

Meals on Wheels West

Helping a nonprofit focus on doing
the good work at the heart of its mission

Meals On Wheels West (MOWW) was looking for something more in its bookkeeping solution. They found it — at the right price — with Supporting Strategies.

Client Profile

MOWW nourishes and enriches the lives of homebound individuals by delivering healthy meals and services that promote self-respect and independent living. Based in Santa Monica, CA, the organization brings over 80,000 meals a year to people in Los Angeles' coastal communities.

Speaking from Experience

In the past, MOWW wasn't getting everything it needed from its bookkeeping resources. MOWW leadership wanted a resource that would be fully engaged, but at the right price.

Len Lanzi, MOWW Treasurer and Board member, recommended that the organization consider Supporting Strategies. Lanzi is Executive Director of the Los Angeles Venture Association, a Supporting Strategies | Los Angeles client since 2014.

"At LAVA, I've seen how Supporting Strategies excels in assigning bookkeeping talent with the right skill sets for the client's needs," says Lanzi.

“

Supporting Strategies has been an outstanding additional support for us as an outsourced bookkeeping service. I find them highly valuable and always timely in responding to my requests.”

Kevin McNulty
Chief Administrative Officer
MOWW

"I also appreciate the practicality of working with Supporting Strategies — they're available whenever we need them."

MOWW staff agreed with Lanzi's assessment, and we began our engagement in March 2015.

Meals on Wheels West

Helping a nonprofit focus on doing the good work at the heart of its mission



An Expert in Nonprofit Bookkeeping

As Lanzi mentioned, one of Supporting Strategies' strengths is staffing projects with professionals who have the right expertise. Michael Kramberg, Nonprofit Practice Leader at Supporting Strategies | Los Angeles, has over 30 years of experience working in accounting departments of various nonprofit organizations, primarily at the controller level and above.

"I understand how these organizations operate and what their needs are," says Kramberg. "It's not my style to be a 'traditional' outsourcing resource who stays at arm's length and just sticks to the numbers. I'm most effective when I can dig in and really get to know the client so that I can tailor my work and reports for maximum relevance."

Kramberg and Financial Operations Manager Christina Reynolds have teamed up to offer the right level of ongoing support for MOWW. Our responsibilities include:

- Managing day-to-day bookkeeping entries in QuickBooks
- Posting payroll
- Posting bank deposits
- Monthly closing
- End-of-month report preparation
- Hands-on, end-of-year audit support

Our depth of expertise is another big advantage. If Kramberg or Reynolds runs into any questions or issues that are outside their comfort zone, they can call on the knowledge of Supporting Strategies' 250+ staff members across the country.

On the Case

During our engagement, Supporting Strategies has helped MOWW to:

- **Streamline the audit process.** Kevin McNulty, MOWW Chief Administrative Officer, has been with the organization since 1998. In all that time, they had never managed to submit their audit and year-end taxes without filing extensions — until Supporting Strategies got involved.

"I shared my amazement with our auditor, who expressed admiration for Michael's streamlining of record keeping and contribution of materials that made their job easier and less time-consuming," says McNulty. In fact, in 2016, the auditing team was only on-site for one day for testing and field work, compared with the two or three days it had traditionally taken.

“

Supporting Strategies has simplified how our financials are presented, making it easier for Board members as well as volunteers to understand the numbers.”

Len Lanzi
Treasurer and Board Member
MOWW

Meals on Wheels West

Helping a nonprofit focus on doing the good work at the heart of its mission



McNulty also lauds Supporting Strategies' methodology and organization of monthly bookkeeping and reporting, which has minimized auditor concerns.

"If prepared for and managed properly, an audit shouldn't be an overwhelming process for an organization like MOWW," says Kramberg. "I try to make sure that it's nothing to fear and nothing that will interrupt their work."

- **Enhance communications with Board members.** As part of MOWW's monthly reporting package, we go beyond providing the standard profit and loss statement. We also deliver detailed financials that help McNulty enhance his presentations to the Board of directors and give him more confidence in answering their questions.

“

I'm most effective when I can dig in and really get to know the client so that I can tailor my work and reports for maximum relevance.”

Michael Kramberg
Nonprofit Practice Leader
Supporting Strategies | Los Angeles

"My Board is quite pleased with the monthly financial reporting," says McNulty.

"Supporting Strategies has simplified how our financials are presented, making it easier for Board members as well as volunteers to understand the numbers," adds Lanzi.

- **Reduce labor costs.** MOWW is enjoying impressive value through its relationship with Supporting Strategies. In fact, says Lanzi, "We're spending less money on these services than we were three or four years ago with the external bookkeeper."

Supporting Strategies is also helping make MOWW employees more efficient. As an example, Lanzi cites the Administrative Executive, who used to spend much more time with tasks like bill paying and record keeping.

"With Supporting Strategies, we have a high degree of confidence that their tasks are being handled correctly, so Kevin and other staff members have more time for their mission-critical responsibilities," says Lanzi.

Having experienced benefits like these, it's no wonder MOWW remains such a satisfied client.

"Supporting Strategies has been an outstanding additional support for us as an outsourced bookkeeping service," says McNulty. "I find them highly valuable and always timely in responding to my requests."

"At first, many nonprofit organizations we speak with are hesitant to embrace new processes and systems," says Mark Wald, Managing Director of Supporting Strategies | Los Angeles. "But those that are ultimately receptive to letting us innovate for them wind up benefiting from better process controls, more insightful and transparent reporting, and optimized efficiency throughout the organization. That's certainly been the case with MOWW."

"We are proud of our successful relationship with Meals On Wheels West, which enables them to maximize the impact they're making in the community and improve the lives of all the wonderful people they serve."

Get started today!