

# LOOKING FORWARD

MAM 2021 Impact Report



MAM's mission is to build stable families, a dynamic workforce, and vibrant communities... together.

At MAM, we envision a Houston of boundless opportunity, filled with hope, stability, and belonging.

## Dear Friends,

At MAM, we look forward knowing that a family's past doesn't define its future. We meet people where they are and help them build on their strengths to create the best future version of themselves, their families, and our collective community. Through our daily work, we are reminded of the growth and unyielding hope that can emerge when challenges are met with sacrificial love and support. In this report, we celebrate all we have accomplished together in 2021, while looking forward to a future of growth and promise.

The past few years have been full of complex uncertainties and unprecedented challenges. I personally have been humbled and proud to lead MAM through the ongoing pandemic and brutal winter storm, providing over \$5M of vital disaster support to the local community, while maintaining core services.



During this time, MAM has learned to leverage technology, develop new skills, and grow capacity to support our mission of *building stable families, a dynamic workforce, and vibrant communities*. Understanding that a family's financial stability profoundly impacts their physical, mental, social and spiritual health, we have worked to expand programs like financial coaching and employment services, and more fully integrate our wrap around supports like English classes and mental health counseling.

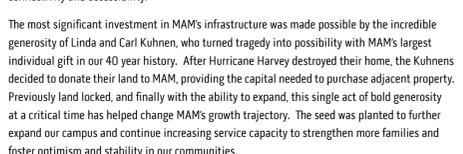
We hope Kimberly D.'s story will inspire you to see what is possible when we, as a community, look forward and invest deeply in people's lives, creating solutions that go beyond quick fixes, and focus on long term, sustainable change. Our work is only possible because of you – our donors, partners, and friends. Creating a vibrant Houston, a place everyone is proud to call home, will take all of us standing together, looking forward, and continuing to help our neighbors in meaningful ways. We can do this. We are doing this. Thank you for your support and commitment to our work. You make change possible. **Now, let's do more.**

Looking forward!  
**Sonja Gee**  
 President and CEO  
 Memorial Assistance Ministries

In 2021, MAM served **16,095** people from **13,081** families

## Expanding to Meet Growing Needs of the Community

For nearly 40 years, MAM has helped members of our community overcome obstacles and develop new skills and confidence for a better future.



Though MAM has grown significantly over the decades, the needs in our city have outpaced our capacity to serve. In response, MAM's leadership has cast a vision to increase our highest impact programming within MAM's 17-zip code service area in northwest Houston. Two major initiatives of the growth strategy include expansion of the main campus in Spring Branch and the establishment of a satellite location in the eastern part of MAM's service area.

MAM took major strides in 2021 strengthening organizational infrastructure in response to evolving pandemic-related needs and in preparation for the growth ahead. We invested in cloud-based technology, a VOIP phone system, and online tools to support virtual services and facilitate collaboration between campuses. This has enabled MAM to offer a new level of flexibility for clients and truly meet them where they are, reducing transportation barriers and increasing connectivity and accessibility.

The most significant investment in MAM's infrastructure was made possible by the incredible generosity of Linda and Carl Kuhnen, who turned tragedy into possibility with MAM's largest individual gift in our 40 year history. After Hurricane Harvey destroyed their home, the Kuhns decided to donate their land to MAM, providing the capital needed to purchase adjacent property. Previously land locked, and finally with the ability to expand, this single act of bold generosity at a critical time has helped change MAM's growth trajectory. The seed was planted to further expand our campus and continue increasing service capacity to strengthen more families and foster optimism and stability in our communities.

Soon afterward, an opportunity to lease a space from Vineyard Church of Houston in Greater Heights presented itself, fulfilling the strategic goal of expansion through a strategically located satellite office. This new campus will serve as home to a second MAM Resale Store and a service access point for in-person and virtual programs for the Northside, Northline, and Heights communities.

Raised more than **\$5 million** of COVID support to infuse into our local community

"The ability to expand access to our programs and services will offer more hope to people looking to create sustainable changes in their lives," said Sonja Gee, MAM President and CEO. "As we continue our growth, we also continue to refine our understanding of the changing communities we serve, recognizing the need to help families meet today's immediate challenges while providing services critical to long-term stability."

2,830 received disaster help

5,365 children received new school clothing

849 volunteers contributed 37,512 hours toward MAM's mission

## Future Focused: Kimberly's Story

Kimberly D. has always had a knack for looking forward through adversity. At the age of 8, she was inspired by the healthcare workers who helped her mother fight leukemia in her native Kentucky.

In 2014, she and her family moved to Houston in search of better opportunities. Despite earning a bachelor's degree in healthcare administration, her online college wasn't recognized by most companies, so Kimberly was limited to working as a health aide making \$9 an hour. Her husband worked as a truck driver and the pair struggled to make ends meet, living in a 3-bedroom apartment with their six children, now ranging in ages from 1-15.

"We've struggled but I always keep a smile on my face," said Kimberly. "I can't show my kids that Mom is stressed out. No matter how many struggles we face, I know we'll get through. It's made me a stronger person."

As her husband experienced major health problems in 2020 and was forced to stop working, Kimberly knew she had to earn more to support her family. After being referred to MAM from Workforce Solutions, she was pleasantly surprised by the warm welcome she found.

"MAM was so professional and willing to help – I felt at home," said Kimberly. "[The staff at MAM] had open arms and just gave me a good feeling. I knew this was going to be good for my family. I could do something I wanted to do."

Kimberly was accepted into MAM's Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training in early 2021. While going through the program, she continued to work as a health aide, often going directly from class to work a 12-hour shift, then home for a couple of hours of sleep before returning to class the next day.

"You gotta get up and fight for what you want," said Kimberly. "[The team at MAM] worked with me to keep me in the program when I didn't think I could do it anymore. Every person you come into contact with at MAM is encouraging, telling you you can do it and asking 'how can we help you progress?'"

Kimberly also met with a MAM financial coach to help manage her money more strategically. Now she is able to pay her bills and have a little money left over each month for savings.

"I was on food stamps and Medicaid, but now I don't need state assistance," said Kimberly. "Those programs are for people that need them. But now I can live on what I make and support my family."

After completing the CNA training and passing her test, Kimberly quickly landed a job as a CNA and is now making \$19 an hour during the week (\$22 an hour on weekends).  
**The impacts of this change on her entire family are immeasurable.**

"I've had people doubt me, but I would look at my kids and I didn't care what other people were saying – I was going to do it for my kids," said Kimberly. "I'm so proud to be in a career that I love with benefits, paid time off, and a good wage. I'm ecstatic to be where I am today."

122 participated in financial coaching

3,123 received benefits application assistance

## Building Healthy, Vibrant Communities Through Mental Health Services



MAM understands that the well-being of clients goes beyond their physical health; it encompasses their mental health, too. That is why MAM offers counseling services as part of our wrap-around services, ensuring client access to helpful tools to improve their mental and behavioral health.

"The pandemic underscored the vital need for mental health support for all of us. This was reflected in the number of clients – nearly 400 – who sought these services in 2021," said Sonja Gee, President and CEO of MAM. "To overcome barriers and become fully functioning, successful members of society, people need others to empathize, listen, and validate their feelings and emotions, and help them gain new insights and tools to live better, which is exactly what we provide."

MAM offers brief solution-based therapy to help people cope with all sorts of losses, life adjustments and other challenges creating barriers including the loss or change in a job, a relationship, or even the passing of a loved one. Individuals and families can receive 8 to 12 mental health counseling sessions at no cost to them. Sessions are offered in-person and virtual visits in English, Spanish, or Farsi. If patients need to be referred to another mental health provider, MAM will do that, too.

"Through our counseling sessions, we teach people coping mechanisms that will not only help them in their current situation but better equip them for challenges they will encounter later down the road," said Gee. "We see the positive results through increased job retention, parent engagement, and overall financial health."

"I'm so grateful to MAM for providing mental health services. It has helped me and my family navigate some challenging situations, especially during COVID."  
 — Rosy H., MAM client

MAM currently offers its mental health services in-person and via telehealth.

356 clients received mental health services in 2,070 sessions

## Creating a Sustainable Future for Young Adults

Building positive habits early and having access to mentors are critical for young adults to reach their greatest potential later in life. Recognizing the importance of both, MAM set out to create Pathways for Young Adults, a program to provide positive interventions for young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are either not in school, at risk of dropping out, or unemployed.

Officially launched in January 2020, "Pathways" provides opportunities for participants to build skills, access resources, and seek support to re-engage educational opportunities or improve their employability. For some, this means getting a GED and applying for college or trade school. For others, this means customized job training and career development to focus on obtaining a job with a meaningful career path.

Meeting young adults where they are, creating a safe place for guidance and mentorship, and providing connections to meaningful career opportunities have all been key to the enormous success of this program early on. Despite the pandemic, the Pathways for Young Adults program served more than 100 participants in its first year. When peers saw their friends enter the program with no clear vision for their future, and exit with a CNA certification, a good job at Methodist or Memorial Hermann, and a clear pathway to a promising future, they were encouraged to join the program. Through word of mouth referrals and working hand-in-hand with partners such as Spring Branch Independent School District, participation more than doubled in 2021, serving 230 young adults.

Young people who participate in the Pathways for Young Adults program receive much more than access to job resources. Through one-on-one coaching, active listening, and building relationships, they create a support system while finding hope, stability, and a purpose. They also can take advantage of MAM's other services.

"We believe it's vital to reach this population before they turn 25 to get them on a path to independence," said Sonja Gee, President and CEO of MAM. "Our team meets these young people where they are and provides them with the tools and support so they can learn to lead happy, successful, and productive lives."

2,181 clients received financial assistance

1,162 clients participated in employment services

## Innovative Combination: New Workforce ESL Program



English as a Second Language (ESL) classes have been a cornerstone of MAM services since the 1980s. Throughout the years, MAM has asked its ESL students why they enroll, and the overwhelming majority say the motivation to improve their English is job related. This need was even more exacerbated after the onset of the COVID pandemic, when thousands of local jobs were lost. In response, MAM developed its new Workforce ESL Program, combining decades of experience in employment services and English instruction to create a powerful, integrated program to meet this critical community need.

Workforce ESL is designed to educate and motivate non-native English speakers to learn new skills, develop positive work habits, find a job, or advance their careers. Classes are focused on workplace terminology and serves students with intermediate to high-level English proficiency. Like MAM's other English classes, Workforce ESL is taught primarily by community volunteers. Staff from MAM's Employment Services offer job readiness workshops throughout the semester with topics spanning from elevator pitch to interviewing skills. The program has quickly gained momentum and is now one of the most popular offerings at MAM.

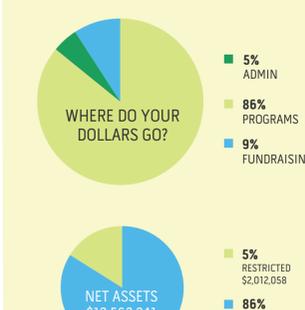
Creating the Workforce ESL program is another example of MAM's commitment to be more intentional about the bundled services offered to clients, providing them with a variety of innovative tools to help them not only survive but thrive as productive members of their communities.

866 clients participated in English as a Second Language (ESL)

541 served with Immigration Legal Services



## Financials



SOURCES OF SUPPORT

- INDIRECT PUBLIC SUPPORT \$1,441,957
- INDIVIDUALS \$1,357,567
- RESALE STORE \$1,727,961
- FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS \$926,633
- OTHER \$187,026
- CORPORATIONS \$322,260
- CONGREGATIONS \$207,474
- SPECIAL EVENTS \$710,974
- GOVERNMENT \$285,681
- PPP \$701,600

WHERE DO YOUR DOLLARS GO?

- 5% ADMIN
- 86% PROGRAMS
- 9% FUNDRAISING

NET ASSETS \$12,562,241

- 5% UNRESTRICTED \$10,550,183
- 86% RESTRICTED \$2,012,058

LIABILITIES \$58,415

NET ASSETS \$12,562,241

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS \$12,620,656

2021 OPERATING EXPENSES \$8,786,910

2021 OPERATING REVENUE \$8,751,838

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (\$35,072)

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