"When the earth tips sideways, it's just where we roll."



2020-2021 Annual Report

# Dear Friends of Lifespan,

The words on the cover of this report are from a Kenny Chesney song. "When the earth tips sideways, it's just where we roll." Indeed, it did feel like the earth "tipped sideways" when COVID invaded our lives. And I am proud to say we did "roll with it" at Lifespan.

With no idea what was to come, in March 2020 we began receiving hundreds of calls from older adults. Told to stay home and with older adult centers and food cupboards closed, they needed food. Staff still working from our office were sent to buy food staples in bulk. We turned a large room at our main office into our own food pantry. For the first few weeks, on our own, we delivered bags and boxes all over Monroe County. In May, we teamed with Medical Motors, the Monroe County Office for the Aging, Foodlink, and ABVI-Goodwill to deliver food throughout the summer and into the fall.

This past January, again with no idea what was to come, hundreds of older adults began calling us for help accessing vaccine appointments. Eventually, our list of older adults wanting appointments grew to over 3,000. Our amazing staff helped many make appointments, but the need was overwhelming, and the vaccination registration process difficult. "Rolling with it," we searched for a provider willing to hold vaccine clinics for us. Rite-Aid stepped up with vaccine and pharmacists. From March to the end of April, we held 12 clinics for 2,700 older adults at our main office. Several more Lifespan clinics were held at Mead Pharmacy in Victor.

Our normal work did not stop. Staff working from home continued providing information and guidance telephonically, and then with PPE, through socially distanced home visits. We moved our entire menu of workshops online, and in November alone, more than 700 people attended workshops via Zoom and Go To Webinar. To help older adults feeling isolated, we greatly expanded friendly calling thanks to the help of volunteers. We also planned and implemented the 3rd NYS Summit on Elder Abuse via Zoom.

In "rolling with it," we impacted more lives in the last year than I ever thought possible. We also entered 2021 celebrating 50 years as a provider of services for older adults and caregivers. With a growing population of older adults, I pledge the team here at Lifespan will do our best to make Rochester a great place to age well — even when, "the earth tips sideways."

Ann Marie Cook
President/CEO

## How We "Rolled with it."





Over

3,000

grab-n-go

lunches.

Over 13,000 boxes of food delivered.

**4,600** 

hot meals delivered from our Wolk Older Adult Center. Over 5,600 masks mailed.

VACCINE ASSISTANCE

**3,000**+ calls.

14 vaccination clinics.

2,770

25,130

calls.

490

shots in arms (At Lifespan with Rite Aid and at Mead Pharmacy). Over **24,000** hours of conversation.

older adults. **463**volunteer
callers.

**FRIENDLY** 

**CALLING** 

PREVENTION

70 Ove

**EVICTION** 

Welcome! Vaccine Registration Here

170 referrals.

ROBOTIC CATS & DOGS 290

given to isolated older adults.

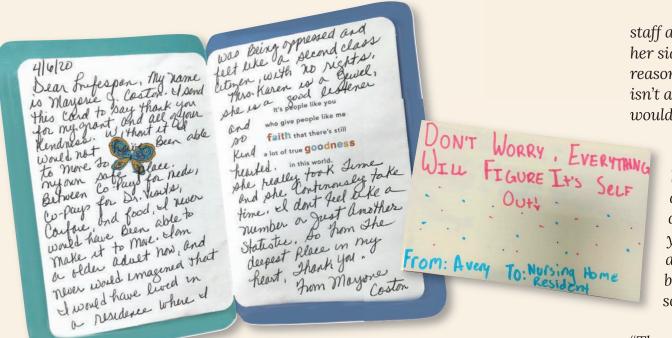
ISOLATED
NURSING HOME
RESIDENTS

Over **8,700** cards delivered.

\$153,000

in rent paid with COVID Relief Funding.





"I'm sure everyone who is delivering supplies to clients is getting similar feedback, but I spoke to a client's friend today who delivered groceries from Lifespan to an elder abuse client (food couldn't be delivered directly to client's house for safety reasons). The client's friend said that he was so happy, smiling from ear-to-ear when she showed up with the food that was donated to him. He expresses his gratitude to Lifespan!!"

"Lifespan team, I want to tell you all that I appreciate your amazing efforts during this pandemic challenge. I could only imagine the difficulties in maintaining support services given these trying times and taking care of yourselves too. As both a caregiver and volunteer, I've come to respect your professional qualities, dedication, and support. Your help counts! Thank you for all that you do!"

"I just wanted to say that I just got off the phone with my mother who lives in a nursing home, and she absolutely LOVES the cat I dropped off to her last week. It had to stay in quarantine for a few days, but I called to check-in, and she couldn't stop talking about it. The nursing

staff also told me it doesn't leave her side. You've given my mother a reason to smile especially when she isn't able to see me the way she would like to."

"This is the 18th call that I have made trying to get some assistance to get the vaccine. I don't have a computer. I trust you will call me back. 18 calls are ridiculous. You called me back. The only one. I am so grateful."

"Thank you for streamlining the vaccine process for me and Mark. We are so appreciative of your help and guidance. We receive a second does on April 10th. Thank you so much Lifespan for your quality service and care."

"Thank you so much for your COVID-19 vaccinations. You are so well organized! The pharmacists give great pain-free shots! So glad you're there for us. One of the perks of getting old is having you!"

"I am glad I came to Lifespan for my vaccine, instead of somewhere else!"

# Behind the Mask, stories of service



Volunteers took up the cause of helping older adults feel less insolated during the pandemic. We published a book, Behind the Mask, about their efforts. These are just a few of the stories.

"Ann and I talk for about 15 minutes every Wednesday, and it's a highlight of my week. At 93, she is so joyful and thankful that she's become my role model for graceful aging. I admire her positivity during this time of isolation, and she keeps active by walking around her property and using exercise equipment. Ann and I discuss our families, cooking and what's going on in our lives. We recently chuckled about the protocol for getting a haircut: a temperature check, a disclaimer, PPE and even taking home my drape to use the next time I go there!"

Ann says, "I enjoy every minute of my conversations with Mary Lou. I think the best thing is that they bring back so many good memories."



"I call five people now but have had a dozen or more from time to time. I've always believed that volunteering and giving back was an important part of life, even back in the day when I joined VISTA. We usually talk about current events, childhood days and families and rarely discuss politics. I do my best to listen and engage with them, and especially to take the time so they are heard."



"I wanted to make an impact, and I have enjoyed every aspect of my task as a 'friendly caller.' It turned out that calling Conrad helped me as much as him. Through our evolving friendship, we found ourselves talking about everything except the virus, which was a relief for both of us. It was great to be part of something that helped to improve another's life during unprecedented times like these."

Conrad says, "I've been talking with Ian once a week since COVID heated up. Since I have no family, it means a lot that he checks up to see how I'm doing with food or anything else I might need."



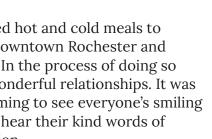
Students in the Police Exam Career Prep program helped us deliver meals and food boxes to older adults for many months. We don't know what we would have done without them!



"My partner and I delivered meals to 40 or 50 people everyday since COVID started. One woman said she needed thumbtacks to hang something. What was a simple trip to the Dollar Store for me meant the world to her."



"I delivered hot and cold meals to those in downtown Rochester and Clarkson. In the process of doing so formed wonderful relationships. It was heartwarming to see everyone's smiling faces and hear their kind words of appreciation.



## **Food Drive!**

A few weeks into the crisis, we received a call from Carol. She felt the need to help in some way and asked, "If I hold a food drive and deliver what's donated, can Lifespan use the items?" "Absolutely yes," we replied. A week later, Carol and Bob arrived at Lifespan with not one, but two vehicles filled to the ceilings with food and other staples. A few days later, they arrived again with more! Then again, with supplies of dog and cat food. We estimate their efforts provided at least \$10,000 worth of food.



## In Other News...



Lifespan signed a ten-year contract to provide social work assistance, educational events and socialization opportunities for older adults living at St. Bernard's Apartments on Lake Avenue.



Our new Texting Buddy service is recruiting volunteers to become texting buddies with caregivers. A texting buddy provides a listening ear and checks-in as often as a caregiver wants.



## Target: Elder Abuse

Lifespan, as coordinator of the NYS Coalition on Elder Abuse, planned and hosted the 3rd NYS Summit on Elder Abuse. The summit focused on ways to better assist underserved populations including LGBTQ, Black/African American, Native American, Latino/a, rural and immigrant/refugee older adults. Webinars on each topic invited feedback via surveys. A summit report will be issued in the fall of 2021.



By May of 2020, ZOOM-inars became the de-facto way to provide our wide array of educational trainings and workshops. We successfully took most of our topics online including our Gerontology Certificate program.

## **Awards and Honors**

The Community Care Connections (CCC) service was a 2020 Honorable Mention for the John A. Hartford Award for Business Innovation.

The CCC team, comprised of social workers



and LPN nurses works with physician practices to improve patients' social determinants of health which include access to food, safe housing, transportation, and help navigating medical care. Our work is proven to reduce unnecessary ED visits and hospitalizations.

When **Art Mason**, director of our Elder Abuse Prevention program for three decades retired in September, the NYS Office for the Aging named a new, annual award in his honor — The Art Mason Advocacy Award.

Christine Peck, LMSW, director of clinical care management at Lifespan, appeared on WXXi's Second Opinion show now hosted by Joan Lunden.

# By the Numbers 41,734 SERVED,

and that does NOT count older adults who received food deliveries, robotic pets, or vaccines.

465

friendly callers matched with isolated older adults resulting in more than 3,700 calls.

More than

people attended online educational workshops.

**Eldersource Care** Management assisted

2,077

older adults and caregivers.

29% reduction in hospitalizations,

**28%** reduction in ED visits by patients served in Community Care Connections, our integration with physician practices.

Lifespan served as the court-appointed guardian for

older adults.

The Finger Lakes Caregiver Institute for families caring for a loved one with dementia provided

**5,496** consults for **1,685** caregivers.

Despite COVID, Give-a-Lift volunteer drivers provided

**8,655** one-way trips.

16,288
telephonic
consultations
by our
NY Connects team.

The Ombudsman staff fielded

1,384

calls from concerned family members.

Our gathering spots at the YMCA locations served 1,179

people 55 and older via in-person and online activities.

840

homes benefited from minor home modifications that can prevent falls. Intervened in **235** cases of elder abuse.

Enhanced Multidisciplinary Teams were supported in

51 of 62

counties throughout NYS.



# 1971-2021

# Lifespan marks 50 years!

In the late 1960s several nursing home administrators, including Eli Rudin of the Jewish Home, approached The United Way about the need for a local organization to provide planning and advocacy for older adults. They were forward thinking men as, at the time, just 68,000 Monroe County residents were 65 or older (compared to 125,000 today). Their efforts led to the launch in 1971 of the organization known then as the Regional Council on Aging, now Lifespan.

Though our name has changed over the years, our commitment to older adults and caregivers has never wavered. We are solely focused on providing information, guidance and services that help older adults and caregivers take on the challenges and opportunities of longer life.

























honored with the agency's Second Half participated in focus groups and open houses.

Thirty years ago, Eli Rudin and a group of 1951, 1961 and 1971, Mr. Rudin was a delegate to the White House other community leaders saw a need for an 
Conference on Aging and, more recently, was appointed by County Executive organization that would provide planning Jack Doyle to serve as a member of the Council on Elders, which advises and for services for the elderly and advocacy on assists with county policy development in relation to mature adults.

their behalf. That agency is now known as At Valley Manor, Mr. Rudin served on the Board of Directors and the Lifespan. In March, during the Annual Resident Services Health and Wellness Advisory Board. He and his wife Lifespan Celebration, Mr. Rudin was Miriam have always welcomed prospective residents into their home and





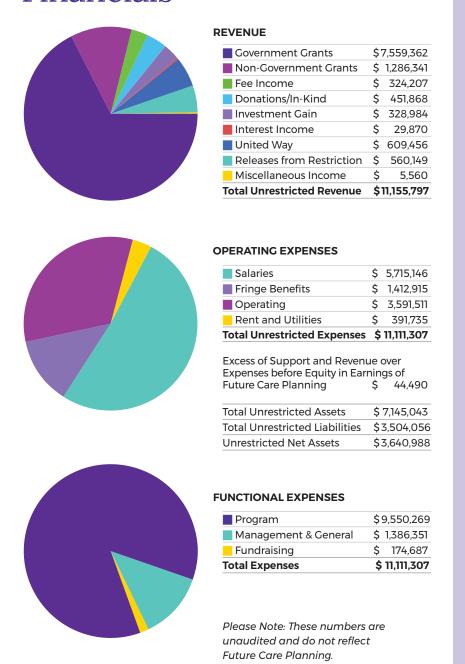








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Total Expenses - Unrestricted by Service \$11,111,307

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# **WOW! Staff Award**

Lifespan's mission is successfully carried out every day because of the commitment and expertise of our staff. In addition to their passion for their work, Lifespan staff always take time to recognize excellence in their colleagues' work—living the "take it on with Lifespan" mission. The monthly WOW! Award is a staff-nominated recognition, and each year, we choose our annual WOW! Award winner.

## Ramona Sharp, LMSW, is our annual WOW! honoree.

It is unusual for a staff person who has been on the job for less than two weeks to be nominated for a monthly WOW award. Ramona Sharp joined Lifespan in mid-July, and two weeks later she was involved in a tense situation. One of her new clients called threatening suicide. Ramona has mental health clinical experience, and she reviewed standard suicide lethality factors during the call. The client told

Ramona he had knives arrayed in front of him, and he was preparing to use them to end his life. Ramona and her supervisor discussed whether it was safe for her to go to his home, or whether 911 should be called. Her clinical judgment was to see him inperson outside or in a place inside where the knives would not be within reach. If she deemed the situation unsafe for either of them, she would call 911. The visit was successful; she talked him through his crisis, and he agreed to a visit from the Mobile Crisis Team. She returned to the office with all the knives, and a rope he bought to hang himself. Mobile Crisis arranged for an expedited mental health appointment. Ramona's willingness to use her expertise and knowledge about suicide prevention helped this client through a crisis that could have ended his life.