

# 19 YEARS OF RESTORING HOPE



# 2019/2020 ANNUAL REPORT

# National Children's Grief Awareness Month

A nationwide effort takes place each November to advocate and educate regarding the unique grief of bereaved children.

Last November, Michael's Place partnered with the Dennos Museum Center for a special program, *The Art of Mourning: Expressions of Youth.* The multi-media event featured storytelling, poetry reading, dance, music, and visual art. Artwork included both nationallyrecognized select pieces from the *Scholastic Art and Writing Awards*, an exhibition curated by the New York Life Foundation, and original art by Michael's Place youth.



ZOE CHEN, Grade 12, Lynnfield High School, Lynnfield, MA, Pulling Tight, 2019 Gold Medal, New York Life Award, Drawing and Illustration



### LOCAL ARTIST FEATURED IN THE ART OF MOURNING: EXPRESSIONS OF YOUTH EXHIBIT

Cover Image: "The Moon" Art Credit: Nyilee Smith, GRADE 6, East Middle School, TC, MI

*My art represents my loved ones because when I look at the moon and sky, it reminds me that they are always with me no matter what.* 

Nyilee, Michael's Place Program Attendee

# Margaret Ann "Peggy" Dendrinos April 27, 1929 – April 7, 2020

Margaret 'Peggy' Dendrinos, the mother of our organization's namesake, Michael, was a dear friend to Michael's Place. Peggy had a compassionate heart and a kind and thoughtful presence. She was known as "Aunt Peggy" to the founder of Michael's Place, Chris Dennos, who remembers her as "a smile waiting to happen in our family."



Peggy lived a life exemplified by love and kindness, even while deeply marked by grief from the loss of her son, Michael, at the age of 14. We will cherish her memory and miss her sweet smile.

A memorial contribution to Michael's Place in support of Peggy's beautiful legacy is a special way to honor her memory and support the many grieving families in our community.



Dear Friends.

It is with great privilege that we present the Michael's Place 2020 Annual Report representing our fiscal year of July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.

The fiscal year began on a highnote as our staff and board set heightened goals for the new year. Michael's Place collaborated with the Dennos Museum Center and presented **The Art of Mourning: Expressions of Youth**. We strengthened our partnerships with workplaces and schools, welcomed a greater number of children and families into our program, facilitated 25 ongoing in-school support groups reaching underserved students and families, and provided monthly Robin's Nest events focusing on the unique grief of children.

As 2020 unfolded and the world changed abruptly, requests for grief support services increased significantly, with many of our bereaved experiencing complications due to extreme isolation. Our staff compassionately responded by discovering new and creative ways of reaching our grieving children and families. Phone support calls, Zoom, and FaceTime gave us the opportunity to connect, and we also went "old school" with handwritten notes and mailed packages of supplies and activities.

We were saddened in April to learn of the death of Peggy Dendrinos, the mother of our namesake, Michael, who died at the age of 14. We remember Peggy warmly and send loving condolences to Peggy's children, Pete and Katie, and their families.

Our in-person grief support groups resumed with outdoor meetings at the end of July. At the end of our time together, each person described how he or she was feeling. To our surprise, despite the pandemic, the loss of their loved ones, and their tremendous grief, the overwhelming feeling was hope. Thank you for finding value in the mission of Michael's Place.

With much appreciation,

Mindy Buell





# Michael's Place Board & Staff

### **Board of Directors**

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

### Michael's Place Staff

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

# **Programs And Services**



Michael's Place mission is to provide support and advocacy to children, teens, and adults grieving the death of a loved one and serve the bereavement needs of our community. Michael's Place provides a safe environment to enable healthy healing after the death of a loved one, and a network of peers who understand.

### **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 ageappropriate 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 guidance to businesses and community organizations to develop grief crisis plans and provides grief education and training to meet the unique needs of the requesting organization. Specialized support services are available to those who work in high loss environments including healthcare providers, law enforcement, and first responders.

### **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 StoryCorps Inspired Sessions | Educational Workshops and Presentations

*Please call us about our current calendar of support group offerings and enrollment information or visit www.MyMichaelsPlace.net.* 

*Thanks for all you do for so many! Each of you makes a huge difference for others and we are very grateful you are serving our community.* 

Barbara Zupin & Tom Gardner, Pledge Supporters

# Stay Home, Stay Safe

# Amid the COVID-19 crisis, Michael's Place Programs and Services continued through:

- Online grief support groups and workshops provided through video-conferencing platforms
- Telesupport for those grieving the death of a loved one
- Grief crisis and support services to businesses and schools
- FaceTime calls, personal letters, and care packages filled with activities and supplies were provided to children and families while safe at home





Through online support groups and one on one phone calls, we've heard time and again how isolated our bereaved feel and how deeply the current state of our world is triggering the pain of losing a loved one or loved ones. We're hearing the plight of single parents whose spouses have died trying to quell the fear and anxiety in their grieving children and the dismay of those who could not see their dying loved one or have a funeral for them because of the virus. Yet, each day we've been able to continue connection, bring peace to those emotionally triggered, calm fears, and restore hope."

Melissa Fournier, Program Director





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

2019-2020: BY THE NUMBERS		
2,696		
Children, Adults, and Community Members Served		
328 12		
Grief Support Counties		
Programs Provided Served		
111		
Volunteers Helped Michael's Place Save		
\$44,499.20*		
by Providing		
1636		
Direct Service Hours to Our Families		

\* The current estimated national value of each volunteer hour is \$27.20



















# Our Impact: Robin's Nest - Best Day for Grieving Children



children will experience the death of someone close to them by age 18

youth and their families attended 13 Robin's Nest

'Best Day'

# Thank You to Our Host Sites:

Incredible Mo's Bowling/Laser Tag/Arcade A Day of Golf at Bay Meadows Twilight Skating at Centre Ice Arena Skiing & Snowboarding at The Homestead Cookie & Gingerbread House Decorating Christmas Shopping at the GT Mall Biking with Norte

**Snowshoeing at Crystal Mountain** 

**Reining Liberty Ranch** 

Jacob's Corn Maze

City Opera House Performance of The Alphabet Experience

James & the Giant Peach at St. Francis

A Slice of Pie at GT Pie Company

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!

My family feels blessed to have a wonderful resource like Michael's Place. The holiday events helped me get my spirit back. We really feel that Landon is with us and we feel like we are honoring him when we are attending these events.

## Angelina R., Program Attendee

We meet such wonderful people at Michael's Place and we are all about wonderful people. We love to see and share in the healing that happens with the families and the horses and all the animals. Everyone is healing from something and Reining Liberty feels blessed to share in the healing as it gives us a purpose. We love our collaboration with Robin's Nest and Michael's Place.

Becki Bigelow, Reining Liberty Ranch, Robin's Nest Host

# Our Impact: Schools And Community

# SCHOOLS

### MICHAEL'S PLACE PROVIDED:

133 Students with Support in the Ongoing In-School Grief Support Program 123 In-School Support Groups

According to the New York Life Foundation's 2017 Bereavement Survey of Educators and The Coalition to Support Grieving Students:

# **70**%

of teachers have at least one grieving student in their classroom. **7**%

of teachers have had any amount of bereavement training.

# **92**%

of educators say childhood grief is a serious problem that deserves more attention

# WORKPLACE & COMMUNITY MICHAEL'S PLACE PROVIDED: 120 615 Individuals in Local Businesses and Organizations with Grief Support Community Members with Education on Grief and Loss

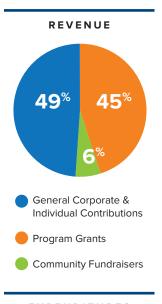
Michael's Place has been a tremendous support to me over the past year following the passing of my mother, as well as the passing of a young coworker. Both of these losses were completely unexpected and have been a lot to navigate. **Having Michael's place come to Hagerty the morning after we received the news about our colleague gave us a much-needed opportunity to come together and begin to process our loss.** 

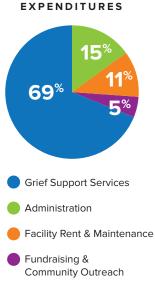
Wendy D., Compassionate Workplace Recipient and Program Attendee

# Michael's Place Financial Statements (Cash Basis)



Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020





253,743
230,166
29,571
513,480
71,300
24,715
316,350
49,756
461,824
51,656

### BALANCE SHEET

Assets	
Checking and Savings Account	170,198
Rental Security Deposit	3,250
Short-term Pledges Receivable	98,000
Pledges Receivable Beyond One Year	220,606
Furnishings and Equiment (Net of Depreciation)	11,603
Total Assets	503,657
Liabilites and Fund Balances	
Accounts Payable	1,525
Payroll Taxes and Benefits Payable	6,195
Restricted Grant Balance	0
PPP-SBA Loan Payable	60,240
Unrestriced Net Assets	435,697
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	503,657

# Thank You To Our 2019-2020 Supporters

### Champion Gifts -\$10,000 and Over

Anonymous Foundation Art and Mary Schmuckal Family Foundation Gerstacker Foundation Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation -Urgent Needs Fund Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation -Youth Endowment North Bay Produce **Rite Aid Foundation Kids Cents** Rotary Charities of Traverse City William J. Nicholson Foundation

### Sustaining Gifts - \$5000 - \$9999

Anonymous Todd and Michelle Broad\* Shane and Lee Ann Bullough\* Mike and Denise Busley\* Chris Dennos\* Dan and Debbie Edson\* Tammy Hagerty\* Hagerty Management, LLC Jamie and Paula Jo Kemler\* Rotary Club of Traverse Bay Cindy Warner\*

### Partnering Gifts - \$1000 - \$4999

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### Gifts of Friendship - \$500 - \$999

Tricia Adams Fred Anderson Anonymous (3) Mike Baker\* Arleta Bernson Adam and Marika BeVier\* Blue Cross Blue Shield of Northwest Michigan Chris Broderick Dennis and Shelly Brodeur\* Leslie Buttleman Collette Champagne\* Cherry Republic Anne Cool Pete and Lori Dendrinos Denine Dingeman Greg and Danielle Donahue **Bob Ebels** Rick and Rebecca Ehlers Robert Flannerv Grand Traverse Resort and Spa Timothy and Sally Hanley Tom and Cherie Hitchens\* Horizon Financial -Holly Gallagher\* Scott and Roxanne Hunter Immaculate Conception Church Paul and Laura Jacobson Peter Jones Joe and Angela Karbowski Peggy Kopmeyer and Larry Clarke Macare and Dustin Lumbrezer Bruce Luoma -National Vacuum Equipment Megan Madion Sean and Carrie McCardel\* Marianne Morgan Doug and Jennie Morgenstern\* Kathleen Moyer Keith and Kristin Nielson\* **Optimist Youth Foundation** Carey Owens\* Schmidt Family Foundation Don and Susan Schmuckal\* Kathy & Pete Schroeter Dan Stoudt Robert and Anne Tucker Chris Warren Patricia Wiltse

### Gifts of Kindness - \$250 - \$499

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### Gifts of Kindness - Up to \$249

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Matching Gift Carolyn Green Jeanne Gross Mark Gurnev Craig and Laura Hadley Robert Hall and Cynthia Glines Molly Harder Sondra Hardv Renee Harris Diane Harter Sara Hautz Zachary and Sarah Hegg Gerald and Corinne Hill Julia Hogan Mike and Sue Hornby Matthew and Courtney Horron Chris Huckle Louise Ihm Wendy Irvin Terry and Patty Jackson Devar Jamil Julia Johnson Teresa Jones Pam Jones Robinson John and Elizabeth Judson Kerry Kalbfleisch Annelle Kaspor and Joseph Jonika Louis and Gloria Katz Lisa Kaupas Mike and Sarah Kebler Robert & Francine Keene Megan Kellogg Charles and Dee Kelly Patrick and Kristine Kernan Dulce Kiessel Melissa Kilbourn Trissa Killeen Charlie and Kelly King Kenneth and Patricia Kleinrichert\* Brian and Pam Klumpp Jay Knapp Thomas Koch Susan Kraus Michael and Janet Kronk Craig and Mary Kuligowski David and Mary Kushion Fred and Linda Laughlin Jen Laventure Wear Robert and Lisa Lazar Andrew Lehman Ruth Leonard Rorie Lewis Kathrvn Linenger Margaret Loy Kapler Douglas and Lynne Luciani Arne and Judith Lundmark Christopher and Kristin Lutz Laura Mackey Todd and Michelle Mackey

# Thank You To All Our 2019-2020 Supporters

### Gifts of Kindness - Up to \$249 (continued)

Mackinaw Trail Health Associates David and Carolyn Mann Jamie and Barbara Marsh Mike and Kerry Marsh Frederick and Angela Mawson Devon McArdle Kathrvn McCain Patrick and Cynthia McCall Thurlow and Joyce McClellan\* Cookie McCullouah Stephen and Sally Meach Jason and Sarah Mettler Robert Mever Robert and Deanne Miller Darcy Milliken Margaret Million Rich and Cindy Milock Christie Minervini Paul and Catherine Minster Marsha Mixer Linda Mohrhardt Branden Morgan and Jennifer Buell-Morgan\* Kelly Nogoski Todd Norris Tim and Laura Nyquist Todd Okerstrom and Andrew Koons Sandra Olson Penelope Ort Ken and Becky Osborne Anthony and June Palumbo James and Amelia Pavelka Dave and Amy Pax Joan Peiffer Kathrvn Penfold Patricia Petrick Jennifer Peterson Karen and Darryl Petterson Meghan Phillips Dykstra

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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 or 231.947.6453.

# Thank You to These Businesses and Organizations for In-Kind and Volunteer Support:

Amical Auto Owners Insurance Bayview Scrappers Central United Methodist Church Crystal Mountain Eyes Only Media, LLC Jimmy John's High Impact Productions Knorr Community Project/ Knorr Marketing SNAP Printing North Bay Produce Northern Broadcast, Inc. TBA Credit Union

# Thank You to Our Volunteers



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Samantha Comai Betsev Coons Jennifer Cutler Chris Dennos Kristy Denny Janet Denton Mary Dillinger Michelle Dunaway **Bob Ebels** Kathy Fitch Robin Flannery Eric Fournier Nancy Gallagher Karen Garson Michele Gentry Pamela Giles Kav Goodall Amanda Gough Erik Gruber Nancy Guido Pat Haber Judy Harrison Cathy Heidel Leslie Heimburger Toni Hernalsteen Jeff Heydlauff Kate Heydlauff Mary Hughes

**Roxanne Hunter** Melissa Johnson Mike Kebler Sarah Kebler Maggie Kernan Jack Kernan Olivia Kiel Brian Klumpp Kim Koehler Andrew Koons Harry Kroll Carole Lannin Gail Lanphear Susan Larned Katy Lawson Andrew Lehman Brian Marhofer Tess Marhofer Michele Marshall Ciara McCullough Marci Michael Jill Miklos Doug Morgenstern Geri Morris Pat Navvac Kevin Nelson Pam Nickerson Sean O'Brien

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# Michael's Place Is Thankful For Gifts Made In Loving Memory Of:

Erin Banton Michael Barry Ed Bishop Susan Brace Joseph D. Browne Kalee Bruce Greg Buell Michael Chaput Dennis T. Couturier Alix Crawford Michael Cutler Margaret "Peggy" Dendrinos **Richard Deneweth** Kurt R. Douglass Gail Ehlers Julie Janis Finch Zac Fochtman

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# Michael's Place is Thankful for Gifts Made in Honor of:

Dan Brady Marika BeVier Chris Dennos The Browne Family Jim and Gretchen Overbeek Libby Struik Joann Jozefowski and Family James Miller and The Fleming Family The Work of Michael's Place



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Traverse City, MI 49684

231.947.6453 goodgrief@MyMichaelsPlace.net MyMichaelsPlace.net

To put into words what Michael's Place has done for our family is an overwhelming task. In short, they allowed me to feel like I could breathe, even if only for a moment. When you speak to someone who truly understands your pain and absorbs it without trying to "fix" it, it is one of the most comforting feelings imaginable.

# Elizabeth K., Michael's Place Attendee