NEIGHBORHOOD RESILIENCE PROJECT

A Year *of* Resilience

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Letter from the CEO

For many, 2020 has been a year of extraordinary pain. We have seen a disease enter the world and ravage humanity, placing a disproportionate burden on those who are poor and in poor health. The economies of the world have also been brought to a standstill, leaving the bottom 25 percent of the workforce suffering layoffs at much higher rates than the top 25 percent. We have seen seemingly unimaginable civil unrest as people across this nation, and indeed around the world cry out in pain as they are confronted with the proposition that human life is not always valued the same.

For the Neighborhood Resilience Project 2020 has also been an extraordinary year. We relaunched and rebranded with a new name that better communicates the work we are privileged to do. We have acquired a new facility in the Hill District that serves as an extraordinary base of operations for our work which increases across the county and beyond. We have added more staff and new partnerships that enable us to better serve our dear region, and even have offered technical support to different groups around the country. Finally, we have launched new initiatives in response to the pandemic that have made a deep impact and have attracted national and international coverage.

The very fact that this growth came on the eve and in the midst of such a difficult year has, to me, strongly reinforced the calling we have to serve the least of these our brothers and sisters, especially at such an extraordinarily difficult time. Over the course of this year, I have seen, time and time again, amazing people step forward and join our movement as they courageously and selflessly offer themselves in service to their neighbors. I have also witnessed countless many join us in a relentless quest for justice and racial reconciliation in an effort to help heal our beloved nation. Finally, I have seen so many people give sacrificially so that those suffering the most among us would not be forgotten in this time of crisis.

To all of those who have come forward to serve and give in the spirit of love and hope, I thank you with all of my heart. There is no darkness that can smother the light you manifest, and you inspire us to continue serving daily in a sacrificial way. It is my prayer that through your generosity and support we may find a way forward together. A way that is defined by a peace and joy that is not of this world. Thank you so incredibly much for being so willing to make this journey of hope and resilience with us.

May God bless and keep you in all of your generosity and labors.

Sincerely,

Rev. Paul T. Abernathy CEO

2020 Impact

The Community Health Deputies

3,476
Therapeutic Interactions

14,352
Activities to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

1,142
COVID-19 Transmissions interrupted

218
Activities to Change Community Norms and help reduce the spread of COVID-19

Organizational Impact

20,705
Basic Need Items distributed

72,172
food items distributed

8,641
Clothing items distributed

22,100
Food bags provided by The Backpack Feeding Program

Emergency Relief

131
people supported

$8,000+
Provided to the community

Health Center

700+
Patients under care

1,800+
volunteer hours

Trauma Response Team

46
Trauma Response Deployments

Resilience When it's Needed Most

Sometimes the most impactful deployments are not the ones when we engage with the most community members. Sometimes it's when we providentially encounter exactly who needs to talk with us despite the obstacles and slim-odds.

Not long ago we deployed to a homicide West of the City. It was an extremely cold day and nobody was outside – not even any faces looking out the windows or front porches to inspect the people in orange vests carrying 2-way radios. After deciding to take another lap around the block and approached our TRV, we encountered a family member of the victim and her friend who was there for support. Despite the bitter cold, she was eager to talk with our team. We were able to normalize some of her trauma symptoms and reassure her against some of the stigmatizing assumptions she was making about her trauma symptoms. We handed her handouts with age-specific information on coping with trauma. We also referred her to several resources that could help with trauma and victim's compensation.

She and her friend received these gratefully and both of them indicated that they would be interested in therapy services. We exchanged contact information to discuss scheduling for trauma therapy and agreed on intervals when she would be comfortable with follow-up and check-in phone calls. Although she was still grieving and in-shock, she seemed relieved to have some helpful resources who could help her navigate the aftermath of her tragedy. It was a heavy conversation for our team as well, but we left feeling grateful that while we could not find anyone else in the neighborhood to talk to, The Lord lead us to this family member in her time of need.

Our Volunteers

Community Health Deputies

Ms. Bidhya Acharya
Ms. Alaa AlAwameh
Ms. Sarab Ali
Ms. Marwa Alkhafaji
Dr. Maureen Anderson
Ms. Carla Arnold
Ms. Ganga Baral
Mr. Dwayne Barker
Mr. Joe Barnhart
Ms. Ebony Baxter
Ms. Luz Becerra
Mr. Kabar Bhandari
Ms. Lok Mahat Bhandari
Ms. Gia Braafhart
Dr. Janis Brooks
Mr. John Burwell
Ms. Carlina Cabeza
Ms. Debbie Carr
Mr. Richard Carrington
Ms. Alejandra Castillo Smyntek
Mr. Nupur Charyalu
Ms. Misty Chybrzynski
Mr. Gary Coleman
Ms. Lucy Conte
Ms. Maria Cruz
Ms. Flo Demus
Ms. Jessica DeTorre
Ms. Amber Farr
Mr. Mastoorah Fazly
Ms .Gisele Fetterman
Ms. Christa Flemming
Ms. Rikell Ford
Ms. Precious Forson
Ms. Lindsay Fraser
Ms. Jamie Glasser
Ms. Reena Goodman
Ms. Jean Gressem
Mr. Til Gurung
Ms. Bimala Gurung
Mr. Donovan Hayden
Ms. Sydney Hayden
Ms. Rose Hilliard
Ms. Sabrina Hornstein
Ms. Asia Howze
Ms. Nairobi Howze
Mr. Chris Hsu
Ms. Kelly Irwin
Ms. Laurie Johnson-Wade
Ms. Amera Khalil
Ms. Tammie Krepp
Ms. Paula Kuzmierek
Ms. Claire Lindsey
Ms. Rhonda Lockett
Mr. Mike Logan
Ms. Keya Luzai
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Ms. Diane McCray
Mr. Lance V. McFadden
Mr. Pralad Mishra
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Ms. Donna Angelis
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Dr. George Bellios DMD
Mr. Simon Brown
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Ms. Grace Eddy
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Dr. Ursula Sangimino MD
Ms. Catherine Thompson
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Ms. Nneoma Uzoukwu
Ms. Laxmi Velankar
Ms. Justine Wang
Ms. Sam Wilcox
Ms. Ellie Yearsley
Ms. Christine Zaky
Dr. Irene Zervos MD
Mr. Elliott Zuercher

Volunteer Trauma Responders

Ms. Denise Abernathy
Ms. Tahel Axel
Sr. Janice Blados
Ms. Carla Coles
Dr. Staci Ford
Ms. Candace Hall
Mrs. Cheryl Hosken
Rev. Anais Hussian
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Dr. Mary Trujillo
Ms. Ami Weintraub

Conversations with a Community Health Deputy

LaRay Moton, 61, a community health deputy, introduced Father Paul to her neighbors in the Bedford Dwellings, a public housing complex: Lori Strothers, 56, and her daughter Jayla, 26. Then they learned that the vaccine was the reason for the priest's visit. “It's scary,” said the younger Ms. Strothers. “You're being filled with unknown things. There's not enough data."

“So how much data would you need to feel comfortable?” Father Paul asked. “I'm a visual person,” she explained. “I need to see it on paper.” He turned to his deputies. “Let's work to get spreadsheets to her,” he said.

At a store in the housing complex's basement, stocked with free surplus and secondhand goods, almost unseen amid the clutter was the store's founder and proprietor, Effie Williams. “I'm here to talk about wellness checks and Covid-19, " Ms. Moton said to Ms. Williams. “What are your thoughts about the vaccine?” Ms. Williams cocked a dubious eyebrow. Unruffled, Ms. Moton plowed ahead. A handful of shoppers drew close. Father Paul cranked it up a notch. “We want to make sure that the vaccine will get into our community and work for us,” he said. “I guarantee you it will be in other communities!"

“That's right!” “Don't leave us out!” “When is it starting?”

Ms. Moton practically shouted with glee: “Now!"

Ms. Williams suggested that Ms. Moton leave cards with the registry information in the store. And she decided to give the vaccine a try. “I can help you register, Miss Effie,” Ms. Moton offered. And then in a low voice, she asked, “Miss Effie, have you eaten today?” Ms. Williams looked down at her lap. Handing her a bag of Cheez-Its, Ms. Moton said, as she made a note: “Don't you worry. I'll get that taken care of right away."

Source: *Hoffman, J., 2020. 'I Won't Be Used as a Guinea Pig for White People'. [online] Nytimes.com. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/health/coronavirus-vaccine-trials-african-americans.html>.*

Why did you get involved in volunteering with the Trauma Response Team (TRT)?

“I got involved with the Trauma Response Team to be able to talk with someone who is going through a difficult time and allow them to grieve and start the healing process. The ability to give back to the community is a wonderful reward that I am proud to be a part of." ***– Regina H.***

“I became a Trauma Response Team Volunteer because I wanted to be able to support individuals dealing with a trauma not only as a professional but also in more of a personal level. It's a blessing to be able to help and support others." ***– “Dr. Staci”***

“I became involved with the Trauma Response Team because I always felt compelled to help or do something whenever a news story would appear on the news showing distraught people that were survivors of violence. The helplessness at times felt overwhelming. When the opportunity presented itself to be a part of the Trauma Response Team, I felt it to be a calling of what I could do to be an immediate help to my community that is in distress." ***– Roxanne P.***

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Our Mission

Rooted in the Gospel and teaching of the Orthodox Church, inspired by the Civil Rights Movement (American 1950s-1960s), the mission of the Neighborhood Resilience Project is to support the transformation of neighborhoods from Trauma Affected Communities to Resilient Healing and Healthy Communities through Trauma Informed Community Development.

Our Vision

To inspire a movement in which suffering people are raised up from the ashes of trauma in unconditional love to become empowered healers, community builders, and positive change makers

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