

Michael's Place  
*let the healing begin*  
18 YEARS OF  
**RESTORING HOPE**  
2018/2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**Michael's Place**  
*let the healing begin*

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Traverse City, MI 49684

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goodgrief@MyMichaelsPlace.net  
MyMichaelsPlace.net

*Thank you a thousand times for helping me through my husband's suicide a while ago. I think of your kindness and compassion often and it still keeps me going. Thank you for being the light when all I could see was darkness. You are amazing people and I am grateful for your strength and the work you do.*

**Former Michael's Place Attendee**



**Road to Resilience: Memories that Move Us Forward** from StoryCorps, in partnership with New York Life Foundation, leverages the power of stories and storytelling to help children cope with the death of a parent, sibling, or loved one.

*It meant a lot to me to have the StoryCorps opportunity. I really loved talking about what happened in the past.* **Wyatt, Age 10**

LEARN MORE | [STORYCORPS.ORG/ROAD-TO-RESILIENCE](http://STORYCORPS.ORG/ROAD-TO-RESILIENCE)

This project is supported by a generous grant from the New York Life Foundation.



**TED<sup>x</sup> Traverse City**  
x = independently organized TED event

This year **TEDx Traverse City** featured stories of resilience, compassion, and community. Our very own Executive Director, Mindy Buell was invited to speak about supporting those who are grieving.

VIEW THIS TED TALK AT:

<http://www.mymichaelsplace.net/ted-talk-executive-director-mindy-buell/>

## A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

We are excited to present to you our 2019 Annual Report. Thank you for taking the time to review the impact of Michael's Place in our region.

Michael's Place has been built on the trust of the children and adults we serve and the donors and volunteers who support our mission. We are dedicated to helping those grieving while being good and faithful stewards of the financial support we receive from our donors.

Michael's Place is committed to designing and implementing creative programming that reaches beyond the traditional support group method to engage the bereaved on multiple levels. A partnership with StoryCorps has added another dimension of creativity and outreach.

Michael's Place was chosen as one of six bereavement centers in the nation to participate on a project called **Road to Resilience**. In January 2019, a team from StoryCorps, an oral history organization out of New York City, traveled to Traverse City to train a selected group from Michael's Place to capture and record stories and conversations of grieving children. These stories are archived in the Library of Congress.

In May 2019, two Michael's Place staff members took to the national stage to share the impact of grief. Melissa Fournier, LMSW, Program Director, presented at the **4th Annual Munson Healthcare Clinical Ethics Conference** to educate medical practitioners on the impact of loss. In the same week, I gave a TED Talk\* at **TEDx Traverse City** and shared what I have learned over 18 years of working with grieving children, teens, and adults. Melissa and I are grateful for these opportunities and appreciate the tremendous support of the Michael's Place staff and board.

As you will see in this report, the impact of Michael's Place on our community is profound. Thank you for giving value to the mission of Michael's Place and supporting thousands of grieving children, teens, and adults in our community.

All the best,

Mindy Buell



*\*TED is a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks. TED began in 1984 as a conference where Technology, Entertainment and Design converged, and today covers almost all topics — from science to business to global issues — in more than 100 languages. Meanwhile, independently run TEDx events help share ideas in communities around the world.*



## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



The mission of Michael's Place is to provide support and advocacy for children, teens, and adults grieving the death of a loved one and educate the community on the impact of grief. Children, teens, and adults need to feel protected as they share the story of their loss.

### ON-SITE SUPPORT GROUPS FOR ALL AGES

Support groups are team-facilitated by trained volunteer facilitators who provide guidance along with peer-to-peer support. Children meet in age-appropriate groups and participate in discussions, art projects, games, and activities. Teens have a support group customized to meet their needs. Adults meet with others who have a greater understanding of their grief journey.

### IN-SCHOOL SUPPORT GROUPS & SCHOOL GRIEF CRISIS SUPPORT

Michael's Place provides in-school support groups to elementary, middle, and high school students grieving the death of a loved one. We work with schools to develop grief crisis plans, assist with aftercare following the death of a school community member, and provide ongoing grief education and training.

### BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

Michael's Place provides professional guidance to businesses and community organizations to develop grief crisis plans and provide grief education and training to meet the unique needs of requesting organizations.

### ROBIN'S NEST

With the help of mentors, the Robin's Nest program provides best day activities and educational opportunities designed to help grieving children and their families feel normal, bring joy to their lives, and create new memories.

### COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS AND SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

Create-A-Keepsake | Writing Through Loss | Healing Garden  
Educational Workshops and Presentations | StoryCorps

*Please call us about our current calendar of support group offerings and enrollment information. Or, visit [www.MyMichaelsPlace.net](http://www.MyMichaelsPlace.net).*

#### Board of Directors

Chris Dennon, Founder  
Karen Browne, President  
Dan Brady, Vice President  
Gretchen Overbeek, Secretary  
Doug Morgenstern, Treasurer  
Marika BeVier, Trustee  
Mindy Buell, Trustee  
Erik Gruber, Trustee  
Judy Harrison, Trustee  
Bill Smith, Trustee

#### Michael's Place Staff

Mindy Buell, Executive Director/CEO  
Elizabeth Boomer-Judson, Robin's Nest Coordinator  
Breanna Broering, Social Worker  
Melissa Fournier, Program Director  
Pam Jones-Robinson, Volunteer Mgmt. & Resource Coordinator  
Connie Wintzinger, Development Director



## OUR IMPACT



Michael's Place is the only grief support center of its kind in northern Michigan, offering no-cost grief support programs to children, teens, adults, and the community.

### 2018-2019: BY THE NUMBERS

**1,431**

Children, Adults, and Community Members Served

**415**

Grief Support Programs Provided

**14**

Counties Served

**110**

Volunteers Gave

**2,160**

Direct Service Hours to Our Families

*My favorite part of being involved with Michael's Place has been watching it grow from a young, fledgling group to the thriving, impactful and mature organization that has helped thousands of our community members better understand and manage their grief.*

**Marika B. / Event Volunteer**

*There are no words that can express the gratitude we have for Robin's Nest and the children's group at Michael Place. My niece came to live with me last August after her father who had sole custody of her passed away. The staff and activities have been amazing and it warms my heart to know that she is being exposed to grief support services and other children in similar situations.*

**Laura M. / Michael's Place/Robin's Nest Attendee**



# ROBIN'S NEST



**1 in 5**  
children will experience  
the death of someone  
close to them  
by age 18

**408**  
attended  
**12**  
Robin's Nest  
'Best Day'  
Activities

## Thank You to These Host Sites:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Fishing at Veronica Valley               | Twilight Skating at Centre Ice Arena   |
| Great Wolf Lodge Water Park              | Skiing & Snowboarding at The Homestead |
| Incredible Mo's Bowling/Laser Tag/Arcade | Cookie & Gingerbread House Decorating  |
| A Day of Golf at Bay Meadows             | Christmas Shopping at GT Mall          |
| Sailing Adventure on the Nauti-Cat       | Indoor Sports at Gritshop              |
| The Coin Slot Arcade                     | Mini-Golfing at Pirate's Cove          |

All of the Michael's Place events are provided at no cost to our families thanks to the generosity of local businesses and donors who host these 'best day' events!



Robin's Nest has been so amazing for our child's growth! She looks forward to seeing all of her friends from Michael's Place and a more relaxed setting where they can play and just be kids, not a grieving child. The value of this program is immeasurable! I cannot begin to thank the community members and businesses who donate their services enough! We so enjoy our time with them! We could never repay them for all that they've given to her!

**Colleen S. / Michael's Place/Robin's Nest Parent Attendee**

I took my children fishing at Veronica Valley yesterday morning. The sun was shining and a pool of kind and patient volunteers helped them bait hooks, learn to cast, then reel in the fish. Most importantly I watched my children's joy. This was truly a metaphor for all Robin's Nest events. Our grief, always swimming beneath the surface, can be an elusive and difficult thing. But, we are learning how to navigate those waters and are finding comfort, hope and healing.

**Ellen T. / Michael's Place/Robin's Nest Parent Attendee**

# OUR IMPACT: SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY

## SCHOOLS

### MICHAEL'S PLACE PROVIDED

**411**

Students and Faculty With Grief Crisis Support

**135**

In-School Support Groups

**101**

Students with Support in the In-School Grief Support Program

Classroom teachers report that students who have lost a parent or guardian typically exhibit:

**87%**

Difficulty concentrating in class

**82%**

Withdrawal/disengagement and less class participation

**72%**

Absenteeism

**68%**

Decrease in quality of work

*Percentages are average teacher observations.*

*The students feel supported and are better able to focus on academics.*

**Samantha Abeel / Social Worker/Lakeland and Mill Creek Elementary**

## COMMUNITY

### MICHAEL'S PLACE PROVIDED

**118**

Individuals in Local Business and Organizations with Grief Support

**683**

Community Members With Grief Support

*Having a plan of action empowers a community...Having options, a plan of action, and knowledge of how to cope strengthens otherwise traumatized communities.*

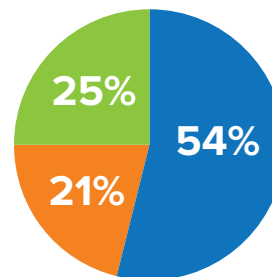
**When A Community Weeps: Case Studies in Survivorship, Zinner and Williams, 1999**

# MICHAEL'S PLACE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Cash Basis)



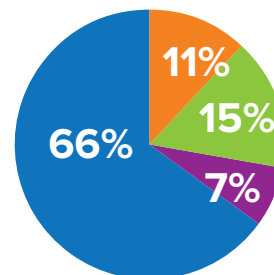
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2019

### REVENUE



- Individual and Corporate Contributions
- Foundation Program Grants
- Community Fundraisers

### EXPENDITURES



- Grief Support Services
- Administration
- Facility Rent & Maintenance
- Fundraising & Community Outreach

### OPERATING STATEMENT

#### REVENUE

Individual and Corporate Contributions	244,603
Foundation Program Grants	114,309
Community Fundraisers	98,018
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>456,930</b>

#### EXPENDITURES

Administration	65,315
Fundraising and Community Outreach	28,861
Grief Support Services	285,969
Facility Rent and Maintenance	49,152
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>429,297</b>
<b>Operating Surplus or (Deficit)</b>	<b>27,633</b>

### BALANCE SHEET

#### ASSETS

Checking and Savings Accounts	114,196
Rental Security Deposit	3,250
Short-term Pledges Receivable	71,987
Pledges Receivable Beyond One Year	216,378
Furnishings and Equipment (net of depreciation)	11,864
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>417,675</b>

#### LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

Accounts Payable	0
Payroll Taxes and Benefits Payable	4,192
Restricted Grant Balance	48,000
<b>Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	<b>365,483</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>	<b>417,675</b>

# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR 2018-2019 SUPPORTERS

## Business Supporters

Advantage Benefits Group  
AMC Cherry Blossom Theater  
American Proficiency Institute - Dan Edson  
American Waste  
Amical  
Anderson's Glen Arbor Market, Inc.  
Apple Inc.  
Beers and Stillwell Family Dentistry  
Bill Marsh Automotive Group  
Bishop Electric  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan  
BMW of Traverse City  
Breton Dental Studio  
Brian Fisher, DDS  
Buffalo Ridge Center South LLC - Joe Sarafa  
BURDCO, Inc.  
C.H. Robinson  
Casciano Traverse City, Inc.  
Centre Ice Arena  
Chef's Pride Catering Company  
Cherry Central  
Cherry Republic  
Cherryland Electric Cooperative  
Cintas Corporation  
Clark Manufacturing  
Clover & Fox LLC  
Coding Products  
Covell Funeral Home - Diane Ankerman  
Crystal Clear Landscaping & Lawn Maintenance LLC  
Crystal Mountain  
Dinghy's Restaurant\*  
Downtown Traverse City Assoc.  
Dr. Jan Manning, DDS  
Eyes Only Media LLC - Luke Haase  
Fischer's Happy Hour Tavern  
Glen Lake Marine  
Grand Traverse Ophthalmology Clinic  
Great Lakes Forge - Peter Jones  
GritShop  
HJH Realty - Mary Sue Hautz\*  
Horizon Financial- Holly Gallagher\*  
Image360  
Incredible Mo's  
Independent Bank  
Jimmy John's of Traverse City - Josh and Deanna Russell  
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Johnson and Associates Insurance  
Kitchen Choreography - Mike and Angela Goodall\*  
M.C. Shortstop  
Marathon Automotive - Ross and Sherry Schofield\*  
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Max's Service

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Traverse Catholic Federal Credit Union  
Traverse City Properties.Net  
Viktor  
William J. Hendershot DDS, PC  
Windemuller Electric  
WTCM

## Religious and Educational Institutions, and Other Community Support

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
Central United Methodist Church  
Christ the King Parish  
First Congregational Church  
Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians  
Immaculate Conception Church  
Kingsley Area Schools  
Leland Public Schools  
Northern Business Network  
Traverse City

Northern Expressions  
Decorative Artists  
Pine River Area Schools  
Pour for More  
Quota International Of Traverse City  
Rotary Charities Of Traverse City  
StoryCorps  
SwingShift and the Stars  
Traverse City Area Public Schools  
Traverse City Elks Lodge 323

## Foundations

Friend of Michael's Place (1)  
Allen Foundation  
Beers Family Foundation  
Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation  
Hitchens Family Foundation  
Oleson Foundation  
New York Life Foundation  
Rite Aid Foundation KidCents  
Robet Foundation  
Saginaw Community Foundation  
Skendzel Family Foundation  
The Gerstacker Foundation  
Walmart Foundation  
William J. Nicholson Foundation

## Individuals/Families

Friends of Michael's Place (58)  
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Steve Prudhomme	Jason Stowe	Christine Zimmer
	Ryan and Jessica Sullivan	Katharine Zurek
	Terri Suten	

We strive to make our list as accurate and complete as possible; if you find an error or omission, please contact Connie Wintzinger at [connie@mymichaelsplace.net](mailto:connie@mymichaelsplace.net) or 231.947.6453.

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS



Aaron Ackerson	Jay Burgess	Nancy Gallagher	Emily Ledford	Holly Smith
Sarah Allaben	Brittney Buti	Karen Garson	Andrew Lehman	Mary Smith
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Caleb Argue	Wayne Carnes	Kay Goodall	Brian Marhofer	Meg Staley
Jeanne Ascione	Abbie Clark	Amanda Gough	Tess Marhofer	Daniel Stewart
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Carol Brock	Margaret Fedder	Maggie Kernan	Noah Phillips	John Wintzinger
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Gus Buell	Flynn-Mach	Carole Lannin	Wendy Shutler	
Mac Buell	Kathy Gabourie	Katy Lawson	Bill Smith	

### MICHAEL'S PLACE IS THANKFUL FOR GIFTS MADE IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

Aaron and Erie	Todd Endresen	Vonda Marie Kelly	Frances Petty Sargent
Eva Ascione	Jeanette Flannery	Don Kiessel	Keith Saum
Kylee Bonne	Max Galbraith	Caden Konigbauer	Sean Schlueter
Susan Brace	Michael Alan Gerus	Anna Grace Luciani	Jared Sheets
Catherine Brazaski	Donald Harrington Giles	Daniel "Beechie" Miller	Melvin Simon
Joseph D Browne	Ian Glynn	James G. Miller	Adam and Mary Skendzel
Kalee Bruce	Dan Goodearl	Parents of Doug and Jennie Morgenstern	Vicki Steffens
Greg Buell	Aurea Gonzalez	Matthew Moyer	Kayden Stone
Tucker Byl	Erica Gough	Mark Nowak	Bruce and Sheryl Struik
Kerstin Colmus	Arlene Grockau	Todd Oetjens	Christopher Arthur Swift
Alix Crawford	Abby Gross	John Ort	Keegan Tarrant
Kevin Connors Crowley	Scott Michael Hamilton	J.W. Pascoe	Fred Tenbusch
Michael Peter Dendrinios	Zach Harder	David Pollie	Drew Tintera
Richard Deneweth	Ann Hartman	David William Reincke	Sid and Catherine Van Slyke
Randy Devereaux	Timothy Hautz	Sarah Richardson-Burns	Josephine Vecchio
Jerry Dillinger	Erna and Milton Heyde	Liza Marie Rosinski	Harold Verduin
Richard and Francis Dryden	Scott Huggins	Barbara Jean Sanders	Archer Wheaton
Gail Ehlers	Lindsey Jacobs	Sue Sandy	Byron Wight
Barb Elliott	Keaton Jeffrey		
	Kobus Joubert		

### MICHAEL'S PLACE IS THANKFUL FOR GIFTS MADE IN HONOR OF:

Chris Dennon	The Helmstetter Family	Ellyn Tarrant	The Work of
Abby Gross	Kingsley Area Youth	Susan Vignand	Michael's Place
Jeanne Gross	The Pavelka Family		