

# BOLD HOPE

2019-2020

Annual Report  
to the Community



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019–2020

## Executive Committee

**Natasha Plooster, President** Chief Operating Officer, Bridgepoint Investment Banking  
**Alynn Sampson, President Elect** Community Impact Director, Food Bank of Lincoln  
**Dave Smith, Immediate Past President** Technology Manager, Allstate Insurance Co.  
**Kiley Wiechman, CPA, Treasurer** Accountant, HBE Becker Meyer Love LLP

## Directors

**Rick Costello** VP, Strategic Customers, SAP America  
**Brad Crain** CFO, Union Bank & Trust  
**Reina Day** Realtor, RE/MAX Concepts  
**Eric Dinger** President, Powderhook  
**Greg Ernst** Senior Vice President, UBS Financial  
**Greg Frayser** Attorney, Cline Williams Wright Johnson & Oldfather, LLP  
**Ameeta Martin, MD** Lincoln Pediatric Cardiology Clinic, Catholic Health Initiatives  
**Tim McEwen, CFP** RBC Wealth Management  
**Brad Meyer** CEO, Bluestem Health  
**Josh Midgett** President, Integrated Life Choices  
**Lincoln Zehr** CEO, Hampton Enterprises Inc.

Special thanks to retiring board members:

**Fr. Kenneth Borowiak, Officer Chassidy Jackson-Goodwin, & Roli Saraf**

## A WORD FROM THE MTKO BOARD PRESIDENT

Serving as President of Matt Talbot’s Board of Directors during an unprecedented time in history has been a humbling and extremely invigorating experience. I have been fortunate to experience firsthand the tireless dedication that our staff has for our clients, the love that is poured out on every aching soul that comes to our doors and the multitude of volunteers that put aside their own priorities to selflessly serve others. At a time when the world seems so dark, Matt Talbot continues to be a light, a glimmer of hope for so many in need. My goal as President is to provide the organization the support needed to carry out our mission and to encourage forward thinking in our continued work to end hunger and homelessness. We are blessed to live and work in a community that is so supportive of our mission and the great work being carried out at Matt Talbot. I’m looking forward to what this great organization will accomplish next!



Natasha Plooster

# A PLACE FOR ALL

This year and every year, Matt Talbot is a place for ALL.

As I sit down to write a message for the annual report I find myself in a quandary. Typically this annual message is full of positivity and thanks. Today those sentiments are included but the state of things is making it a bit more challenging. Race relations are poor in our country and community. We’re in the middle of a pandemic and there is great fear and uncertainty surrounding that. Even the most optimistic of souls can feel a bit discouraged. But this is something, like racism, we must fight against.



Susanne Blue

Matt Talbot has always been a place where hope is bold and compassion is at the forefront. **ALL people are welcome no matter their circumstance.** We are an inclusive community where diversity is embraced and people are treated with respect and dignity. **ALL PEOPLE.** The fact that as a society we are still struggling with skin color and orientation is baffling. We’ve advanced in so many areas but today we are very aware that the progress made has not been enough and has not been sustained.

What can we do to remedy this? We can listen, we can learn, and we can keep our minds and hearts open, especially to people who are different than us. These types of practices are what has helped Matt Talbot thrive all these years. **Our differences make us stronger, more thoughtful and just plain better.**

In the past year we have continued to grow to meet the needs of Lincoln’s working poor and homeless. We are expanding our housing and substance use programs. We continue to innovate to address affordable housing, hunger relief and outreach assistance. We’ve had to pivot to provide the same comprehensive services during the pandemic. It has required a tremendous amount of research, thought, patience, and sacrifice. I commend our staff and volunteers for making it happen. We accomplished all this through our diverse ideas and perspectives. We came together around a common cause. We listened and learned from each other.

When I reflect back on this year I want to remember that the hungry were fed, the homeless provided shelter, those who wanted recovery were provided the tools and those who wanted to serve others were provided an opportunity. **EVERYONE** was a part of the good that is Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach. Because of our differences we have excelled. We’ve been blessed. Thanks to our wonderful board of directors, staff, volunteers, and donors who have contributed to that goodness. **YOU** make Matt Talbot a place where **EVERYONE** can feel like they belong.

Please enjoy the content of this report. It highlights our efforts to defeat hunger and homelessness and restore hope!

Sincerely,

*Susanne Blue*

Susanne Blue, CMSW  
Executive Director



# RELIEVING HUNGER

Everyone is welcome to walk through our open doors, and without judgment, get a hot meal two times a day, every day. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, meal service was uninterrupted with volunteers and staff providing boxed "to-go" meals for guests.

For more than 27 years, thousands of compassionate volunteers have come to our community kitchen to provide, prepare, and serve nutritious meals to people experiencing homelessness or near homelessness in Lincoln. We also have volunteers who help with many of our outreach programs. These volunteers are tireless in their efforts to provide nourishment for body and spirit.

**291**

average meals served daily

**106,094**

meals provided in 2019

**8,841**

average meals served monthly

**\$217,852**

worth of food donations for the hunger relief program

**33,588**

hours provided by volunteers

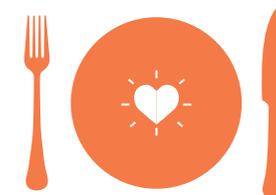
**\$561,878**

worth of volunteer labor

**12,449**

instances of volunteerism

Matt Talbot received a "Nourish Our Community" grant from Conagra Brands Foundation in support of our twice-daily congregate meals, food pantries, and cooking and gardening classes for children and adults. Matt Talbot was one of only 23 nonprofits throughout the country selected for funding!

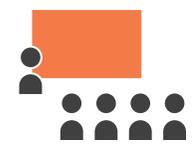


# PROVIDING OUTREACH

Matt Talbot is much more than food. In addition to being a safe place of refuge, Matt Talbot works to **connect people to resources that take care of the whole person** — providing beyond basic needs to embolden people to have hope.

We serve a large number of people through hunger relief and basic outreach services. But the majority of our staff efforts serve fewer people with more comprehensive services such as **housing, case management, outreach, life skills training and tenant education, and nutrition education** — all aimed at the goal of preventing homelessness.

*"Matt Talbot has been there for us during hard times and we always feel welcomed and loved. The staff knows just what to say to give me and my kids the encouragement and hope we need. They help in more ways than they know — because that's how it goes when you are doing things to genuinely help people."*



**74%**  
of students graduated

**24**

Life Skills classes facilitated

**3,987**  
unduplicated clients served

**370**

guests received vital ID assistance (i.e. driver's license, birth certificate)



**39,303**

total outreach & homeless prevention services provided to guests

**580**  
haircuts



**141**

instances of street outreach provided

**5,265**

pieces of mail distributed to homeless guests



**3,502**  
homeless guest shower instances



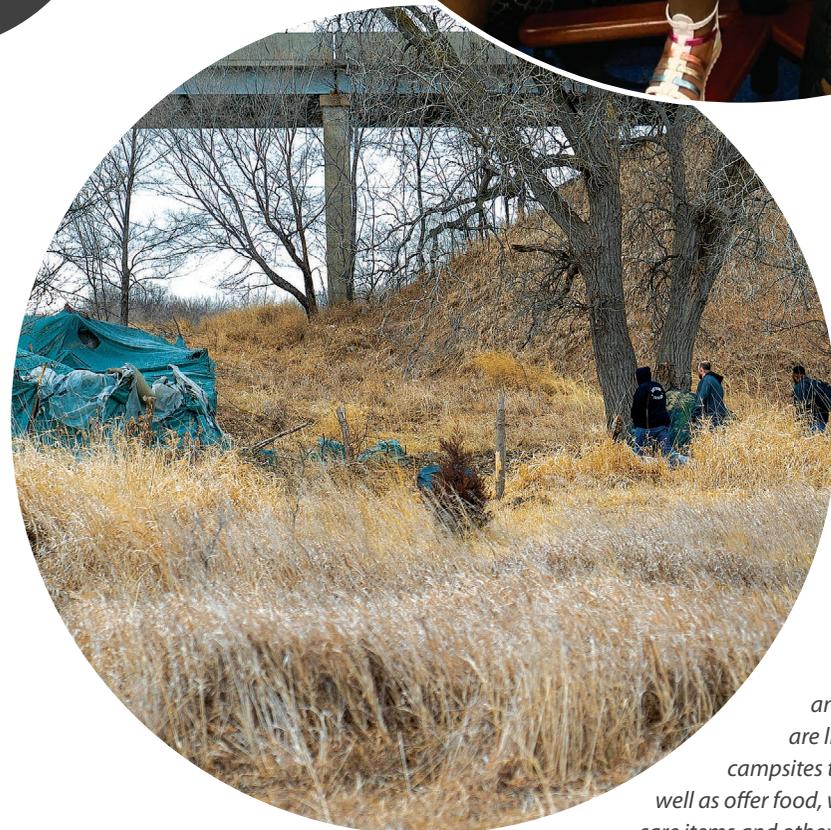
**1,405**

homeless guest laundry instances



**4,600**

guest phone calls



*Staff reaches out to individuals and families who are living outside in campsites to build trust as well as offer food, water, personal care items and other basic supplies.*

# ADDRESSING ADDICTION

← **The Transitions + CARE Program** (Counseling, Advocacy, Referral, Evaluation/ Education) provides substance use evaluations, counseling, outreach, and education to the homeless at no cost. These services, combined with transitional housing, give individuals the opportunity to address housing, treatment, and long-term recovery needs which brings us closer to our vision of defeating homelessness.



**5,805** total instances of assistance through the CARE Program

**28** individuals served through transitional housing and intensive case management

**401** unduplicated clients served through the care program (up from 241 in 2018)

**127** individuals who attended alcohol education classes

**50** individuals who attended pre-treatment groups

**191** substance use evaluations provided free-of-charge

## KARRIE'S PATH HOME

Karrie turned to drugs and alcohol after finding the strength to leave an unhealthy relationship. In the familiar spiral of addiction she lost her home, her job and her children. After spending two years living in her car or with friends, she faced the legal, physical and emotional consequences of her substance use.

*"I was trapped in a dark place. And I was so tired. I knew I needed help and I wanted to make a change."*



Karrie received a free substance use evaluation at Matt Talbot and was referred on for residential treatment. Karrie didn't have anywhere to go after she finished treatment so she completed an application for Matt Talbot's Transitional Housing Program and prayed she would get in.

The timing was right and a bed was available in the 5-bedroom sober living house for women. While in the program, women receive intensive case management and substance abuse counseling focused on helping residents maintain sobriety, access services, secure employment, and become productive members of the community.

For Karrie the house was a safe place to be while she got back on her feet. She stayed in the Transitions Program for a year and recently moved into her new apartment. She is working and spending time with her children.

*"One of the most important things for me was the structure the program provided through the house rules and regular contact with your counselor. Without that structure, I don't know if I'd be in such a good place right now."*

# DEFEATING HOMELESSNESS

Our programs used evidence-based best practices for securing safe and stable housing for the homeless.

← **The COVID Rapid Rehousing Project** provides safe housing for individuals and families in the Lincoln community experiencing homelessness during the pandemic. Households are first provided crisis shelter through hotel vouchers and then are bridged to permanent housing through a Rapid Rehousing model. More than 40 households will be assisted through this project.

← **First HOPE** uses a proven model called Housing First to house individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness and surround them with the support they need. This program is currently serving 15 individuals and 4 families. Matt Talbot recently received funding to expand this program to serve an additional 8 individuals and 2 families.

← **The Landlord Liaison Project** forms partnerships between property managers, consumers, and case managers to address the critical need of finding quality affordable housing for the homeless in Lincoln.

← **Transitional Housing** provides a sober living environment for homeless men and women who have experienced significant drug and alcohol problems and are serious about becoming and staying active in their recovery. Residents stay up to two years and receive intensive case management and counseling from CARE staff to prevent relapse, become employed, increase self-sufficiency, and realize the goal of permanent housing.

← **Homeless Diversion** empowers individuals on the edge of homelessness to identify safe and appropriate housing options in order to avoid a shelter stay. The program offers mediation, conflict resolution, referral services and limited financial assistance and has the ultimate goal of reducing the number of individuals and families becoming homeless.

**81%** housing retention rate



**38** partnering landlords

**13** partnering agencies



**154** people housed

**33** children housed

**326** individuals served through Homeless Diversion

*Stephanie was experiencing chronic homelessness when she learned about the First HOPE housing program at Matt Talbot more than two years ago. Getting an apartment provided stability and helped her reunite with her kids, including her daughter Kaylee (pictured here).*



# BOLD COMPASSIONATE TEAM

Matt Talbot is a *dedicated and united front of staff* who have found their true calling by helping the homeless and near homeless find possibilities when things seem impossible.



Stanford Bradley



Janet Buck



Vicky Drozd



Lynda Flynn



Clarence Grendahl



Alanna Hulse



Chris Hruza



Dave Klitzke



Retha Knapp



Rosie Newell



Randy Olaveson



Victoria Oneil



Amanda Owen-Doerr



Heather Rhoden



Glenn Schawang



Jeanetta Schnieder



Sara Sunderman



Lori Wellman



Susie Wilson



Sydne Wirrick-Knox

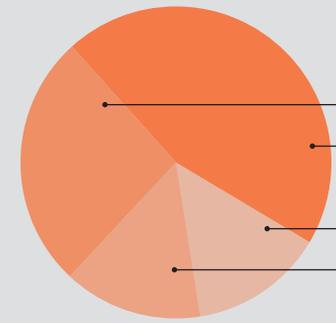
## STEWARDSHIP

Special thanks to Dana F. Cole and Co. LLP for audit preparation and their ongoing support of Matt Talbot.



### Revenues & Other Support

Donations	\$1,171,976
Special Events	\$640,727
Grant Revenue	\$727,105
Investment Income	\$45,316
Miscellaneous Income	\$2,083
<b>Total Revenues &amp; Other Support</b>	<b>\$2,587,207</b>



### Expenses

Program Expenses	
Hunger Relief	\$587,114
Outreach	\$1,004,145
Support Services	
Management & General	\$306,771
Fundraising	\$321,963
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,222,993</b>

### Statement of Financial Position

	2018	2019
Total Assets	\$4,042,418	\$4,425,449
Total Liabilities	\$99,616	\$118,433
Total Net Assets	\$3,942,802	\$4,307,016

A copy of our audited financial statement is available at  
[www.mtko.org/about/financialinformation](http://www.mtko.org/about/financialinformation)

### Community Partners

Bluestem Health • CEDARS • Center for People in Need • CenterPointe • Clinic with a Heart  
 Community Corrections - Lancaster County • Davines Professional Acad. of Beauty & Business  
 NE Department of Health & Human Services • First Plymouth Congregational Church  
 Food Bank of Lincoln • Lincoln Housing Authority • Lincoln Lancaster County Health Dept  
 Lincoln Literacy • NE Vocational Rehabilitation • Southwood Lutheran Church  
 Union College • Veterans Affairs

### Memberships & Affiliations

Better Business Bureau • Cause Collective • Clinton Neighborhood Assoc. • GuideStar  
 Lincoln Homeless Coalition: Continuum of Care • Nonprofit Assoc. of the Midlands  
 North 27th Street Business & Civic Association • United Way of Lincoln & Lancaster County

## VISION:

Defeat hunger  
and homelessness.  
Restore hope!

## MISSION:

The mission of  
Matt Talbot Kitchen  
& Outreach is to  
serve the physical,  
emotional and  
spiritual needs of  
Lincoln's working  
poor and homeless  
through outreach,  
advocacy, education,  
and the provision of  
food and shelter.

## CORE VALUES:

Compassionate Love,  
Dignity, Empowerment,  
Community, Integrity



**matt talbot**  
kitchen & outreach

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