

GENERATIONS HELPING

DOROT

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Innovating During the Time of COVID

Never before has DOROT been challenged to sustain and grow its mission as it has been throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our mission – alleviating social isolation and loneliness in the older adult population – took on a sudden, unprecedented urgency when the lockdown began in March 2020. The average age of the people we serve is 82, 64% of them live alone. As the most vulnerable among us, they were forced to stay indoors and isolate. For them and for all of us, social isolation and loneliness became all too pervasive.

DOROT's response was immediate, deliberate and transformative. Instead of neutralizing or inhibiting our work, the crisis inspired DOROT to reimagine our mission for the new environment. We met – and even exceeded – key goals outlined in our pre-pandemic strategic plan. In total, **5,507**

older adults participated in **84,410** DOROT programs, activities and volunteer connections in the pandemic year from March 2020 – February 2021.

Throughout this time, DOROT's staff has been rethinking and reengineering nearly every program and created new ones to keep older adults safe and connected during the pandemic. Our laser-focus on the well-being of older adults caught the attention of the national news media – CBS *Morning News*, CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, NPR's *The Takeaway* and others – covered our work and success throughout the year.

Here is what we've accomplished since the pandemic began one year ago. ➡

Caring Calls

This new initiative created **1,147** matches between seniors and volunteers for a four-week series of friendly phone conversations, forging new friendships among seniors and volunteers from across the country. Nearly 30% of matches continued beyond the initial required period.

Check-In Calls

Staff and trained volunteers began regularly scheduled calls to thousands of older adults in DOROT's database to let them know that they are not alone and to offer help with shopping resources for food, medication and essential supplies. More than **8,400** calls were made this pandemic year.

Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) and Aftercare

DOROT's HPP transitional residence has remained open throughout the COVID-19 crisis. We offer housing and vital support to the residents who currently live at the HPP, and have increased meals from two to three per day to eliminate the need for residents to leave the building for their own safety. We also reached out to former HPP residents who had transitioned into housing through check-in phone calls every three weeks – more often, when necessary – and provided supplemental food.

Kosher Meals at Home

Food insecurity is often a concern for older adults, many of whom needed meal assistance for the first time during the pandemic. Since March 2020, we doubled the number of participants in our weekly food delivery program, providing **48,697** meals to a total of **345** older adults.

Onsite@Home

DOROT launched Onsite@Home within a matter of weeks after going remote. We welcomed **2,282** seniors to **873** Zoom programs this past year. Many older adults participate on a weekly basis, embracing Zoom technology and mastering the ability to connect virtually.

Tech Coaching

Many older adults are eager to connect through tech but lack needed skills. Trained Volunteer Tech Coaches assisted **260** older adults through **475** remote visits, helping them connect to family and friends via Zoom, FaceTime, text and email. More than **2,800** newly revised Tech Guides were downloaded from the DOROT website to enable older adults and their families to learn new tech skills.

Teen Internship Programs

While many summer teen programs were canceled due to the pandemic, DOROT successfully delivered its program remotely, expanding it to include a new Russian-English-speaking cohort at the Shorefront Y in Brooklyn. Seventy-five teens formed meaningful bonds with more than **200** older adults.

Shopping Assistance Program

Through a partnership with a local grocery store chain, we helped **133** seniors place **649** remote grocery orders, calling regularly to check in with them for assistance. DOROT has also been covering the costs of food for 90% of the participating seniors due to financial need.

University Without Walls (UWW)

DOROT's teleconference program for older adults who depend on the phone for social connection doubled this past year in both number of participants and programs offered. We engaged **737** participants, with **442** joining the program for the first time.

DOROT depends on the generous support of donors to help older adults stay socially connected. Thank you for your help in making this difficult year one of change, compassion and hope. We always welcome referrals of older adults. Please continue to support DOROT's work at www.dorotusa.org/donate