Troy Area United Ministries (TAUM)

Mission Statement:

In partnership with interfaith communities and others, we provide a safe and just space for those in need, offering meals, HIV/AIDS services, furniture, education, spiritual counseling and advocacy.
2020 Annual Report

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SNAPSHOT OF STATISTICS

Furniture Deliveries
Pieces of furniture delivered ................................................................. 2,584
Adults served ........................................................................................... 692
Children served ....................................................................................... 822
Total served ............................................................................................. 1,514

Damien Center Meals
Adults .......................................................................................................... 6,789
Seniors ....................................................................................................... 701
Children .................................................................................................... 450

Groceries
Pounds of food donated .......................................................................... 17,427

Volunteers
Hours .......................................................................................................... 1,662
People ........................................................................................................ 200+

Computers for Kids
Students Graduating .................................................................................. 10

Holiday Adopt-a-Family
Individuals served .................................................................................... 75
Children served ......................................................................................... 40

Crop Hunger Walk
Walkers ....................................................................................................... 45
Dollars Raised ............................................................................................ 11,233

Toiletries Drive
Items ........................................................................................................... 377+

Ronald J. Dukes Memorial MLK Scholarship
Scholarships Awarded ................................................................................ 4
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Rev. Donna Elia

Even as I reflect upon the angst of 2020, I am filled with gratitude for our supporters, volunteers, board and staff. We grieve the loss of so many lives. We are challenged by the inequities COVID 19 laid bare. We remember being part of 11,000 people who gathered in Troy to proclaim Black Lives Matter! We worked our way through the 2020 census and the importance of voting, including early voting in Troy.

In the midst of all of that, as a provider of essential services, Troy Area United Ministries had to pivot. Instead of served community meals, we bought thousands of to-go boxes to meet the needs of those suffering food insecurity. While before COVID, we could take entering the homes of furniture donors and recipients for granted, now we had to find ways to serve while minimizing contact to keep everyone safe. TAUM’s Computers for Kids Program-- socially distanced and with fewer students for reasons of safety-- was one of only 17 programs able to run a Summer Youth Employment Program. Ordinarily, that number would exceed 50.

We went virtual however we could, with board meetings, the CROP Hunger Walk and AIDS Walk, and staff meetings. We could not have done the work without our volunteers. Some volunteers stepped up because others were from vulnerable populations. It was a year in which people really worked together for the good of the community.

We owe a profound word of gratitude to the local foundations who especially gave generously during the pandemic. To the Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation, McCarthy Charities, Inc., Capital Region Community Foundation, Robison Family Foundation, Pioneer Bank Foundation, Stephen J. McKee Foundation and CDPHP, thank you more than we can say.

Thank you to our wise and committed Board of Directors, particularly Board President Rev. Dr. Janice Palm. Our staff also has my deep gratitude. Finally, we experienced two significant deaths, that of former board member Malinda Kerwin and office administrator Katy Culhane. Both of these women served diligently while battling cancer. We will never forget the contributions they made to TAUM’s life, and their memory is a blessing.

May your 2021 be healthy, blessed and filled with peace and justice.

Donna M. Elia
This year for many was a challenging year. Fortunately, the program was able to thrive through such a difficult time. I have grown to love and appreciate the furniture program even more this year. Every year this program proves how vital it is to many individuals’ and families’ happiness, hope and survival. COVID definitely had an impact. However, it was not able to stop us from putting smiles on children’s faces, reinforcing hope, or letting individuals know we are here and willing to help you survive, right when they may have been ready to give up. The odds were already against the families we serve, and in these days, the odds grew even greater. Yet, we stand strong like a tree planted by the water and able to assist.

As you would expect we slowed down for a bit, and the need continues to grow. We were very fortunate to be ahead of the curve with some amazing donors making big contributions; therefore, we did not really lose any ground in terms of what we were able to take in. Our donors donated 831 beds of various sizes, 356 dressers, 234 kitchen and dining room sets, 158 sofas of various sizes, along with an additional 1,005 pieces of furniture ranging from cribs, toddler beds, end tables, coffee tables, living room chairs, air conditioners, hutches, sheets and blankets, towels, pillows and microwaves. All of this has allowed us to provide for 822 children and 692 adult individuals.

When you have witnessed a mom drop to her knees in tears with her children wrapping their arms around mom and squeezing her ever so tightly, and seeing the wonder in their eyes, wondering why mom is crying. Is she being hurt again, is she sad again, are they not safe again, has someone died again? Mom and her children have lost a loved one during the pandemic, then had to relocate due to domestic violence, and now being alone with her children and not knowing what’s next to come. Then we jump out of the truck and open the sliding door, and mom is still on her knees crying but to see the children realize that mom is crying because hope has been restored and the needs of her family are about to be met is a beautiful feeling!

With a pandemic happening, we were still able to assist 1,514 people in need and take in 2,584 pieces of furniture. The program continues to grow, as we will be expanding with a new area to hold furniture. This will allow us to take in more, which will help more. Grateful for another year!
Goodbye 2020, Hello 2021!

I have the honor of working at the Troy Damien Center. What a year it has been. But we are still going strong.

On Monday evenings we serve dinner. We would like to thank the Latham Community Baptist Church, St. Henry’s Roman Catholic Parish, Masters No. 5 F&AM, Center Brunswick United Methodist Church, and St. Jude’s Roman Catholic Parish.

We also want to thank St. Francis Fellowship and the Fifth Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church. These churches serve food on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Tuesdays of each month.

Thanksgiving baskets are distributed by the Brunswick Presbyterian Church, providing for families who otherwise would not be able to have a nice holiday dinner together.

At Christmas time, Santa brings gifts for the children and families are adopted through TAUM’s Adopt a Family program. With the help of Brunswick Church, Catholic Central High, Class of ’72, and TAUM neighbors and friends, we serve families who come to the Troy Damien Center and others who are clients of the Alliance for Positive Health.

This year we served 7,940 meals to those with HIV/AIDS and other serious illness as well as others who are living below the poverty line in the Troy and Watervliet area. One the pandemic hit, the meals were served to go only. In addition, thanks to a partnership with both the Regional Food Bank and Hannaford, we gave away 17,427 pounds of food, the equivalent of 14,523 meals

As a long-time survivor, I am honored to be working with a great group of people here at the Troy Damien Center. I love meeting the new people who start coming here. They get a warm meal and become part of our family.

Meals served 2020:
Adults: 6,789
Seniors: 701
Children: 450

Total Meals: 7,940
This year, due to the COVID protocols on the Sage campus, I was asked to work virtually. This led to some different programming challenges. I send out a monthly Monday Mindfulness self-program through the Chomp newsletter. In the fall semester I was allowed on campus outdoors. I gave away de-stress and welcome bags and did 5 minute meditations with the students outside. I also had a Halloween candy give away where I met and checked in with students.

The rest of the contact has been virtual. I contact students through email and Sage social media and school outlets. I offered the viewing option of The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song, and discussion group. I promoted Douglas A. Blackmon, author of Slavery By Another Name speaking at a webinar and discussion. I have had a program, Tuesday Talks, running where students meet and talk about a different subject affecting them each week. Turnout has been low, but I am hopeful. The Troy campus Food Hub, which is a food pantry for students, has been getting food and supplies from TAUM. I am doing a meditation class and will be on the campus this month to pass out some semester-break fun bags and do a quick de-stress activity with them.

This has been an overview of this COVID driven year with the hope that next year is a return to full campus programming and activities for me.
In 2020, TAUM continued its annual summer Computers for Kids program. This program is designed to teach computer hardware, software, and professional development skills to teenage students from Rensselaer County. The program’s instructors were Linette Jones and David Kassover.

C4K was conducted on TAUM premises, but with appropriate modifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including a smaller than usual number of students, a shorter than usual program length, entry screening, wearing of masks, sanitizing frequently used surfaces, etc.

For many, if not all, of the students, this program is their first real job. Throughout the program, career development skills were introduced and practiced. The students were given an introduction to the workplace and professionalism, and then to productivity suite applications, such as document creation, presentation production, and spreadsheet creation and maintenance. The first activity was crafting individual resumes.

Each student designed, built, and presented a slide presentation on a topic of their choice. This also served as an introduction to accreditation, copyrights and other intellectual property rights and procedures.

The curriculum also covered website design, including basic HTML webpages and elements. Students then learned to style their webpages using CSS. These webpages included links, pictures, animations and more.

Also covered were a brief history of computing and discussion of computing hardware. While actual hands-on experience was necessarily not available, students were given enough information to identify basic components visually and discuss their functions and interactions. The program touched on digital communications and networking. Students learned to understand and design logic and electronic circuits, troubleshooting methods, and protecting themselves from potential cybersecurity attacks. TAUM board member Gary Nelson also delivered an excellent presentation on electric power safety.

The students also learned about safe practices on the web, and about malware and other pitfalls that might be encountered.

At the beginning of the program, students were given a pre-test assessment, to learn what knowledge they had coming in and a post-test assessment, to learn what knowledge had been gained. Out of a possible 240 correct answers, there were 79 correct on the pre-test (32.9%) and 93 correct on the post-test (38.8%). All 10 of the students who started the program completed it.
HOLIDAY ADOPT-A-FAMILY

In 2020, we adopted a record number of individuals and families- 75 individuals benefitted, including 40 children. Families received gifts and gift cards for the Holiday season, as well as food baskets for Thanksgiving. The response to the toiletries drive was also phenomenal, with Congregation Berith Sholom gathering most of the items. With such a great response, we were able to share with other agencies. For those who like numbers, the breakdown is below:

- 201 toothbrushes
- 49 toothpaste
- 3 dental kits
- 2 dental floss
- 44 soap/body wash
- 38 deodorant
- 26 feminine hygiene
- 3 tissues
- 3 body lotion
- 8 shampoo
- 3 dental kits

And 6 very large bags of personalized toiletries, including soap, shampoo, lotion, etc!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 Volunteers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>People:</strong></td>
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<td>200+</td>
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Thanks to one and all who gave of their time!
REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. EVENTS AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

In January 2020, we were able to gather in person at Bethel Baptist Church for the Sunday Interfaith Service. We were inspired by the combined choir under the leadership of Ms. Pamela Sharpe and by the words of the Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston, Senior Pastor of First Reformed Church in Albany, who preached on justice, resilience and prayer. The first woman and first person of color to serve at First Church, Albany it is said of her that “she has a backbone for righteousness.” With prophetic and spirited words, she invited all of us to have the same.

The MLK Breakfast, annually held at Franklin Terrace featured the remarkably accomplished Colonel Gail Benjamin Colvin. In addition to her own story of moving up the ranks, often the only woman in the room and the only Black woman, she told a poignant story of her father, an engineer, whose acceptance letter was ripped up when the employer saw he was a Black man. Unstoppable and grace-filled in her achievements, she motivated people young, old and in between to rise to their full potential.

In 2020, even in the midst of a pandemic, four scholarships were awarded to: MacKenzie Brown, Noelle Maloney, Derek Rosetti, and George Spencer. Congratulations and best wishes.

CROP HUNGER WALK

The CROP Hunger Walk was solo or virtual in 2020. While we missed the opportunity to gather at TAUM and walk together, walkers and sponsors stepped up with extraordinary generosity. Together, we raised over $10,000 for local, national and global hunger. Since TAUM has been organizing the Troy/ Rensselaer County CROP Hunger Walk, we have raised over $400,000!

Thanks to you, there is greater access to clean water, support for refugee resettlement and assistance to people throughout the world dealing with the pandemic. The following agencies received a share of the local funding to help alleviate food insecurity: Commission on Economic Opportunity, Doors of Hope, Hope 7 Community Center, Troy Damien Center, Unity House and the YWCA of the Greater Capital District.
OUR HISTORY
Troy Area United Ministries from 1986 to the Present

Troy Area United Ministries was organized in 1986 as a consolidation of the United Urban Ministry of Troy and the Troy Area Council of Churches, which joined together to work for “a more abundant life for the people of the area.”

The Rev. Seymour Flinn, the Rev. Don Pangburn and others had the vision to combine the social and pastoral ministries of the original organizations into one association.

The growth of TAUM includes becoming local organizer of the CROP Hunger Walk; forming a Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Committee to include race and community relations, scholarships for youth, forums and dialogues; meeting the dire needs of the poor in Rensselaer County by creating the Furniture Program, welcoming the Troy Damien Center and developing Computers for Kids.

Here, people of faith, justice and care, work together to build the spiritual and social well-being of people in the Troy area. Hundreds of volunteers serve in a year’s time. Our very active Board of Directors represents local congregations and the community at large. About 40 congregations, six denominations, and many individuals contribute.

In 2004, with the help of many supporters through a Capital Campaign, TAUM purchased and renovated its own building at 392 Second Street.

Through this move, TAUM strengthened its programs and became a community center. The Osgood Neighbors meet here regularly, and others use the building as well.

In celebration of TAUM’s 25th Anniversary, the Board of Directors ran a Capital Campaign to increase energy efficiency through much needed upgrades, and retired the mortgage.

In 2016, TAUM celebrated its 30th Anniversary. A legacy fund has been established to sustain TAUM’s vital programs well into the future. In 2021, TAUM will celebrate its 35th anniversary

On an annual basis, over 2,500 people are served by TAUM’s programs.
TAUM Board & Support Staff

Board of Directors

Rev. Dr. Janice Palm
President
Vanessa Crosby
Secretary
Brian Nelligan
Vice President
Sharon Bonk
Treasurer

2020 Board Members

Josh Anthony
Suzanne Anthony
David Benjamin

Susan Benjamin
Marge Davey
Rabbi Debora S. Gordon

Wade Lawrence, Esq
Joy Lowenthal
Gary Nelson

Rev. Donna M. Elia
Executive Director

2020 TAUM Support Staff

Katy Culhane
Office Administrator
In memoriam 1970-2021

David Kassover
Finance Administrator

Tyrell Pryor
Furniture Assistant

Jen Skelton
Custodian
WELCOME NEW TAUM STAFF

Sam Estabrooks
Office Administrator

Cameron Carter
Furniture Assistant

Lamont Garland
Furniture Assistant
Our Supporters

Legacy
The following people have committed to leaving a legacy to TAUM:

Jeanne Aurelia Terri and Walter Kersch
Don and Shirley Bowes Alexandra Lusak
Pat Carlson Rev. Dr. Bob Loesch
Vera Jean Carpenter * Gary and Dale Nelson
Don and Peggy Drew Rev. Janice Palm
Rev. Donna Elia Joan and Bob Rogers
Joe and Claudia Fleming Laura and Dan Rogers
Angelo and Lilajane Frascarelli Ken and Dorcas Rose
Chandlee Gill Joan Stry
Rev. Dr. Arthur Hagy, Jr. * Alice Trost
David Kassover Trudi Wybourne

* Deceased

Grants
Adopt-a-Pantry – St. Michael the Archangel Parish
AIDS Walk
Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS
City of Troy Emergency Solutions Grant
Community Foundation Elmira – Corning
Community Foundation for the Capital Region
Emergency Food and Shelter Program
Emma Willard School
First Reformed Church of Schenectady
Girl Friends, Inc. Albany
Hunger Prevention Nutrition Assistance Program
NYS Department of Family Assistance
NYS Solutions To End Homelessness Program
Regional Food Bank of NENY, Inc
Rensselaer County Stewart’s Foundation
The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region
The McCarthy Charities, Inc.
The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York
Robert and Naomi Ingalls Fund
The Robison Family Foundation
The Split Rock Charitable Foundation
Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation
U.S. Treasury
United Way of the Greater Capital Region
WGY Christmas Wish Campaign

In-Kind Donors
The following donated goods or services:

Susan Benjamin Theresa Kersh
Rev. Donna M. Elia Rev. Janice W. Palm
Our Supporters

Denominations
American Baptist Presbytery of Albany
Baha’i Faith of the Capital District Roman Catholic
Presbyterian Synod of the Northeast (USA)

Congregations
Anne H. Armao Division #5 LAOH Loudonville Presbyterian Church
Bethel Baptist Church Muslim Community of Troy
Christ Church United Methodist St. John's Episcopal Church
Christian Church St. John's Lutheran Men's Breakfast
Church of the Covenant U.M. St. Joseph's Church of Troy
Delmar Presbyterian Church St. Michael's Church
First Baptist Church of Hoosick Falls St. Paul's Church in Troy
First Reformed Church of Schenectady Stephentown Federated Church
First Reformed Church of Wynantskill The Rensselaer Newman Foundation
First United Presbyterian Church Troy United Methodist Church - E. Greenbush
Girls Organization of Fun & Service United Methodist Women - E. Greenbush
Greenbush Reformed Church United Methodist Women - W. Sand Lake

Corporations and Organizations
Amazon Pioneer Savings Bank
Avocado Split Rock Charitable Foundation
Fagan Associates The GE Foundation
Frontstream The Neary Group, LLC
GoodSearch The Robison Family Foundation
Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group The Troy Savings Bank Foundation
Leahy Funeral Home Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation
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Helen Aguliur  Grace M Bourdeau
Anne F. Ahlborn  Elsa K Boyce
David A Aikens  Charles W. Boylen
Kathy Amodeo  Sue Braymer
Eric Anderson  Judith Breselor
RoseMarie Andrie  Joyce Cust Brewer
Suzanne Anthony  Sue Ann Brown
Marc Applebaum  Bruce Brynolfson
Kenneth I. Applegate  Valerie J Buchakjian
Elizabeth O Armstrong  Linda B Buckley
Sister Kate Arseneau  Carol F. Bullard
Barbara Ash  Nancy J Burgin
Amy F Babcock  David R. Capobianco
Herbert P. Backus  Ingrid A Carlson
Sarah M. Backus  Helen Centanni
Rev. Paul E. Baker  Paul Centanni
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Mary E Blackmon  Elizabeth Conroy
Susan and Thomas Blandy  James J. Conroy
Marilyn R Blom  Marylou Conway
Ira Mark Bloom  Anne L Coonrad
Jean F & Abraham E Bolgatz  Kathleen J Corbett
Joanne Bonesteel  Carla Corina
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Cherrie Miller Goodecoff  
Lorenette Goodman  
Judi Goyer  
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Britney Well
Catherine S Welling
Richard Welty
Barbara G. Wheeler
Karin M White
Wakeem White
Michele Wilcox
Wendy J Willard
Edward J Woodhouse
Rev Ted (Charles E) Wright
Mia Wu
Trudi Wybourn
Kenneth Zalewski
Stephanie Zaloga
Lillian R. Zanella
Margaret R. Zettle
Save These Dates in 2021:

CROP Hunger Walk – Sunday, May 2nd (individual & virtual)
FEAST – TBD
AIDS Walk – Sunday, September 26th (tentative)
Festival of Music and Chocolate – TBD
Troy United Ministries Day at Ten Thousand Villages –
Sunday, November 22nd (tentative)

Many thanks for all your
kind acts of generosity.
Troy Area United Ministries
appreciates all of our supporters!

Go to smile.amazon.com and select TAUM as your charity.
Troy Area United Ministries will receive 0.5% of all purchases made through Amazon
Smile. Bookmark it!

Don’t forget to follow and “like” us on Facebook at
Troy Area United Ministries

You can find us on the web at TAUM.org
Your employer may match funds!
Currently, donations are eligible for a GE, Macy’s, or Bank of America match!