



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S

REPORT March 2022

NEMCSA held its first employee Town Hall for 2022, allowing for good discussion regarding agency benefits, recruitment ideas, and retention.

In addition, a pulse check was done regarding the focus areas of the agency Strategic Plan. Valuable employee feedback was captured by polls during the event.



**Friday Feb 25**  
**2PM**  
**TOPIC**  
Lisa Bolen, Executive Director/CEO answers rapid fire questions, "Colbert" style & Agency updates

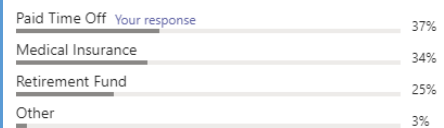
Watch Recording

What is the best way to recruit for NEMCSA job opportunities in your community?



44 responses

In your opinion, what is NEMCSA's best benefit?



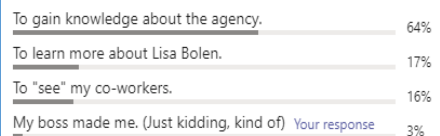
67 responses

What fun thing are you planning on spending your incentive on?



62 responses

Why did you decide to join us for this Town Hall?



75 responses

*"The NEMCSA organization is like a huge family- always watching out for each other- always human! My own team is awesome and I wouldn't trade them for love nor money- we are a micro example of the agency. I look forward to years working here until I retire and pray I am able to." - NEMCSA Early Childhood Staff*

Enhancing quality of life by empowering individuals and strengthening communities.



**NEMCSA is hiring- help spread the word! Visit our website to apply today!**

### Thankful Story

One man went out of his way to thank NEMCSA for the free COVID test kit he received during last month's food distribution. When he took the test that same day, he had a positive result. This was concerning to him, since he has numerous underlying medical issues. Fortunately, by obtaining results so swiftly, he was able to receive the antibody transfusion, and is now recovered.



**NEMCSA has been able to distribute over 4000 test kits throughout Northeast Michigan.**

*"I was happy to help distribute COVID Tests at the Cheboygan Senior Center on Friday, 2/25/2022. We gave out 116 tests and everyone was so appreciative for them!"*

**Beth Connors, RN for AAA division**



The Michigan State Housing Development Authority has launched a new program to help homeowners experiencing pandemic-related financial hardships avoid foreclosure and keep their homes. Read more information at [www.michigan.gov/MIHAF](http://www.michigan.gov/MIHAF).

Housing Choice Voucher Program

## Waiting List

MSHDA is accepting applications for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Rental Assistance for low-income households) February 23, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. EST until March 25, 2022 at 3:00 pm for the following counties: Alcona, Roscommon, Presque Isle, Otsego, Oscoda, Ogemaw, Montmorency, Iosco, Crawford, Cheboygan, Alpena.

**Submit your application online at: <https://mshda.myhousing.com>.**

*Early Childhood  
Services*

# PROGRAM IMPACT

## Impact: Staff Development

### Training Topics

Social-emotional development  
Conflict resolution  
Breastfeeding  
Child health requirements  
Using nature to teach science  
Poverty education  
Microsoft TEAMS tips.

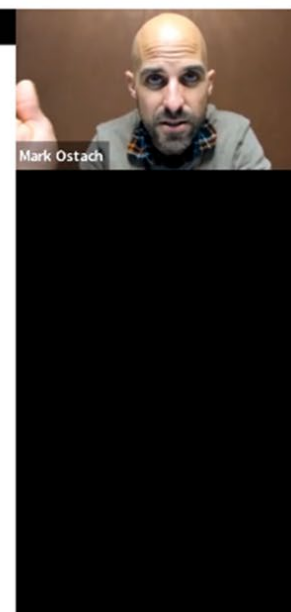


Early Childhood Services staff engaged in two days of professional development at our annual staff In-Service in February.

Key-note speaker Mark Ostach helped ECS staff reconnect and revitalize our energy and passion for the crucial work of preparing the next generation for success at school and in life.

### Recap

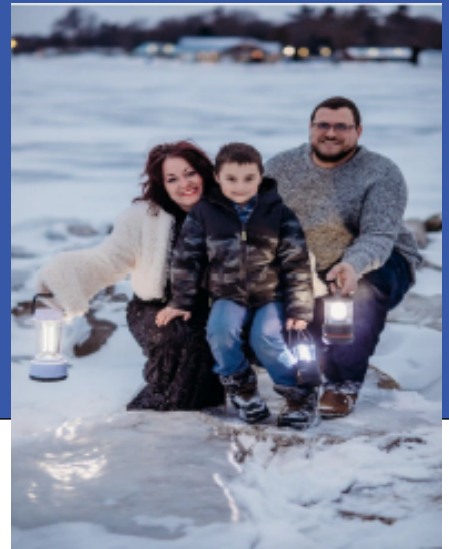
1. Own Your Story
2. Retire Broken Soundtracks
3. Give Yourself The Grace to Grow
4. Determine Your Turn Down Techniques
5. Speak Your New Anthem into Life!



Preschool and Early Head Start are now taking applications for the next school year. Visit [www.nemcsa.org](http://www.nemcsa.org) for more information.

## Community Programs

# PROGRAM IMPACT



### **Meet Amanda Bergeron: Warehouse/Food/WX Coordinator for Community Programs Division**

Amanda was born and raised in a suburb of Detroit, living the hustle and grind day in and day out, vacationing to Northern Michigan and across the country. She and her family made the move permanently to Oscoda at the beginning of the pandemic to live a life closer to nature and to find a slower pace. They found that and so much more. Her family consists of her husband Dave, son Hudson, their dogs Lady (pug), Willow (chocolate lab), two cats: Milo & Trigger and 28 chickens.

She is a cancer survivor, domestic violence survivor and has experienced homelessness after fleeing from an abusive marriage. Her drive to help others started at a young age and has continued to grow year after year through the trials and tribulations she has faced personally. She strives every day to make a difference, support, and empower others in her daily work and beyond.

Amanda earned her Bachelor's degree from Ferris State University with a major in criminal justice and worked in law enforcement for over 10 years, before coming to NEMCSA. She recently received her master's degree from Arizona State University with a psychology major. She is also certified in mindfulness and meditation and also has a passion for photography.

Amanda joined NEMCSA in April of 2020 with the Homeless and Prevention Department as a Housing Resource Specialist and within 6 short months, moved into a Lead Housing Resource Specialist position, overseeing the operations of all Housing Resource Specialist. Currently, she is the site supervisor at NEMCSA's Ossineke location along with Food Programs and Weatherization Coordinator. She is the chair of agency's Diversity Equity and Inclusion committee and the Co-Chair of the Workplace Violence committee. Amanda graduated from NEMCSA's cohort with Lean Six Sigma with her green belt in Lean processes. Process improvement, change and empowerment are three of her love languages! She is currently attending Michigan Community Action's Leadership Program and scheduled to complete the program this summer!

Amanda's passion for lifting people up and her fierce loyalty to her work is second to none. Working alongside Amanda has been such a pleasure and trust me, you will always have a smile on your face and feel a sense of gratitude for life working with her.

Congratulations Amanda on all your recently accomplishment and thank you for your hard work and dedication to NEMCSA. I look forward to seeing you excel and using your many talents within NEMCSA for years to come.

**Submitted by Community Programs Director, Dorothy Pintar**

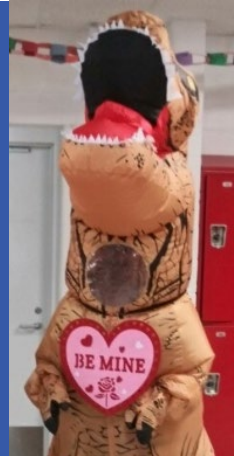


# PROGRAM IMPACT

School Success Administrative Staff have been hard at work with our lobbyist Robert Kennedy of Capital Affairs to prepare to advocate for continued state funding for the School Success Program. This includes preparing updated documents highlighting the successes of our program during the 2020 – 2021 school year and first semester of the 2021 – 2022 school year, history of truancy reduction and potentially saved FTE dollars for schools, and preparing for meetings with legislators.



***Thank you to the Presque Isle Women's Club for the donation of gloves for the students at Hinks Elementary School- it is much appreciated!***



Gina Murphy, Tawas Area Middle/ High School Success Liaison, spreading some Valentine's love.



Joy Garrison, Clara Bolen School Success Liaison, at the annual Peanut Butter Jelly Drive to raise funds and donations to supply students in need with PB&J supplies for the upcoming spring break.

***Thank you to Alpena's Citizens of the Year Mr. & Mrs. Lemke for your donations for students in our communities. And many thanks to the Alcona County Masons who donated \$3500 to a Coats for Kids account for Alcona Schools!***

## Weatherization

# PROGRAM IMPACT

Our field work is in full swing, we have continued to push production to the highest levels to date this year. We are still encountering supply chain slowdowns and our contractors are dealing with continued labor issues. However, we are optimistic moving forward this will ease and we can try to reach our goals for this program year.

Excitedly, we are also in process of applying for new grant that would allow our program to address water well replacement, drain field replacement along with addressing other plumbing issues commonly found in homes. We hope to one of three agencies statewide chosen to administer this critical program to our clients.



Weatherization installs spray foam insulation in most crawlspaces to act as an excellent air barrier and insulator. This product will provide the most R-value per inch of any insulation product available on the market today. Our program also carefully installs a 6MM vapor barrier to cover all exposed ground ensuring no moisture will infiltrate the home. This ensures the home will be more comfortable and energy efficient. The methods we employ in treating our client's crawlspaces are certainly among the most effective available. These measures help keep the home healthy, warm, and safe for many years to come.

## Weatherization Five Fast Facts

- 1.) Every dollar invested in WAP returns over \$4 to society in energy, health, and safety benefits.
- 2.) Weatherization has been shown to reduce the symptoms of asthma by 11.8%.
- 3.) Weatherization saves households an average of 30% on heating costs.
- 4.) Weatherization saves families with low-incomes \$283 per year on average in energy costs, lowering their energy burden.
- 5.) Weatherized households save, on average, \$514 per year in out-of-pocket medical expenses.

[www.energysufficientmaryland.org](http://www.energysufficientmaryland.org)

### What Is It?

The Weatherization Assistance Program is free to low-income home owners and renters. Services provided reduce energy use and lower utility bills.

### What happens if I qualify?

Introduction to Weatherization and Client Education  
Basic Health and Safety inspection  
Testing of appliances for efficiency and safety  
Testing of Combustion Appliance Zone for safety  
Inspection of the exterior of the home  
Inspection of the interior of the home  
Blower door test

### Why Should I Apply?

According to national studies, households that receive weatherization services can expect heating costs to be reduced up to 25 percent. As fuel costs continue to rise, even greater savings will result.

More information visit [www.nemcsa.org](http://www.nemcsa.org).

## Food Programs

# PROGRAM IMPACT

Our Food Programs have had a very busy month with both CSFP (Senior) and TEFAP (Emergency Food) distributions running throughout the month, together. We have had the pleasure of working side by side with wonderful volunteers that were distributing COVID-19 tests at our distributions. We have received dozens of appreciative comments such as "Oh my goodness, I do not like leaving my house and I am so thankful that this is being offered to me and others." -TEFAP recipient.

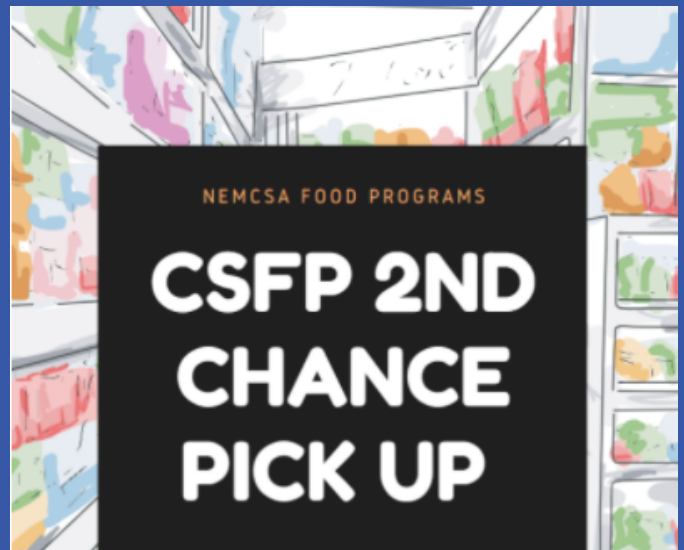
We have launched a Facebook pages that can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/NEMCSAFOODPROGRAMS> This page provides important information regarding upcoming and rescheduled distributions and employee spotlights, as we want to build a better connection between our staff, our community partners and participants we serve.

We have hired an amazing new staff member to our warehouse, Peter. He has been a great addition to our team and is enjoying meeting all our participants out at distributions! Please be sure to give Peter a warm welcome when you see him.

Internally, we have launched an electronic TEFAP request form that staff members can complete to request a TEFAP box for themselves or families/individuals that they serve.



NEMCSA Food Programs are now offering 2nd chance pick ups for both CSFP and TEFAP for those who were unable to make it to their scheduled distributions, to ensure that all qualified participants are receiving their commodities.



## March Food Distributions Dates

3/1/2022 - Oscoda County  
3/2/2022 - Iosco County  
3/3/2022 - Ogemaw County  
3/7/2022 - Alcona County  
3/8/2022 - Alpena County  
3/9/2022 - Crawford County  
3/9/2022 - Otsego County  
3/10/2022 - Presque Isle County  
3/11/2022 - Arenac County  
3/21/2022 - Montmorency County  
3/22/2022 - Oscoda County  
3/23/2022 - Iosco County  
3/24/2022 - Ogemaw County  
3/25/2022 - Cheboygan County

Specific dates and locations can be found at

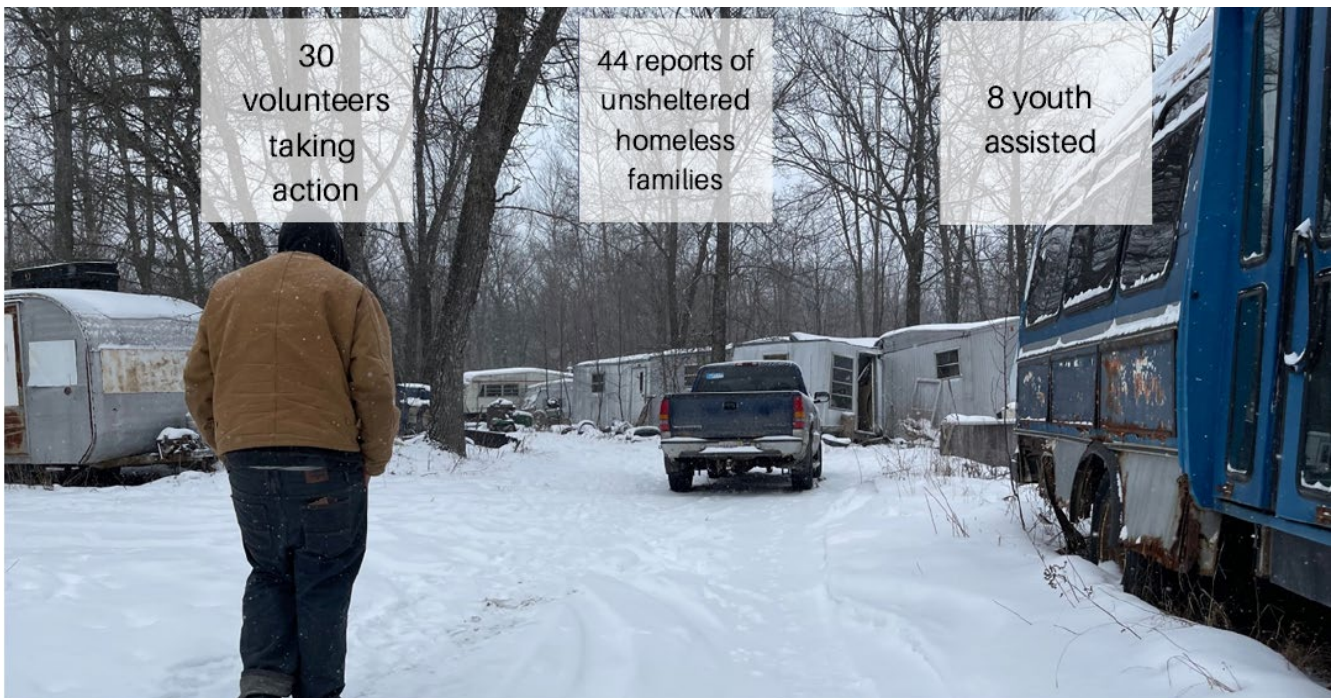
<https://www.nemcsa.org/services/commodity-supplemental-food-program/>.

*Homeless &  
Prevention*

# PROGRAM IMPACT

## **Northern Michigan participates in annual Point in Time Count – Led by Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency.**

One day, across the country communities bundle up and hit the streets for the annual point-in-time count. This count day is to give Housing and Urban Development ,HUDa snapshot of those experiencing homelessness on one given night across the country. And why is this important Counting and interviewing people sleeping in unsheltered locations during the winter months can provide a more precise count of people who are unable or unwilling to access emergency shelter or other crisis response assistance. A count on one of the coldest nights of the year can be very effective in raising public awareness of the challenges faced by homeless people without shelter. These counts are important local benchmarks that help measure changes in need at the population and subpopulation level. Counts should help us adjust our interventions to be more effective.



Volunteer

# PROGRAM IMPACT



Submitted by Richard Houchin RSVP Project Director, General Volunteer & Collaboration Manager

## RSVP Staff Out Spreading the News!

RSVP staff had the chance to meet and chat with regional community organizations during the month of February. RSVP Services Coordinator, Amy Cook-Otto once again attended and spoke to the Roscommon Ladies Group, while RSVP Project Director Rick Houchin presented to members of the Exchange Club in Alpena. These meetings and presentations are vital to bringing community awareness and support to our program. Plus, RSVP staff enjoy spreading the good news the dedicated RSVP volunteers do for their communities each day!

## RSVP Program Welcomes New Coordinator!

NEMCSA's RSVP is so excited to announce the arrival of our newest staff member, Austin Gates. Austin joins the program as our new RSVP Services Coordinator for our northern counties. She brings an extensive background in community service and volunteer management. With her office in Alpena, Austin will be serving the counties of Iosco, Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, Presque Isle, and Cheboygan. She has hit the ground running, already visiting community partners and meeting with potential RSVP volunteers. Welcome Austin!

Submitted by Heidi Powers FGP / SCP Project Director

## Foster Grandparents in the News - Well Sort of...

"Sort of" as in the Foster Grandparent Program wasn't listed by name in the 2/22/2022 edition of The Alpena News' recap of the Alpena Public School's (APS) 2/21/2022 Board Meeting, but it did include the following: "Sanborn students in oversized heart-shaped glasses told the board about the special adults who keep their school running, from **grandparent volunteers who offer the extra hugs students sometimes need...**". Those "grandparent volunteers" would be Foster Grandparents Donna Mackey, Stuart Smith, and Norma Ludwiczak. Pictured is Grandma Norma in the middle with her prior teacher, Karen Cordes, on the left and her current teacher, Niki Kalisch, on Norma's right. Norma has served as a Foster Grandparent for six years after a career as an APS bus driver and the mother and son team of Donna and Stuart have served 19 and 5 years respectively.



Area Agency on Aging  
(AAA)

# PROGRAM IMPACT

Region 9 Area Agency on  
Aging needs your help!



Scan the QR code to take the Needs  
Assessment Survey!

The Survey gathers information  
regarding the needs of older adults in  
your area.



The Multi Year Plan (MYP) is underway. *You* can help by completing the Needs Assessment Survey at <https://forms.office.com/r/rHphZ6Vq1n> ease help by completing it and spreading the word. The survey results are helpful in setting goals for the next three-year period.

More opportunities to provide input for the MYP are the **Community Input Sessions** –

March 10, 2022 at 1:00 pm at the Cheboygan COA, 1531 Sand Road, Cheboygan

and

March 11, 2022 at 10:00 am at the Ogemaw COA, 1528 S. M-33, West Branch.



## MMAP News

The Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program welcomes two new counselors to its ranks: the Alcona County Commission on Aging welcomes Kelly Vonfintel to its MMAP team and Christine Martinez-Mullins adds MMAP to her array of talents at the Alcona Health Center (Cheboygan). **Welcome to both!**

The next “New to Medicare” Zoom meeting (for anyone planning to retire, starting Medicare in 2022, or wanting more information about how Medicare works) will be held on March 16, 10:00 – 11:00. Call 800-803-7173 to make your reservation for the virtual meeting, which can be joined by computer or by phone. Participants can also schedule a meeting with a MMAP counselor to address their personal insurance



Join Kitty and Brooke  
for a bi-monthly  
podcast.

Beginning March 9<sup>th</sup>, Let's Talk About Aging will be live on Facebook the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays each month, with Kitty Glomski and Brooke Mainville. On March 9, Kitty will lead a conversation on the Medicare topic, “Aggressive Marketing and Advantage Plans” and on Wednesday, March 23 Brooke will cover the topic, “What is an Area Agency on Aging?” Also featured is the weekly “Scam Alert” discussing how to protect yourself against fraudsters and schemers that want your identity and your money.

The link for the podcast will be posted on the website: [www.Facebook.com/Region9AreaAgencyonAging](https://www.Facebook.com/Region9AreaAgencyonAging).

How's that New Year's Resolution going? Check out a new series hosted by the AAA:

## 2022 Healthy Living Webinar Series

<b>Healthy Cooking and Nutrition</b> April 22, 2022 1:00pm-2:00pm	<b>Living with Diabetes</b> May 20, 2022 1:00pm-2:00pm	<b>Healthy Living for your Brain and Body</b> June 17, 2022 1:00pm-2:00pm
<b>Fall Prevention</b> July 15, 2022 1:00pm-2:00pm	<b>Living with Chronic Pain</b> August 19, 2022 1:00pm-2:00pm	<b>Managing Stress and Mental Health</b> September 16, 2022 1:00pm-2:00pm

For more information or to register, contact Brooke at 989.358.4616 or [mainvilleb@nemcsa.org](mailto:mainvilleb@nemcsa.org)