

# Project URGE

Urban Revitalization God Experienced



## 2019 Annual Report



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Jeff Telle - Secretary



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Garry Manuel - Board Chair/Founder



Cindy Mead

# Project URGE Board & Team Leaders

**Christina Ferguson McGill**

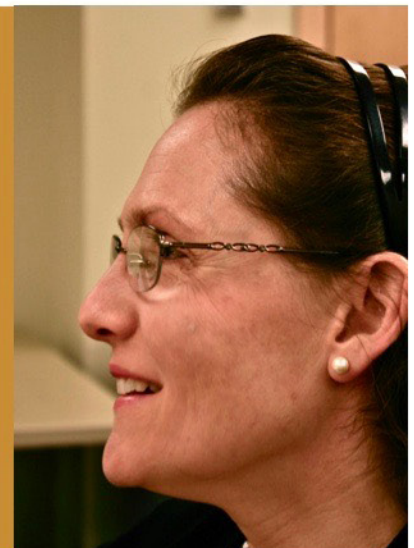
Diversity Cafe Facilitator



**Maria Wehrle - MINO**

Mothers In Need of Others  
Team Leader &

Administrative Assistant



## Mothers In Need of Others ministry

### 2019 Annual Report

This year has been one of learning and tremendous growth for our ministry! Our larger space in the Youth for Christ building has enabled us to take in even more donations, which we quickly distribute to the many programs we work with. We now distribute emergency supplies to over 74 agencies and churches and 259 case managers.

#### LEADERSHIP LAB

In May, MINO's Ministry Leader was accepted into a year-long Leadership Lab run by Focused Community Strategies. This course is designed to take an in-depth look at how to make programs more user-friendly and interactive.

Through a series of surveys and meetings with participants, sponsors, and volunteers, it was decided that MINO's distribution process should remain the same.

We are looking into ways to partner with agencies that already work with mothers to gauge interest in starting a multi-generational mom's group to help mothers to become more independent and self-sufficient.

#### TEEN MOM VOLUNTEERS

We have been working with the teen moms from the Parent Life program at Youth for Christ who have been volunteering with us. They're learning various job-related skills, like customer service, product handling and packing, and organizing and displaying the donations we distribute.

Our goal for this year is to teach our mom volunteers to sew the cloth bags we use to pack our feminine hygiene products. We have been meeting with several seamstresses in the area to discuss the possibility of teaching more volunteers how to sew not only the feminine hygiene bags, but also reusable shopping bags that we will put our logo on and sell to support the ministry.

On Sept. 4 we were thrilled to have had the opportunity to be on the Evan Dawson Show, WXXI 1370AM, to speak about the ministry and these "hands on" projects to advance our eco-friendly and relationship-building efforts in the community!





## GRANT

In October, we were awarded a grant from the Greater Rochester Health Foundation for their Healthy Habitats project providing funds to supply personal hygiene and cleaning products for the next year for the families of the agencies and churches the ministry works with!

We will be surveying the recipients of those products to determine usage and efficacy in creating a cleaner, healthier living environment. We will be anxiously awaiting the feedback from the survey.

One thing we know for sure, is that the grant has enabled us to meet the needs of even more individuals who have limited or no access to these products currently. And for that we are truly grateful to the Greater Rochester Health Foundation.



## SAVERS THRIFT STORE

Recently, I cultivated a relationship with the Community Donations Center at Savers Thrift Store. Savers does not accept baby items, but they have generously agreed to pass those items on to MINO. We clean, inspect, and recall check each item before making them available to the families from the agencies and churches we work with.

This drastically increased the quantity of baby gear (strollers, car seats, pack-n-plays, highchairs, etc.) and clothing that we have in stock on an on-going basis to offer our case managers for their clients.

The partnership between Savers and MINO (under the umbrella of Project URGE) has had an added benefit in that it has opened the door for more collaboration between other non-profits and the two organizations.

I was able to put MC Collaborative and the House of Mercy in touch with management from Savers. Now the furniture and warm clothing and coats that do not sell within several weeks on the floor get picked up at the store and are distributed to the homeless and newly housed through those agencies.

The Rochester Mission is now benefitting from the recycled clothing, coats, and winter-wear from Savers as well! Savers had a fashion show on Feb. 8 in their Webster location and invited MINO, the Open Door Mission, Dress for Success, and the House of Mercy to take part in the show, and the Coffee Connection will be catering the event!





Hats off to Savers for being true to their mission of caring for the environment and those in need in our area! It is a privilege to work for such a community conscious business! And this is only the beginning!

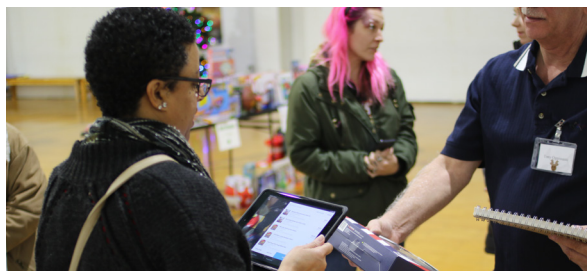
## THE CHRISTMAS STORE

Closing out the year, we held our annual Christmas Store on Dec. 6 and 7, modeled after the Pride for Parents program of Focused Community Strategies in Atlanta, Georgia.

Our two-day event consists of collecting brand new toys and gifts from various businesses, churches, schools, community service organizations, and private donors. We then sell them at deeply discounted prices to financially struggling parents to give them the opportunity to experience the pride and dignity in being able to “shop” for their own families.

The proceeds go to offsetting the expenses and were further used to purchase supplies for the ministry. In addition, we were able to bless three other organizations with their Christmas gift programs with the remaining toys and gifts.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our 80 volunteers who helped us out over the two days of the event and the following donors who not only gave to the Christmas Store, but who have supported us throughout the year with clothing, personal and feminine hygiene, and cleaning products.



### ***Christmas Store Supporters***

*Avon UMC — The UPS Store — RAMP (Rochester Area Music Project) — Edge Advertising Group — Webster Chamber Health Insurance Service — Omeros Clothes — Fairport UMC Henderson Ford — Steinmiller Insurance — Summerville Presbyterian Church — Neubert Financial Services, Inc. — CURVES Fitness Center — ESL (Chestnut branch) — ESL (Victor branch) — Mary Kay Cosmetics/Cindy Mead — Mary Kay Cosmetics/Deborah LaBello Pittsford Rotary Club — Williamson High School — St. John of Rochester Church Meadowbrook Townhome Association*

As 2019 comes to a close, we are grateful for those who support us in our efforts to serve our brothers and sisters in need in our community. We thank you and pray that you will be blessed with good health and happiness in this New Year.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Maria Wehrle*





## Diversity Café 2019 Annual Report

During 2019, Diversity Café — typically a group of 9 to 10 people — met for two hours on the third Saturday of each month. We have continued to discuss racism and its effects on our society and the church.

To this effort, we spent a few months of 2019 reading and discussing the “Roadmap to Reconciliation: Bringing Communities into Unity, Wholeness and Justice,” by Brenda Salter McNeil. We discussed the injustice we see in our lives and the communities around us and how we, as leaders of reconciliation, move to assist in bringing our communities to a place of justice and equity.



In November, Diversity Café partnered with Shane Wiegand, Tyler Owens and Adryanna Elmendorf to bring a dramatic presentation, discussion and history of redlining and segregation to Church of the Assumption in Fairport.

# DIVERSITY CAFÉ



Project  
URGE  
1 Favor St.  
Rochester  
14608

**URGE**  
Urban Revitalization God Experienced

Diversity  
Cafe Team  
Leader:  
Christina  
McGill

## WE MEET THE 3RD SATURDAY AT 11AM

Building relationships across racial lines. Through study materials and discussion questions our hopes and goals are being realized, which include: 1) becoming more informed about our racial history, 2) sharing what we have learned, 3) developing friendships, and 4) praying for one another and our community. Join Us!  
Contact: Garry at [ProUrge@aol.com](mailto:ProUrge@aol.com)

This event was embraced by that church community and left an impact on many of the attendees. Many inquired about opportunities to serve with Project URGE and its ministries, such as MINO and Diversity Café.

Thanks to the work of Garry Manuel, we have several other churches that have expressed interest in sharing this presentation with their community in 2020.

We also agreed, as a group, that this history of redlining and segregation in our local area is missing in many of our schools. Several members of Diversity Café have begun using their relationships and privilege to reach out to administrators to push for this information to be incorporated into the local history lessons in our local schools.

Diversity Café will continue to have discussions and become more informed about our racial history and the present-day effects of slavery, Jim Crow law, segregation, and mass incarceration of American descendants of the enslaved. We will continue to develop relationships and pray for our community and each other.

Throughout the year we have had several people express interest in being a part of the group and possibly willing to be part of a second group. While we were not able to start a second group of Diversity Café in 2019, we are continuing to seek new members for Diversity Café, and a hopefully a leader for a second group in 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Ferguson McGill





## Networking & Training

### 2019 Annual Report

Since the inception of Project URGE in 2002, we have hosted community meetings and invited notable urban practitioners to lead workshops in an effort to strengthen efforts by organizations, non-profits and churches in regard to impacting poverty and racism.

In 2019 we hosted the *Reimagine Charity* seminar, facilitated by Donell Woodson from the Lupton Group/FCS Ministries in Atlanta, Georgia. This was a logical segue from the results of our 2016 seminar based on community problem solving, labeled *Building Unity from Chaos*.

The follow-up from that seminar had many involved in utilizing FCS Ministry's course, Seeking Shalom. We then organized the Beyond Food and Clothes seminar in 2017, which took place at Foodlink. We were also grateful for additional support of this year's workshop by 441 Ministries, Asbury First United Methodist Church, New City Fellowship and Youth for Christ.

The *Reimagine Charity* event focused on rethinking the way we do charity. In fact, both Project URGE and 441 Ministries have been touting many of the methods of community development that FCS Ministries and Bob Lupton have been implementing and introducing to faith-based organizations across the country for over a decade.

Project URGE's first introduction to Robert Lupton goes back to 2006, when we gave out books at one of our collaborative meetings, to propel the reasons that different approaches to community development were needed, because current methods were clearly not bringing results nor giving dignity in the process. In fact, this is where the Christmas Store idea was born and adapted for our community.

Some of the concepts introduced expressed the importance of proximity and diversity to allow for mutually transforming relationships, as well as utilizing the gifts of those living in neighborhoods to participate in the planning and flourishing of their neighborhoods. There was also an emphasis on finding sustainable strategies that can remove economic barriers, systemic obstacles and promote lasting change, rather than many programs that are ineffectual and only serve as another "program."



Sponsored by Project URGE, Inc. & Co-Sponsors: 441 Ministries, Asbury First UMC, Youth for Christ, New City Fellowship

Fifty people attended the workshop, with the follow up survey indicating the majority of those attending found the workshop valuable. Many were interested in meeting for discussion of relative topics in the coming year that could serve to enhance existing efforts toward a real impact on poverty and community development.

Respectfully submitted,  
Garry Manuel



## Volunteer Coordination 2019 Annual Report

Once again, Williamson High School came to volunteer with Project URGE/MINO, Cameron Community Ministries, Foodlink and Community Lutheran Ministry.

This was the 14<sup>th</sup> year that the school has served non-profits that are committed to serving those in need to the community. Their activities have included sorting food, serving lunches, painting, cleaning, organizing supplies and helping to set up the Christmas Store.

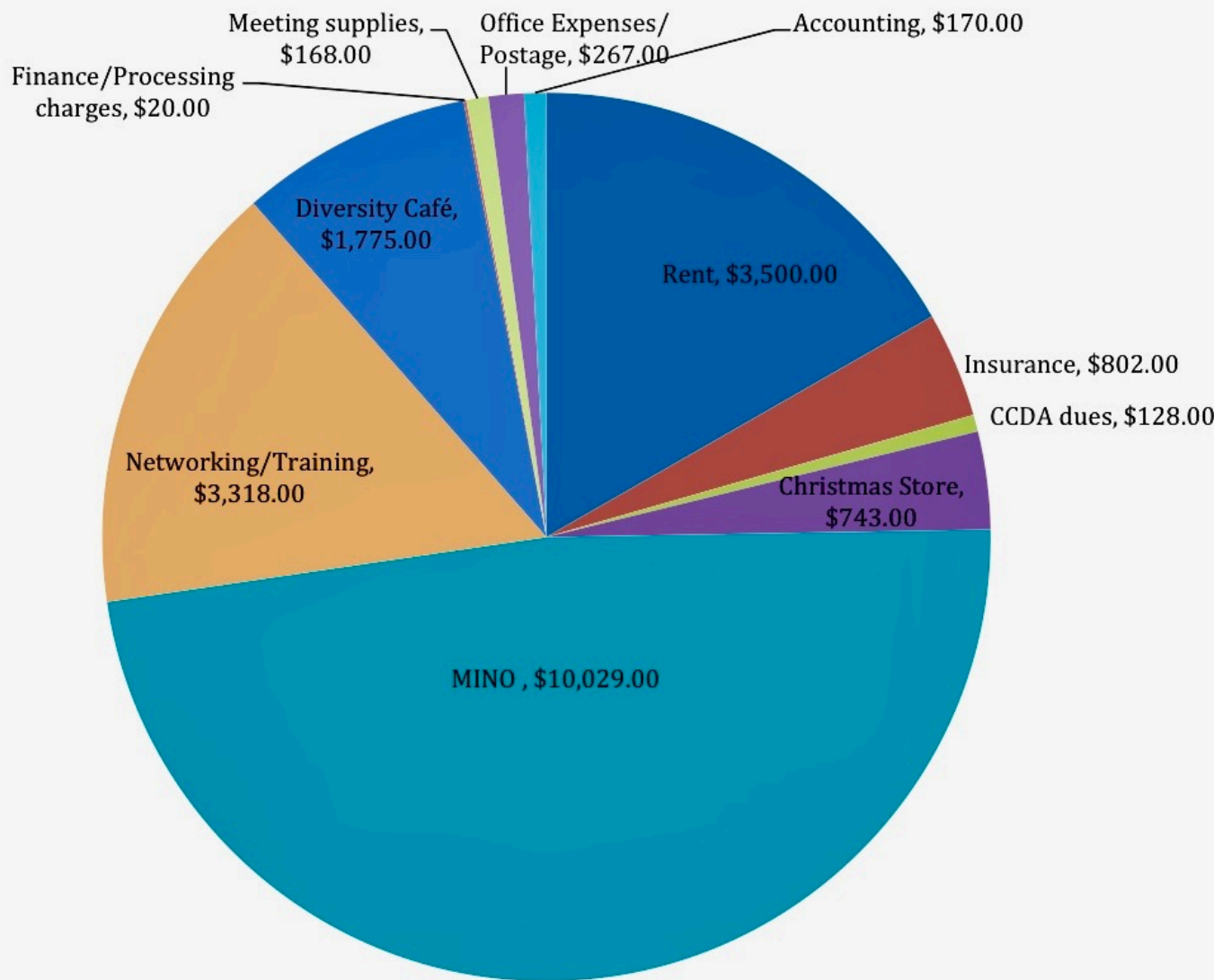
When people email or phone in search of ways they might serve the community, we not only look to opportunities within Project URGE, but also with other organizations and ministries in the city of Rochester that we have worked with over the years. Church groups, schools and individuals have utilized this service over the past 15 years.

Respectfully submitted,  
Garry Manuel





## 2019 Expenses





We are extremely grateful to the churches, individuals and businesses that have financially supported our efforts in Project URGE, Inc.; many who have been alongside us for a very long time! Please know what an encouragement that is to us. God has set us on a course to do our part to alleviate poverty and racism. We thank you for partnering with us!

Don Baumfalk — Greg Beck — Kingsley Beck — Tim & Susan Beck — Karla Cardella,  
Charlie & Barb Castilano — Linda Devey — Glenn & Rebecca Fadner — Michael Gardner,  
Elizabeth Gonzalez — Linda Hagarty — Karen Hartnett — Eleanor Harquist  
Deborah Labello — Amy Marie Lord — Roy & Kris Macumber — Garry Manuel  
John McNeill — Jim Merrill — Meaghan Milliman — Kathy Morton — Tracy O'Hara  
Carolyn Patterson — Elaine Rose — Bonnie Slack — Katherine Suddaby — Jeff Telle  
Ron & Catherine Tocci — Thomas & Mary Trabert — John & Maria Wehrle

A Horse with Wings — Finger Lakes Dental Care of W. Henrietta  
Foundation of the Rotary Club (Pittsford) — Rochester Area Music Project (RAMP)

Asbury First United Methodist Church — Church of the Assumption  
Church of St. John of Rochester — Community of the Savior  
Fairport United Methodist Church — GVD Lay Servant Ministry  
Kingdom Bound Ministries — New City Fellowship Beechwood/441 Ministries  
Irondequoit United Church of Christ — Summerville Presbyterian Church

*Special thanks to:*  
*Andrew Soucier — Soucier Designs (Website)*  
*Julia Garver — Merzbach & Solomon — P.C.*  
*Melody Burri — Melody Burri Media*

We also must give a shout out to the many  
volunteers we have working with us, along with  
Williamson High School.

