



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. COMMUNITY CENTER



ANNUAL REPORT

2018



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Mission

Founded in 1922 and renamed honoring Dr. King in 1968, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center is a central service provider for at-risk individuals, families, and seniors. An independent nonprofit, the MLK Community Center fights hunger, promotes health, educates young and school-age kids, supports families, and engages seniors across Newport County, RI.

Programs Encompass:

- ◆ Hunger Prevention and Nutrition
- ◆ Early Childhood and Extended Learning Time Education
- ◆ Community Support

Dear Friends,

With great pleasure, we introduce 2018 highlights from the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center's 97th year of service.

The MLK Community Center had a deeply impactful year: more clients, enriched programming, stronger collaborations, more volunteers. Despite an improving economy, we served 3,654 Newport County residents in 2018, the most in our history and 10% more than the prior year.

Newport County is an expensive place to live with many working in service industries. From July 2016 – July 2018, wages increased an average of 5%. Wonderful news, until one learns that food costs in Rhode Island increased 15% in that same period.* For many seniors and low-income working people, life would be much more difficult without the services and support of the MLK.

We hope you'll take the time to peruse this report at length to learn more of our impact, summarized here:

Mobile Food Pantry Launched:

Committed to fighting hunger in innovative ways, we launched a pilot program to bring the food pantry to those who cannot visit the Center due to family, job or transportation barriers. We brought the mobile pantry to nine locations across Newport County.

Food 2 Friends Expands:

Increased demand from homebound clients across the community doubled this program's impact. Now on both Tuesdays and Thursdays, volunteers proxy shop for clients and deliver food with a wellness check-in.

Refreshed Food Pantry:

Our Food Pantry is in use five days and one weeknight per week, between regular pantry hours and proxy shoppers for the Food 2 Friends program. Funding enabled us to refresh the physical space. The pantry was painted a more welcoming color, and new rolling shelves and brighter LED lighting were installed.

Holiday Help:

Holiday programs of 2018 were record-breaking. The MLK provided Thanksgiving food to 1,228 individuals, with a turkey for every table and a wide variety of fresh produce and holiday staples. The Christmas food program served 1,471 individuals. 874 local children received toys and gifts from Santa's Workshop.

Client Demographics Trends:

Spanish-speaking people are the fastest growing client segment.

Increased Collaborations:

Our programs continue to be enriched by an ever-growing network of dozens of partners.



FROM LEFT: Heather Hole Strout, Rose Hyder and Marilyn Warren.

* *Rhode Island Community Food Bank: 2018 Status Report on Hunger in Rhode Island*

Volunteers Make it Possible:

625 people gave over 13,000 hours of service to the Center.

Supporting Education Success:

Enrollment remained strong in the Preschool, After School and Summer Camp. Faced with increasing limits on childcare subsidies for already struggling working families, the MLK provided the most scholarship funding in its history. We are committed to supporting children and families. Our students thrive in a safe and nurturing environment filled with experiential learning.

Executive Transition:

Those who read each year's Annual Report might notice something different in this letter: three signatures rather than two. The additional signature reflects a leadership transition. Marilyn Warren retired in December 2018, after eight years at the Center's helm. Her impact was nearly immeasurable: increased financial stability, two major renovations, instituting the client choice food pantry, and deepened partnerships. Sad to bid Marilyn farewell but focused on building on her leadership, the Board of Directors voted unanimously to name Heather Hole Strout the Center's next Executive Director. The transition has been seamless.

We are proud of what we have accomplished together, as a community that cares about the most vulnerable in its midst. The challenges faced by the clients we serve are myriad and personal. We are honored by our client's trust in us; we are honored by our volunteer's, donor's and funder's belief in the MLK as a bridge between those challenges and programs that create real impact.

Data and financial statements are crucial metrics but cannot fully express what is most important about the MLK Community Center: the impact on local people's lives, because people like you support us. Please take the time to read Dezarae's story and William's story. Then, consider that those are only two stories out of nearly 4,000 stories of residents of this community.

As our centennial draws near, we remain firmly planted in our community, with wisdom gained from our years of service, and eyes always looking forward, firm in our resolve to fulfill our mission of a stronger Newport County.

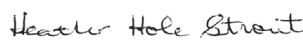
Thank you for working with us for the betterment of this special place we call home.



Marilyn Warren
Former Executive Director
JANUARY 2011 — DECEMBER 2018



Rose M. Hyder
President, Board of Trustees



Heather Hole Strout
Executive Director
DECEMBER 2018 — PRESENT

2018 Programs

Adult Fitness & Wellness

After School

Client Employment
(Parking Lot)

Cooking Classes

Community & Family
Dinners

Community Resource
Referrals

Daily Breakfast

Food Delivery to
Homebound

Food Pantry

Holiday Meal Help

Medicare/Medicaid
Enrollment (*SHIP counseling*)

Mobile Food Pantry

Nutrition Education

Nutrition Counseling

Preschool

Santa's Workshop
(Toy & Gift Help)

Senior Lunch & Learn

Summer Camp

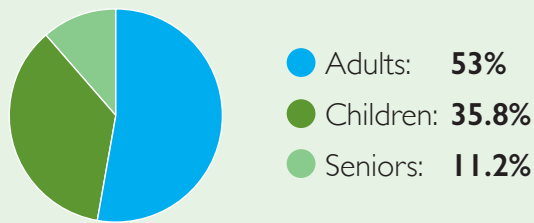
Community Impact

CLIENTS SERVED

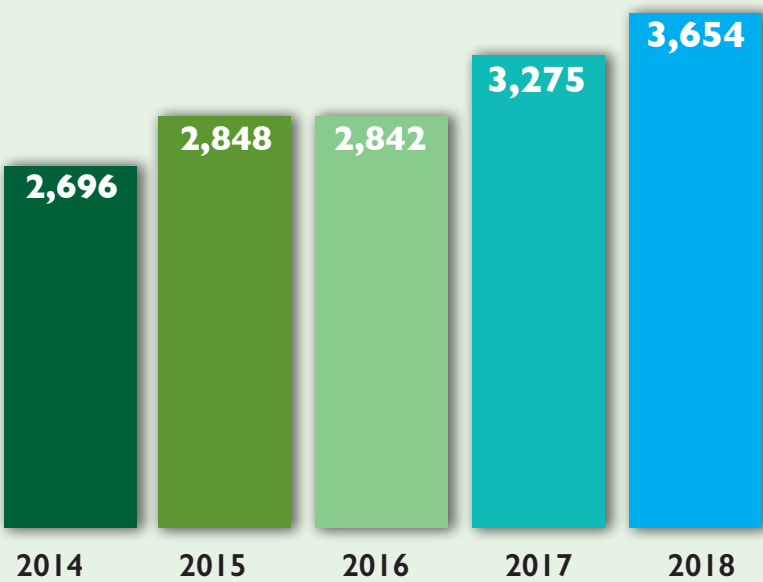
A Vital Social Services Resource for Thousands

In 2018 we served an astonishing 3,654 unique individuals, 10% more than the previous year. Many of our clients are families who represent the “working poor,” employed but not earning enough to keep up with rising housing, utility and food costs. Overall, 95% of MLKCC clients are low-income.

2018 CLIENTS



CLIENTS SERVED – FIVE YEAR HISTORY



EDUCATION

Educating Young & School Age Children

95% of all children served live below the Federal Poverty Level.

PRESCHOOL (Ages 3-5)

49 children attended year-round.

98% of children live below poverty level, despite all preschool parents working.

85% of preschoolers entered Kindergarten already reading.

Preschool blends developmentally appropriate creative play with a variety of enrichment activities.

AFTER SCHOOL (Kindergarten – 4th Grade)

54 children attended during the school year.

20% of children were second language learners.

All children could take violin or cello lessons through Newport String Project, participate in STEM, art, cooking and SPARK Fitness classes, and sing with Newport Youth Chorus at no additional cost.

SUMMER CAMP (Kindergarten – 5th Grade)

48 children enjoyed 8 full weeks of fun and learning taught by certified teachers.

95% of summer campers increased their reading levels. (5% maintained)

90% of summer campers increased their math fluency. (2% maintained)

Thanks to community partnerships, summer campers learn to sail, cook, play tennis, and garden. They go to the beach, hike, visit parks, libraries and museums, enjoy musical performances, and much more.



FIGHTING HUNGER

Promoting Health and Increasing Nutrition

FEED A FRIEND FOOD PANTRY

255,234 meals provided.

3,188 individuals shopped in the pantry. **1,089** were new clients.

THANKSGIVING

1,228 individuals shopped for their holiday meal in our Thanksgiving Food Pantry, full of fresh produce and all the fixings, and a turkey on every table.

CHRISTMAS

1,471 individuals in **479** families shopped for their holiday meal in our Christmas Food Pantry. Families chose fresh produce, eggs, bread, and milk. In addition, families received a gift card to the grocery store to purchase a protein for their holiday meal.

FOOD 2 FRIENDS HOMEBOUND DELIVERY

1,113 deliveries to **145** individuals in **119** families.

DAILY BREAKFAST

9,998 meals served to **264** clients.

LIVFIT COOKING/NUTRITION CLASSES

63 participants attended twice-weekly classes.

REGISTERED DIETITIAN

185 people received 1:1 Nutrition Counseling.
124 children received nutrition education through weekly cooking classes.

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

This new pilot program brings food to neighborhoods in need throughout Newport County and served **760** individuals.



SUPPORT

Engaging Adults and Seniors, Supporting Families and Building Community

LUNCH & LEARN

41 seniors attended a monthly Lunch & Learn.

COMMUNITY & FAMILY DINNERS

240 people attended twice monthly dinners connecting with their neighbors.

SOCIAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE

Our Case Manager connected **240** people to vital services at outside agencies.

INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

Income tax returns prepared for **72** people with AARP Tax Aide.

SENIOR HEALTH INFORMATION PROGRAM (SHIP)

102 people met with the Case Manager for assistance enrolling in Medicare or Medicaid through the SHIP program.

SANTA'S WORKSHOP

874 kids from **395** families, from birth to age 18, received holiday gifts and toys.

Client Profile

Dezarae and Ryleigh

When Everyone Else Said No, The MLK Said Yes

Doing everything right, yet still struggling

Honors college student. Knitter.
Girl Scout troop leader. Volunteer.
Gamer. MLK staffer. Dezarae has many
roles but she's most proud of her role
of mom to daughter Ryleigh, age 11.

Born in Newport to a Navy family, Dezarae is the oldest of five. After graduating high school in Virginia, her family returned to Rhode Island. "Newport is home. It's always been home", she says. Not yet 18 when she returned home, Dezarae started working right away in retail. She learned she was pregnant when she was 21. "It was terrifying," she recalls. "I didn't know what I was going to do, or how I was going to do it. I wanted to finish school."

"I was finishing my first year spring semester at Johnson & Wales studying business management. When I found out I was pregnant, I ended up dropping out. I struggled with 'What choice do I need to make?'"

"Co-parenting wasn't Ryleigh's dad's forte," says Dez. "So it was a lot of me alone." Finding a job as a bank teller when her daughter was six months old, she relied on family to babysit. "Daycare was so expensive even though I worked full time," she explains. Compared to her former retail jobs, her new paycheck was bigger. But, like many low-wage working people, the paradox of the Cliff Effect kicked in almost immediately.

Low-income families may qualify for supportive benefits like child care assistance that help cover the cost of basic necessities. But, as earnings increase, families begin to lose these critical benefits. The result: Parents can earn more without improving their financial situation. Dezarae learned, "'you make too much money. You're eligible for medical through your work,' I lost food stamps (SNAP benefits), I lost childcare assistance. I no longer qualified."

She explains how devastatingly frustrating this is. "I cried when they told me I made too much money. Ryleigh was just a baby, I'd just transitioned from two part-time jobs to a stable full-time bank position. I said, 'Yes, I'm earning more, but this is my rent, here are my utilities. I now have to pay for childcare, and I have to buy food. That adds up to more than my income!' Eligibility



is based on gross income. Why isn't it based on what I bring in after taxes? I still had housing benefits, (Section 8) but had to pay so much more in rent."

As she excelled at work, her paycheck increased. "I didn't get help from Ryleigh's dad so the raises were really important. But, Section 8 said, 'we're proud of you, but your rent's going up.' I became Head Teller and had three promotions. But with each raise, I'd flinch because I knew my rent would increase. More responsibility and income is great, but the net result was it actually made me less independent, not more. I tried but I couldn't do it all on my own. I felt like I was failing."

"I had to admit I couldn't afford rent, childcare, and food. I asked my mom to move in with us." Trying to make the numbers work, she gave up her car in 2014. "Ryleigh and I bus it and walk it. It's hard. It's insane how few buses Newport has. I get all my shopping done once a month and we end up calling an Uber to take it all back."

Approached by another bank via LinkedIn, she accepted another position promising commissions plus base salary. "I was starting over but the potential income bump made it worth it. But it turned out to be a terrible decision." Despite routinely exceeding her individual goals, she learned she only saw extra money in each paycheck if the entire branch met benchmarks. "I received one commission check in two years. I realized I wanted something better."

Determined to succeed, Dez enrolled full-time at CCRI in 2017. "My Section 8 Case Manager helped me understand if I was a full-time student, my rent would drop dramatically. I found a 12-hour a week job to help with expenses. But the tradeoff was I lost childcare benefits while I was in school full-time. I was told I should go to school the same time Ryleigh was but college classes don't always align with an elementary school schedule. I was told

I needed to work at least 20 hours a week.” She persevered and finished her associate degree in 2018, making the Dean’s List every semester. She’s now working toward a bachelor’s degree.

“I first connected with the MLK for After School for Ryleigh when she was 5. I had Ryleigh in another childcare but I wasn’t happy with it. It wasn’t safe. I’d heard so many great things about the MLK. At first, I didn’t know just how much help is offered here. Ryleigh attended After School and Summer Camp for five years. She’s taken violin lessons with Newport String Project at MLK for six years.”

Dez received no help for childcare costs and paid full tuition. Her voice cracks as she talks about falling behind on payments. “I’d miss a week, and try to catch up but I just couldn’t make ends meet. It got to the point where we couldn’t afford food. Something had to give.”

“The MLK’s staff sat me down and said they could help. That was the turning point. They helped me get Ryleigh on a scholarship. I didn’t think I qualified, because every other organization told me I made too much money. They said, ‘If you’ll work with us, we’ll help you.’ *When everyone else said no, the MLK said yes.*”

She turned to the Center’s Holiday Help programs for the first time. “My base pay was about \$6 less per hour than my former job. I just couldn’t keep up with anything.” The MLK’s Thanksgiving and Christmas food and Santa’s Workshop programs helped stretch her paper-thin budget. “I decided I wanted to work where I made a difference; so, I found a job at a non-profit.” But, it wasn’t a good fit. “It had a very different atmosphere than the MLK.”

Three generations of Dezarae’s family met with the Registered Dietitian for nutrition counseling. “I was trying really hard to be healthy but my mother got into the habit of making unhealthy meals. The dietitian reinforced the changes I was trying to make. Instead of ramen and fatty, salty snacks that are quick and cheap, we’re eating chicken and sides with lots of veggies. My mom learned to make quick meals that were inexpensive and healthy too.”

“My mother complained healthy food costs too much. The dietitian taught us what to choose in the pantry and the grocery store to eat better in a way we could afford.” Mother and daughter also participated in LivFit cooking class. Ryleigh enjoyed the cooking classes too. “She came downstairs one afternoon raving about a salad. I asked for the recipe. It has edamame and dried cranberries and balsamic dressing. We make it all the time.”

Ryleigh loved participating in After School physical activities and Summer Camp active fun like sailing and hiking. Dezarae explains “Her weight was too high. My pediatrician wanted me to meet with a nutritionist to work on her diet. I had a medical plan through my job but the co-pay was too much. Thanks to the MLK, we had counseling with the dietitian and now Ryleigh’s weight is appropriate. Her doctor even complimented me on all the positive changes in her health!”

The family’s relationship with the MLK Community Center deepened. “I remember picking up Ryleigh and meeting the Executive Director. I couldn’t believe it...the big boss knew our names! That definitely helped me decide to leave the other non-profit and go to school full-time so someday I could work somewhere like the MLK. I started volunteering at the Center teaching the knitting class. Then, I saw the post for the Front Desk Administrator position. I applied right away. I was so excited when I got the interview. When I got the job here, everything changed for the better.”

Hired by the MLK in May 2018, Dezarae’s duties include registering clients for services and administering the client database. She brings more to her position than a sunny, can-do spirit, and technical skill. When a client visits the pantry for the first time, Dez offers understanding beyond compassion.

She freely shares her experience with clients. “Even before I worked here, the Center reinforced that I wasn’t doing anything wrong. The staff makes people feel comfortable asking for help and not making us feel like we don’t deserve it. I came from a strong working background. I made good money. Even though I was really struggling I felt like ‘there are people way worse off than me.’ But to hear the staff tell me ‘everybody needs help at some point’ made it okay to get help.”

Dezarae has goals beyond graduating. “My plan next is to move up as far as I can here. One of my first papers was about the business field we aspire to. I was the only one who wrote about a non-profit. Everyone else wrote about Fortune 500 companies but I wrote ‘I’ve fallen in love with non-profits, and here’s why.’ I said ‘everything we’re learning, I deal with at a non-profit.’ It’s not just sitting in a cubicle or emailing this paperwork. There’s so much face-to-face and community to this work. I decided, I belong here.”

She’s a passionate advocate for the Center’s role in Newport County. *“This Center saved my daughter and me from being homeless, from not having anything to eat, from not having a safe place for her to go when I was at work.”* She tears up. “The first time walking in here needing to use the pantry, in my business casual wear, I felt some of the other clients were thinking ‘what is she doing here?’ Now when clients say ‘I’m really struggling. I need to use the food pantry,’ I can tell some think ‘she doesn’t understand. She’s working here. She’s well-off.’ I tell them *‘you don’t have to explain it to me. I know – the Center’s helped me since 2013.’*”

Dezarae is grateful when she reflects on her achievements. “I pay full market rent, but I still set aside money each payday. I’m working towards my bachelor’s degree. If I hadn’t had help while I was in school to become qualified for this job, if I didn’t work at the MLK now...none of that would be possible.” She thinks back on her daughter’s growth, too. “Ryleigh’s so independent now, with such a good head on her shoulders.”

Just like her mom.

Client Profile

William

Citizens Bank® A Partnership That Changes Lives

You notice his friendly smile and positive attitude first. You don't notice the motorized wheelchair until later.

At 26, native El Salvadorean William Corleto knew he was ill. "I was getting weaker and weaker. I visited many doctors and spent a lot of money but I couldn't get any answers," he explains. Frustrated, he sought the help of U.S. physicians and secured a travel visa to visit his sister in Maryland. There, William received a devastating diagnosis: he had a form of muscular dystrophy, a progressive disease causing weakness and degeneration of the skeletal muscles. There was no cure, and the weakness would only increase over time.

Undeterred, William immersed himself in his new country, finding work right away. Big City life, however, wasn't for him. "When my cousin told me to come visit Newport, I decided to go." He immediately felt at home. "I love it here! It's very safe. Everyone is friendly."

Despite his condition, William found work in the kitchen of a large local hotel, where he worked from 1999-2016. "I did everything. I was a dishwasher, I was a prep cook, I worked on the line," he recalled.

"But, I was getting weaker and weaker. My English wasn't so good so the chef went with me to a specialist. I saw him crying when the doctor explained what was happening. He told me in six months I wouldn't be able to walk, or feed myself or shower. The doctor said there wasn't any medication to help."

Refusing to quit, William worked at the hotel until his medical team finally ruled working was no longer safe. His driving license was medically suspended; he had to rely on public transportation. He wanted to keep being productive. William explains he applied for other jobs. "I tried many places. No one would hire me. It felt like when they saw my wheelchair, they thought I couldn't do any job."

At no point does William express frustration or anger. Rather, he expresses a gentle sadness about the time before he came to the MLK. "I was very sad. I want to DO something. It's not for the money. I want to get out, and be with people. I only needed one opportunity." A friend connected him with the Center.



William was hired in 2017. "I knew right away he was someone very special. Hiring William was one of the best decisions I've made," says Executive Director Heather Hole Strout. Her intuition proved correct. Customers routinely say what a terrific job William does.

William's eyes light up when he speaks about finally being hired. "I was very excited! When Heather asked me if I could work at the parking lot I said: *I can do this job!*"

Citizens Bank's parking lot partnership with the MLK Community Center began in 2008. The MLK seasonally operates the bank's downtown lot, ensuring spots are available for branch customers. The Center hires, trains, supervises and pays the parking lot staff in exchange for retaining the revenue earned from parking fees.

"This is a perfect example of how impactful corporate and non-profit partnerships can be," says Hole Strout. "Citizens Bank gains a well-run parking lot and the Center gains a workforce development program which aids Newport County adults new to the workforce or struggling to find work like William. The parking lot revenue helps sustain other MLK programs. William and his fellow attendants have jobs and contribute to the local economy. Everyone benefits."

William is grateful: "I want to thank Citizens for letting the Center run the parking lot. I'm grateful to the MLK for not discriminating. My brain is not limited, my body still has ability. People just need one opportunity."

Every work day, William navigates his wheelchair over a mile and a half across busy city streets to the parking lot. "I feel freedom. I can smile, I can feel the breeze. I've made so many friends! I have one restaurant friend who brings me sandwiches. People stop to say hello, offer to give me water, ask if they can help me. Work is good for my health and the money I collect helps other people, not just me. It doesn't matter what country you're from, you can find help at the MLK."

Volunteer Profile

Farouk and Susan Niazy

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?” These famous words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. are the words that Farouk and Susan Niazy live by.

Farouk and Susan first crossed the threshold of the MLK in 2012, and instantly become champions for the Center, tirelessly giving their time, talent, and treasure. Fully retired from paid employment, the couple has immersed themselves in the community dedicating their time, talent, and service to multiple causes, especially the MLK. Whenever and however they are asked to help, they always say yes – and with a smile.

Farouk and Susan have volunteered thousands of hours here at the MLK. Farouk has worked in our Daily Bread, Breakfast, and Food 2 Friends Programs and at events like the Pell Bridge Run, Santa’s Workshop and community dinners. Susan’s volunteer positions at the MLK Center have included receptionist, food pantry guide, fill-in cook for our education program, Healthy Cooking Class assistant, cook for the Senior Citizen Lunch & Learn Program, and at events like community dinners and Santa’s Workshop. They were the recipients of the 2015 MLK Center Volunteer of the Year award, and since receiving this award have continued to generously make a difference in Newport County. The impact that Farouk and Susan have had on this community over the past seven years is enormous. The personal connections that they have made with the clients and staff have truly changed lives.



“I know that being a volunteer has as many benefits for me as a volunteer as for the clients served. I wouldn’t give up a moment of my time there!”

— SUSAN NIAZY

“I chose the MLK because it provides me a means to help others. I like knowing that I am giving back to a community that has given me so much.”

— FAROUK NIAZY

Financial Report

Audited Financial Statement for Fiscal Year January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018

Public Support:

Federal Support	\$ 51,685
State of Rhode Island	\$ 4,969
Municipal Support	\$ 12,510
Foundation and Corporate Support	\$ 748,692
Individual Support	\$ 278,059
In-Kind Contributions*	\$ 521,991
Special Event, Net of Direct Expense	\$ 146,268

Total Public Support **\$ 1,764,174**

Revenue:

Education Fees	\$ 338,842
SHIP Counseling and HEZ Contract	\$ 38,366
Client Employment, Parking Lot Fees	\$ 49,601
Investment Income, Net	\$ (\$37,671)
Interest Income	\$ 13,035
Loss on Disposal of Equipment	\$ (\$2,394)
Other	\$ 1,270

Total Revenue **\$ 401,049**

Total Public Support and Revenue **\$ 2,165,223**

Program Expenses:

Hunger Services	\$ 808,913
Education Programs	\$ 694,267
Community Programs	\$ 88,408
Client Employment Program	\$ 21,437

Total Program Expenses **\$ 1,613,025**

Supporting Service Expenses

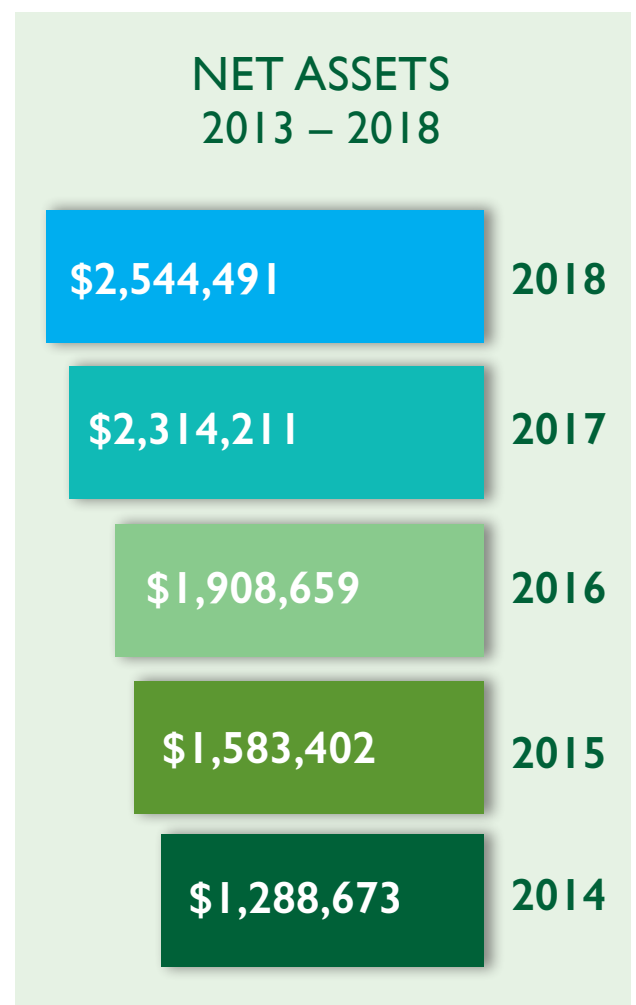
Management and General	\$ 170,417
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 151,501

Total Supporting Service Expenses **\$ 321,918**

Total Expenses **\$ 1,934,943**

Net Assets, End of Year **\$ 2,544,491**

*Less than **3.2%** of the
Center's annual budget comes
from local, state or federal
government sources.*



* The majority of the food distributed is donated. Donated food is recorded as contribution revenue using per-pound values established by Feeding America, the national food bank network. The per-pound value for the year ended December 31, 2018 was \$1.68. Inventory on hand at year-end is weighed and recorded using this per-pound value.

The Center supplements donated food supplies by purchasing nutritious food items not regularly donated.

Since 2005, the MLK Community Center has bestowed the Keeper of the Dream award annually on those whose outstanding commitment most embodies the ideals of our namesake, Dr. King. The Volunteer of the Year award was created in 2007 and in 2012, the MLK added an award to recognize businesses or community partners with exceptional commitment.

2018 HONOREES

KEEPER OF THE DREAM

Bazarsky Family Foundation

KEEPER OF THE DREAM - COMMUNITY PARTNER

Middletown Rotary Club

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Stephen and Zulekha Ludwig

PREVIOUS HONOREES

2017

Keeper: Walter and Eileen Jachna
Partner: Newport Harbor Corporation
Volunteer: Lisa McWilliams

2016

Keeper: Rena DiMuccio
Partner: The Waters Edge Flowers
Volunteer: George W. Emerson

2015

Keeper: David and Donna Goodrich
Partner: Aquidneck Island
Stop & Shop Supermarkets
Volunteer: Farouk and Susan Niazzy

2014

Keeper: Dr. Susan Walker
Partner: Home Depot Store #4287,
Middletown, Rhode Island
Volunteer: Joann Carlson and Peggy Clay

2013

Keeper: David D. Schuller
Partner: Gilbane Building Company
Volunteer: Donald G. Pfeiffer

2012

Keeper: Liz and Emlen Drayton
Partner: Atlantic Beach Club & Pavilion
Volunteer: Liz and Bob Mastin

2010

Keeper: Noreen Stonor Drexel
Volunteer: Rosalind Vaz MacLean

2009

Keeper: The Wilcox Family Foundation
Volunteer: Steven Turilli

2008

Keeper: William and Alison Vareika
Volunteer: George Steele

2007

Keeper: Ronald and Lillian Dick
Volunteer: David and Donna Goodrich

2006

Keeper: Suzette D. Schochet

2005

Keeper: Richard Sardella

No awards were bestowed in 2011.

Keeper of the Dream

Bazarsky Family Foundation



A steadfast partner in philanthropy, the Bazarsky Family Foundation has not only shaped the direction of the MLK but has also vastly improved the lives of hundreds of local children and their families.

Carol and David Bazarsky have generously donated to the MLK Community Center for years, but it wasn't until five years ago that Carol became personally involved by volunteering in the Food 2 Friends program, a position she still holds today.

Like all new volunteers, Carol toured the Center. She realized the After School program room desperately needed a facelift. Two years later the couple formed the Bazarsky Family Foundation with a mission to enhance education on Aquidneck Island and a firm belief that all children deserve a happy, bright and fun environment to learn and play in.

One of their first projects was to renovate the MLK's outdated After School and Summer Camp program space. The Bazarsky Family Foundation's tremendous support allowed the Center to completely renovate, creating high-tech yet warm and welcoming educational spaces, designed to enhance learning, where the excellence of the program is finally matched by a built environment of equal quality. After the first renovation, the Bazarsky Family Foundation provided additional support to renovate the second floor lobby and adjoining hallway flooring, linking all the newly renovated rooms into a seamless and attractive whole.

Children in Summer Camp and After School thrive in their new environment. The staff is delighted to work in spaces that enhance learning. Families are thrilled to send their children to programs housed in physical spaces that are among the very finest in our community.

Keeper of the Dream Community Partner

Middletown Rotary Club

Comprised of men and women from across the community, Middletown Rotary Club is a civic organization with a focus on “Service above Self.”

Initially part of the Newport Rotary Club, the Club was accepted into full Rotary International membership on May 6, 1953. The Club is most proud of the funding and food it provides for Middletown seniors and for the MLK Community Center’s food pantry.

Middletown Rotary Club has also helped the Middletown and Aquidneck Island community with diverse initiatives including those for the Middletown Fire Department, Newport County YMCA, Middletown High School, Middletown Public Library, Lucy’s Hearth, the Salvation Army and dictionaries for Middletown 3rd grade students. The Club works in collaboration with national and international Rotary Clubs through its Water for Cambodia program. Today, this initiative is providing clean water for approximately 200,000 people. At the urging of longtime Rotarians Patrick Burke and Henry “Ted” Wrobel, the Club began hosting a public barbecue dinner in 2013 in support of the MLK Community Center’s Hunger Services programs. Thanks to the pair’s steadfast support, the club’s event has grown each year and is now one of the MLK’s signature fundraising events with 100% of all proceeds donated to the Center.



FROM LEFT: Dick Adams, Ted Wrobel, Pat Burke, Sara Meirowitz, Ella Murphy and Deanna Conheeny.

Club members generously volunteer their time and donate personally to sustain the Center’s programs. Middletown Rotarians are shining examples of what it means to be good neighbors.

Volunteers of the Year

Stephen and Zulekha Ludwig

Zulekha joined the MLK Community Center's Board in 2013 after serving on the St. Michael's Country Day School's Parent Association Board where she ran the daily lunch program for four years.

In addition to her board service, Zulekha volunteers weekly with the Daily Bread program. She co-chaired Swing into Spring, the Center's signature fundraising event, for three consecutive years. Under her leadership, the event's success grew each year. Zulekha introduced the MLK to Steve who quickly joined her as a volunteer, assisting with special events and projects. Currently she serves as Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

Recognizing the Center needed a stronger platform, Zulekha was the driving force in creating the MLK's first promotional video *Are you with us?*. She spent countless hours interviewing clients, staff, trustees and other volunteers, and editing hours of footage to create a polished and professional video that debuted at Swing into Spring 2015, which inspired guests to give at the highest levels to that date. She continued her successful role as "Videographer in Chief" and led the creation of the Center's next videos *A Day at the MLK* and *Because of You*.

In 2017-2018, Steve and Zulekha initiated a quantum leap forward for the MLK by creating a new website. They worked tirelessly, better showcasing programs and community impact in a visually appealing and informative format that is easy to navigate for clients and supporters alike, and simple to maintain internally. The couple has logged hundreds of hours in their commitment to giving back to their community.



*Steve and Zulekha Ludwig
do more than strengthen
the Center, they inspire all
who know them.*

Foundations and Grants

Strong institutional support is critical. By generously sustaining MLK programs, the following foundations and funders do more than write checks: *they build a stronger Newport County.*

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The AEC Trust
Alletta Morris McBean Charitable Trust
AmazonSmile Foundation
Bank of America Charitable Foundation
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Community Collaborations

John Donne wrote “No man is an island.” The MLK Community Center puts that phrase to work daily with partners from across our region. Community change doesn’t happen in a vacuum or on paper; real impact happens only with real work, and real partnerships.

The MLK creates change by strong collaborations of people and organizations working together with a common focus. Our partners-in-community help seniors learn a new skill, ensure Summer Campers go sailing and explore island nature, After School students learn to play the violin, families are fed and so much more. Our programs are immeasurably improved because of our work with the following.

Strengthening our programs...and our community.

AARP Tax Aide Program
AHEPA 245 Apartments
Amenity Aid
Aquidneck Community Table
Aquidneck Land Trust
Artists and Scientists as Partners
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Newport Music Festival
Newport Open Space Partnership
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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of these lists. Please notify us of any errors by contacting the Development Office at (401) 846-4828 x102.

Volunteers

We salute these special volunteer teams who tackled big projects beyond our small paid staff's capacity. Thanks to their can-do spirit, our programs better enrich the lives of thousands of people in Newport County, and the Center is better maintained and organized inside and out.

Bike Newport
Citizens Bank
Gurney's Newport Resort & Marina
James L. Maher Center
Looking Upwards
Magellan Rx Management
Marine Corps Detachment Newport

Mayflower Congregational Church
Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
Newport County Chamber of Commerce
Newport Marriott
Newport Vineyards & Winery
NPT HealthWorks
Rogers High School - Life Skills Class

Salve Regina University
St. George's School
The Gap / Old Navy / Banana Rep
The Mooring
Thompson Middle School
United States Navy - Naval Station Newport
Wyndham Newport Group

Our volunteers are a dedicated army who tirelessly answer the call to build a better community. They stock our pantry shelves, deliver food to homebound seniors, mentor children, act as MLK ambassadors and staff out in the community and at events, cook hot meals, and so much more.

These selfless people freely and generously share their time and talents; they sustain and enrich the Center's programs.

625 volunteers gave **13,273** hours in 2018.

Belise Abane
Shaun Abbate
Vikki Ahern
Liz Alofsin
Myah Alvarez
Tonia Anderson
Jordan Andrews
Justine Avery
Miguel Ayala
Tricia Bailey
Jim Baillarger
Melissa Bains
Heather Baker
Sophie Bakoleidis
Laura Barclay
Ashley Barey
Lynn Barger Elliott
David Barnes
Miriam Bartlett
Madeline Bassinder
Barbara Baum
Brittney Baumgardner
Carol Bazarsky
Lindsay Bearisto
Libby Beaudry
Savanna Bebe

Bassem Bedjaoui
Malek Bedjaoui
Carol Beecher
Bridget Beer
Lauren Beer
Evan Belka
Lucy Belka
Lydia Bennett
Patrick Bennett
Penelope Bennett
Caroline Benson
Joshua Berman
Mary Bernier
Heather Bestoso
William Beusse
Tom Beverly
Karen Binder
Betsy Blair
Justin Blanchette
Kate Bolton
Sydell Bonin
Braden Bonoff
Anna Borges
Audrey Borges
Beth Borges
Laura Borges

Sydney Borges
Riley Bouchard
John Bowen
Ann Boyer
Pelham Boyer
Mark Braga
Mike Braley
Taylor Brandariz
Matt Brazier
Mason Brinich
Meredith Broadus

Jeff Brooks
Miyah Brooks
John Broughan
Winnie Broughan
Scott Brousseau
Brett Brown
Jessica Brown
Matthew Brown
Maebh Browne
Alli Brozusky
John Burke

Kelsey Burke
Pat Burke
Neely Burkhardt
Diana Burleigh
Leo Burnham
Billy Burns
Sharon Butler
Maggie Calcagno
William Calcione
Kyle Calise
Rachel Call



Volunteers



Benjamin Camacho
Elie Camille
Patrice Canning
Brandon Caplan
Dylan Carabia
Jourdan Carboni
Joey Cardullo
Caroline Carney
Judy Carroll
John Carter
Lily Carter
Martha Casey
Mirasia Cassese
AC Castillo
Adan Castillo
A. Michael Cecchi
Isabella Cecchi
Lisa Cecchi
Mike Cecchi
Roberta Cecchi
Michael Cecchi, Sr.
Linda Chandler
Miles Chandler
Thor Christensen
Marion Citrino
Collin Clair
Kevin Clare
Riley Clare
Dudzile Clarkson
Eilish FitzGerald Clarkson
Madeline Clarkson
Mduduzi Clarkson

Jennifer Cloud
Chelsea Clouse
Guy Cloutier
Mark Coady
Ana Cobb
Eleanor Coen
Kelley Coen
Mary Ann Cofrin
Marty Cohen
Niña Cohen
Nate Cole
Priscilla Cole
Denise Collins
Katie Collins
Matt Collins
Deanna Conheeny
Charlie Connell
Sue Cook
Stephen Cookson
Maxx Cooper
Sean Copley
Jane Corcoran
Mikki Coronado
Emily Corr
Ellen Correia
Carole Corriveau
Paula Coveney
Kimberly Cunningham
Alyssa Cuomo-Perriello
Steve Cutts
Laura Czechowicz
Hannah D'Amore

Dempsey Daniels
Alexandra D'Aurio
James Davies
Michaela Davis
Loriana DeCrescenzo
Meredith Delk
Kate Dempsey
Katie DeSa
Chad Detwiller
Steven Devoe
Will Dewey
Maisie Dick
Sydni Diehl
Juliana DiNapoli
Jared Diosdado
Amy Do
Thien Do
Maryellen Doherty
Noe Dos Santos
Ammala Douangvanh
Jessica Douglas
Emily Dube
Jennifer Dube
Morgan Dube
Lena Dufresne
Katie Dyer
Joe Easley
Melissa Easley
Rachel Easley
Elijah Edelen
Ronald Elden
Monte Ellis

George Emerson
Danny Eruzione
David Fairchild
Tyler Fandetti
Lisa Farley
Cristina Feden
Angela Fernandez
Javier Fernandez
Patricia Ferrebee
Lia Ferri
Dave Field
Toby Field
Anne Fitzmorris
Susan Fitzmorris
Don Fitzpatrick
Alasdaire Fleitas
Kayla Fleming
Pam Fleming
Kevin Fletemeyer
Arlene Florencio
Joe Flowers
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Olivia Forst
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Cara Forti
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Robert Fye
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Robert Gaines
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Sandy Gallagher
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Candy Gilmartin
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Tara Gnolfo
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Mariana Gonzalez
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Donna Goodrich

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Sherri Grace
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Monique Graham
Kaelyn Graveline
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Warren Gray
Ben Green
Berne Greene
Heather Groeneveld
Amanda Grundy
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Lauren Gugliotta
Owen Gugliotta
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Keegan Gurvey
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Cece Hallisey
Maria Hallisey
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Lucy Hamilton
Sophia Hamilton
Ingrid Han
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Joy Hannon
TJ Hannon
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Keisei Harita
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Jeanne Harrington
Craig Harris
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Kristin Hatch
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Adrienne Haylor
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Kirsten Healey
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Katie Hellendrung
Maeda Hellendrung
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Luke T. Hyder, Jr.
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Emma Israels
Rosetta Izzi
Kathy Jannoth
Heather Jensen
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Lucia Johnston
Elder Jowers
Bridget Joyce
David Kalif
Mostafa Kamal
Becky Kane
Tina Kaupe
Steven Kay
Katie Keenan
Ams Kein
Horus Kelley
Ami Kelly
Joan Kelly
Rick Kelly
Jim Kenney
Laurel Kenney
Caellum Kerr
Emma Kerr
Jeff Kerr
Lisa Kerr
Nancy Keyworth
Maureen Kielbasa
Liz Kilzi
Ellie King
Jamarie King
Justine King
Jackie Kirby
Gary Klein
Natalie Koster

Rose Kromer
Maureen Krupa
Peter Ku
Anita Lahue
Jason Lamoureux
Nord Lange
Dena LaPlante
Eliseo Lara
Hannah Larkin
Erik Larsen
Eric Lau
Christina Lawber
Josie Leach
Andrea Lembo
Zachary Leteillier
Kurita Lewis
Lisa Lewis
Renee Lewis
Rita Lewis
Jane Leys
Mary Leys
Lisa Libutti
Brian Lima
Dawn Lima
Portia Little
Erin Littlewood
Bob Lobecker
Laura Loftus
Wendy Lord Harvey

Steven Lou
Cassandra Lovely
Michael Loyola
Steve Ludwig
Zulekha Ludwig
Marshall Lundberg
Mark Lundy
Hannah Lynch
Heather Lynch
Mike Lynch
Beckett Lyons
Oscar Macgilluary
Barb Maguire
Jim Maguire
Sarah Maher
Marilynne Manning
Emilia Marchelck
Lynn Marino
Steve Marino
Kara Marley
Kyle Marten
Christina Martin
Roberto Martinez
Drew Marzano
Liz Mastin
Kim Mathews
Kati Mattley
Theresa Mattos
Kevin McCarthy

Patricia McCarthy
Brewster McCleridge
Mari Kate McConnell
Sheila McEntee
Da Shawn McGee
Pauline McGrady
Patrick McGroarty
Andrea McHugh
Jennifer McIntosh
Daniel McKillop
Pam McLaughlin
Oliver McMahon
Ryleigh McMillan
Lisa McWilliams
Terry McWilliams
Sara Meiorowitz
Frank Mendes
Matthew Mertel
Steve Michurski
George Miller
Dominic Mitchell
Dave Monroe
Dave Monteiro
Valdir Monteiro
Zachary Montello
Hailee Montes
Erika Moore
Stacy Morataya-Pilkington
Megan Morgan



Volunteers

Leslie Muir
Grant Munson
Bill Murphy
Ella Murphy
Susan Murphy
Karen Nash
Caelen Nesbitt
Kate Nesbitt
Justine Neves
Farouk Niaz
Susan Niaz
Caroline Nickerson
Henry Nicol
Michael Nolan
Bob Novick
Kaitlynn Nowakowski
Jerome Nurse
Cheryl O'Brien
Erin O'Brien
Omar Ochoa
Jessica Odunwa
John O'Gara
Emma O'Grady
Sue Ohama
Isabella Oliver
Lauren O'Neil
Marguerite O'Rourke
Doug Osterman
Anthony Palmisano
John Paolo
Margaret Paolo
Juniper Park
Grace Parker
Janet Parkinson
Scott Pascua
Ezekiel Payne
Finley Peck
Trinh Pedigo
Troy Pelton

Ariel Pena
Haiden Pereira
Shawn Perez
Tristen Perez
Evelin Perez Diaz
Kristal Perna
Andrew Perry
Elizabeth Phelps
Carole Phillips
Alexander Pitser
Addison Platnico
Dick Poholek
Nick Poillocci
Madeline Polss
Barnes Poole
Caroline Powell
Stephanie Power
Reese Prater
Scott Pruitt
Jean Quinn
Adalia Quitzau
Natalie Raheb
Stevie Ramponi
Suzanne Ramponi
Joan Rauch
Betsy Reed
Caleb Reed
Nathan Reid
Keith Renaldi
Matthew Resendiz
Lynne Rey
Oliver Rey
Sophie Rey
Sydney Rey
Tony Rey
Colby Richardson
Jamoya Ridgell
Renee Robbins
Barbara Roberts

Hayley Robichaud
Marcello Rocco
Anne-Marie Roche
Leah Rogers
Zoey Rogers
John Rok
Antonio Romeo-Oliver
Mike Roper
Leah Rosin-Pritchard
Brianna Ross
Nathan Ruchames
Bianco Ruiz
Steve Rush
Glenn Russell
Delaney Saluja
Linda Sami
Vionsax Samuel
Melissa Santos
Zoe Saurette
Ashley Schafer
Kip Schenck
Barbara Schiaroli
Dave Schuller
Uwe Schwenn
Raphe Sciola
Jeffery Scobee
Helene Scola
Sharon Seabold
Nate Seibold
Kirtley Seveney
Deidre Sharp
Bill Shea
Ali Sheehan
Tristan Sheldon
Cinthia Silvia
Melissa Simands
Kim Simmons
Isaiah Simpson
Jeff Simpson
Alexis Sinewick
Marjoban Singh
Sukhi Singh
Hannah Smith
Linda Smith
Sloan Smith
Caroline Solari
Marina Solda
Alex Solimene
Ethan Southworth
Logan Southworth
Stephen Souza



Joanna Steinhauer
Lynn Stewart
Tania Stith
Quinn Stoeckle
Ella Stookey
John Stookey
Marilyn Stookey
Allyson Storch
Chris Storts
Laura Stout
Christopher Strout
Dick Strout
Jenna Strout
Alexis Sullivan
Bridget Sullivan
Isla Sullivan
Michelle Sullivan
Lauren Svensen
Julie Sweeney
Shane Sweeney
Kathleen Taddei
Sandy Takacs
Riley Tapper
Richard Tarr
Ali Tasso
Conrad Tea
Delbert Terrell
Fred Theriault
John Toppa
Kendra Toppa
Tatum Toppa
Patricia Ustick
Lois Vaughan
Alex Viveiros
Maximillian Viveiros
Autumn Walker

Tomi Waters
Kyle Watts
Ezme Webb
Julie Weeden
Henry Welch
Roger Wells
Susan Wells
Connor Welsh
Ann Weston
Deb Whalley
Grant White
Deb Wiant
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Mary Wiley
Kim Wilkey
Dylan Williams
Jaylin Williams
Jill Williams
Mary Lynn Williams
Bethany Winkin
Jennifer Winpenny
Judy Wojick
Brian Wolfe
Linnea Wolfe
Victoria Wolfe
Julianna Wooldridge
Brandon Yee
Jeffrey Yewell
David Yuengert
Lois Zawrotny
William Ziegler

In Memoriam

With heavy hearts, we remember:

Fred Theriault

He left us far too soon, but the impact
of his selfless generosity lives on.

PHOTOS:

Kate Whitney Lucey
MLK Staff

Tribute Giving

Tribute gifts offer donors meaningful opportunities to express remembrance, celebration or gratitude. These thoughtful gifts provide lasting impact and support the MLK Community Center's mission of making a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable in Newport County.

IN MEMORIAM

With heavy hearts, the MLK Community Center humbly and gratefully acknowledges gifts received in memory of the following individuals.

In memory of Louis W. Amoruso, Jr.

Mrs. Carolyn Amoruso

In memory of Ramon Izaiah Arroyo

Gruben Charitable Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Dennis P. Sullivan

In Memory of Ronald C. Baer

Ms. Elizabeth Phelps

In Memory of Sarah Beane

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Orr

In Memory of Patricia R. Beede

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Albanese, Jr.

In Memory of William Boatwright

Dr. and Mrs. Terry Childs

Ms. Elizabeth Alcorn Holt

Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Scholz

Mr. and Mrs. R. Michael Sceery

In Memory of Sadie Brown

Ms. Betty Peters

In Memory of William W. Brown

Dr. and Mrs. John Kelchner

In Memory of Nathan Bruno

Be Great for Nate

In Memory of Stanley Chapman

Ms. Pamela Chapman

In Memory of Marlene Heath Cherry

Mr. and Mrs. Brian Carroll

Ms. Brittina Sarden

In Memory of Deborah Jean Ciany

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ciany

In Memory of Alphonsa A. Cook

Mrs. Mary Clark

In Memory of Mary G. Corcoran

Mr. William W. Corcoran

In Memory of Ryan Egan

Ms. Georganne Tollefson

In Memory of Marcia Farrar

Mr. and Mrs. Mark A. MacKinnon

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In Memory of Joseph B. Going

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In Memory of Anita Earle Graves

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In Memory of Susan Trainor Hall

Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Trainor

In Memory of Elsie "Gert" Henry

Ms. Tyanne H. Thomas

In Memory of Duane Higgins

Mrs. Carolyn Amoruso

Ms. Martha M. Dowda

Ms. Elizabeth Greene

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Jemo

Mr. and Mrs. James Long

Lifespan Physician Group,

Newport Administrative Team

Newport Hospital Financial Dept.

Ms. Dorothy Nevins

Mr. and Mrs. Chet Oakley

Ms. Laura Peckham

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Peterson

Mr. Arnold Regan

Mr. and Mrs. Paul A. Trout

In Memory of Joe Houlihan

Mr. James G. Pemantell

In Memory of Stephen Jemo, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Amoruso

In Memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Col. and Mrs. Richard Price

In Memory of

Frederick W. Clark MacAdam

Ms. Ethel B. MacStubbs

In Memory of Kim Amoruso McCarthy

Mrs. Carolyn Amoruso

In Memory of Wanda Medeiros

Tom and Marilyn Warren

In Memory of Peter J. O'Neill

Margie, Missy and Brian O'Neill

In Memory of Lois Pailin

Margie, Missy and Brian O'Neill

In Memory of Raymond Picozzi

Mrs. Alberta Picozzi

In Memory of Penelope "Nel" Roberts

Ms. Priscilla T. Grant and Mr. David A. Wend

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In Memory of Marriam Ring

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In Memory of Menona F. Robinson

Mr. Frederick D. Nalle

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In Memory of Cathleen Speer

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In Memory of Anne S. Stewart

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In Memory of Carolyn Tollefson

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In Memory of Tucker Tyler

Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Alsheimer

In Memory of Warren Weston

Mrs. Victoria Johnson

In Memory of Winston Whitehead

Patricia and Daniel Ustick

Tribute Giving

IN HONOR

We gratefully acknowledge gifts made in honor of the following individuals and congratulate them on this recognition.

**In Honor of
Deacon Leroy “Buck” Close**

Dr. and Mrs. John Kelchner

In Honor of Roy Dutra

Ms. Pam Maxson

**In Honor of
Valencia Garrett Friend**

Ms. Brooke McDowell and

Mr. Jean Calixte

In Honor of Mohan Gaitonde

Mr. and Mrs. James Perry

In Honor of Donna Goodrich

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In Honor of Mark Tagliabue

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**In Honor of
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Daniel and Patricia Ustick

In Honor of Patricia Ustick

Ms. Cheryl T. Fine

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Mr. and Mrs. Dave Goodrich

In Honor of Kerstin Zettmar

Ms. Meredith Sabin



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center
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Newport, RI 02840

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F: 401-848-7360

MLKCCenter.org

Created by students in the After School program, this tape art mural celebrates our Newport County community.

