

**"You guys really made it clear that I'm an equal, and that's not something I've felt in a long time."  
— COR youth leader**



*COR is all about community, and one role of a supportive community is to celebrate each other's success! Friends, mentors, and chosen family gathered to celebrate Alex's access to gender affirming healthcare.*



*COR is proud to be part of the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). Julia Terry, COR's Director of Programming, joined community partners to celebrate support for our shared goal of ending youth homelessness.*

**"Being a host home has given us the opportunity to watch a young person grow and work towards their goals, while knowing that they have safe, stable housing. Hosting has empowered us to make an impact not only on a young person's future, but also on one of the largest issues our city currently faces: homelessness."**

**— Teagan Presler, host**

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**Choosing Our Roots**  
Safely Housing Queer Youth

**2019 Community Report**

*The mission of Choosing Our Roots is to ensure that all queer Alaskan youth and young adults have access to safe homes, supportive communities, and opportunities to thrive.*

*COR Values: Dignity & Respect · Empowerment · Cultural Relevancy · Community · Hope*

"COR is like my family," said a youth participant as she hugged me goodbye. Earlier, I had asked about her current apartment, and she replied that the space was ok, but spoke in a hushed voice about other tenants who did not like transgender people. She is living where she can afford for now, but she is on COR's waitlist for a host home where she can save money for a safer space of her own.

I have so much gratitude for all of you who give to COR. Your giving shapes communities that open their doors to strangers, empower acts of kindness, create safe inclusive spaces, and amplify youth and LGBTQ+ voices in community discussions on homelessness. I am so grateful to youth participants for striving to be themselves and for teaching us that the safety, security, and support they need is already in all of us to give.

To heal our communities it will take all of us. I encourage you to engage. Spend time with a young person in mentorship or at a COR potluck. If you have space in your home and a chair at your table, open it up to a youth in need. If you have extra time or money to give, consider giving to Choosing Our Roots. I sincerely believe that the more love we give to our community, the greater that love will grow.

Thank you,

Ariel Berg  
COR Board President

**"It isn't easy to build trust when you've been disappointed so many times. I know that when I need COR, you're there."**

**"Being matched with my hosts is the best thing that's ever happened to me!"**

**— COR youth participants**



*Youth leaders and volunteers representing COR in the Mat-Su Valley. Queer visibility and public advocacy are essential for young people, especially in smaller communities, and many were delighted to see COR marching in the Colony Days parade.*

# THANK YOU for Your Generous Support!

**Luke first became homeless at age 15.** Like many COR youth, Luke is transgender with a family that doesn't accept his identity. He has stayed in shelters and tents. For a while, he lived in a friend's closet. Though he works when he can, his paycheck goes to meet basic needs like food and transportation. Focused on daily survival, he could never save enough to pay first and last month's rent. When he made contact with COR this spring, Luke was 22 years old, working full-time and living in a tent. With support from his case manager, Luke secured a job with lodging in an outlying community. Then the job unexpectedly ended, and Luke found himself homeless again in a new place. COR was able to quickly identify and train a host home in that community. Now, Luke is stably employed and describes his host as the best roommate ever. He chooses to contribute toward the rent – not because he has to, but because it helps him feel a sense of balance and responsibility. He has begun to access healthcare and mental health supports. He has a plan to be independently housed by next year. Luke recently told his case manager that **this is the first time he has ever been able to think about what his future might look like.**



**Since launching the host home program this year, COR has:**

- ◆ Matched queer youth with mentors for ongoing one-on-one support
- ◆ Advocated for the needs of homeless LGBTQ+ youth in local and statewide systems
- ◆ Hosted multigenerational, sober community-building events
- ◆ Created opportunities for youth leadership development



**Housed 7 youth**  
in safe, supportive,  
identity-affirming homes

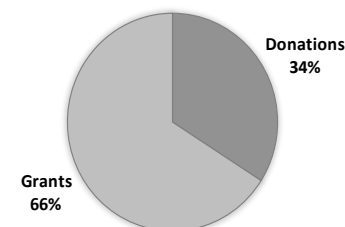


**Provided case management to 25 youth** as they work toward fulfillment of their personal goals

**“This is how it should be,  
people helping people because  
it's the right thing to do.  
You are giving me hope.”  
— young adult during intake**

**The Financial Information** below reflects the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2019. Significantly, it was midway through the year that COR hired a director of programming and launched services. Annual expenses will increase in this and all future years, as we continue to operate the host home program year-round.

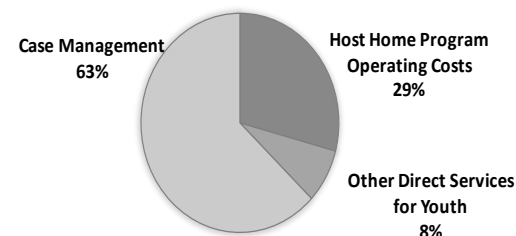
## REVENUE



**FY19 Total Revenue** \$132,752  
**FY19 Total Expenses** \$44,974  
**Net Revenue** \$87,778

**FY20 Operating Budget** \$193,423

## EXPENSES



### Grantors & Corporate Donors

Alaska Community Foundation \*  
Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority \*  
Alaska Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Alaska Women's Giving Circle  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
Anchorage Youth Development Coalition  
AT&T \*  
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NeighborWorks Alaska  
Pride Foundation  
Queer Happenings Alaska  
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UAA Drag+  
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) \*  
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*\* grant awards above \$5,000*

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Barbara McCarthy  
Benjamin & Ari Cohn  
Catie Bartlett  
Chris & Jamez Terry  
Erinn Barnett & Kayla Coughlen  
Frank & Grete Chythlook  
Gabby  
Jaisa Andersen  
M.E. Rider  
Shen Mao  
Teagan Presler  
courageous and wonderful friends  
our community's inspiring youth

### Gifts Made in Memory of:

Andrea Redeker  
Chandler Braley  
Doug Middleton

*We are grateful to all who make this program possible and do our best to maintain a thorough and accurate record of contributions received.*

*If you believe there has been an error or omission, please let us know: [info@choosingourroots.org](mailto:info@choosingourroots.org) or 907-764-6233*