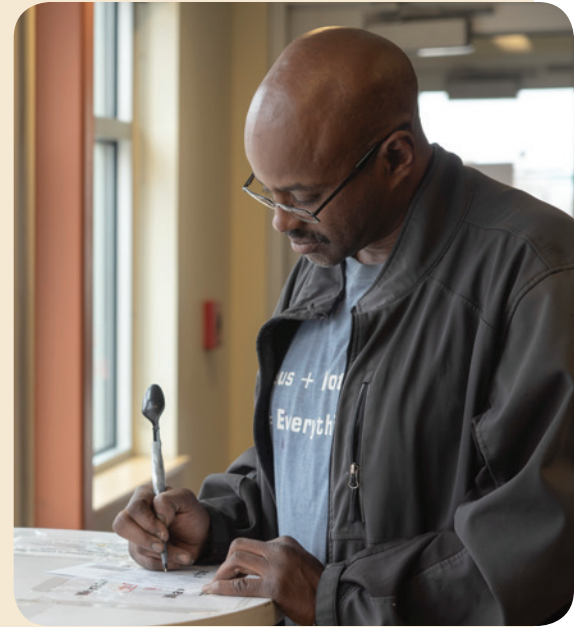


DABC FILED  
283 TAX RETURNS,  
RESULTING IN OVER  
\$300,000  
IN FEDERAL REFUNDS  
AND MORE THAN  
\$60,000  
IN STATE REFUNDS  
FROM COLORADO

## WE TARGET ROOT CAUSES

**Metro Caring's Wraparound programs are intended to help level the playing field for families living with low incomes.**

In FY2019, 102 individuals participated in the Seeds for Success job-training and employment-readiness program. Of the participants who were placed in jobs, the average starting wage was \$15.56. The organization also piloted a Seeds for Success Alumni group to support past participants after they have completed the program. The first meeting of this group attracted 35 individuals and sparked many ideas for how the program could evolve.



Throughout the year, the Wraparound team started to explore some new directions. While the Seeds program was successful at getting individuals into jobs, through evaluation and feedback from individuals like Lynn (her story is on the following page), we discovered that often these jobs were still not paying enough for participants to make ends meet. In the future you will see evidence of how Metro Caring has started to move this work in another direction.

In addition to Seeds, Metro Caring's community members are also welcomed to access resources like vouchers for state identification, free valet tax services, Denver Human Services representation, and (in FY2019) assistance paying for utility bills. In the last fiscal year, the organization distributed over 21,000 ID vouchers and utility assistance to 915 households. Our partnership with the Denver Asset Building Coalition (DABC) for tax prep services file 283 tax returns, resulting in over \$360,000 in state and federal refunds.



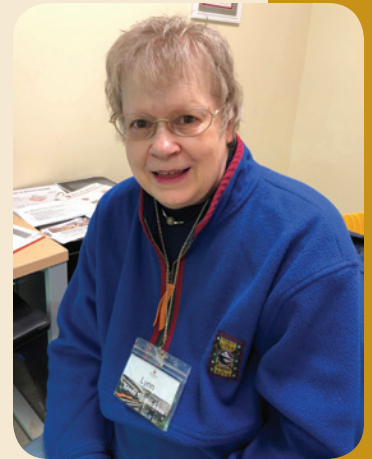
OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE THE BEST!

56,651 VOLUNTEER HOURS,  
EQUIVALENT TO 28 FULL-TIME  
EMPLOYEES, AND VALUED AT OVER  
\$1.4 MILLION



# IN HER OWN WORDS...

**Lynn is a long-time participant, former Seeds for Success member, and current volunteer. Here is what she has to say about Metro Caring.**



When I came to Metro Caring I had almost given up hope and was barely functional physically, emotionally or mentally. I desperately needed food to live and to fight Crohn's Disease. My life had been devastated and crushed by diseases including multiple cancers, long years of ongoing abuses, and multiple traumas. My entire system had shut down to the point where I could barely function – physically, emotionally, or mentally. All the normal sensory data we encounter going through our daily routines provided a total overload to my brain and emotions and to my body's ability to handle it. For years I lived in almost total isolation; not by choice but because I could not find a way out of it. With help from a government program, I got an online job designed for the disabled where I worked until my whole section of the Vendor's workforce were laid off. During and continuing after this job, a neighbor started cooking meth, filling my home with toxic fumes and causing my strength and health to deteriorate further, leaving me unable to recover enough to try for more work.

At Metro Caring, I found a spirit of caring, openness and freedom I desperately needed. Seeds for Success gave me opportunity to spend time in this atmosphere as well as learn emotional skills, get counseling and relearn how to interact with others in a small group at a non-threatening speed I could handle. Since I was not yet physically able to take on even a part-time job, I entered the Volunteer program to continue learning and building strength. I worked briefly in the Market, then at the Front Desk until I qualified to work as a Navigator. This direct interaction with others challenges and stimulates my heart, soul, and mind—functioning as a medium for healing and growth. Slowly, I have regained confidence, trust, hope and even dreams while losing the fears and overcoming hurdles that were blocking me.

There are still broken areas in my life preventing me from being fully in the workforce, but the new Seeds direction of creating and building connections with others gives me hope that I will find the information and sources needed to remove and solve the rest of my challenges.

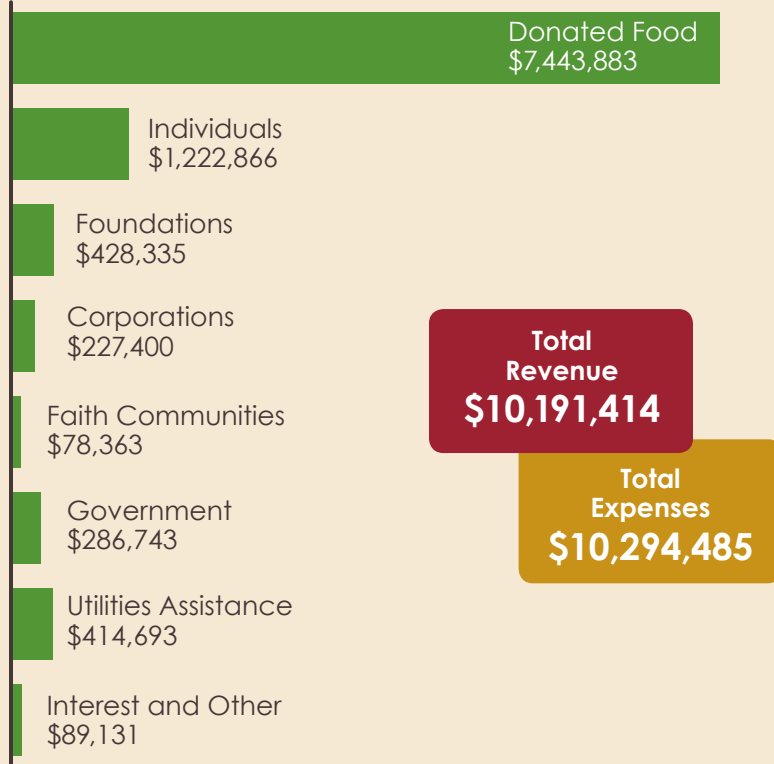
Brokenness comes in all kinds of forms and ways. Sometimes the solution is a simple connection or a few simple ones. Other times it may take some more basic levels of connection to first restore and build up the soul and the body of the broken individual so that they can begin to trust and to dream as well as interact and grow in relationships. Then, the person will be strong enough to not just get a job but to hold onto it and grow and develop into a fully contributing member of the community.

Dreams can be extremely simple first steps toward wholeness or they can be growth beyond normal functioning into extraordinary accomplishments. Good connections and interactions with others are the beginning of solving brokenness that is behind all the different forms of poverty and to creating wholeness and health in not just the individual, but also in the whole community.



# FINANCIALS

## INCOME



**Total Revenue**  
**\$10,191,414**

**Total Expenses**  
**\$10,294,485**

**TOTAL REVENUE: \$10,191,414**

## EXPENSES



**TOTAL EXPENSES: \$10,294,485**

**TOTAL NET ASSETS: \$5,520,728**

**DECREASE IN NET ASSETS: \$103,071**

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Chair

Doug Hock,  
Manager of Media Relations,  
Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc.

### Vice President

Maria Hannon,  
Director of Human Resources,  
Colorado Health Foundation

### Secretary

Nicole Lang,  
Senior Communications Specialist,  
Stantec

### Treasurer

Mike Porter,  
Retired, Nexus Corp.

Matthew Arentsen,  
Attorney,  
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

DC Coulon,  
Retired Youth Counselor,  
Denver Human Services

Iris Gardner,  
Career Director,  
Trilogy Education Services

Adeeb Khan,  
Director of Corporate Social  
Responsibility, TIAA

Shen Nagel, M.D.,  
Pediatrician,  
Pediatrics West P.C.

Jo Ann Pegues,  
Registered Dietitian, Retired

Deborah Price,  
Retired CFO,  
Thermoflex Corporation

John Shively,  
Founding Partner, Retired  
Faegre Baker Daniels

Teva Sienicki,  
CEO,  
Metro Caring

## ROOTS TO RISE SOCIETY

Roots to Rise Society members are a special group of friends that believe in Metro Caring's mission and wants to ensure our services are here to help individuals and families for years to come. It is a multi-year giving society that honors our most committed donors who have pledged an investment in Metro Caring for 5 years.

### \$25,000+

Deborah Price

### \$10,000-\$24,999

Mike and Cheryl Porter

### \$1,000-\$9,999

Anonymous  
Matt and Laura Arentsen  
Judith Ackerman and Jon Brause  
James W. Braun  
Sisi Dong Brinn and Mike Brinn  
Tom and Mary Brook  
Dominic Dezzutti  
James East and David Johns  
Don and Marianne Hamilton Maria, Bilal, and Bella Hannon Stephanie and Chris Hegland  
Paul Heitzenrater and John Farnam  
Erik Hicks  
Susie and Henry Higginbottom Doug and Jenny Hock  
Ernie and Alice Jablonski  
Janie and Ray Johnson  
Alex Katich  
Adeeb and Heidi Khan  
Al and Sheryll Kraizer  
Bob and Marty Longway  
Nicole Lang  
Ken and Kay Madsen  
Carloffa Mast  
Helen M. Matzick  
Todd Miller  
Steven Morrow and Denise Cope  
Donna Munip  
Shen Nagel  
Jo Ann and Sam Pegues  
Becca and Rob Reichenberger Way  
Shen and Chris George  
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Teva Sienicki and Adrienne Russman  
David Suppes  
Bob and Shirley Traettino  
John Shively  
Diana Terry  
Jamen Tyler  
Lisa Whitesides

## THE GREENHOUSE

The Greenhouse is a special group of Metro Caring supporters who have chosen to donate monthly. Throughout history, a greenhouse has long been a place of nourishment, sustainability and year-round growth. With the help of our monthly givers, we are able to nourish our neighborhoods with access to healthy food, offer programs to help individuals become self-sustaining and grow the number of families and individuals who are able to enjoy our services.

### Members

Anonymous  
Michael and Mikaila Barton-Gawryn  
Justin Batchelder  
Ria Bates  
Mark Bell  
Kathleen Blaede  
Sarah Boulden and Scott Kitchens  
Martha Burroughs  
Ann Cearley  
Savinay Chandrasekhar  
Christ Episcopal Church  
Susanna and Mark Donato  
First Avenue Presbyterian Church  
Hosanna Fortmeyer  
Sarah Grey  
Rachel Hanson  
Lynn Hawthorne and Andrew Loizeaux  
William Henderson  
Dick Hess  
Robert Hubbard  
Janet Hukill  
Sarah Hulslander  
Graham Ignizio, Ph.D.  
Stephanie Jensen  
Tom Keyse and Jen Courtney-Keyse  
Steven Kick and Steven Turner  
Samantha Kingston  
Mitch Lehn  
Kayla Mauriello  
Brady McNellis  
Alexander Merkle and May Merkle-Tan  
Linda Mitchell and Ken Neeper  
Esther Muzzillo  
Colin O'Brien  
Katy Parr  
Sam and Jo Ann Pegues  
Judith Peters  
Miriam Post  
Kurt and Susan Reisser  
Olga Reyes  
Laura Roth  
Megan Sawyer and Ian Hagan  
Bethany Siekmeier  
Kathryn Seitz  
Alyson Silkwood  
Julia Steiner  
Charles Strickland  
Anthony Suggs  
Debra Thomas  
Thomas Weathers  
Doug and Allison Wilson  
Cheryl Zimmerman

## FOUNDATION FUNDERS 2019

American Nurses Foundation  
Anschutz Foundation  
Babies Now! Foundation  
Bank of America Charitable Foundation  
Colorado Health Institute  
Community First Foundation – Brennan Family Fund  
Credit Union of Colorado  
Delta Dental of Colorado  
Domanica Foundation  
Gill Foundation  
Kaiser Permanente  
Community Health Fund  
Kettering Family Foundation  
Louis & Dorothy Meister Foundation  
McPherson Family Foundation  
Melvin and Elaine Wolf Foundation  
Mile High United Way  
Morgridge Family Foundation  
Onward! A Legacy Foundation  
Opus Foundation  
Pinkert Family Foundation  
Posner-Wallace Foundation  
Schlessman Family Foundation  
Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation  
The Colorado Health Foundation  
The Denver Foundation  
The Kenneth King Foundation  
The Kroger Company Foundation  
The Nord Family Foundation  
The Swinerton Foundation  
The Winter-Lehman Family Foundation  
The Women's Foundation of Colorado  
Tracy Family Foundation  
US Bank  
Viking Foundation of Lincoln  
Virginia W. Hill Foundation  
Wells Fargo Foundation



**Metro Caring**  
1100 E. 18th Ave.  
Denver, CO 80218  
303.860.7200  
[www.MetroCaring.org](http://www.MetroCaring.org)

