

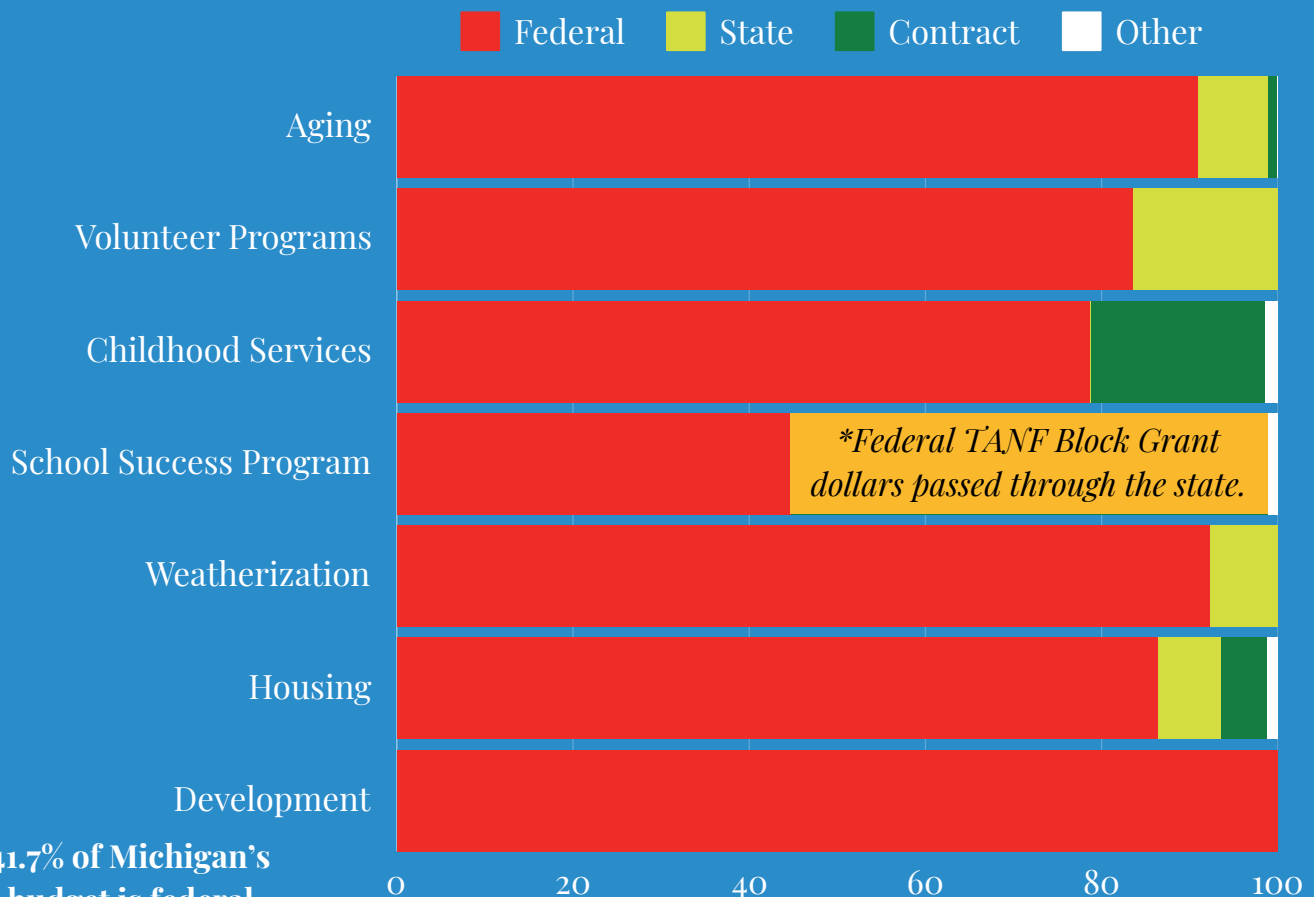
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March
2025



NEMCSA FUNDING BREAKDOWN

How Much of Our Paychecks Are Federally Funded?



****Note: 41.7% of Michigan's
FY 2026 budget is federal**



ADVOCACY MATTERS.

The data provided on the front cover is meant to educate on the composition of NEMCSA's Funding. While it may be uncomfortable, it is necessary in understanding our foundation.

Now is the Time:

Advocacy plays a critical role in securing resources and shaping policies that support NEMCSA's mission. Without strong advocacy, essential services could face budget cuts, limiting NEMCSA's ability to provide support to vulnerable populations.

What You Can Do:

Visit NEMCSA's Take Action Page:

<https://www.nemcsa.org/get-involved/take-action.html>

On this page, you will find a link to locate your federal legislators.

STAFF MAY NOT:

1. Claim to represent NEMCSA or viewpoints of NEMCSA. Be clear that you are expressing your views as a CITIZEN, NOT as an employee of NEMCSA.
2. Engage in advocacy activities on work time or equipment or on NEMCSA premises. (Do not use your work email, computer, phones, copy machines, supplies, etc.)

The Power of Collective Action:

Every action, no matter how small, helps build a stronger safety net for Northeast Michigan. By understanding how NEMCSA is funded and advocating for continued support, we ensure that families, seniors, and individuals in need can access the resources necessary for a brighter future.

If you see the impact and importance of NEMCSA's programs, take some time to reach out to your federal legislators to let them know.



Celebrating Samantha Nelson: A Rising Star in Early Childhood Education



30 UNDER 40: Meet Samantha Nelson of NEMCSA Head Start

© Courtesy

Introducing Samantha Nelson, Family Service Coordinator at NEMCSA Head Start in Midland, who has been honored in the '30 Under 40' for her outstanding contributions to early childhood education.

Samantha believes that the most rewarding aspect of working in this field is the opportunity to observe children's growth and development firsthand. She finds great satisfaction in helping parents understand their crucial role as their children's first teachers, guiding them as they grow and thrive.

We are happy to have Samantha Nelson as a valued member of the NEMCSA Team! [Read the full article here.](#)

Shining Bright at the Alpena Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet

On February 13th, NEMCSA Staff attended the Alpena Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet. They had a wonderful opportunity to network with various local organizations and enjoyed watching awards being presented to deserving community members and organizations. The event also provided a chance to remember and reflect on the year 2024 in Alpena, celebrating the achievements and milestones that made the community shine brightly. Looking ahead to 2025, there are many exciting events and initiatives on the horizon. One notable program is PACE NEMI, which will support the community by providing comprehensive care for older adults.



Program Impact

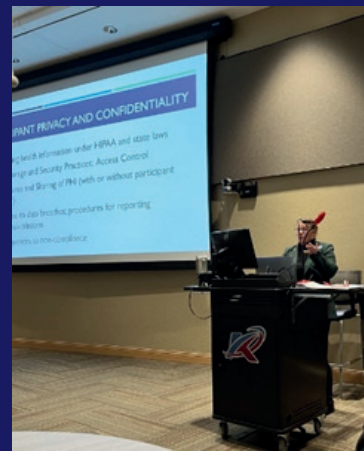
AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Region 9 AAA's Medicare Assistance Program Transitions to "SHIP"

The Medicare Assistance Program formerly known as "MMAP" (Michigan Medicare Assistance Program) will now be known as SHIP (State Health Insurance Program). This reflects a transition that puts NEMCSA's almost thirty Region 9 counselors in direct contact with CMS (Center for Medicare Medicaid Services) for information and services. Regional Coordinator Kitty Glomski says, "Our counselors will do what we've been doing all along; we just have a different name, and our SHIP service is supervised by MDHHS. We will have more access to information and resources." The SHIP will now operate as part of the new No Wrong Door System (NWD) the state is implementing this spring. In addition to SHIP, the NWD will also offer Person-Centered Options Counselling for long-term care. This service will help individuals, and their families better understand and plan for the time when long-term care is needed. Glomski wants to remind beneficiaries that Open Enrollment for Medicare Advantage (MA) plans continues through March 31. Anyone that wants to review their MA plan may contact their local Council/Commission on Aging or they can call 800-803-7174 to find their local counselor.

Residential Setting Provider Meeting Highlights

A productive and engaging Residential Settings Provider Meeting was held on February 19th at Kirtland Community College in Grayling, MI. With 24 attendees representing 16 facilities within Region 9, the session covered key topics crucial for the efficient operation of residential settings for the MI Choice Waiver Program. The two-hour meeting, led by Jaime Carney and Yvette Smigelski, focused on several important areas including contract requirements, compliance standards, program integrity, and billing/documentation practices. Attendees were actively involved, asking questions, and working through sample documentation as a group. This interactive approach allowed participants to gain practical insights and clarify important aspects of their operations. The session provided a valuable opportunity for networking and shared learning, strengthening the community of residential setting providers in the region.



Upcoming Webinars, Events & Programs:

Webinars:

Events & Programs

- March 13: Medication Safety
 - March 14: Body, Mind & Soul: Building a Caregiver Wellness Plan
 - April 10: What is Normal Aging?
 - April 11: Caring for a Veteran
 - May 9: Improving a Difficult Caregiving Day
 - June 13: Communicating Effectively with Someone with Dementia
 - Dementia Caregiver Support Group: March 5 & April 2 (9-10 am or 5-6:30 pm, virtual)
 - Dementia Caregiving Series: March 13, 20 & 27 (2-4 pm, virtual)
 - Matter of Balance: March 31-May 19 (9-11 am in Gaylord or 1:30-3:30 pm in Mio)
 - Relatives Raising Relative's Children (Kinship) Support Group: March 13 & April 10 (10-11 am, virtual)
 - Caregiver Journaling Club: March 14 & April 11 (3-4 pm, virtual, March Topic is Luck and April Topic is Spring Change)
 - Caregiver Empowerment & Wellness Conference: April 25, 10-4pm, Crawford County
- For more information, contact:**
989-358-4616 or mainvilleb@nemcsa.org

Program Impact

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Michigan

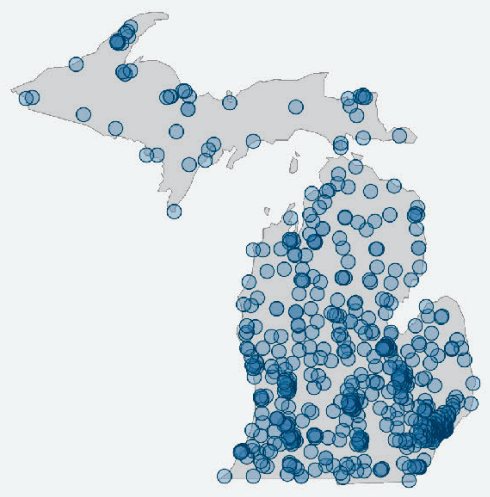
2025 Head Start Profile



BY THE NUMBERS

\$407,472,000	FY24 Funding
28,532	Total Funded Seats
20,564	Funded Head Start Preschool Seats
6,736	Funded Early Head Start Seats
330	Funded American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Seats
232	Funded American Indian/Alaska Native Early Head Start Seats
670	Funded Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and Early Head Start Seats

8,705	Total Staff Employed
620	Total Centers



Visit nhsa.org/locator to view maps in detail with congressional districts.



SNAPSHOT



“My two grandchildren were enrolled in Early Head Start and received infant mental health and family support services through home visiting and center-based care. I am so thankful for the nutritious food, health screenings, kind and caring teachers, and excellent play-based curriculum! These children are high risk, but Head Start has given them a shot at successful lives.”

—Kay, Early Head Start Caregiver



Program Impact

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES



THE HEAD START MODEL

Nationwide, Comprehensive, Multi-Generational

The premise of Head Start is simple: every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to reach their full potential.

In the six decades since its founding, Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start has served nearly 40 million children and their families. Innovators and small business owners, police officers and members of the military, nurses and teachers, and even members of Congress—our alumni represent the vast and diverse fabric of our country. From early math and reading skills, to confidence and resilience, Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start help with children build the skills they need to be successful in school and life.

There are four pillars in every program.

- Education:** Leaning on decades of brain science, Head Start staff work with children to build the brain connections and self confidence necessary for success in kindergarten and beyond.
- Health:** Providing dental, health, and mental health services and referrals, as well as healthy eating based on current nutritional best practices, and early identification of health problems, Head Start addresses critical health and nutrition needs so that children are fully ready to learn and grow.
- Parent Engagement and Support:** Believing that parents are a child's first and most important teachers, Head Start requires parent involvement in major program decision-making. Further, Head Start works with parents to put them on a path of economic self-reliance through goal-setting, parenting training, and genuine engagement, enabling parents to join the workforce and stay working.
- Local Design:** Acknowledging that each community has different strengths, resources, and challenges, each program is designed to reflect the traditions, priorities, and cultures of their community.

Children who attend Head Start are:



Research shows that the benefits of Head Start appear to transfer from one generation to the next in a substantial way.



CHILDREN

193,698	Home Visits Conducted	2,821	Children Received Care for a Chronic Health Condition
502	Pregnant Women Served	22,249	Children Received Preventative Dental Care
13,106	Newly Enrolled Children Completed Behavioral Screenings	18,541	Children Up-to-Date on Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Screenings



FAMILIES

1,699	Homeless Families Served	8,225	Fathers Involved in their Child's Educational Experiences
566	Active Duty or Military Veteran	21,329	Families Received Services that Promote Family Outcomes



COMMUNITIES

1,565	Head Start and Early Head Start Classrooms	18,707	Parents Employed, in School, or in Job Training
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Program Impact

BRIDGES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

BOSS Program Success Stories

A BOSS family has undergone an inspiring transformation over the past year. Initially homeless and facing multiple challenges, they have:

- Repaired their vehicle
- Purchased a home
- Regained custody of their children
- Secured full-time employment with benefits
- Enrolled in college for a bachelor's degree

Their journey and success make staff immensely proud!



BOSS 2.0 Year-One Achievements highlight significant progress:

- Employment & Career: Participants finding jobs, starting businesses, and completing training.
- Education & Skills: Involvement in college, GED completions, and earning professional certifications.
- Financial & Housing Stability: Improvements in housing stability, vehicle purchases, budgeting, and credit repair.
- Personal Growth: Milestones like obtaining a driver's license, regaining child custody, and transitioning to as-needed support.

This project was supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRF4951 awarded to The State of Michigan by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES



A NEMCSA Podcast

**Episodes 1 & 2
Now Available!**

💡 **Have ideas or want to
join as a guest?**

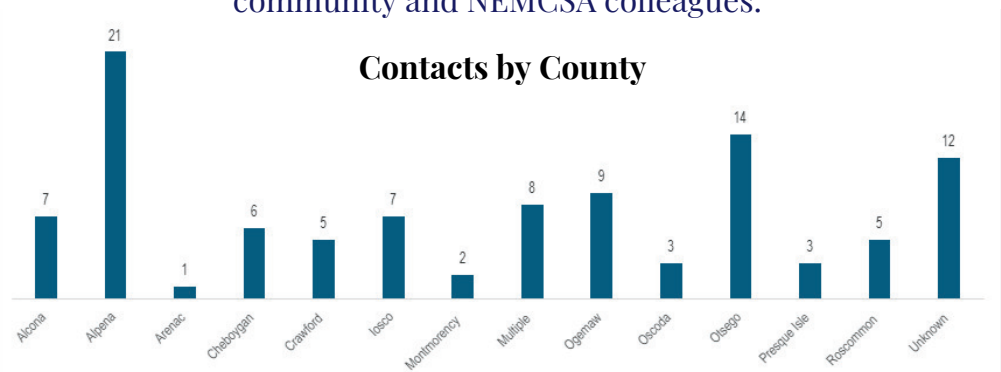
Share your suggestions,
topics, or feedback by
completing the form
here:

[Podcast Feedback Form](#)

In January, the Community Resource Team, alongside NEMCSA's BOSS Program Self-Sufficiency Mentor, assisted the Homeless & Prevention Department with the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count across Northeast Michigan. This vital initiative helps NEMCSA better understand and address homelessness in the communities.

The team provided support to 103 individuals, including 6 internal requests for assistance, demonstrating the team's ongoing commitment to helping both the community and NEMCSA colleagues.

Contacts by County



CRC@NEMCSA.ORG



989-358-4757

Program Impact

SCHOOL SUCCESS

Empowering Young Heroes



Joy Garrison, School Success Liaison at Clara Bolen Elementary, leads a "self-control" Superhero group for kindergarten students that are referred by Head Start and struggle with self-regulation. The program lasts 6 to 8 weeks, and this year kids wore superhero capes. Great job, Joy, for partnering with Head Start!



FAFSA

NIGHT



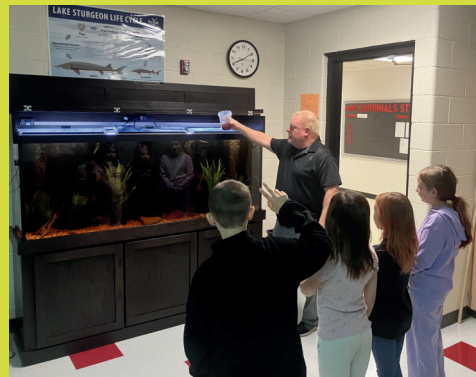
Brian Colorite, Career Development Coordinator at Tawas Area High School, organized a successful FAFSA Night on January 28, 2025, attracting 45 attendees, including students, families, and a financial aid expert. The Assistant Director of Financial Aid from Kirtland Community College provided valuable insights on the FAFSA process, contributing to productive discussions and hands-on assistance. Tawas had one of the highest engagement levels among participating high schools. The Tawas Area Rotary Club generously provided food, enhancing the experience for attendees, many of whom completed their FAFSA on-site and received expert guidance. This event significantly impacts students' future planning.

Thank You



The School Success Team would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Boys and Girls Club for recognizing our team and program as an outstanding force in supporting underserved youth in the community. The YVC students thoughtfully presented an incredible basket to the SSP team as a gesture of appreciation for their ongoing efforts in promoting child wellness and care within the service area. A big shoutout to the School Success Team for their dedication and hard work, and we also want to express sincere gratitude to the Boys and Girls Club and the Youth Volunteers for their invaluable support and commitment. Thank you all for making a difference!

Feeding Stewie



Brent Rellinger, School Success Liaison at Whittemore-Prescott Elementary, assists 4th graders in feeding the school sturgeon. This responsibility is a part of the 'Sturgeon in the Classroom' program. The goal is to instill conservation stewardship. Students feed, measure water temperature, water chemical balance as well as weigh and measure "Stewie". Stewie will be released in the Spring. The sturgeon and tank are located in Mr. Brent's room and funded through a grant through place-based education (PBE). PBE can help students develop a sense of place and attachment to their community. Thank you for making your space so amazing, Brent!

Program Impact

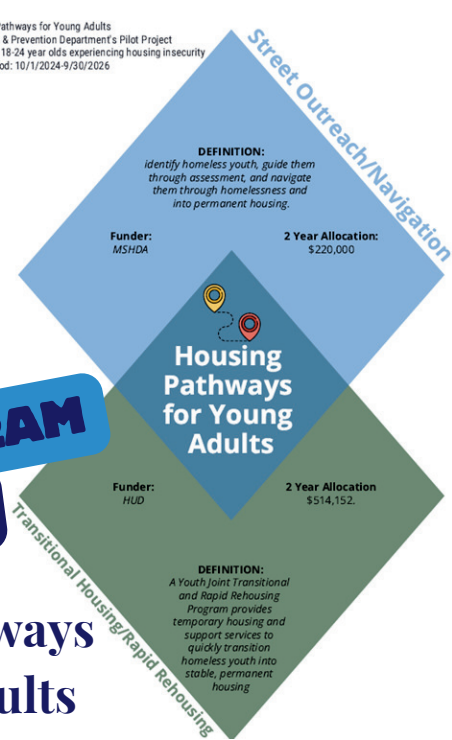
HOUSING



Welcome
Danielle!

**NEW PROGRAM
ALERT!**

Housing Pathways for Young Adults



Danielle is the program's new Shelter Diversion Specialist. She will be meeting participants at the office, in the shelter, and speaking with them over the phone to offer resources to divert participants from shelter. This process elevates creative problem solving and conflict resolution to empower people experiencing a housing crisis to find an immediate alternative to shelter and return to more stable housing.

The YHDP program has housed 2 households since January. Staff have purchased both families several household items including toddler beds, bedding, kitchen and bathroom items and cleaning supplies. The program is working on establishing Transitional Housing units. There are currently 4 literally homeless youth on the program's By Name List.

Point-In-Time Count Day!

The Point-In-Time Count, is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness held on the last Wednesday in January every year. New for this year is an agency record for the number of PIT volunteers, as well as the first time the Housing department has had PIT crews in all 11 counties, some counties with two crews. The highly spirited PIT volunteers included people from several community partner agencies- United Way, Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, Michigan State Police, Oasis of Hope, Veterans Affairs, SSVF, District Health Department No.2 along with the whole CRC team and H&P team members. And while not active as boots on the ground, we had reporting help from the several NE Lower MI DNR COs and the Huron-Manistee National Forests Law Enforcement Officers. The crew of volunteers acted as frontline contacts, going out to tents, cars, campers where homelessness has been reported to take a count of those who are unsheltered. Pictured are some of the homeless reports that volunteer crews checked on while they were out. Pictured is Tiffany Giles as she continued to count through the afternoon and evening in Roscommon County. She is the Community Health Worker with District Health Department #2.



Thank you to all the volunteers and agencies who took part in making everyone COUNT!
To find out more about Homeless & Prevention Services, call: 989-358-4678.

Program Impact

FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Housing Counseling

On January 24th, the Housing Department was approved to receive funds through CSBG to make payments to residents to prevent property tax foreclosures within the 11 counties. To date, \$27,000 has been paid and 18 households have successfully been able to complete Foreclosure Counseling and avoid losing their homes to foreclosure. The program was initially granted \$28,227 in funds, but due to the speed in which they were spent and the number of individuals contacting the agency for assistance, an additional \$10,000 was awarded to help more families maintain their housing.

MSHDA recently announced their new First-Generation Down Payment Assistance Program. This program will assist first-generation homebuyers or individuals that have aged out of foster care with \$25,000 for a down payment to purchase their home. Further information about the program is available at <https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/pathway-to-housing/firstgendpa>. One condition of the program is the homebuyers must meet face to face with our Financial Coach to complete Homebuyer Education.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program

NEMCSA currently has 24 households participating in the program. The program recently received a new grant that will enable us to help FSS families with things like child care or car repairs, so they are able to maintain and/or obtain employment.

To find out more about the Financial Empowerment Programs, Call: 989-358-4627.

WATER PROGRAM

**In February, The Water Affordability Program
successfully provided assistance to:**

32

HOUSEHOLDS



47

ADULTS



39

CHILDREN
UNDER 18



To find out more about the Water Program, Call: 989-358-4675.

Program Impact

WEATHERIZATION

Welcome Whitney!



The Weatherization program would like to introduce their new staff member, Whitney Royer. Although Whitney's childhood dream job was to work at Disney World, her life brought her to NEMCSA to work as a Weatherization Intake Specialist. Her position is one that staff are very excited to have in the department. Her focus is client home visits, where she will assist them in filling out the weatherization application, explain exactly what services through weatherization they can expect, answer all questions the clients have at that time and collect all necessary documentation from them while in the comfort of their homes. If you happen to run into Whitney outside of working hours, she may be indulging in a protein buddha bowl, watching a Tim Burton film, attending a concert or celebrating her favorite holiday, Independence Day. Whitney looks forward meeting all different people and being able to help her community when they need it most with no judgment. Weatherization assisted 124 households in Fiscal Year 2024. The program currently has 75 households in progress and with a waitlist of just over 300 clients, and expects to have a very busy spring/summer and a higher number of households assisted for Fiscal Year 2025.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

FOSTER GRANDPARENT/SENIOR COMPANIONS

Meet the dynamic duo of Erick and Valerie Erickson, a married couple serving as Foster Grandparents at Ella White Elementary school. Their volunteer service doesn't stop at being Foster Grandparents, every year they delight kids of all ages posing as Santa and Mrs. Clause throughout Alpena Public Schools and the Boy Scouts during their holiday programs and craft bazars around the area. Valerie is going on her 12th year as a Foster Grandparent, loves the kids and receives great satisfaction watching how kids the grow through the year including how much they've learned and how they've matured. Her teacher, Ms. Bade says the students love Grandma Val, rely on her for help often and she's a great asset to the classroom. Erick, who joined his wife in the Foster Grandparent program shortly after retiring, will be celebrating his eight-year anniversary. Eric is no stranger to service; he is an Army National Guard veteran having served six years. Eric enjoys being able to provide the kids with extra support and being helpful. Volunteering makes him feel good too and he loves the kids. Ms. Roznowski says Eric does a great job helping the kids and all students in the classroom benefit from having him there. They both serve 24-hours per week Tuesday through Thursday.



*We ♥ our
Volunteers*



FORKLIFT FOR SALE



CONTACT TAMMY
989-358-4708
DEANT@NEMCSA.ORG

- Bids start at \$20,000
- Hours: 558
- Comes with a battery charging station
- Reliable and ready for heavy-duty work. Hook up is for 3-phase electrical.



SCAN HERE



Place your bid by
visiting
www.nemcsa.org
or by scanning
the QR code
above.