

Troy Area United Ministries



2023
Annual Report

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.

Troy Area United Ministries
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Troy, NY 12180

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2023 Annual Report



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SNAPSHOT OF STATISTICS

Furniture Deliveries

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Pieces of furniture received..... | 3,242 |
| Families served | 311 |
| Children served | 623 |
| Total served | 1,012 |

Damien Center Meals

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| Adults | 3,528 |
| Seniors | 918 |
| Children..... | ,097 |

Groceries

| | |
|------------------------------|--------|
| Pounds of food donated | 15,039 |
|------------------------------|--------|

Volunteers

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Hours..... | 2,250 |
| People | 200+ |

Tech for Teens

| | |
|--|----|
| Students Participating in Summer Program and Workshops | 25 |
|--|----|

Holiday Adopt-a-Family

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Individuals served..... | 50+ |
|-------------------------|-----|

Crop Hunger Walk

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Dollars Raised | \$8,900 |
|----------------------|---------|

Ronald J. Dukes Memorial MLK Scholarship

| | |
|--|---|
| Scholarships Awarded (1 Continuing Scholarship)..... | 5 |
|--|---|

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rev. Donna Elia



It was a year of emergence and change of pace. Some well-loved staff people retired- BJ Larouech after 10 years as Damien Center Coordinator and Bob DeFelice after a brief but meaningful time as Office Administrator. We added 2 dedicated staff people- Barbara Healey and Lynn Malatesta. Welcome Barbara and Lynn!

I am grateful to the Board of Directors for granting me a Civil Rights Sabbatical in the Summer. We had meaningful conversations with others visiting the Equal Justice Initiative, at Black-owned restaurants, in the Medgar and Myrlie Evers home, to name a few. The Dexter Avenue King Memorial Church in Montgomery and the King Center in Atlanta served as sobering reminders that some have given their lives for the hope that “justice will roll down like the waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”

Women like Mary McLeod Bethune were also instrumental in Civil Rights work, and her last will and testament included these dynamic words: “I leave you love. I leave you hope. I leave you the challenge of building confidence in one another. I leave you a thirst for education. I leave you respect for the uses of power. I leave you faith. I leave you racial dignity. I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow human beings. I leave you finally a responsibility to our young people.”

At TAUM, we are in an upswing. Tech for Teens is expanding to add an afterschool program; Troy Damien Center continues to serve and has also become a vital resource to food insecure students at the Sage Colleges. The Furniture Program gives priority to those experiencing homelessness and domestic violence and still serves a wide array of people lacking resources to meet basic needs. TAUM is a service provider, an advocate, a community center.

Finally, a word of thanks to outgoing President, Brian Nelligan who has served so ably and well for 6 years, 4 of them as president. Thank you also to Vice President Michael Nofal and to Treasurer Sharon Bonk. We have been blessed to have such extraordinary officers. Thank you, volunteers and donors. Your partnership makes the work possible.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna M. Elia". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Donna M. Elia

FURNITURE PROGRAM

Tyara Burnett, Director

It's that time of year again where I get to talk to you about all the great work I get to do at TAUM! This year once again has been nothing short of amazing.



Imagine driving by a fire and saying a prayer. Praying everyone was alright and praying they haven't lost too much. Then within days a piece of paper comes across your desk to assist a family re-establish from a fire. Then you pick up the phone to make contact with the family and you speak to a father, who is anxious to get his family settled asap because he doesn't want them to miss a beat in life. His wife just got a job she's been waiting months for and the children just got accepted to a charter school they were on the list waiting for over a year. This father never mentioned himself, only how he wanted his family to not feel the pain of what happened. He reminded me several times what was lost in the fire was nothing in comparison of what could be lost presently. My assistant and I were eager to help the family when we heard the father's passion for making sure his family was well. We were able to get them established within 7 days of the fire and the father followed up with a call of thanks. We are grateful for experiences like that remind us to value the opportunity to serve.

This year the program has taken in 3,242 pieces of furniture. We kept this out of the landfills and gave these pieces of furniture purpose in a new home. There were 332 twin beds, 303 full beds, 451 queen beds, 72 king beds, 48 bunk beds, 387 dressers, 178 sofas, 101 love seats, 17 sectionals, 31 recliners, 375 kitchen sets, 211 kitchen chairs, 221 coffee tables, 354 end tables, 78 flat screen TVs, 52 TV stands, 7 cribs/toddler beds/pack and plays, 24 microwaves, and numerous miscellaneous items: cutlery, pots, pans, dishes, comforters, sheets, suitcases, Christmas trees, etc. Adding up to over \$234,000. As a community we did this! Thank you to everyone who chose to donate instead of sending these items to the dump.

We successfully assisted 311 families, 1012 Individuals and 623 were children this year. Per the usual, the furniture went to families and individuals who were fleeing domestic violence, experiencing homelessness, getting a new start following incarceration, and overcoming financial difficulties.

Let's come together and do it again! Team work makes the dream work!



TROY DAMIEN CENTER

Barbara Healey, Program Coordinator



2023 has been a year of tremendous growth and change for Troy Damien Center. In April, we said goodbye to longtime Program Coordinator **B.J. LaRouech**, who began retirement after ten years of service to Troy Damien Center. B.J.'s cheerful smile and positive attitude are still missed by so many of Troy Damien Center's "regulars".

Last spring, after three long years of social distancing, we began opening the center for people to come inside to eat their meals (instead of "to-go" only). Although it seems like most people do still prefer to take their meals to go, we have several people who enjoy coming inside to enjoy their meal and the companionship of staff, volunteers, and other community members who have also come for a meal.



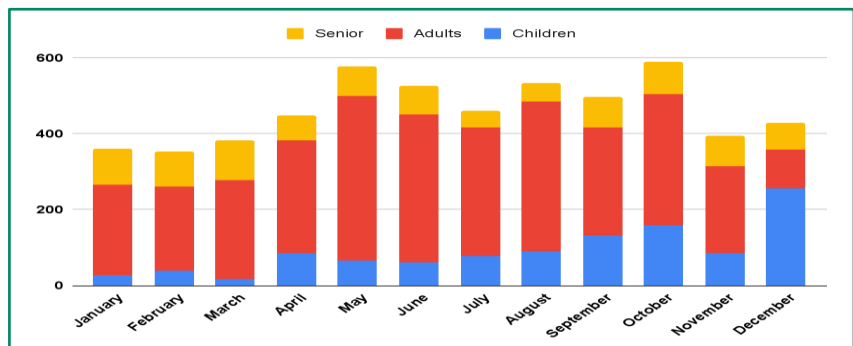
Last summer, we began utilizing the resources of the **Regional Food Bank** more frequently to supplement the bags of groceries that we distribute every Thursday. In addition to the perishable food items, we receive weekly from **Hannaford** in Lansingburgh and **Panera** in Latham, we have been able to supplement the groceries with free items from the **Regional Food Bank**, including fresh eggs, cheese and seasonal produce; meat; and shelf stable items such as peanut butter, pasta and sauce, applesauce and canned soups. Last fall, we began a partnership with **Sage College in Troy**. Every Friday, a member of the Sage community helps prepare and serve that day's lunch. When lunch has ended, Troy Damien Center donates any unused food to the Sage Food Pantry, where it gets distributed on Friday afternoons to students challenged with food

insecurity. This partnership has been a great resource for Troy Damien Center, and we have been told that the students greatly appreciate and look forward to the food we donate each week.

Over the course of the year, we received **15,039 pounds of donated food** from Hannaford in Lansingburgh. Although this represents over a 3,000-pound decrease in the amount of food we received in 2022, we were still able to serve **5,553 meals** and distribute **1,122 bags of groceries**. In 2023, we **increased the number of meals we served by almost 15%** as compared to 2022, and we averaged almost **107 meals served every week**.

This increase would not be possible without the generous support of so many local churches and volunteers. Thank you to **Latham Community Baptist Church, St. Henry's Roman Catholic Church, Masters No. 5 F&AM, Center Brunswick United Methodist Church, Church of the Covenant** and **St. Jude's Roman Catholic Parish** for providing dinners on Monday nights, and to **Fifth Avenue A.M.E Zion Church** and **Brunswick Presbyterian Church** for providing dinners on Tuesday nights. Thank you also to **Olivia Walton**, whose tireless work, dedication, and culinary expertise make Thursday and Friday lunches possible. Finally, thank you to all of the Board members and volunteers who are the backbone of Troy Damien Center. Whether they are picking up food at Hannaford and Panera on Thursday mornings, bagging groceries, slicing fruit, or distributing meals and groceries at the door, volunteers are vital to the success and growth of the program.

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Meals Served in | 2023 |
| Senior | 918 |
| Adults | 3538 |
| Children | 1097 |
| Total | 5553 |



CAMPUS MINISTRY

Darren Gundrum, Protestant Chaplain and Spiritual Advisor at Russell Sage College



As I look back on this past year and what we have done here at the Spirituality Center, our work has really been about partnerships and working with other groups. One of these partnerships is with the Sage Food Hub that offers options for food insecure students. This year though, they really wanted to expand to do more than just food and wanted to offer a job to a student to experience the whole process. TAUM partnered with them, and someone comes every Friday to work at TAUM. TAUM will hire a regular student soon. This is a real and healthy partnership with the food hub.

We also got together with the Wellness Center and with financial support from Thrive, we are offering High Intensity Workouts. With the fitness and recreation department, the Spirituality Center continues to offer guided meditation classes for students and staff. I have a solid working relationship with Residence Life and have done several things with them including mindfulness training for their RA'S and working to help feed students left behind on breaks like Thanksgiving. I continue to work with Student Life doing their commuter pie social, and we distribute our de-stress bags at the start of finals weeks. They are always a huge hit and really appreciated. We continue with our gratitude tree in the Spirituality Center. People post their gratitude and have contemplative time. We are always working to promote that space as a safe and open place for all religions to use.

I did ashes to go in an Ash Wednesday Service and have recently been going an hour a week to a table at the student center to discuss any spirituality questions students may have. We are planning a combined project or event with the Title 9 coordinator's office. We will also be partnering with First United in Troy for an Earth Day project.

Of course, I continue to offer office hours and time for anyone who wishes to talk, and I am planning a book club in the near future.

Peace, Darren Gundrum, Chaplain



TECH FOR TEENS

Jack Foster and Connor Bowden

The following report is for the Summer 2023 program, and we are also delighted to report that Tech for Teens is now a year-round program!

Troy Area United Ministries (TAUM) ran the five-week Tech for Teens course from July 3rd to August 4th this year. The mission of the course is to educate teens in



Rensselaer County about computer hardware, software, cyber security, and career development. The students worked 5 hours a day Monday through Friday.

The participants acquired skills in resume building, job interviewing, Microsoft Office Suite, Google Suite, internet safety, cybersecurity, Python coding, HTML website building, and breadboard circuit wiring. Kahoot games were used to help students review these topics to strengthen the student's confidence in these areas. Participants created resumes, research papers, websites, and computer applications in Python.

Additionally, new material was added to the program this year. This material covered topics in cyber security and electrical engineering. Students completed activities on the website "TryHackMe.com" learning how to protect themselves and their personal information from hackers and malicious software. On the first day of the program, students were assigned a pre-test. Students were expected to struggle with this initial test, as it was used to gauge which areas the instructors would focus on. On the last day of the program, students retook the test. Every student improved significantly the second time, and with the average score more than doubled. All students increased their initial knowledge base by at least 55%. This summer we had 2 returning students. When these students took the initial pre-test, which was half composed of material covered in the previous summer and half composed of new material added to the course this summer, the two returning students remembered 92% and 96% of the material from the previous course.

At the end of the program, the participants were able to take the laptops they had used throughout the program home. This was a well-deserved reward for all their hard work throughout the program.

HOLIDAY ADOPT-A-FAMILY

In partnership with our Troy Damien Center and with others in need who are not guests of the Center, we adopted over 50 people, mostly children but adults as well.

Thank you to Brunswick Presbyterian Church, and a few members of Catholic Central High School Class of '72. Both Brunswick and CCHS have faithfully supported our holiday adopt a family program for many years. Thanks to board members, staff and friends of TAUM who also participated. Children and adults received warm clothing, as well as toys and games, personal care items, household items and more! As always, art supplies are a big hit!

| 2023 Volunteers | |
|--|---------------|
| People: | Hours: |
| 131 | 2,080 |
| Thanks to one and all who gave of their time! | |

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. EVENTS AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



At last, we were returning to some semblance of in person gathering. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Interfaith Service was mostly online, but the Annual Community Breakfast was in person. The Rev. Dr. Charles U. Barber preached at the Interfaith Service, and with exceptional grace and dignity called all people to embrace the dream of Dr. King. Dr. Barber motivates others with his leading by example. There is no child of God outside of his loving embrace.

At the delicious breakfast at the Franklin Terrace Ballroom the next day, former scholarship recipient Angelo Domingo paid tribute to his mother and to all those who have gone before him, to inspire and guide him as a performance major at Malloy College in New York City. He spoke authentically about the struggles and joys of getting through high school and into college. He, too, leads by example and is a multi-year scholarship recipient.

In 2023, four new scholarships were awarded to the following students: Laney Broglio, Adrianna Denio, Justin Gilmore II, and Katie Waugh. A continuing scholarship was awarded to Angelo Domingo.



CROP HUNGER WALK

At last, the CROP Hunger Walk was in full walking mode, with the kick-off from TAUM, 392 Second St, on Sunday, May 7 at 1 p.m. The weather even cooperated!

While some chose the Golden Mile, most walked the 5K. We raised over \$8,900 to alleviate hunger locally, nationally and globally.

The following local organizations received a benefit:

Commission on Economic Opportunity,
Hope 7, Joseph's House and Shelter,
TAUM's 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 30 congregations, 3 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 celebrated its 35th anniversary.

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

TAUM

Board of Directors

Brian Nelligan
President

Michael Nofal
Vice President

David Graham
Secretary

Sharon Bonk
Treasurer

2023 Board Members

Loretta Branigan, Esq.
Marge Davey
Joseph Fleming

Karen Greene
Rev. James Ketcham
Joy Lowenthal

Gary Nelson
Valerie Perrins
Joan Rogers

Rev. Donna M. Elia
Executive Director

2022 TAUM Support Staff



David Kassover
Finance Administrator



Lynn Malatesta
Office Administrator



Cameron Carter
Custodian/
Furniture Assistant



James Davis
Furniture Assistant

Our Supporters

Legacy

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

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Jeanne Aureelia | Alexandra Lusak |
| Don & Shirley Bowes | Rev. Dr. Bob Loesch |
| Pat Carlson | Gary & Dale Nelson |
| Vera Jean Carpenter* | Rev. Dr. Janice Palm |
| Dr. Don & Peggy Drew | Joan & Bob Rogers |
| Rev. Donna Elia | Laura & Dan Rogers |
| Joe & Claudia Fleming | Ken & *Dorcas Rose |
| Angelo & Lilajane Frascarelli | Susan C. Smith |
| Chandlee Gill | Joan Stry |
| Rev. Dr. Arthur Hagy, Jr. * | Alice Trost |
| David Kassoover | Trudi Wybourne |
| Terry & Walter Kersch | *Deceased |

Grants & Foundations

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Broadway Cares/Equity Fight AIDs | Regional Food Bank of NENY, Inc. |
| Catskill Hudson Bank | Rensselaer County |
| City of Troy | Robison Family Foundation |
| EFSP | Stewart's Foundation |
| James H. Miller Foundation | The McCarthy Charities, Inc. |
| Stephen J. McKee Foundation | The Troy Savings Bank Foundation |
| NYS STEHP | Union Mission Fund |
| Presbyterian Women | United Way of the Greater Capital Region |
| WGY Christmas Wish Campaign | |

Corporations & Organizations

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Amazon | PayPal |
| Collar City Clay Guild | Pioneer Saving Bank |
| Curtis Electrolysis | TAP, Inc. |
| Cusack & Company | The Justice Center of Rens County, Inc |
| Exterior Consulting | Ten Thousand Villages |
| Fagan Associates | Trustco Bank |
| Mighty Clean | WPNT Construction |

In-Kind Donors

The following donated goods or services:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| All Star Wine and Spirits | Cornerstone Comm. Church-Lasingburgh | Paula Herbert |
| Dave Anthony | Marge Davey | Joyelle Jewelers |
| Bacchus Wood-Fired | Mary Anne Davis of Davistudio | Joy Lowenthal |
| Michael Barrett | Donna Elia | Lynn Malatesta |
| David & Susan Benjamin | 5 th Ave. AME Zion | Market Block Books |
| Sharon Bonk | Joe Fleming | Master #5 F&AM (Shriners) |
| Brunswick Presbyterin Church | Gipfel Coffee Company | Members of Catholic Central HS- |
| Café Euphoria | Elizabeth Gordon | Class of '72 |
| Center Brunswick UMC | David Graham | Gary Nelson |
| Tom Clement | Karen Greene | Michael Nofal |
| Church of the Covenant | Hannaford-Lansingburgh | Panera-Latham |
| Community Baptist Church-Latham | Barbara Healey | Pawling Avenue Florist |

In Kind Donors (cont'd)

Valerie Perrins
Pet Supplies Plus
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St. Henry's RC Church
St. Jude's RC Church
Technical Advice Professionals at
TAP, Inc.

Terry and Walter Kersch
Troy Savings Bank Music Hall
Rev. Merry Watters
Olivia M. Walton
Yankee Trails

Denominations

Baptist Campus Ministry
Catholic Charities Diocesan
NYS American

Presbyterian Synod of the Northeast
Presbyterian Women
Presbytery of Albany

Congregations

Anne H. Armao Division #5 LAOH
Bethel Baptist Church
Center Brunswick United Methodist
Christ Church United Methodist
Church of the Covenant U.M.
Delmar Presbyterian Church
First Baptist Church of Hoosick Falls
First Reformed Church of Schenectady
First Reformed Church of Wynantskill
First UM Church – E. Greenbush
First United Presbyterian Church – Troy
Greenbush Reformed Church
Hope United Methodist Church

Our Lady of Victory Church
St. John's Episcopal Church
St. Joseph's Church of Troy
St. Michael's Church Women's Guild
The Rensselaer Newman Foundation
The Women of St. Paul
United Church of Cohoes
United Methodist Women – E. Greenbush
United Methodist Women -- Johnsonville
United Methodist Women – W. Sand Lake
Victorious Life Christian Church
Waterford Wesleyan Church

Individuals

David A. Aikens
Julia Alsarraf & Nina Nichols
Eric Anderson
Virginia Anderson
Joshua Anthony
Elizabeth O. Armstrong
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Gladys Viall
Cornelia A. Vooyo
Elizabeth M. Walsh
Olivia M. Walton
Carolyn & Joseph Warden
Rev. Merry Watters
Jeanne Wein
Dawn Stuart Weinraub
Karin M. White
Susan J. Wong
Rev Ted & Sue Wright
Trudi Wybourn
P. Marla Yudin
Kenneth Zalewski
Christine M. Zeolola

Save These Dates in 2024

CROP Hunger Walk – Sunday, May 5

FEAST – Thursday, May 30

TAUM Day at Ten Thousand Villages – TBD

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

TAP who painted our façade!



RPI Fraternity Volunteers



Troy Damien Meals

