

NEW ENGLAND

UNIQUE
PROGRAMS
BOOKLET



New England CAA Unique Programs Booklet

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Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)

ABCD's Field of Dreams

Program Description:

When you play, they win! ABCD's Field of Dreams got its start in 1999 when the Boston Red Sox generously opened fabled Fenway Park to ABCD so that everyday dreamers could swing big at the plate, dart around the bases, and dive for a line drive on the storied field – for a great cause.

Businesses, service organizations, and groups of friends suit up to play the game of their lives – for the good of Boston's underserved young people ages 14 to 21 who face the severe social and economic barriers – and who have all the potential in the world.

Event proceeds support ABCD SummerWorks, a youth development program that provides a paid job, career development, and mentoring, and helps under-resourced young people build a better future. Since its inception, Field of Dreams has raised more than \$5 million for Greater Boston's under-resourced youth.

“I worked at the YMCA where I supervised the kids with creative writing and on field trips, including a cruise in Boston Harbor. I really enjoyed the different SummerWorks workshops, especially the one that helped me understand banking and saving.” – Tatiyana, 14

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abcdfieldofdreams.org





Access Community Action Agency Access to Employment

Program Description:

The Access to Employment (A2E) program began in 2016 to help fill the need within our communities for support and trainings with employment issues. Originally the program was offered twice a year in the form of twice weekly classes for 11 weeks. Starting in 2021, the program evolved due to several factors: additional funding from both federal and state sources, and increased grants which led to the hiring of a full-time employment specialist. Prior to that the program was run by interns and hired consultants. With the hiring of the full-time staff, the 11-week programs were offered and in addition, customers could also receive employment case management services without attending the classes. This allowed customers who could not attend the 11-week classes to still access some of the content provided during course time. Case management services included financial and computer literacy training, career exploration and job coaching to all of our customers. Others had a resume done for them, were assisted in searching for jobs/applying for them and supported in locating low-cost or no cost continuing education classes. The changes in the program allowed it to grow from approximately 20 people helped per year to approximately 75. Of those individuals, 45 found employment and another 13 enrolled in education programs that will lead to better paying jobs.

Kate* came into the A2E program in the fall of 2021 having been away from the workforce since 2014 when a personal tragedy happened. She had previously worked in the healthcare industry but felt she no longer had the skills or ability to find a job. Kate faithfully came to class each week and worked very closely with the case manager. Her resume was done, and she was assisted with applying for jobs leading to her getting a great position making well above the minimum wage with benefits for her and her family. A year later she is doing great and for the first time was able to purchase a car.

Jill (Kate's Sister*) - Text message received upon Kate getting her car. She had been walking the almost two miles a day to her job. "Without your help Sherry, Kate wouldn't be where she is. She was always capable but just needed that someone to have faith in her, to make her believe in herself again. You did that for her. So as her little sister who loves her so very much, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving Kate what she needed to believe in herself again, you are truly our angel. Thank you."

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<https://www.facebook.com/AccessCommunityActionAgency>





Berkshire Community Action Council

C.A.R.s (Community Action Rides)

BCAC partners with Greylock Federal Credit Union and local car dealerships to close the transportation gap in Berkshire County. The C.A.R.s program supports individuals and families on a journey toward self-reliance. We provide training to enhance financial literacy, to help improve credit scores (FICO), and to develop positive relationships with banks and lenders. Upon successful completion of the courses—which includes being able to demonstrate the ability to maintain a sustainable budget of monthly loan payments, insurance and maintenance costs—BCAC will guarantee a 72-month low interest vehicle loan through Greylock Federal Credit Union. Greylock then works with local auto dealers to match participants with safe, clean and reliable used cars. Participants make a “Pay it Forward Pledge” to offer rides to other income eligible commuters in their neighborhood or at their work site thereby expanding the program’s reach in the community.

“BCAC opened my eyes to resources available in this community, and gave me something to look forward to as I build my credit. It’s really helped me as I work to get ahead and better myself. Not having reliable transportation has been a major barrier. Getting a reliable car through the C.A.R.s program will really help me move forward.”
— BCAC Client

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Berkshire Community Action Council

Pittsfield, MA

bcacinc.org





Community Action Programs Inter-City, Inc. Chelsea/Revere Family Network

Program Description:

The Chelsea / Revere Family Network is a community-based information and resource hub for all families in the community. The goal of the program is to increase knowledge of and access to high-quality early education and care programs and services and provide support to parents. The Chelsea / Revere Family Network has been in operation since 1998 serving families with children birth through age eight. This program is funded by the Coordinated Family & Community Engagement (CFCE) grant and awarded to CAPIC by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

Over the past year, the program started to host a weekly Arabic Storytime/Playgroup for families so that families can come together and experience this activity/resource in their own native language. The playgroup takes place at the Revere Public Library and has been a huge success, with over thirty (30) families participating each week. This has been a great opportunity for families to meet other families in their community.

Nairony Nunez, Program Coordinator

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Cinderella Project of Maine

Waldo Community Action Partners

What is the Cinderella Project?

The Cinderella Project is a prom dress giveaway program for high school students throughout the state of Maine to promote positive body image and increased self-esteem. New or gently used prom dresses are available in the spring for anyone attending a prom. The gowns are free, with the promise that the high school student receiving the gown will pay the kindness forward in their community.

The Cinderella Project arose in 2006 from a volunteer grassroots effort in Waldo County, ME. In 2009 WCAP officially took ownership of the project. Since its inception, the project's scope has expanded beyond Waldo County with partner sites at the Gardiner Area High School and the Aroostook County Action Program.

How will you 'Pay it Forward'...

Each year we ask students receiving a dress how they plan to pay the kindness forward in their communities. Here are some of our favorite answers from 2022:

- I will gift my dress to someone that can use it after I don't need it
- Volunteering to help all the people at the dance with prep & makeup
- Teaching hiking and trail signs and leave no trace
 - Dry clean & donate the dress after prom
 - Volunteering at an Elementary School
- By being kind and telling people they look beautiful



Contact WCAP at (207) 338-6809 or at development@waldocap.org to donate a dress

Visit our [Facebook Page](#) to learn more!



Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

Community Inclusion Network – Community Ambassadors

Program Description:

Inclusion is one of the most important aspects of our work as a community organization. CVOEO employs nine bi- and multi-lingual Community Ambassadors to help our neighbors overcome language and cultural barriers, while building trust and communication with New American community members. Community Ambassadors are trusted, self-motivated representatives of the New American community who have lived experience in outreach, organizing, educating, and advocating. Ambassadors respond to hotline calls from community members seeking service referrals for health (including COVID-19), access to housing including fair housing and tenant rights, credit/finance, unemployment, crisis fuel, weatherization, access to green energy rebates, food, transportation, education, childcare, and more.

What makes CVOEO Community Ambassadors unique is not only their translation and interpretation services, but their efficient and trusted outreach for group- and community-level service provision (workshops/classes) and one-on-one support to empower individuals and communities.

“I am a passionate community servant with the ability to motivate and inspire individuals in identifying their potential to continue and share this passion to serve others. With this ongoing quest to give, I have been able to promote significant, positive change in communities and individuals through advocacy, empowered by compassion.”

--Community Ambassador

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Community Baby Shower

Healthy Families of Southern Worcester County Worcester Community Action Council

Worcester Community Action Council's Healthy Families of Southern Worcester County program hosts an annual Community Baby Shower each spring. The event brings together a variety of community organizations. The event features a variety of vendors offering community resources and activities of interest to new or soon-to-be parents, along with raffles and door prizes. Not to be missed is the ever-popular Baby Boutique featuring gently used clothing for infants and toddlers! Admission is free and open to all.

WCAC's Healthy Families of Southern Worcester County program serves first time parents expecting or with a child under the age of 1, residing in seventeen communities throughout southern Worcester County. Services are provided free of charge from pregnancy through a child's third birthday. In partnering with first-time, young moms and dads, Healthy Families staff provide coaching and support navigating the ups and downs of parenting. Home visitors help build parenting skills, answering questions and supporting young parents in setting and achieving personal goals such as staying in school or finding the right job.

"The WCAC Community Baby Shower is a hotspot for families of all background to find and access resources in their area. As a former Healthy Families participant, the community baby shower was where I learned about counseling services for myself as well as early elementary school options for my son. The atmosphere of the event is incredibly welcoming and supports the feeling of unity being in a place where so many other families are experiencing the same needs that you may have."

-Kacey Moore (Graduate Participant of HFSWC and Family Support Advocate)

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www.WCAC.net
Facebook & Twitter: @WCACInfo
Instagram: @WorcesterCommunityAction





Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

Community Resource Center

Program Description:

CVOEO's Community Resource Center is a daytime warming, cooling and resource center in Burlington, Vermont providing services to people experiencing homelessness and other community members in need. Caring and dedicated Community Resource Center staff operate the facility from Monday-Friday. Meals are provided Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and grab and go food is available from 12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. We average over 100 people a day at the Resource Center.

Services Include: Housing Advocacy including access to shelter and permanent housing, hot meals, and food to go, access to public benefits, a variety of clinics including health care, employment and haircuts and more. Access to clothing, computers and phones, safe recovery information and referral for medical and health care needs.

“I have had been to 40 different states and I have never seen so many great services and meals in one place.”

– Community Resource Center Guest

Program Contact: Paul Dragon

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COVID Response Team Penquis

In March of 2020, Penquis recognized the need for timely, low-barrier resources and services for families and individuals financially impacted by the rapidly expanding COVID-19 pandemic. Agency leadership quickly recruited a small group of highly skilled staff from varying programs, departments, and disciplines, including fiscal staff to track the growing number of monetary donations received and ensure payments were sent without delay. This group became affectionately known as *The C-Team*. They met every day at 8:30 am to review new requests, working hard to always ensure other available resources were being utilized to meet the need before approving COVID emergency funds for applicants.

Throughout the next nearly three years, The C-Team provided financial assistance to support 1,866 individuals, distributing nearly \$230,000 to support households impacted financially by the pandemic. These funds came from a wide variety of private donors, foundations, corporations, along with federal COVID relief funding and several Maine CDC COVID-19 support contracts.

As 2022 came to a close and the pandemic began winding down, The C-Team knew it was time to evolve once again to meet the needs of our community. Continuing the momentum built up from nearly three years of intense work assisting families, this group of dedicated staff maintains its morning meeting ritual. Now members discuss how to best assist families still struggling from the lasting effects of the COVID pandemic but without the extensive financial supports once available. Currently, a major part of their work is identifying resources and developing solutions to assist with the housing crisis in their communities. They often have staff from other agencies and from within Penquis join them to debrief difficult cases and problem solve creative and impactful solutions. This team has developed a reputation of being the people to call when all other resources and options have been exhausted.

Client Story: A Town manager called Penquis for support for a retired couple who were isolated due to COVID and in a dire situation because their furnace wasn't working. They were running a huge bill using space heaters. They had been referred for help to several agencies but could not gather the needed documents required to get help and were overwhelmed by recent medical trauma that left the husband bedridden. A member of the C-Team visited them and then brainstormed with the C-Team on how to best assist them. As a result, we got them support for food deliveries, assisted in getting the furnace cleaned and started, and arranged for medical transportation.

www.penquis.org
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Heidi LeBlanc, Chief Operating Officer
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Self Help Inc

Programs & Resources to Help Families & Individuals Thrive

Farm to Pantry Program

Providing Local Farm-Fresh Nutritional Options for Those in Need
Supported by MASSCAP & CDBG Cares Act Funding for Food Insecurity



In 2022, Self Help, Inc. formed a partnership with C & C Reading Farm of West Bridgewater, MA, to undertake a community project to connect locally sourced and grown fresh produce to food pantries and Food Access Programs in the grant area. Locally grown seasonal produce helps families with food instability balance nutritional needs for their families. C & C Reading Farm picked crops for us weekly, the day before and the morning of delivery, to ensure the freshest options to maximize shelf life.

The goal was to not only provide fresh produce for those in need, but to also support a locally owned farm to:

- a) grow more food that goes back to the community
- b) create jobs in a difficult and under-supported local industry
- c) increase and stabilize production so that no food goes to waste
- d) create more equity and access for all

“Thank you, SHI, for your support of the Canton Food Pantry. Your generous support will help feed over 200 CFP clients in need!”

Brenda - CFP Volunteer



SHI Food Stabilization Coordinator Harley French delivering fresh produce to the Canton Food Pantry.

For more information on this program:

Harley French



hfrench@selfhelpinc.org



1-(508)588-0447 x 1360

Discover all Self Help, Inc's programs at:

www.selfhelpinc.org



Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

Feeding Chittenden

Founded in 1974, Feeding Chittenden was launched as the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf. This new organization was created to fight hunger and food insecurity faced by households throughout Chittenden County. The Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf initially operated a small pantry program that provided a three-day supply of groceries once per month to a few dozen families.

In response to a growing need for hunger relief services over the years, we have relocated twice to larger sites, including our 1994 move into our current location. Following this latest move, Feeding Chittenden began serving hot meals every weekday and significantly expanded the support and outreach programming we offer in the community. Today, Feeding Chittenden serves more than 12,000 people each year through our many programs.

Our programs include the food shelf (a week’s supply of groceries for community members to pick up), the hot meal program (we serve a hot meal every day for any community member), the Community Kitchen Academy (a culinary job training program), the Stay at Home Delivery program (grocery delivery for the elderly & those with mobility issues), food rescue (rescuing over 1 million pounds of food from going to waste each year), and The Good Food Truck (our mobile food truck-style meal provision project).

<https://feedingchittenden.org/>

Contact the Program:

(802) 658-7939 ext. 24

email: ibraimes@cvoeo.org



Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)

ABCD Food Pop-Ups

Program Description:

ABCD FOOD POP-UPS bring delicious and healthy choices to local neighborhoods for qualifying residents in Boston, Medford, Everett, Belmont, Newton and Winchester — at no cost. To qualify, a household must have an annual income under 80% of the area median income.

Our pop-up van provides fresh produce, meats and other essential goods, and we often tailor our selection to community needs. For instance, through our partnership with ICNA Relief, we provide vouchers for halal meat, enabling households to observe their faith’s dietary guidelines in a respectful manner.

These pop-ups are ideal for residents who don’t live near a food access center or who have mobility issues. No appointment is necessary.

Dog and cat food is also available at our East Boston and Mattapan pop-ups, courtesy of the **Animal Rescue League of Boston**.

Supplies are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

“Rising inflation and grocery prices have threatened the food security of local families. We have to be forward-thinking to expand our services as efficiently as we can to reach as many people as we can.”

–Nick Owen, program director, food insecurity

Program Contact: Nick Owen, Program
Director, ABCD Food Insecurity

www.bostonabcd.org/mobilefood





Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Inc. (GLCAC)

Immigration Services and Citizenship Classes

Greater Lawrence Community Action Council is located in Lawrence, a Gateway City with a wonderfully diverse population of newcomers and immigrants, hailing in particular from Latin American and Caribbean communities. Many community members are in need of assistance with securing documentation, naturalization, and citizenship. GLCAC's Immigration Services Program has provided assistance and advocacy for people seeking permanent resident status and United States citizenship since 2016. The program model is twofold, providing both citizenship classes as well as support with citizenship applications and interviews. Staff guides low-income clients along every step of the process at no cost to the client. Additionally, each staff member is bilingual in Spanish and English, further reducing barriers to citizenship for those seeking services. Specifically, two attorneys and two paralegals offer assistance with the following: citizenship and naturalization applications, renewal of green cards, fee waivers, and preparation of immigration cases for submission to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the Department of State, Immigration Court, and the Board of Immigration Appeals.

GLCAC braids its immigration services with its internal English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and citizenship classes. These two programs (immigration services and ESOL/citizenship classes) work closely alongside each other to make bi-directional referrals to ensure that clients have access to the full spectrum of services that they need to thrive in their new community.

“Thanks to the teachers who have the vocation to teach each student with love and dedication, I feel privileged to obtain this service.” – ESOL/Citizenship Class Student

Program Contacts:

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Astrid Paniagua, Director of Immigration Services, apaniagua@glcac.org

www.glcac.org



Kennebec Community Investors

Kennebec Valley Community Action Program

The Kennebec Community Investors initiative was created in 2015 to address the absence of resources for a number of basic needs, including beds, security deposits, medical items, and car repairs. We partner with the local homeless shelter, General Assistance office, and the public school district. KVCAP and partner case managers can apply for assistance for a basic need when there is no other resource, the client's household is at or below 175% of the FPG, and the request provides a sustainable solution.

A weekly email is sent to our Investors list on Fridays; approximately 175 community members who have agreed to receive the emails. A de-identified description of the need is shared, and Investors have the option to contribute online or mail in a check. If not enough donations have been received by the following Tuesday, an updated email is also sent.

Any donations received above the requested amount are held in a special account that we can draw from in the event that we do not receive the full amount for another request. This is an essential component as once an application is approved; we are committed to funding it. We began with a \$2,000 cushion from a private funder and have consistently had a healthy balance available to use when needed.

The Community Investors initiative has proven to be wildly successful! Every year we help more than 50 households (100 people) through an average of \$22,000 in Investor donations.

We have learned that sometimes a simple unmet need can make or break a person's future economic and social stability, and that when a community rallies together great things can happen! If you build it, they will come!

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<https://www.instagram.com/kvcap/>

The Secret Sauce!

1. It provides a constant "feel good" feedback loop. The Investors read the need and contribute and receive an instant thank you, they quickly receive a mailed thank you letter, and then they receive an update letting them know the need was met the following Friday.
2. Investors are fully aware that all of their contributions go directly to people in need; no gifts are used to pay staffing or admin costs.



Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee

Language Justice at CEOC

About the Program

Four CEOC staff participated in a Language Justice Blueprint project in collaboration with the Unbound Language Justice Collaborative. Staff started attending monthly sessions learning how to embed language justice into the agency's work and increase the participation of culturally and linguistically diverse residents.

Once the sessions were completed, staff developed a Language Justice Plan and work with all staff to present the initial plan. The plan includes information on what language justice is, how it affects social services agencies, and a roadmap for how to incorporate language justice more holistically into CEOC's operations (which includes how to handle drop-in clients who do not speak or read English, how to use remote interpreters, and more). Some next steps include training for our receptionist on best practices for sensitively interacting with non-English speakers and ensuring all written material is written in plain language and translated. The group of staff continues to meet with the Unbound Language Justice Collaborative consultants as the implementation period progresses.

In addition to working on implementation of the Language Justice Plan, three CEOC staff are participating in the Unbound Community Interpreting Certificate program. This program trains bilingual and multilingual staff to provide the skills they need to become successful language interpreters in the areas of community-based work, social services, social justice settings, and more. By the end of the training, all three staff will be certified simultaneous interpreters.

Staff Testimonial

“To be able to move away from English as the default and make people feel comfortable and heard, no matter what language they speak, will truly be life changing for our clients.” – CEOC Staff Person

For more information, contact Rachel Plummer at rplummer@ceoccambridge.org or 617-868-2900 ext. 328

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Facebook: @ceocCambridge
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ceoc->





Lantern Light Camp Partnership

Community Teamwork, Inc.

The Community Teamwork Inc. at Lantern Light began in the summer of 2022 when the agency was presented with an opportunity to bring children to a traditional overnight camp. A total of 28 children from our School Age and Emergency Assistance Family Shelter Programs experienced a week-long sleepaway camp, including swimming, rock wall climbing, archery, pottery making, music-making, and many more activities. This was the first time these children had ever been to an overnight camp and for most, away from their families. Results were gathered that demonstrated children expanded their horizons and developed new skills; they pushed themselves to try something new.

This summer we are planning to serve 80 children over 4 weeks, and have increased and revitalized our team, including a newly hired Camp Director. In addition, we have restructured our staffing to implement a behavioral health component, providing additional supports to both campers and their families. The team is focused on building a community within camp where campers will learn how to implement mindfulness practices into their daily lives. This program is completely free to children and includes transportation, housing, food, and all supplies needs while at camp.

"I was feeling really, really homesick and afraid of the bugs - the spiders especially! I would always have a counselor do a "bug sweep" of my cabin or the bathroom before I would even go in! Then, one day, I had to go in by myself. So I went in and there was a spider. A BIG Daddy-long-legs. I freaked, but then I noticed he was missing 3 legs! Three of them! I decided right then and there, if he could do it, so could I. So... I did!"

Camp Director & Clinical Manager

Kandace Demers

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Southern New Hampshire Services

Southern NH Nurse Leaders & Educators Pilot Project

Program Description:

Southern New Hampshire Services (SNHS) is the convener and financial sponsor of a group of 24 nurse educators and nurse leaders who began meeting around the topic of ***Mobilizing Collective Action to Address the New Hampshire Nursing Shortage***. SNHS, as the statewide administrator of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programming, plays a key role in working with the state, businesses, and other organizations to address the issues around a well-trained labor force. This group chose to form a task force called the Southern New Hampshire Nurse Leader and Nurse Educators Pilot Project, to move toward resolving systemic issues in the field contributing to the nursing shortage adversely affecting the delivery of health care services in New Hampshire.

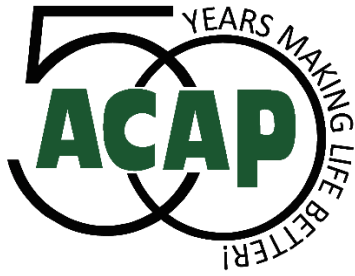
With CSBG funding from SNHS, the group secured the services of a coordinator and facilitator to help participants through an assessment of issues addressing nurse education, recruitment, and retention in order to build consensus around a shared path forward. Some of the early major accomplishments of the group include:

1. Aligned their work with research and other efforts throughout the State.
2. Brought nurse leaders and educators together to create deeper, or new, informal connections the Leadership Team of 18 members is from 6 hospitals, 5 educational institutions, and 2 workforce development organizations.
3. Policy change: Request a credentialing change, from Board of Nursing, to grow the nurse educator pool.
4. The group agreed to share and advance *Best Practices* among participants.
5. Utilized as a leveraged “roadmap” a strategic plan name Giving Care: A Strategic Plan to Expand and Support NH’s Health Care Workforce (March 2022); that was funded by NH Endowment for Health.
6. The group convened a 40-person focus group to develop strategies to increase and improve clinical, learning opportunities, and placements.

“When we learned of the research done by The Seldin/Haring-Smith foundation which demonstrated a predicted shortage in nursing and the inability of schools to accept the increase in nursing student applicants because of an insufficient amount of faculty and clinical space with preceptors, we knew the best way to determine if we could alter that course was to bring together the people on the front lines to find solutions. Putting the “action” into Community Action!” – Donnalee Lozeau

Program Contact: Donnalee Lozeau, CCAP
CEO Southern New Hampshire Services

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<https://www.snhs.org/>



50th Anniversary Community Potato Plot Project

Aroostook County Action Program

From planting to harvesting, the community embraced this season-long project which called attention to the significance of the County's agricultural industry, raised awareness of food insecurity in the region, and celebrated the 50th anniversary of Aroostook County's most comprehensive provider of social services. The ACAP 50th Anniversary Potato Plot was a collaborative project of ACAP, G. B. and D. Pelletier Farms of Fort Kent and Northeast Packaging Company (NEPCO) in Presque Isle/Caribou. The Pelletier Family donated the field and the Dark Red Norland potatoes and NEPCO donated the production run of specially designed ACAP 50th Anniversary five-pound bags that held the potatoes that were given to County food pantries and stocked in community cupboards region-wide. The unique artistic design on the bag was created by Fort Kent Artist Gert Thibodeau who was the winner of a countywide art design contest to help promote the project. Pre-school children enrolled in Aroostook County Action Program's Fort Kent Head Start Program took part in the ceremonial planting and sign unveiling for a special potato plot on Route 161 in St. John Plantation while nearly 200 local students from the Fort Kent Elementary School helped harvest and bag 15,000 pounds of potatoes.



"We are excited to be collaborating with ACAP and NEPCO to help relieve food insecurity in The County, and proud to have the Head Start children included in this project," said Anne Desjardins of G. B. and D. Pelletier Farm.

"At Northeast Packaging Company we pride ourselves in our customer service with the local farmers here in Aroostook County and helping the people of the community. Getting local children involved in an agricultural project helps instill them with work ethic and gain knowledge of what our local farmers do throughout the growing process," said Domenic Bua, NEPCO Sales Manager. "We are pleased to be partners on this project and to support both the local community and ACAP as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary."

Program Contact Information: Sherry Locke, Director of Advancement (207) 554-4130 slocke@acap-me.org

www.acap-me.org
<https://www.facebook.com/acaparoostookcountyactionprogram>



Project Flourish

Worcester Community Action Council

Modeled after apprenticeships in traditional trades, Project Flourish supports the advancement of early career professionals through a combination of classroom instruction, mentoring, professional networking, pay increases when benchmarks are reached and, upon graduation, professional certificates. Graduates receive an EOLWD Apprenticeship Certificate and become eligible for Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Teacher licensure. Additionally, they earn required professional development hours towards Lead Teacher licensure as well as the nationally recognized Child Development Association certification from the Council for Professional Recognition.

Fevian Mekhail grew up in Egypt, the middle child of five. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and has always had a passion for analyzing personalities and child behavior. Shortly after getting married, she and her husband emigrated to the United States for his employment. As a first-time parent in a new country Fevian admits the move was rather isolating until she was referred to WCAC's Early Head Start program. Her youngest was connected with early intervention services before being eligible for enrollment in center-based Head Start program at age 3. She became active with the program as a parent volunteer, often helping translate for other Egyptian families enrolled with the program and was subsequently recommended by staff for Project Flourish. Having successfully completed her coursework, Fevian now works as a Lead Teacher at WCAC's Webster Head Start Center.

"I love working with children - my own and other families. WCAC was very good to push me to believe in myself. Now I don't feel like I am going to work, but that I'm going to see friends,"

Fevian Mekhail, WCAC Head Start Lead Teacher

Kathleen Dow, WCAC Head Start Director
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Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee Cambridge RISE / Rise Up Cambridge

About the Program

Last year, the City of Cambridge launched Cambridge RISE, a pilot program that provided \$500/month for 18 months to 130 Cambridge residents at or below 80% Area Median Income. These families were randomly selected in a lottery process. Through this pilot, CEOC was the program coordinator and client-facing partner, handling all applications, intake, follow up, and other client relations for the duration of the program.

Due to the success of Cambridge RISE and the positive community impact that it had, the City has committed \$22 million in ARPA funds to expand Cambridge RISE by launching the first non-lottery cash assistance program in the country. This program, called Rise Up Cambridge, will provide direct cash to all Cambridge households earning at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level with children under 21 years of age. This will enable over 2,000 Cambridge families to receive \$500 for 18 months with no strings attached.

Rise Up Cambridge aims to address the growing economic divide, maintain a diverse population, and help families recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. CEOC again serves as the project coordinator. CEOC's Rise Up Cambridge staff speak English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and French.

Participant Stories

“Due to this extra income from RISE, I actually have a few dollars in my bank account; it's not empty and it's not overdrawn”. – Anonymous, Cambridge RISE recipient

“When I heard I was selected for RISE, it was such a relief...This was going to help ease my mind, knowing I was going to be able to pay my bills”. – Anonymous, Cambridge RISE recipient

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Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Inc. (GLCAC)

Addressing Student Homelessness

Student homelessness has a negative impact on academics and behavior. On any given year the Lawrence Public Schools (LPS) identifies approximately 125 to 150 families experiencing homelessness within the school system. Historically, it has been very difficult for the school system to address this rising problem, as the system does not have internal capacity or experience with housing and homelessness interventions. While LPS can ensure that students are transported to and from their home school and their place of residence/shelter, beyond that the school district is unable to provide additional assistance, as is the case with most school systems.

Because the issue of student homelessness is very concerning, and because LPS does not have the resources to meet the needs of this vulnerable population independently, in 2022 LPS approached GLCAC for support in addressing this problem. As a result, GLCAC has entered into partnership with Lawrence Public Schools, City of Lawrence Community Development Department, Lawrence Housing Authority and other local partners to address homelessness by providing housing search and subsidies, economic supports, case management and ongoing training for parents.

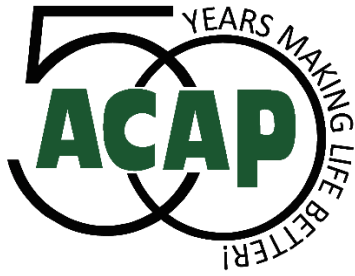
With the help of DESE, the United Way, and community partners, GLCAC designed a program to help intercede in the addressing the lack of support for school students. The agency drew in the Lawrence Housing Authority as well to make some Section 8 housing vouchers available for these families. Working with school system, GLCAC's Program Coordinator, who is allocated completely to this program, helps to identify housing needs for families; offers housing search services; provides case management supports such as work opportunities for parents, workforce training, immigration services; and guides families along the path to stabilization.

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Back to School Bash/Stuff the Bus and Backpack Giveaway

Aroostook County Action Program

ACAP holds its annual Back to School Bash at the Agency's Customer Service Center at 771 Main Street in Presque Isle. The day-long event includes community partners and members of Team ACAP representing many of the Agency's 40 programs and services. Hundreds of children and their families attended the event and receive backpacks filled with school supplies. Gently used clothing, new socks, new winter jackets, snacks and lots of other great giveaways are part of the event. In addition to the fun and prizes for the children, families have the opportunity to connect with both ACAP programs and those provided by community partners. Backpacks are distributed to hundreds of registered children at the event, and are also distributed to students in Northern and Southern Aroostook, totaling over 900 backpacks annually countywide in partnership with United Way of Aroostook.



Program Contact Information: Sherry Locke, Director of Advancement (207) 554-4130 slocke@acap-me.org

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Community Action Programs Inter-City, Inc. Substance Use Disorders Program

CAPIC's Substance Use Disorders (SUDS) & Mobile Outreach Team provides comprehensive support services and resources to individuals struggling with addiction in the City of Chelsea. In September the team took part in the Chelsea Recovery Month Celebration.

The SUDS Program Director is a member of the Overdose Vigil/Recovery Committee and worked with local partners: MGH Healthy Chelsea, MGH Recovery Coaches, North Suffolk Mental Health Recovery Coaches, Chelsea Police Department Downtown Task Force; Selah Resource Center; and Bay Cove to coordinate and host the 7th Annual Chelsea Overdose Vigil. This event is dedicated to the many loved ones lost due to substance use. Purple flags were placed outside the Chelsea Police Department.

CAPIC's SUDS & Mobile Outreach Team also assisted in coordinating the Chelsea Recovery Month event in downtown Chelsea. It was a wonderful night to be together with other local service providers and residents and celebrate those who are in recovery.

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Summer House

Community Teamwork, Inc.

Since 2020, Community Teamwork has expanded its programming to include a new Individual Homelessness department. This work commenced following a report by the Mayor of Lowell’s Task Force on Homelessness, which found that across Lowell, 300 new units are needed to meet the needs of the individual homeless population, especially in light of the pandemic’s threat to unsheltered individuals. The department includes outreach services, housing case management, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter, and voucher-based permanent supportive housing. Working with the Greater Lowell Community Foundation, the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, and the Lowell Plan, Community Teamwork committed to working with community leaders and developers to create more housing for this highly vulnerable population.

As a result of this initiative, Community Teamwork is currently in the process of renovating a former rooming house in Lowell to provide 19 units of Permanent Supportive Housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development has awarded the agency a contract to provide permanent supportive housing at this location. Programming will provide access to basic needs supports such as food, transportation, and healthcare as well as case management and stabilization services, which can include employment, educational opportunities, financial literacy, access to benefits, access to and support around technology, legal support, etc. The site is located in close proximity to downtown, Lowell’s public transit hub, and a variety of supportive services.

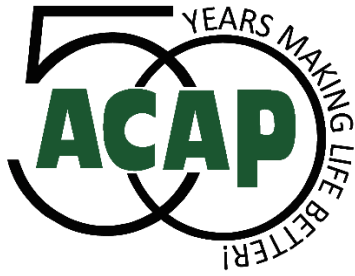
“The need for ‘affordable’ housing is great across Massachusetts, but the growing need for deeply affordable or low-threshold housing has never been greater. By focusing on new housing development, which provides both affordable and deeply affordable housing units, we can address the housing crisis that is growing in every community across the Commonwealth.” – Karen Frederick, Community Teamwork CEO

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Supportive Housing Project

Aroostook County Action Program

Recognizing the need for additional housing, and specifically supportive housing, ACAP has worked diligently with partners and community stakeholders to establish Aroostook County's first supportive housing project. The building, located at 1 Edgemont Drive in Presque Isle, will be home to 13 apartments and the Hope and Prosperity Resource Center. The project will provide housing insecure individuals the opportunity to rent an apartment with a longterm lease as they work with ACAP staff towards successful independent living. The project is scheduled to be completed and ready for occupancy by early 2024.



“As someone who has been integrally involved with ACAP for decades, I can also attest to the important human needs that will be well served by this future facility, beyond just providing a roof over people’s heads. This Supportive Housing complex, with embedded services offered through the Hope and Prosperity Resource Center, housed on the ground level, will provide the supports necessary for the individuals residing here to navigate needed services, including employment, to help the residents be their best selves and live their best lives,” said Norman Fournier, Aroostook County Commissioner and former ACAP Executive Director.

Program Contact Information: Sherry Locke, Director of Advancement (207) 554-4130 slocke@acap-me.org

www.acap-me.org
<https://www.facebook.com/acaparoostookcountyactionprogram>



Talent LMS

Job & Education Center, Worcester Community Action Council

While its hard to replace the experience of face-to-face interaction with young people engaged in work-readiness training, the pandemic forced our Job & Education Center (JEC) staff to adapt. TalentLMS is the Job and Education Center's new online learning platform used for work readiness training and education. TalentLMS makes it possible for participants in our programs to receive valuable virtual training on their own time wherever they have access to the internet.

On TalentLMS, we can offer participants original training content, surveys, and assessments, and take advantage of over 600 TalentLibrary courses covering a vast array of work readiness topics including self-management, DE&I, and interpersonal skills. It also improves our data tracking capabilities, allowing us to more accurately assess the effectiveness of our trainings. We can then use that information to adjust our trainings and develop a more stable, long-term training infrastructure including agency created curriculum and trainings which reflect the unique needs of our population.

Since its initial implementation for WCAC's YouthWorks Winter Cohort in January 2023, close to 120 participants have been enrolled in training courses. Of those 120, two-thirds have completed some or all of their assigned trainings. WCAC will be expanding LMS training to include close to 500 youth engaged in our Summer YouthWorks employment program.

“Thanks to Talent LMS we can now train individuals from anywhere they can access the internet... meaning we can reach the community no matter where they are.”

Jenna Wills, WCAC Job & Education Center Director
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Tri-County Community Action Program (TCCAP)

TCCAP Connect

Program Description:

In the midst of COVID-19 lock downs, all health and human service providers had to pivot and come up with innovative ways to get services to people to who couldn't get to us. Tri-County Community Action Program, Inc. (TCCAP) used CSBG COVID dollars to launch an exciting new initiative in Northern Coos County: TCCAP CONNECT. TCCAP CONNECT is a fully mobile, handicap accessible office unit equipped with satellite internet that enables the public to access TCCAP services right in the communities where they live.

Coos County New Hampshire is characterized by smaller, rural towns that are isolated from one another and only accessible by secondary roads. Many people living in these communities don't have reliable internet or cell phone service. They are also upwards of two hours away from the closest TCCAP office in Berlin, NH. Through TCCAP CONNECT, people are now able to come to the mobile unit when it visits their town, fill out one central intake application, and be connected to all of the services that the agency has to offer. TCCAP CONNECT visitors can also speak with trained service intake navigators, meet with specific program staff, drop off paperwork, or use the internet to apply on-line for services from other providers or schedule appointments. The unit is also available to other service providers to meet with their clients in these communities.

The TCCAP CONNECT mobile unit rotates among Northern Coos County towns on a weekly/bi-weekly basis. Providing enhanced access to Community Action services in this traditionally underserved area has long been a vision of ours at Tri-County CAP. COVID intensified the need, and thankfully, COVID Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) dollars enabled us to launch this unique project and make our vision a reality.

"We are so excited to launch this new service in Northern Coos County. People in communities without reliable internet and for whom traveling to the Berlin area is difficult will be able to come to the mobile unit, fill out one central application, and be connected to all of the services our agency offers."

-- Jeanne Robillard, Tri-County CAP CEO



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Access Community Action Agency Trauma-informed Care Training (TiC):

Trauma-informed care is an approach in the human service field that assumes that everyone is impacted by trauma. Some symptoms of that trauma include difficulty maintaining relationships, lack of focus, poor physical and/or mental health, employability challenges, as well as adversely influencing other critical life functions.

The trauma-informed care training (TiC) includes instructional modules that leverage best practices and leading thinking in building belonging communities. The information and tools are adapted to the target audience in collaboration with a given organization's leadership. Thus far, the following organizations have engaged TiC: The Northeast Family Federal Credit Union (NFFCU), The Willimantic Public Library, The Windham Area Interfaith Ministries (WAIM), The No-Freeze Shelter, with others in development.

“This year I had two sets of mentors in the Partners in Independence Project (PIP) attend the Customer Service iteration of Access’s trauma-informed Care trainings, and I could not be more pleased. Not only was the material clear, useful, and well-delivered, but also the presenter, Ian, went beyond the scope of the material to run a practical discussion with mentors who had particular challenges within the scope of their work. He was patient hearing the concerns, owned that he knew very little about the situation, but offered a guided inquiry that led the mentors to solutions that they felt comfortable with. All in all, I cannot wait to have another group experience this training and some of the others that are offered within the TiC curriculum.”

– Anonymous Participant

‘The training plunged our mentors into the realities that many of our learning partners have faced in their lives. It inspired us to stay positive, curious, and engaged. It also challenged us to be our best and most excellent selves as we support and encourage the learning partners who we mentor.’ – Anonymous Participant

Project Contact: Ian Matthew Harrington (he/they)

Specialist- Health Disparities |

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Southwestern Community Services

Unique Programs

Sullivan County Community Partners – Monthly meeting held and facilitated by SCS, with more than forty (40) community partner organizations attending from healthcare to family resource centers to DHHS and more!

Head Start Dental Clinic – Partnering with area dental offices to provide dental services to Head Start children and families.

Family Housing/Kids Collaborative – Partnering with Kids Collaborative to provide the children residing within our Family Housing access to activities such as karate lessons, arts & crafts, soccer camps, dance classes, music lessons, and more!

Educational Workshops – Tenancy 101 and Financial Literacy

Veterans Expo – Annual event for area providers to connect with Veterans about available resources and services through the communities served. This event includes a partnership with the Keene Family YMCA.

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Agency Website: www.scshelps.org

Voices has been providing services to survivors of domestic & sexual violence in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties since it was founded in 1980. The organization started as a team of community members dedicated to supporting victims, and soon after established itself as Women in Crisis in 1981. That organization grew into the Abuse and Rape Crisis center (under the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity), which supported survivors, trained volunteers, educated community members, and created policies & procedures. The organization flourished over the years, especially after the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in 1995. In 2003, our emergency shelter (Laurie’s House) was established, and we changed our name to Voices Against violence. At Voices, we use a survivor-centered approach; this means we support survivors to make the decisions *they* feel are best. We believe that everyone has strengths that can help them achieve their own goals around relationships, sexuality, and safety. We also meet survivors “where they’re at”, supporting them in their current situation and desires, and *never* judging based on the past. Voices also works to promote systems change as a way to support survivors and end violence. Legal, medical, and social systems are important resources, but they can also hurt those who most need support. By bringing to light systemic oppression and violence, we hope to create a world that works for victims & survivors. Current services and programs include addressing domestic/sexual violence and stalking, housing & economic advocacy, individual and group support, legal advocacy, medical & hospital advocacy, public education, outreach, and prevention activities, and social justice & systems advocacy.

Mission: Voices Against Violence works towards the elimination of domestic and sexual violence and stalking through direct service, education, and systems change.

Program Contact Info:

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Facebook Page:

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Westbay Farm

Westbay Community Action

In 2005, the three acre Westbay Farm was created primarily to provide fresh produce for Westbay's food pantry, the Marketplace, the third largest food pantry in Rhode Island. The farm manager and a team of volunteers use organic methods to grow 20,000+ pounds of tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, lettuces, squash, onions, blueberries, and other crops annually.

From the beginning of July into late October, clients often receive produce harvested that morning! In partnership with the Health Equity Zone, produce is also sold at farmstands that accept SNAP and WIC in areas deemed food deserts. Produce is also delivered to homebound seniors. Each year, the farm provides nutritious food to thousands of families.

Last summer, through a program collaboration between the Farm and Can O'peas (a food delivery program for homebound seniors), Westbay was able to provide fresh produce to over 150 Seniors who could not attend the Farmer's Markets otherwise. One Senior stated, "I haven't had a fresh tomato or cucumber in years." Another said, "It's such a blessing to have an opportunity to receive fresh vegetables because I am elderly with no transportation and low income, I depend on the Emergency Food Assistance Program, which only provides canned food options, so this is a real treat."

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