

It takes **all** of us.



# Annual Report



JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019

It takes **all** of us.

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# Leadership Letter



Dear Affinity partner,

If the past year was summed up in one word, it would most certainly be growth. The 2018-19 year has been an incredible time of growth for Affinity Mentoring in so many ways. The most significant was the physical growth of our program as we prepared to add a new site at Godfrey-Lee Early Childhood Center. Through the newest location, we will be able to expand the reach of mentoring, supporting up to 40 more students and their networks. This new addition also grows Affinity's footprint across two school districts - Grand Rapids Public Schools and Godfrey-Lee Public Schools.

We have also seen growth in demand throughout our community with increasing numbers of requests from families and schools hoping to utilize mentoring services. This is a testament to the quality of the work done by our mentors, site coordinators, and the entire Affinity team. It is also evidence that our work is nowhere near being done. While we will continue to take a measured approach to growth and future expansion, we are excited to continue to partner with the community to invest in our young people and their success.

The 2018-19 year also marked another important milestone as the last full year our Executive Director, Laura Ward, served in her role. At the time of writing, Laura has stepped down and we have welcomed her successor to lead Affinity into the future. Laura has been the heart, vision, and voice of Affinity Mentoring, and through her leadership she has helped shape Affinity into what it is today. While we will miss Laura's passion and her talent for inspiring the team and volunteers to bring their all to their work, the foundation she helped lay will ensure Affinity continues to keep its mission moving forward.

As we have prepared to say goodbye to Laura, we have loved hearing from the families, community members, volunteers, and partners who have journeyed alongside us. Laura's impact on the community through her work has been significant and she has built many genuine relationships with those who support Affinity through their time and as donors. To celebrate Laura and her legacy with Affinity, we will be sharing opportunities to make a gift in her honor throughout the rest of the year. As always, you can make a gift anytime online through the Affinity website. We are so grateful to those who support our work in the ways that are most meaningful to them - thank you for your belief in the power of mentoring and for continuing to grow with us.

**It takes all of us.**

With gratitude,



**John Robinson**

Board Chair and Mentor at Affinity Mentoring  
[affinitymentoring.org](http://affinitymentoring.org)



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## Who We Are

### Our Vision

We envision that every student has a caring adult mentor to help improve academics, social skills, and self-esteem.

### Our Mission

We strive to interrupt the cycle of poverty through weekly, school-based mentoring.

### Our Model

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that collaborates with individuals and organizations, in partnership with businesses and schools, to provide mentoring to school-age children.



## Our Story



## Who We Serve

84%

of students in our partner schools are **economically disadvantaged**

MI School Data

### Target Population

- ▶ Kindergarten - 8th grade
- ▶ Schools with high populations of families lacking access and resources
- ▶ Students that can benefit from additional academic and social-emotional support



71%

of 4th graders in Michigan are **not proficient in reading**

Kids Count Data Book

### Our Students



90% elementary school students

10% middle school students



+80% identify as Hispanic or Latino

53%

of youth in Kent County **do not have a trusted adult to confide in**

Kent County Prevention Coalition

### Referral Process

Teachers, parents, and administrative staff from our partner schools refer students to our program.

### Matching Students and Mentors

Our program staff work one-on-one with students to pair them with a best-fit match based on common interests, background, student needs, etc.

14%

of students in our partner schools are **chronically absent**

MI School Data

A circular portrait of a woman and a young boy. The woman, on the right, has long brown hair and is wearing a dark blue sweater over a patterned collared shirt. The boy, on the left, has dark hair and is wearing a bright blue t-shirt. They are both smiling and standing in front of a red wall with a decorative star-shaped object hanging on it.

A circular inset photograph showing a young boy with dark hair wearing a red polo shirt, standing next to a man with glasses and a mustache wearing a dark sweater over a plaid shirt. They are both smiling and standing in front of a bookshelf filled with books.

Read more mentor stories at [affinitymentoring.org/about/blog/](https://affinitymentoring.org/about/blog/)

## How We Serve

**334**

individual  
donors

### Our Community-Based Approach

We develop strategic partnerships with community stakeholders to help recruit mentors, sponsor mentor matches, and increase overall organizational capacity.

**7,620**

total volunteer  
hours

### Diversity and Inclusion

We continue to promote inclusion, celebrate diversity, and uphold equity in our business partnerships, mentoring relationships, and every aspect of service delivery, including materials, recruitment, training, activities, and organizational culture even as we continue to learn and improve.

**5%**

increase in  
mentors of color

- 16% of mentors speak a language other than English
- 11% of mentors identify as people of color
- 66% of staff identify as people of color
- 50% of board members identify as people of color



## Community Partners



“The growing number of requests from families for the mentoring services of Affinity is evidence of the quality of the work done by Affinity’s leadership and volunteers in three of the highest needs Kent County schools. The Steelcase Foundation is appreciative of Affinity’s willingness to base its work on best available research, rigorous analysis, and growing dedication to improving student literacy achievement.”

**Julie Ridenour** | Steelcase Foundation, President

### 2018 - 2019 Community Partners

after the move  
Aon  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of MI  
boldSOCKS  
Butterball Farms  
Chemical Bank  
ChoiceOne Bank  
COM 616  
DWH LLC  
Erhardt Construction

Kars4Kids  
Kent District Library  
New Holland Brewing  
Geskus Photography  
Godfrey-Lee Public Schools  
Gordon Food Service  
Grand Rapids Public Schools  
Greater GR Chapter of Jack  
and Jill of America

Herman Miller Cares  
Kent School Services Network  
Mars Hill Bible Church  
Mindscape  
Rivertown Finance  
Steelcase Foundation  
The Wege Foundation  
YMCA of Greater GR



## Impact and Outcomes

**92%**  
program  
retention

### Measuring Match Quality

Our comprehensive evaluation plan is based on the *40 Developmental Assets*. We examine the relationship and match quality measures.

**255**  
mentor  
matches

Over the past 17 years we've gathered significant anecdotal evidence on the positive impact mentoring has on academic and socioemotional growth as well as on the school community.

**65%**  
of matches have  
been together  
2+ years

### Data Sharing Agreement with GRPS

We secured a Data Sharing Agreement with Grand Rapids Public Schools that will allow us to collect attendance and academic data. We will compare our data to a control group which will inform our future work and measure impact on a larger scale.

## Community and Family Impact



One of our core values is community, the belief that it takes a village to raise a child. We are honored to begin a partnership with Affinity Mentoring to provide mentoring services at the Godfrey-Lee Early Childhood Center to bring out the brilliance in each child."

**Kevin Polston** | Godfrey-Lee Public Schools, Superintendent

"Ha sido una experiencia excelente. Yo creo que no podría lograr yo sola estas cualidades en mi hijo sin la ayuda de Jim."

[It's been an excellent experience. I don't believe that I alone would have been able to develop these qualities in my son without Jim's help.]

**Marilu López** | Southwest Community Campus, Parent  
Watch Marilu's full story: [vimeo.com/affinitymentoring](https://vimeo.com/affinitymentoring)



## Our Team

### Laura Ward

Executive Director

### Rachel Humphreys

Development Director

### Angela Reyna Perez

Program Assistant

### Rocio Moreno

Site Coordinator | Burton

### Monica Zavala

Site Coordinator | SWCC

### Keyla Araujo

Site Coordinator | ECC



**Rocio Moreno** is the Burton Site Coordinator (or better known to kindergarteners as Mentor Boss Lady). “I love the fact that this organization is family-oriented. Affinity always puts the best interest of the family first. I am able to speak in Spanish and not feel out of place or looked down upon,” she explains.

Fleeing a dangerous situation, Rocio came to the U.S. from Mexico with her mom at the age of three.

“I can relate to a lot of the kids and families. I only spoke Spanish and didn’t start learning English until Kindergarten. I hated reading, I was often embarrassed.”

Rocio approaches mentor matching with a unique perspective in addition to drawing on her Master’s in Social Work. She explains that, “Mentor matching is a little bit of art, science, and a whole lot of gut because even though a mentor and student might have a lot of similarities that does not mean that they would be a good fit for each other.”

When she’s not at work she loves to exercise, “I wake up at 4 am every day to go to the gym.” She has two sons, Luis and Rolando, “I love to be with my two wonderful boys playing games, being outside, reading, and dancing.”

Read Rocio’s full story at: [affinitymentoring.org/blog/](https://affinitymentoring.org/blog/)

## Board of Directors

### President

**Susan Lukaart**

*Community Leader & Educator*

### Vice Presidents

**Matt Maletich**

*Blue Engine Consulting*

**John Robinson**

*Head Start for Kent County*

### Treasurer

**Benjamin Borisch**

*Growth Distilled, LLC*

### Secretary

**Madeline Aguilon**

*Gordon Food Service*

### Directors

**Missy Jackson**

*Herman Miller*

**Jason Loepp**

*Blue Cross Blue Shield of MI*

**Meaghan Miracle**

*Willis Law*

**Johana Rodriguez-Quist**

*Literacy Center of West Michigan*

**Adam Russo**

*COM 616*



**Back Row** [Left-Right]: John Robinson, Missy Jackson, Susan Lukaart, Ben Borisch, and Jason Loepp.

**Front Row** [Left-Right]: Johanna Rodriguez-Quist, Meaghan Miracle, Madeline Aguilon, and Adam Russo.

“Hearing about the need tears at your heart. I came back to the office and drummed up more support. I recruited 4 or 5 more mentors.”

### Jason Loepp

Board Member and Mentor at Burton

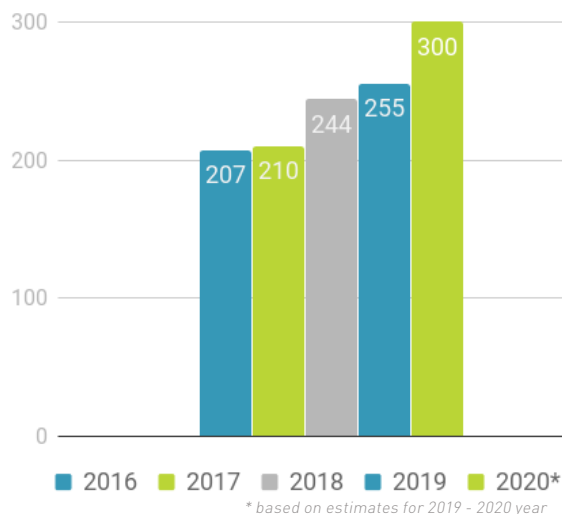


# Growth and Sustainability

There is a direct correlation between the number of matches we serve and the financial support we receive. We've created a diverse and sustainable fund development plan to meet this need. Our ultimate goal is to lessen the need for grant dollars by increasing the number of more sustainable gifts in the form of individual donations and match sponsorships.

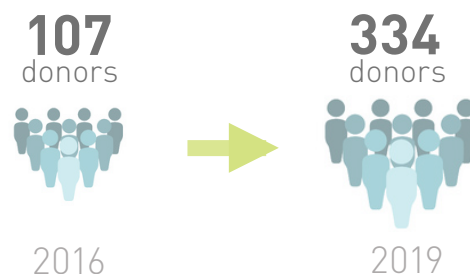
Below are our areas of growth since becoming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 2016.

## Mentor Matches



## Individual Donations

We invest in cultivating meaningful relationships with our stakeholders. We've seen a significant increase in individual contributions and match sponsorships.



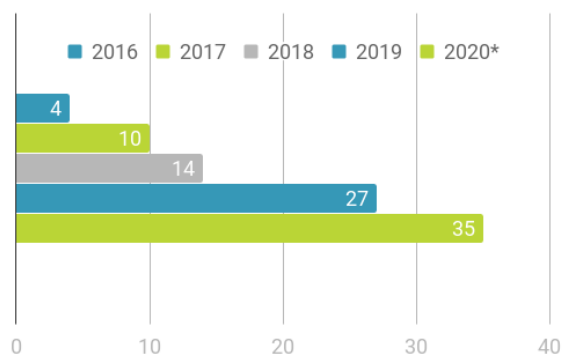
## Staff

We strive to meet best practice standards of no more than 100 matches per 1 FTE. In 2015, we had 2 part-time and 1 full-time staff.

Now we've grown to ...



## Community Partnerships

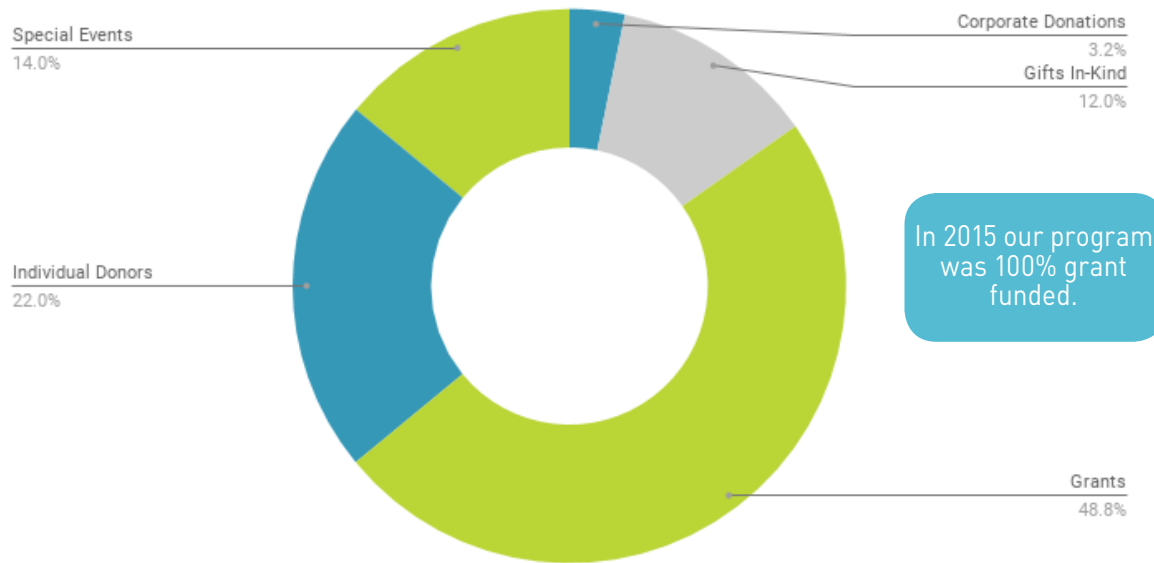


\* based on estimates for 2019-2020 year

# Financials

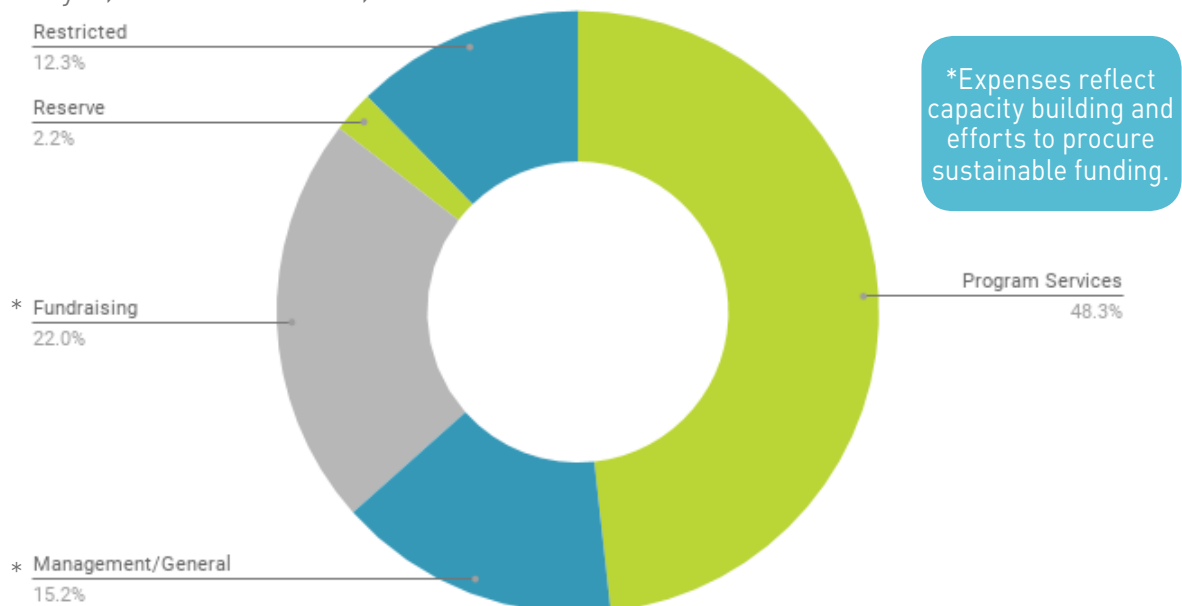
## Revenue | \$406,093

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019



## Expenditures | \$406,093

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019



It takes **all** of us.

## Connect With Us



### Join

[affinitymentoring.org](http://affinitymentoring.org)



### Sponsor a Mentor Match

[affinitymentoring.org/sponsor/](http://affinitymentoring.org/sponsor/)



### Email

[info@affinitymentoring.org](mailto:info@affinitymentoring.org)



### Like

[facebook.com/AffinityMentoring](https://facebook.com/AffinityMentoring)



### Call

616.209.8435



### Follow

[linkedin.com/company/affinity-mentoring](https://linkedin.com/company/affinity-mentoring)

## Current Locations



### Burton Elementary + Middle School

2133 Buchanan Ave SW | Grand Rapids, MI 49507

616.819.2262 | [burton@affinitymentoring.org](mailto:burton@affinitymentoring.org)



### Godfrey-Lee Early Childhood Center [NEW 2019]

961 Joosten St SW | Wyoming, MI 49509

616.241.4722 x 1336 | [glecc@affinitymentoring.org](mailto:glecc@affinitymentoring.org)



### Southwest Community Campus

801 Oakland Ave SW | Grand Rapids, MI 49503

616.819.6799 | [swcc@affinitymentoring.org](mailto:swcc@affinitymentoring.org)



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