



**RMAPI**  
ROCHESTER-MONROE  
ANTI-POVERTY INITIATIVE

**2018**  
**Year in Review**

## RMAPI COMMUNITY PARTNERS

1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East	Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.	Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)
ABVI - Goodwill Industries of Greater Rochester, Inc.	LiDestri Foods Inc.	SUNY College at Brockport
ACT Rochester	Lifespan	SUNY Rochester Educational Opportunity Center
Action for a Better Community, Inc.	Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation	The Center for Youth
Anthony L. Jordan Health Center	Maximus	The Children's Agenda
Ark of Jesus Ministries	Mental Health Association of Rochester/Monroe County, Inc.	Truform Manufacturing
Breakthrough Leadership Group	Monroe Community College	Young Adult Manufacturing Training Employment Program (YAMTEP)
Bridges to Success	Monroe County	U.S. Congressman Joseph Morelle
Catholic Family Center	Nazareth College of Rochester	U.S. Congresswoman Louise Slaughter
Causewave Community Partners	New York State 7th Judicial District	United Christian Leadership Ministry of Western NY, Inc.
Coordinated Care Services, Inc.	New York State Department of Labor	United Way of Greater Rochester Inc.
Center for Collaborative Health at CCSI	North American Breweries	University of Rochester
Center for Governmental Research, Inc.	New York State Department of Employment and Workforce Solutions	University of Rochester/EAST Partnership
CEO Works	Optimax Systems Inc.	Urban League of Rochester
Charles Settlement House	OWN Rochester	Veterans Outreach Center
Children's Institute	PathStone Corporation	Wegmans Food Markets
City of Rochester	PMI Rochester Chapter	William G. McGowan Charitable Fund
Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School	Regional Greater Rochester Transit Authority	Wilson Foundation
Common Ground Health	RMAPI Community Advisory Council	
Compeer Rochester	ROC the Future Alliance	
Connected Communities, Inc.	Rochester & Genesee Valley Area Labor Federation (ALF)	
Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Rochester	Rochester Area Community Foundation	
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County	Rochester City School District	
Council of Agency Executives	Rochester Institute of Technology	
Education Success Network, Inc.	Rochester Public Library	
Empire Justice Center	Rochester Regional Health System	
Empire State Development	Rochester Rehabilitation	
ESL Federal Credit Union	RochesterWorks!	
ESL Charitable Foundation	Salvation Army of Greater Rochester	
Finger Lakes Performing Provider System (FLPPS)	School of the Holy Childhood	
Foodlink	St. John Fisher College	
Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce	St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center	
Greater Rochester Health Foundation	State of New York	
Ibero-American Action League, Inc.		



Daan Braverman  
RMAPI Steering Committee Co-Chair  
President, Nazareth College

## RMAPI BACKBONE STAFF

This team of professionals is charged with supporting, guiding and organizing the work of the RMAPI Coalition.

**Dr. Leonard Brock**, Executive Director

**Dr. Rashid Muhammad**, Director of Operations

**Rebekah Meyer**, Operations Associate

**Takiyah Butler**, Operations Associate

**Loriane Ngarambe**, Community Engagement Specialist

**Graham Hughes**, Community Operations Associate

**Nate Dougherty**, Communication Coordinator



Rev. Dr. Marvin McMickle  
RMAPI Steering Committee Co-Chair  
President, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School

Dear Friends,

## **There is nothing new about poverty. What is new, however, is that we have the resources to get rid of it.**

These words, spoken by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, still ring true in our community today. Significant, concentrated poverty still plagues the Rochester area, as it has for decades. In 2018, Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative coalition members made significant strides in putting resources toward the kind of systemic change necessary to achieve the poverty reduction that has eluded us for so long. Through this coalition's focus on workforce development and the accessibility and affordability of basic needs, we are creating dramatic improvements to the wider systems that address and often perpetuate poverty.

We did this in a number of ways in 2018. Dozens of RMAPI coalition members began to map the social service sector — a daunting but necessary task in order to better understand how to improve the complex, interwoven and sometimes counterproductive processes that connect people with resources and opportunities to move out of poverty. Later in this report, you will have the chance to learn about organizations across our community that have committed to the RMAPI Guiding Principles: to address structural racism, address trauma, and build our neighborhoods. There is encouraging evidence these key principles are becoming a basis for informed community decision-making.

Since systemic change will not take place overnight, in the last year RMAPI coalition members also led efforts to bring immediate relief to those impacted by poverty. More than 200 participants in adult mentoring programs found new employment and raised their monthly income; more than 325 additional children attended summer learning programs thanks to state funding secured by RMAPI; and 200 individuals with low incomes learned valuable manufacturing skills and ultimately found sustainable employment through the RMAPI-supported Young Adult Manufacturer Training Employment Program.

In 2019, RMAPI coalition members will continue efforts to create systemic change. Our social service mapping project continues as dozens of coalition members identify concrete and immediate changes on the path toward long-term improvements. Efforts to bring system integration — one of the greatest challenges identified by RMAPI coalition members — will be supported over the next five years thanks to \$15 million from the State of New York. The United Way of Greater Rochester, an RMAPI coalition member, is leading this effort.

We know that addressing poverty is a marathon and not a sprint. But the progress of the RMAPI coalition in 2018 gives us hope of a new day in Rochester, with equal opportunities for success for all our residents, a level playing field for those looking to work and support their families, and a system that effectively meets the needs of all our neighbors.

Dr. Martin Luther King reminded us that "Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals."

Thank you for joining us in this work.



# As a community, we have set out to fight poverty in a meaningful way.

Pervasive, long-standing, and deeply rooted poverty is the greatest crisis the Rochester area has ever faced. RMAPI coalition members are proud to be engaged in this fight, alongside our many colleagues, peers and partners.

Through the dedicated work of this group, across our community and across the state, we have created a new

approach—one that doesn't stop at addressing the symptoms of poverty today, but also focuses on creating system-wide changes to bring long-term improvements and reduce poverty.

In 2018, we spent hours in deep engagement with more than 2,000 members of the community, from elected officials to social service agency staff to individual

community members. We assessed multiple data sets and analyzed the approaches taken by other communities across North America. RMAPI coalition members engaged thousands of individuals and families in programs and opportunities designed to help them address their needs. And coalition leaders adopted a common agenda to guide RMAPI's initial areas of focus.

## RMAPI FOCUS AREAS

Many factors need to be addressed to help those affected by poverty achieve self-sufficiency, including improvements to our local public health and education systems. Many of these are the focus of existing collaborative efforts within the broader anti-poverty landscape.

Intensive research and community engagement has pointed RMAPI coalition members to two critical areas that provide some of the greatest opportunity for poverty reduction:



### Workforce Development

helping people affected by poverty prepare for, find, and keep jobs with family-supporting wages.



### The accessibility and affordability of Basic Needs

helping people avoid the tyranny and repeated trauma of a focus on basic survival — which prevents them from even considering the higher-level activities required to exit poverty, and stay out of it.

## HOW WE WILL KNOW WE'VE ARRIVED

When we focus our efforts on these priorities, we can organize RMAPI coalition members around the achievement of three high-level outcomes:

**1**

Increased family income, through better jobs and access to critical supports

**2**

Increased access to and affordability of basic needs, through more affordable housing, better coordination of services, and more effective utilization of benefits

**3**

Decreased concentration of poverty, through strengthened communities that become a home to self-sufficient families

RMAPI coalition members are pursuing these outcomes aggressively, in dozens of ways. They are collaborating in ways never experienced here before, across the boundaries of organizations and systems. Service providers, government agencies and public and private funders are finding new opportunities to connect programs and services with the people who need them.

All this work is setting the foundation for a truly integrated system that achieves visible progress at the individual and community levels.

## CHANGE TAKES TIME

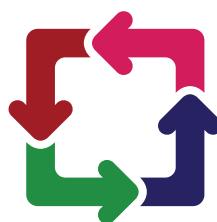
Addressing poverty is a marathon, not a sprint. This collaborative approach has found success in addressing poverty in communities across the continent, but nowhere has change happened quickly. In each of these communities, efforts have followed a long-term trajectory like the one adopted here:

### PHASE 1: 2015-2020



Strategies focused on **Process Changes**, beginning with mapping the system, identifying and prioritizing short and long-term changes within organizations and a new way to collaborate.

### PHASE 2: 2020-2025



Strategies focused on **Systems Changes**. With critical processes and players actively improving their collaboration and outcomes, the broader system can begin to see improvements in its own results.

### PHASE 3: 2025-2030



Strategies focused on **Population Changes**. At this stage, mature interventions are functioning effectively in an integrated system that is responsive to changing needs and continually improving the quality of life for our community.

# COMMUNITY SUCCESSES IN 2018



## Participatory Budgeting Rochester

RMAPI implemented a Participatory Budgeting process that gave members of the community the power to decide how to spend \$200,000 in state-approved funding for projects addressing poverty. The process was entirely community run—from the board of community members who set the rules for voting and proposals to the individuals and groups who submitted ideas. More than 2,600 people voted on which projects should be funded.

Participatory Budgeting aims to increase civic engagement and encourage political participation,

especially in traditionally marginalized groups. Hundreds of community members submitted project ideas, everything from expanding community gardens to building “tiny homes” for very low-income individuals to providing free bikes to people who need them for transportation to work and school. The top vote-getters will be announced and funded in early 2019.



## Adult Mentoring Programs

RMAPI coalition members Catholic Family Center, Action for a Better Community, and Community Place of Greater Rochester launched programs that address the need for mentoring services for individuals and families with two programs. Bridges to Success and the Family Independence Initiative create systemic change on an individual level, helping participants navigate systems of support by removing roadblocks.

Both of these programs reached their full cohort

of 300 participants in 2018, and participants in both programs saw tremendous improvements. In Bridges to Success, the employment rate increased from 28 percent at the start of the program to 56 percent by the end of the year and the average monthly household income for participants rose by 46 percent. In the Family Independence Initiative, the employment rate increased from 61 percent at intake to 71 percent by the year's end, while average monthly income rose by 21 percent.



## Building the RMAPI Coalition

RMAPI continued to bring on new partners in 2018 dedicated to making the process changes within their own organizations and across sectors that are required for systemic change. There are now more than 250 individuals serving on RMAPI's steering committee and working groups, representing dozens of local agencies that collectively touch all of the 107,626 people in poverty in our community and hundreds of thousands of others seeking to achieve self-sufficiency.



RMAPI has also maintained its close connection to the community, seeking the input of more than 2,000 people in the past year, with a focus on those affected by poverty. Their input guides RMAPI's priorities and informs the work of creating systemic change.

## Social Service Sector Mapping Project

The RMAPI coalition members have formed a Social Service Provision Working Group, which is creating a virtual "map" of the complex web of programs, services and providers who exist to help community members achieve self-sufficiency. By developing a clear understanding of the system that has been created over the past half-century, this group is identifying opportunities for greater efficiency, ways agencies can work together, and gaps that need to be filled.



This mapping project, launched in November of 2018, has brought an unprecedented level of cooperation among local non-profit groups, government agencies, and community organizations who are now working together to create systemic changes that will lead to incremental improvements in systems addressing poverty.

## Young Adult Manufacturing Training Employment Program (YAMTEP)

RMAPI's state funding included \$750,000 for the growth of YAMTEP, a 90-day job training program designed to help individuals with low income prepare for careers in manufacturing. YAMTEP partners with the City of Rochester, Monroe County, and RochesterWorks! to eliminate barriers to employment for all participants. They have a network of more than 30 companies and YAMTEP evaluates all students for qualifications and skill sets to ensure they are matched to the right job openings.

YAMTEP is a model collaborative effort that brings partners together to achieve more sustainable employment for individuals with low incomes.

# COMMUNITY SUCCESSES IN 2018, continued

## Advancing RMAPI Guiding Principles

At its formation, RMAPI coalition members identified three key principles to inform the community's anti-poverty work and serve as a guide for community decision-making: **Addressing Structural Racism, Addressing Trauma, and Building and Supporting Our Community.** RMAPI serves as the guardian of these Guiding Principles, spreading them across our community and helping coalition members adopt them within their own organizations.

In 2018, RMAPI coalition members made these Guiding Principles the foundation for the effort's working groups: Social Service Provision, Policy, Data and Evaluation, and

Employment. In 2018, both the Wilson Foundation and Rochester Area Community Foundation adopted the

Guiding Principles as part of their funding guidelines. RMAPI coalition members are also making these principles a foundation for their strategic plans — a critical step in embedding them in the community's anti-poverty work.

RMAPI has also worked with St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center to expand implementation of its Structural Racism Initiative. Dozens of nonprofit organizations participated in this two-year program that helps local agencies and businesses better understand structural racism and develop effective ways to combat it within their own organizations.

**"Addressing Structural Racism, Addressing Trauma, and Building and Supporting Our Community."**



## New York State Support

In 2018, RMAPI received continued support from the New York State government to address efforts that create systemic change. Based on the early success of the RMAPI collaborative model, New York has expanded the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) program to 16 other communities across the state.

RMAPI has grown its relationships with other ESPRI communities in 2018 to share best practices, discuss common areas of concern, and offer guidance so that future efforts to reduce poverty in Rochester will have the support of a broad, statewide coalition.

## JOIN US!

Do you want to learn more about what RMAPI and its partners are doing to address poverty and implement the Guiding Principles in our community? Would you like to share what you or your organization is doing to address poverty? Connect with us online by visiting [www.endingpovertynow.org](http://www.endingpovertynow.org).

**Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative**  
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