



# REVIVE & THRIVE PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



# ABOUT REVIVE & THRIVE PROJECT

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## Mission

We provide nourishing meals to those facing a health crisis while empowering the next generation.

## Vision

Optimal health outcomes through equitable access to nutritious foods, nutrition information and a caring, connected community.

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## Board of Directors

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## Revive & Thrive Project

Physical Address: Grace Episcopal Church, 1815 Hall St SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Mailing Address: 1971 E Beltline NE, STE 106 #210  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

Visit us online:  
[www.reviveandthriveproject.org](http://www.reviveandthriveproject.org)

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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense gratitude for the incredible strides we've made together at Revive and Thrive Project (RTP). In the nine months since joining RTP as Executive Director, I have had the privilege of meeting with volunteers, clients, and donors alike. Your warm welcome and support have been truly humbling, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such dedicated individuals who share a common commitment to our cause.

Imagine the feeling of returning home from the hospital after receiving treatment, weary and in need of sustenance to aid in your recovery. Yet, the mere thought of preparing a meal feels daunting. It's in these moments of vulnerability that our organization steps in, delivering not just meals, but a beacon of hope and support directly to the doorsteps of individuals and families in need. Our dedicated volunteers, armed with warm smiles and delicious, healing meals, offer more than just sustenance – they provide comfort, strength, and the reassurance that no one is alone in their journey towards wellness.

At the heart of our program lies a commitment to supporting individuals and families through their health crises. Through our home-delivered, fresh meals, coupled with nutrition education and support, we strive to alleviate some of the burdens of illness and restore vitality to those in our care. Last year alone, we provided 17,765 meals to individuals facing health challenges in Kent County, which represents a 58% increase in the number of meals served. Since our establishment in 2015, we have served over 69,406 meals to individuals and families facing health crises.

But our impact doesn't stop there. We believe in investing in the future by engaging young people as teen chefs, offering hands-on training in healthy cooking and life skills. By empowering the next generation with the tools they need to make positive choices for themselves and their communities, we are sowing the seeds for a healthier, more resilient future. This year 18 teens participated in the program, and we look forward to continuing to grow that number!

In closing, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who has contributed to our success; none of which would have been possible without your continued generosity and support. Your belief in our mission fuels our passion and drives our determination to make a difference, one healthy meal at a time.

With heartfelt thanks,

**AMY THOMAS-MELLEMA**

Executive Director





# FRESH, HEALTHY HOME-DELIVERED MEALS

Revive & Thrive Project's medically supportive meals can make the difference between barely surviving and actually thriving when faced with a serious illness. In 2023, we served 6,500 more meals than in 2022. On average, clients received meals for 16 weeks, though some for up to 6 months through cancer treatment, organ transplant, or recovery from heart failure, complications of Diabetes, or major surgery.

We are very proud of our meals - fresh, nutrient-dense, and packed with lean protein, colorful vegetables, and whole grains. Revive & Thrive meals align with the DASH and Mediterranean diets and are 85% vegetarian and free from saturated fats or refined sugars. We focus on creating accessible, delicious food that introduces our clients to a wide variety of healthy ingredients, and share recipes and resources that allow them to continue building healthy habits.

Our delivered meals provide vital nourishment when every bite counts and significantly relieve stress on the entire family, as well as promoting healthy food choices.



**17,765**  
nutritious meals served in 2023

**272**  
people served

**16**  
average weeks of meal  
service per client  
household in 2023



# CLIENT IMPACT

Since 2015, Revive & Thrive Project has nourished those most at risk of malnourishment during a health crisis by preparing and home-delivering thousands of delicious, nutrient-rich meals. We deliver beautiful, nutritious meals at no cost to individuals and families facing medical crises across Grand Rapids. Revive & Thrive Project's aim to bolster nutrition is enacted with a culture of support for each meal recipient and their families. Clients complete surveys at the point of intake, and again after receiving at least 12 weeks of home-delivered meals. Results include the following:

**100% of Revive & Thrive clients said that our meal service reduced stress related to grocery shopping and cooking.**

**94% of clients reported that Revive & Thrive meal service helped them feel better physically.**

## Revive & Thrive Project Client Spotlight: Philip & Renee



Philip's cancer diagnosis early last year was devastating, especially since he was already the primary caregiver for his spouse Renee, who has MS and other chronic conditions. Philip and Renee turned to Revive & Thrive for support during his daily radiation treatments, as it became incredibly difficult for him to get to the grocery store and cook healthy meals while also caring for his wife.

Having healthy meals delivered to their door every week allowed Philip and Renee to focus on their health and enjoying time together, in addition to introducing them to new healthy ingredients. He shared, "How blessed we are to have all of you in our community! Thank you for so many delicious dinners, salads, and soups. I never thought I could enjoy beans or kale - thank you for expanding my food horizons!"



**Learn more about Revive & Thrive meal recipients and our impact in 2023 by visiting our website.**

# HANDS-ON SKILLS FOR TEENS

To amplify the benefits of cooking with fresh, healthy ingredients, Revive & Thrive engages high school students in the kitchen each week. Our teen program includes motivated high schoolers from school districts across greater Grand Rapids. We invest in the next generation by providing opportunities for youth to build skills in the culinary arts, nutrition, teamwork, and leadership development.

Teens gain confidence and learn about the powerful relationship between food and health. Weekly experience working with a chef in a professional kitchen environment also teaches valuable cooking and job readiness skills. Our model of service elevates teens from learners to nurturing leaders, providing positive youth development experiences that benefit many aspects of their lives.

Revive & Thrive welcomed 18 teen chefs from 10 high schools throughout greater Grand Rapids in 2023. On average, teen chefs participated in 12 volunteer shifts during the year, contributing 36 volunteer hours - though our most dedicated teens showed up for 30 weeks of volunteering! These diverse, dedicated, and inquisitive kids brought fresh energy to the kitchen while learning useful skills.



18

teen chefs in 2023

378

teen volunteer hours

6

teens involved for 6 months or more in 2023, contributing over 75 volunteer hours



# VOLUNTEER POWERED

We are truly grateful to have a team of loyal volunteers who contribute in so many ways to make our meal service a success. It takes 45 volunteers each week to prepare, package, and deliver healthy meals to the doors of our clients. We celebrate the astounding 3,724 volunteer hours contributed this year!

Revive & Thrive volunteer shifts begin each week with “Chop & Chat” volunteers who gather to prepare farm-fresh vegetables for cooking while enjoying each other’s company. In 2023, we added a second shift on Tuesdays for preparing our weekly soup. Wednesdays featured the height of activity at Revive & Thrive - after an early afternoon shift where dedicated volunteers assisted Chef Mandy Thompson with cooking and baking, we welcomed teen chefs after school to cook, plate up and garnish entrees, and participate in many aspects of operating a commercial kitchen.

Our packaging volunteer team stepped in on Wednesday afternoons to seal, label, and organize all of our meals. Finally, our delivery driver volunteers arrived each evening to pick up their meal bags and travel throughout greater Grand Rapids to the doors of those facing medical crises in our community. With a dedicated and energetic volunteer crew, we produced 400 fresh, delicious meals each week. Revive & Thrive is honored and grateful to be a volunteer-powered organization.



124

adult volunteers in 2023

3,724

total volunteer hours

1,743

deliveries made to client homes in greater Grand Rapids

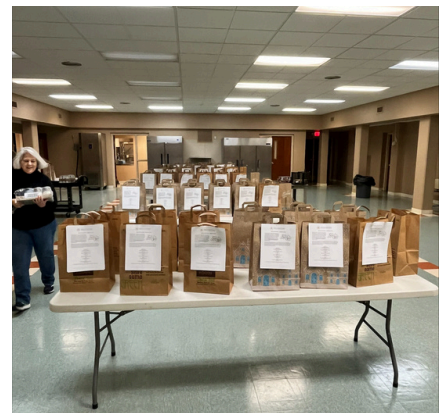


# GROWING AT GRACE CHURCH

In March 2023, Revive & Thrive moved our operations into a new, fully-equipped kitchen at Grace Episcopal Church. We were able to move our entire operation and start cooking in this new space without missing a single day of meal service, thanks to many volunteers who packed and hauled kitchen equipment, and dozens of donors who funded a new fridge, freezer, and blast chiller.

We moved from a shared catering kitchen in Walker to the centrally-located kitchen and office space at Grace Episcopal Church in East Grand Rapids. Our new kitchen in Grace Church has much more space for our meal packaging team, a great office, large parking lot, and a warm, welcoming environment - so many features that helped us to expand our capacity and serve more nutritious meals. Its central location has been key to welcoming new volunteers, and has also reduced travel time for most of our meal delivery routes.

Overall, Revive & Thrive was able to serve 10 additional people per week - providing 6,500 additional healthy meals throughout the year for those with life-altering illnesses. We are grateful to the leadership at Grace Episcopal Church for welcoming us!



78

donors funded our new fridges & freezers

19

volunteers helped us move

2

trailers of kitchen equipment moved

# STAFF ADDITIONS

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**Amy Thomas-Mellema: Executive Director  
August 2023**

Amy Thomas-Mellema is a visionary leader with exceptional experience and a leadership style focused on collaboration, empathy, transparent communication, accountability and having fun! During her 25-year legal career, in addition to managing her own law firm, Amy has held positions as general and senior counsel at organizations including Priority Health and Health Alliance Plan. Amy is passionate about health and healthcare, and the impact of nonprofits in our community.

**Marta Fenu: Director of Development  
October 2023**

Marta is a business development and strategy leader who has worked with a variety of companies, founders, and brands helping her clients reach their full business potential. She has international experience in leading brands strategies, helping companies grow, and expanding in new markets. She is enthusiastic to leverage her skills to serve Revive & Thrive's mission and community. Marta is a mom of 3, passionate about nutrition, and healthy living: holding certifications as a Wellness Coach and Yoga Instructor.



**Quana O'Bryan: Meal Packaging & Delivery Coordinator  
October 2023**

Quana has a background in healthcare, manufacturing, and most recently has worked in human resources with a global online travel agency. Her passions are traveling and volunteering. Quana has volunteered with Kids Food Basket, Gilda's Club Laughfest, and LINC-UP among other non-profit organizations. She is excited to participate in meal packaging and delivery at Revive & Thrive where she feels connected to the mission and purpose and is always ready and willing to lend a helping hand.





# GARDEN-FRESH FOOD

Thanks to the support of several donors and the diligent work of teen volunteers, Revive & Thrive's first garden at Grace Episcopal Church was a great success! Herbs, lettuce, kale, and cherry tomatoes are especially plentiful and were featured in many of our healthy meals during the summer months.

Teen volunteers Kersten and Ella led the charge on creating a garden for Revive & Thrive, raising the money for garden supplies and plants through fundraising and collecting thousands of pop cans. After installing the containers, they planted herbs, vegetables, and flowers. They also caringly watered and weeded the garden throughout the summer months, ensuring a bumper crop.

The Revive & Thrive kitchen team delighted in adding garden-fresh ingredients into our meals - including kale for our frittatas and salads, basil in a summery berry smoothie, and grilled vegetables with chimichurri sauce prepared from garden-fresh parsley.

We are grateful for the ability to source hyper-local produce for our healthy meals and are glad to have a beautiful container garden for years to come!



6

garden beds

4,000

pop cans collected for fundraising efforts

14

herb and vegetable varieties cultivated





# HEALTHY MEALS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

For the first time in our 8-year history, Revive & Thrive served healthy meals throughout the 2023 holiday season. Our clients were very happy to receive consistent service, and we were excited to provide year-round, vital nutrition for those facing a health crisis.

For deliveries on the weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas, Revive & Thrive received a generous donation of 500 organic, vegan meal kits. Getting these meal kits to our clients was a true team effort including support from several community partners. Volunteer spirit was also critical to the success of our holiday deliveries, from packing meal kits to delivering food to client homes throughout Grand Rapids, Kentwood, Wyoming, and Walker.

Providing regular meal service throughout late November and December created remarkable results for client experience and success rates. Because we provided consistent service through the holiday season, we did not have any client turnover in our meal service. As a result, Revive & Thrive served more than double the fresh, nutritious meals in January 2024 as we did in the prior year. The 2023 holiday season was one for the record books at Revive & Thrive, and was made possible because of generous, caring people coming together to nourish our community.



47

holiday delivery volunteers

668

meal kits distributed for Thanksgiving & Christmas

113

clients served during the 2023 holiday season



# CELEBRATING THE HARVEST IN STYLE

We were honored to have a record number of new and returning guests join us for Revive & Thrive Project's signature farm-to-table dinner event, Celebrate the Harvest. This year's event returned to the elegant and spacious Studio D2D Event Center near downtown Grand Rapids.

Event attendees enjoyed delicious appetizers, entrees, and desserts prepared by Executive Chef Mandy Thompson and our intergenerational volunteer team. Revive & Thrive staff and Board members shared about the incredible impact our mission is making in the community.

Chef Jenna Arcidiacono, Owner and Chef at Amore Trattoria Italiana and Founded of Food Hugs, emceed the event with panache and energy, contributing a surprise dinner to our live auction to support fundraising efforts. Additionally, our new Executive Director, Amy Thomas-Mellema, shared an update on Revive & Thrive programs. Event attendees contributed generously to the mission of Revive & Thrive, making our 2023 Celebrate the Harvest the highest fundraising event in our history.



172

event attendees in 2023

\$70,000

raised for our programs

47

volunteers involved behind the scenes



# PARTNERING FOR HEALTH



Cross-sector partnership is key to meeting many of Revive & Thrive Project's operational goals. Our partners in 2023 have included:

## Corporate Sponsors



Kamminga & Roodvoets, Inc.



United Bank  
real solutions

## Grant & Contract Funders

*Kent County  
Senior Millage*

*Warren & Beverly Boos  
Family Foundation*

*Grace US Foundation*



## Food Procurement Partners



## Client Referral Partners



THE CANCER & HEMATOLOGY  
CENTERS

*Mary Free Bed  
at Home*



Trinity Health



*Beautiful You  
by Profile*



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



METRO HEALTH  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH



# LOOKING AHEAD: 2024 & BEYOND

Revive & Thrive Project continues to grow, serving more in need of nutritious meals and empowering more teens with nutrition, cooking, and life skills. Some of our areas for growth in the coming years include:

- Building our capacity to reach more people in need of our meals throughout greater Grand Rapids. Steps to increase our impact include:
  - Installing additional cold storage space in our kitchen to accommodate increased food donations and store ingredients for healthy meals
  - Incrementally adding clients throughout 2024, with the goal of reaching 80 clients per week (560 meals per week)
  - Expanding our funding base to provide sustainable support for additional healthy meal capacity
- Revamping our teen chef program to provide enhanced opportunities for teen volunteers:
  - Updated and expanded culinary skills and nutrition curriculum
  - Leadership and board service paths
  - Outreach at local schools
  - Enrichment opportunities such as farm field trips

As we look ahead, Revive & Thrive Project remains dedicated to our core values - to connect with confidence, act with an open heart, and be unstoppable. These values mark our approach to each meal recipient who enjoys our healthy dishes and each teen chef who enters our kitchen.

One bite at a time, one meal at a time, Revive & Thrive Project is focused on nourishing our community.

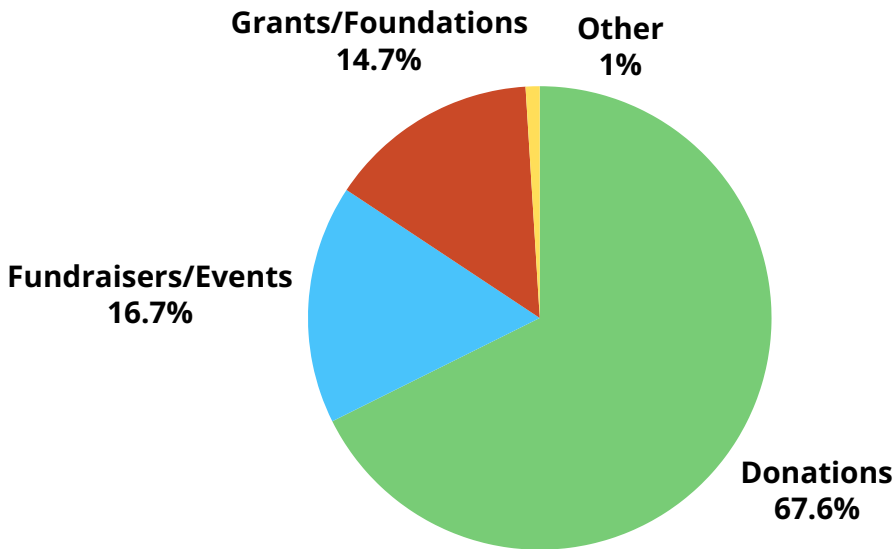
To get involved with Revive & Thrive as we continue to make an impact for those facing medical crises, while empowering teens, visit [www.reviveandthriveproject.org](http://www.reviveandthriveproject.org) or find us on Facebook and Instagram @reviveandthriveproject.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

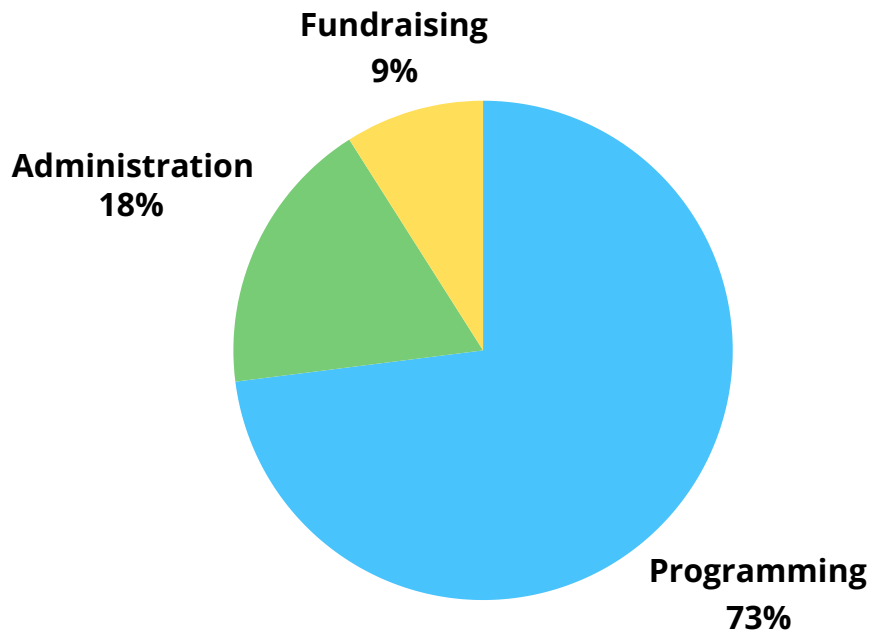


## 2023 Revenues



We are grateful to our incredible volunteers, who contributed over **3,700** hours representing a value of **\$59,600!**

## 2023 Expenses



# THANK YOU!

Revive & Thrive Project's work is made possible by the generous contributions of many individual donors. To all those who contributed to our mission in 2023, your support makes it possible for Revive & Thrive Project to serve more individuals and families facing serious illness, while empowering teens. Thank you!



Visit our website to support Revive & Thrive Project's continuing growth in 2024.





# Revive & Thrive Project



Nourishing the community,  
one healthy meal at a time.



[www.reviveandthriveproject.org](http://www.reviveandthriveproject.org)

