



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March
2023



March 3rd is Employee Appreciation Day. I wish I could be at every NEMCSA work site to share in person my appreciation for the work all of you do, everyday. Lately, I am loving Amanda Gascho's quote, "We can do hard things." That is SO true of the work you do everyday. So on behalf of NEMCSA's Board of Directors and myself, please know how much you are appreciated today and throughout the year. - Lisa



NEMCSA staff were able to attend the Alpena Chamber Awards last month for a great outreach event that hundreds of community members attended.

Pictured, Front Row- left to right: Paige Sumerix, Executive Assistant, Cathy Macfalda, HR Director, Dorothy Pinter, Community Programs Director Back Row- left to right: Brooke Mainville, Special Programs Coordinator, Yvette Smigelski, Director of Business/Financial Resources, Kimberlee Hincka, CFO, Victoria Purvis, Director of Homeless and Prevention Services.

Enhancing quality of life by empowering individuals and strengthening communities.

Sanborn Elementary School announces the opening of a new Little Free Pantry providing a 24/7, zero barrier access point to food for anyone in need. The free pantry is an easy way for Sanborn Elementary to help neighbors in need and spread kindness to the community. The pantry became available on February 11, 2023.



NEMCSA'S TEFAP (Food Boost Program) in collaboration with other private donations, supports and stocks the Little Free Pantry each month. Thank you to our amazing Sanborn School Success Liaison, Amy Weide, and our Food Program staff for coming together and being part of this amazing endeavor to spread kindness throughout our community.

Pictured: Sanborn Elementary Students, Amy Weide, School Success Liaison Sanborn Elementary, and NEMCSA's food staff in action!

NEMCSA Staff volunteer to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, agency staff took the opportunity to teach the young children in various Head Start classrooms across the region about the life and legacy of the civil rights icon. They did so by reading them the book "Who Was Martin Luther King Jr.?" by Lisbeth Kaiser. Dr. King's teachings continue to inspire us all to strive for equality, justice, and peace. His message is one that we all can learn from, regardless of age. Reading a short book about his life to young children is an excellent way to introduce them to the importance of his work and the impact he had on our society. Teachers, children, and volunteers all had an amazing time and can't wait for more next year!

NEMCSA's Shine Bright volunteer program is currently looking for volunteers to help fill critical needs across northeast Michigan. Interested in working alongside NEMCSA and our fight against food insecurity? Have a couple hours to spare 1-2 days a month? We are looking for volunteers in all counties across NE Michigan to help our emergency food programs reach homebound seniors. We have an urgent need for volunteers to deliver boxes of food to recipients that are unable to make it to scheduled distributions sites. If you're interested or want more information, please contact Rick at 989-358-4637 or email shinebright@nemcsa.org.





BREAKING NEWS

From the Crawford County Commission on Aging: "The Crawford County COA Board voted on February 22, 2023 to recommend bids for the new Senior Center along with a request to the County Commissioners for up to \$1 million of ARPA (COVID) dollars for the project's budget gap. County Commissioners met the next day and approved the bids for construction along with the gift of \$1 million. We are so incredibly thankful for their support! We hope to break ground at the beginning of May or sooner..."

Congratulations Crawford County!



Caregiver Webinar Series

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging hosted a free Caregiver Webinar: Navigating Difficult Conversations: Hear the Perspective of Persons Living with Dementia. The one-hour webinar was presented by the National Council of Dementia Minds, a group of persons living with dementia. The panel explored how and when to discuss difficult conversations with someone with dementia. Twenty-four participants attended the live event. One participant stated "Today's panel was amazing. The panel brought such understanding and encouragement to dementia patients. Thank you for hosting these events." Another participant stated, "Thank you soooo much, Brooke, I found it to be so thought-provoking and believe it will be very helpful in dealing with our difficult conversations going forward." Many thanks to the Dementia Minds panelists for such interesting presentations. To view the recorded presentation visit:

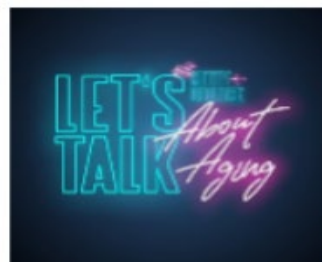
https://www.facebook.com/Region9AreaAgencyonAging/videos/?ref=page_internal



Thanks to a partnership with MI Works!, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) along with the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program hosted a recruitment event on February 15, 2023 at the Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium in Mio, Michigan.

MMAP (Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program) needs volunteers to help Medicare beneficiaries. Join an award-winning team of volunteers that counsel throughout NE Michigan. Learn how to assist older adults and persons with disabilities with unbiased information about Medicare and available insurance choices (drug plans, Medigap, Advantage plans), how to avoid penalties, subsidies that help lower income beneficiaries, finding affordable prescriptions, and avoiding scams and fraud. To learn more about becoming a MMAP counselor and receive free training, please contact Kitty Glomski, MMAP Regional Coordinator, 989-358-4612.

New to Medicare Virtual Webinars are available on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 10:00 to 11:00. Connect to the webinar either by computer or listen in by telephone. The next presentation will be held on Wednesday, March 8. Call your local Council/Commission on Aging or 800-803-7174 to register. After the presentation, you can also schedule an appointment to review your individual insurance options with a MMAP counselor in your area.



Let's Talk About Aging podcast! Listen to MMAP SHIP Director Pat MacKinnon discussing Advantage plans and Open Enrollment extending through March 31. What is an Advantage plan? How do I choose one that fits my needs? What about those extra benefits? New podcast topics are posted monthly. Sign up to receive an email notice of new podcast postings at: <https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/podcast.html> Scan the QR code above with your cell phone's camera or go to www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/podcast.html

The Expanding Dementia Care Support in Underserved Communities and Populations in Michigan

The AAA and Michigan State University School of Social Work are partnering on a \$333,096 Michigan Health Endowment Fund grant to pilot a two-year grant program. Currently, about 190,000 people are living with dementia in Michigan.

The purpose of the grant is to expand dementia resources to rural areas and minority groups and provide two social work services to Dementia Caregivers with two main focus areas: 1. General Case Management: This will provide information, education, and linkage to services. 2. Clinical: Which will provide counseling for the family caregivers.

*Early Childhood
Services*

PROGRAM IMPACT



Over 340 Early Childhood Services staff gathered at annual In-Service for the first time in person since March 2020. The inspiring two day training focused on professional development and reconnection.

Tricia Grifka, NEMCSA Early Childhood Services Director, and other Head Start Directors met with Representative John Moolenaar in his Washington, DC office in January to discuss workforce, continued bipartisan support, and impacts programs have made in Michigan. Representative Moolenaar was invited to visit any of NEMCSA's many Head Start classrooms in the the state's 2nd District.



Laurel Barnovitz, Sydney Funnel, Heather Proctor, Faithanna Sheldon, Sean Smith and Chelsea Struble completed the Family Service Credential Train the Trainer course in February. They join Lori Clark and Kelly Mowery in training staff to understand family systems and develop skills to support families as they work toward achieving their goals, and to support parents to be their child's first and most important teacher. In-house trainers save the program both time and money while providing greater flexibility in scheduling.





PROGRAM IMPACT

The School Success Partnership Program welcomed Samantha Farris, LMSW, IECMH-E Regional Training Specialist, Western Michigan University's Children's Trauma Assessment Center and Texas Christian University's Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development and D/Sgt. Scott Wood, Michigan State Police to their in-person team meeting on February 17th in Alpena.

Holding in-person trainings are valuable to the School Success staff because it is important to gather all of the team together and receive exceptional trainings that are directly applicable and immediately transferable into daily work and achieving the agency mission.



Dorothy Pinter, Community Programs Director, Samantha Farris, LMSW, IECMH-E Regional Training Specialist, WMU CTAC & TCU Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development, & Kristen Wisniewski, SSP Program Coordinator (Pictured above).



D/Sgt. Scott Wood providing Home Visiting Safety Training & updates on the current drug climate in our communities (Pictured above).



School Success Liaisons, Liz Jones (TBJH) & Nancy Kreis (ACES), interacting with Samantha Farris during the TBRICorrectionWorkshop



Homeless & Prevention

PROGRAM IMPACT

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count - The last Wednesday of January every year is the Point-In-Time Count. For 24 hours, individuals living in a place not meant for human habitation (cars, campers, tents, public restrooms, etc.) have the opportunity to share general information about their household with volunteers.

Public access points such as libraries, laundromats, 24-hour gas stations, food pantries and soup kitchens, reported to the volunteers individuals that would frequent their establishments seeking warmth from the winter weather.

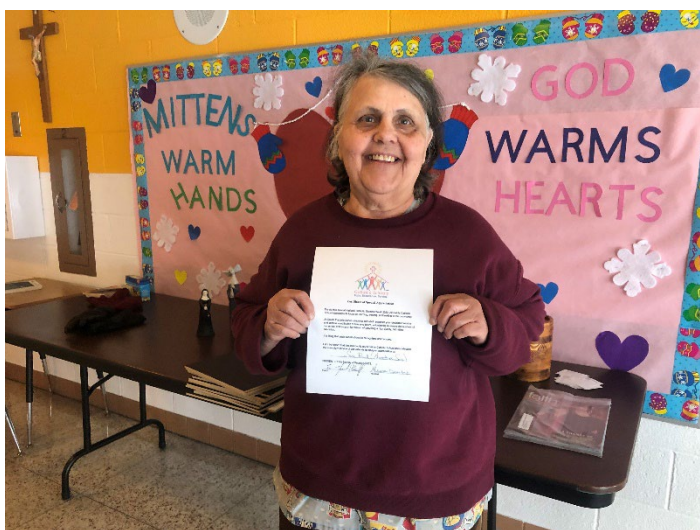
Volunteers were able to engage with 164 homeless individuals. One hundred and eleven were sheltered and 53 were unsheltered. The volunteers collected count information to present to HUD and state partners and provided the unhoused with outreach bags containing supplies such as water, gloves, socks, non-perishable snacks, hand warmers and community resources.



Volunteer

PROGRAM IMPACT

NEMCSA RSVP staff have been busy in the community in the first couple months of 2023. Staff have concentrated on visiting regional community organizations and speaking to them about the benefits of community service and volunteerism. Here at RSVP, we believe that community service not only benefits the organizations that receive help, but also the individuals who volunteer. For the volunteer, it leads to personal growth and development, learning new skills and expanding their knowledge, and decreases loneliness while improving connections to others in their community. All benefits which also improve both the physical and mental health of the volunteer!



Meet Foster Grandparent volunteer Susan Paul. Grandma Sue, as she is called at All Saints Catholic School in Alpena, is a new member of our program as of November 2022 and is already making a huge impact. Grandma Sue is pictured here holding a Certificate of Special Appreciation presented to her by All Saints February 3rd. She is recognized by the students and staff for her "dedicated service and selfless contribution of time and talent" and her "exemplary service." A great honor after just three months of service! Grandma Sue volunteers 23 hours a week, provides specialized assistance to five students ranging between five and seven years old, and is making a positive impact on so many others, everyone wants to sit with Grandma at lunch!

SAVE THE DATE: May 9, 2023 Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Program's Recognition.

FOOD PROGRAM

PROGRAM IMPACT



The NEMCSA Food Program has been braving the Michigan winter at 19 distribution sites for our monthly Golden Grocery Giveaway's. Ice, snow, wind, negative temperatures, and rain doesn't stop this team! The only time our distributions are rescheduled is if schools are closed.

The Food Boost Program is moving forward full speed ahead and pictured above are two pantry partners from the Oscoda Senior Center, excited about the food they received for their monthly delivery to help feed their community. This month we welcomed a new home delivery volunteer for Iosco County, Mr. David Ladd. Not only did Mr. Ladd deliver to our homebound residents throughout Iosco County, he also gave our team a helping hand for our Oscoda distribution. This distribution usually runs 30 minutes, but we saw a large increase in participants, lengthening the distribution to over one hour!



PROGRAM IMPACT

Weatherization Assistance Program

The NEMCSA Weatherization Team is one step closer to starting work with MSHDA and their new MI-Hope Grant. This has been a challenging road for both NEMCSA and MSHDA since they are developing much of the administrative structure for this large grant as we are trying to move forward with our projects. We wanted to thank everyone within NEMCSA who was part of the process and helped us get to this point. Our first allocation is for \$200,000 and those funds are earmarked to dovetail with our WAP funds to make homes in our region weatherization ready. We will be looking to complete major projects on homes that were deferred from the WAP for various reasons, the main issue being roof replacements. We hope to begin many of these projects as soon as spring weather arrives, which we all hope is sooner rather than later. Once a percentage of the first allocation is spent, a second round of \$200,000 will be added to our efforts to improve the housing for qualified families in our service region.

Staff News

Our long time Weatherization Inspector Mark Whitscell was asked to become a part of the State of Michigan WAP Training Work Group. Mark has many years of experience in weatherization and is very well respected throughout the State WAP Network. This work group will help guide MiTec and BCAEO into the future for WAP training. NEMCSA is fortunate to have Mark on our Team and this is a great honor for him, Congrats Mark!

LIHEAP & WAP

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT HOUSEHOLD
ENERGY RESOURCES & REDUCE THE ENERGY BURDEN



LOW-INCOME FAMILIES ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY
AFFECTED BY HIGH HOME ENERGY COSTS.

16.3%

OF A LOW-INCOME FAMILIES'
GROSS ANNUAL INCOME IS
SPENT ON HOME ENERGY COSTS

3.5%

OF OTHER HOUSEHOLDS' ANNUAL
INCOME IS SPENT ON HOME
ENERGY COSTS COMPARATIVELY

LIHEAP PROVIDES 6.7
MILLION HOUSEHOLDS
WITH HEATING AND
COOLING ASSISTANCE.

WAP INSTALLS ENERGY
EFFICIENCY MEASURES
FOR LONG-TERM
SOLUTIONS.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMS

PROGRAM IMPACT



There continues to be a lot to celebrate for the families in the BOSS program. With the support of their mentor and other NEMCSA resources, one family has paid off their home, their vehicles and will be utilizing their tax return for a new hot water heater, vehicle repairs and to establish a savings account! Another BOSS family welcomed a baby into their family!

The BOSS program was able to fund the purchase of a used vehicle for a family who was in critical need due to their vehicle having rust and frame failure that it was deemed not road worthy or worth it to repair. This direct service assistance prevented the mother of the family from losing her job, and allowed her to have safe transportation for her and her family!