“Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season, It is today that our best work can be done And not some future day Or future year...”

W.E.B. Dubois
Late last year, the world changed drastically. Many people in our community are in crisis, unclear where to turn for help.
They are consumed with survival.

They are often overwhelmed by paperwork and policies.

They may not know how to find help.
Many wind up at the doors of community organizations like Bread for the City, Manna Food Center, and Community of Hope.

George Jones of Bread for the City says that the first signs of a recession were already visible three years ago: rising utility costs, increasing property assessments, and escalating food prices.

According to Amy Gabala of Manna Food Center, Montgomery County, Maryland—one of the wealthiest counties in the country—now has schools with the same federal poverty rate as the poorest parts of DC.

Homeless children are more likely to have at least one major mental illness, says Kelly Sweeney McShane, which is why Community of Hope assigns each family a case manager and a youth advocate.
It is here that they first realize they are not alone.
When the bottom dropped out, nonprofits like these three providing essential services were there to catch people when they fell.

**Bread for the City** = mental health + medical care + advocacy + legal services + food + clothing

**Manna Food Center** = feeding families + kids’ snacks + food delivery for seniors + advocacy

**Community of Hope** = housing for homeless families + social services + health care

“This is the new normal,” says Amy Gabala of Manna Food Center.
But while nonprofits like these are ably and bravely responding to the community, behind the scenes they are dealing with crises of their own:

Where is *their* safety net?

increasing need
decreasing funding,
staffs, reserves
Lines are longer; need is greater. And budgets are smaller.

Amy Gabala sees a 50 percent increase in clients needing food at Manna Food Center.

Bread for the City’s George Jones was forced to cut Friday hours and slash salaries.

Kelly Sweeney McShane of Community of Hope fears loss of funding could force one of her housing programs to close. “Yes means stretching too thin; no means we’re turning people away,” she says.

Still these organizations persevere. They prepare contingency budgets and forge new partnerships. They find more efficiencies in the way that they work. They continue to do the heavy lifting needed in times of crisis.
The Meyer Foundation is responding and adapting to these seismic changes in our economy.

Our priority is to continue to support longstanding, effective grantees.

We will continue to provide general operating support grants whenever possible.

We remain committed to nonprofits that provide direct services as well as those that effectively advocate for social justice.

We will continue to bolster strong and effective nonprofit leaders.

We will offer our new conference space free to grantees and funding partners.

In this climate of dramatic change, the fundamental character of this institution remains the same as it was at its creation 65 years ago: we are committed to listening deeply and looking for innovative ways to support community leaders as they work tirelessly in our region.

Medical services offered to clients at Bread for the City include adult general medicine, pediatrics, OB/GYN care, and job physicals. The clinic provides examinations, medications, lab tests, and referrals at no charge.
How we work

The Meyer Foundation works to strengthen nonprofit organizations and to address important issues that will improve the quality of life for people in the Greater Washington, DC area.

Collaborating
Meyer staff participate in the larger community by serving on many boards, committees, and working groups.

Supporting
The Exponent Awards sustain and raise the visibility of visionary nonprofit leaders.

Listening
Our program officers listen deeply to community needs and develop strong relationships with grantees.

Communicating
We provide timely information and resources through our website and e-newsletters. We raise the visibility of some of our most effective grantees.

Advising
Program officers serve as sounding boards for ideas, offer program strategy, and management and leadership tips.

Connecting
We connect donors with grantees that meet their interests. We serve as matchmakers for grantees that share common interests and goals.

Scanning
Our research reports have garnered national attention and have sparked dialogue on nonprofit leadership issues.

Advocating
We are committed to raising the voice and visibility of the nonprofit sector.

Leveraging
We leverage millions of dollars of local and national funding for our grantees.

To learn more about or to support the three organizations featured in this report and the other extraordinary grantees we fund, visit www.meyerfoundation.org/annual08

Bread for the City
www.BreadfortheCity.org

Community of Hope
www.communityofhopedc.org

Manna Food Center
www.mannafood.org
Pennsylvania native Carol Guzy has been a staff photographer at The Washington Post since 1988. Prior to that she was staff photographer for The Miami Herald. A change of heart in career choices made her switch from nursing to photography. Her assignments include both domestic and international stories and documentary reportage. She has been honored twice with the Pulitzer Prize for spot news photography for her coverage of the military intervention in Haiti and the devastating mudslide in Armero, Columbia. Carol received a rare third Pulitzer Prize for feature photography for her work in Kosovo. She has been named Photographer of the Year for the National Press Photographers Association and has earned other prestigious awards in photojournalism. Carol lives in Arlington, Virginia.