

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February  
2024



## WELCOME, JEFF!



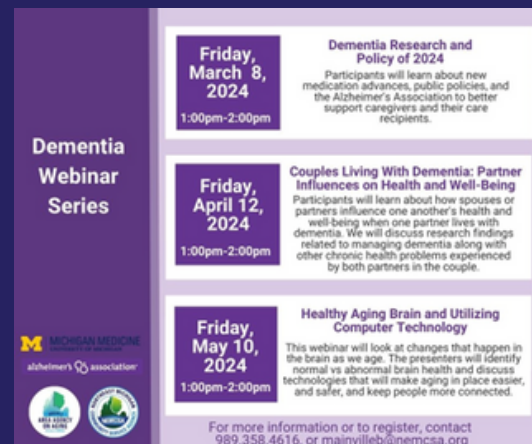
Jeff Meden grew up on the shores of Lake Huron in Alpena Michigan. Upon graduation from Alpena High School, Jeff attended Ferris State University for an education in Nuclear Medicine Technology. This program led him to Michigan Medicine where he completed his internship and began employment. Jeff completed a Bachelor's in Health Administration at Eastern Michigan University while working at Michigan Medicine. Jeff's education came to completion at the University of Michigan's School of Public Health where he received his Executive Master's in Health Systems Administration. Jeff's career has been focused on being an impactful leader who utilizes innovation and best practices to drive continuous improvement. This began with his role as a Clinical Research Manager and continued all the way to his most recent position of Vice President for a large medical group. Jeff is excited to bring his enthusiasm and experience to build and shape the vision for PACE Northeast Michigan. Jeff is supported by his wife Nicole, and three young children: Otis (8), Ozzy (5), and Cordelia (3).

# Program Impact

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

### Dementia Webinar Series

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging is hosting three one-hour webinar sessions presented by the Alzheimer's Association Michigan Chapter and the University of Michigan: Michigan Medicine. Older adults, healthcare professionals, and caregivers of all types are welcome to attend. See the schedule to the right for more information, or to register, contact Brooke Mainville at 989-358-4616 or visit <https://forms.gle/yDyRfg5GpzYQj7Pp7>.



**Dementia Webinar Series**

**Friday, March 8, 2024**  
1:00pm-2:00pm  
**Dementia Research and Policy of 2024**  
Participants will learn about new medication advances, public policies, and the Alzheimer's Association to better support caregivers and their care recipients.

**Friday, April 12, 2024**  
1:00pm-2:00pm  
**Couples Living With Dementia: Partner Influences on Health and Well-Being**  
Participants will learn about how spouses or partners influence one another's health and well-being when one partner lives with dementia. We will discuss research findings related to managing dementia along with other chronic health problems experienced by both partners in the couple.

**Friday, May 10, 2024**  
1:00pm-2:00pm  
**Healthy Aging Brain and Utilizing Computer Technology**  
This webinar will look at changes that happen in the brain as we age. The presenters will identify normal vs abnormal brain health and discuss technologies that will make aging in place easier, and safer, and keep people more connected.

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

### Other Upcoming Workshops Series:

- Chronic Pain PATH (Virtual): February 19, 2024 - March 26, 2024, from 1:00 pm-3:30 pm
- Dementia Caregiver Workshop Series (Virtual): See above
- Dementia Information for Everyone: Wednesday, March 20, 2024, from 2:00 pm-4:00 pm
- Activities for Persons with Dementia: March 27, 2024, from 2:00 pm-4:00 pm
- Dementia Behaviors and Self-Care: April 3rd, 2024, from 2:00 pm-4:00 pm
- MOB (Arenac) April 29-May 22, 2024, from 12:30 pm-2:30 pm
- MOB (Alpena) August 5, 2024 - August 28, 2024, from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm
- PTC (Alpena) August 6, 2024-September 10, 2024, from 1:00 pm-2:30 pm
- Diabetes PATH (Alpena): August 7, 2024-September 10, 2024, from 9:00 am-11:30 am

**For more information or to register, contact Brooke Mainville at 989-358-4616 or visit <https://forms.office.com/r/BAJyPxTULU>**

**Medicare News:** The time is now for Medicare Advantage Plan Open Enrollment until March 31. Reach out to the Michigan Medicare Assistance Program for information or assistance in choosing a plan. Call (800) 803-7174 to be matched with a local certified counselor. If you're new to Medicare, log on to the next "New to Medicare" Webinar or check with your local Council/Commission on Aging to attend a "watch" party.



**"New to Medicare" Webinars**

Are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each Month  
10:00 - 11:00 am \* Next webinar is **February 14**

Viewing available at COA sites

Contact your local COA/MMAP Counselor  
or Call 800-803-7174 to register



Listen to the latest podcast with Veteran's Affairs Officer, Bill Stypick, as he discusses Veterans and Medicare.

<https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/podcast.html>



# Program Impact

## EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

### NEMCSA CHILD OUTCOMES HIGHLIGHTS

NEMCSA - HEAD START & GSRP CLASSROOMS  
FIRST QUARTER - 2023



### PROGRESS TOWARDS SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

Creating school readiness goals is important because they help children get ready for school in the best possible way. These goals make sure that all children, no matter where they come from, have an equal chance to succeed when they start school. By focusing on things like reading, thinking, getting along with others, and being healthy, school readiness goals set children up for a better chance at doing well in school and in life. It's like giving them a strong foundation for their future.

DOMAIN	SUMMARY	3 YEAR OLD CLASSROOMS	4 YEAR OLD CLASSROOMS	PLAN FOR UPCOMING YEAR
 LANGUAGE & LITERACY	The Language and Literacy domain is all about helping children develop their communication and reading skills.	41% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	15% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	Provide staff training on listening and comprehension at February 2024 In-Service.
 COGNITIVE	The Cognition domain refers to helping children develop their thinking and problem-solving skills.	46% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	40% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	Offer staff training on the scientific method during February 2024 In-Service.
 SOCIAL EMOTIONAL	The Social-Emotional domain is about helping children learn how to handle their feelings and interact with others in a positive way.	41% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	25% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	Two of six group coaching topics and our expert coaching sessions will be based on social-emotional learning.
 APPROACHES TO LEARNING	The Approaches to Learning domain is about how children take the initiative in their learning, be curious, and never give up when they face challenges.	63% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	36% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	Continue to utilize the curriculum to achieve goal.
 PHYSICAL	The Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development domain focuses on helping children develop their physical and motor skills, as well as their sensory abilities.	61% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	27% MEETING OR EXCEEDING GOAL	Continue to utilize the curriculum to achieve goal.

### PRE-K CLASS ASSESSMENT AVERAGE SCORES

HIGH RANGE

6.2

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

HIGH RANGE

5.5

CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION

MID RANGE

3.82

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

### CLASSROOM SUPPORT

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING

249

FACE TO FACE COACHEE VISITS

MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

81

TEACHER CONSULTS/ GROUP CONSULTS

# Program Impact

## FOOD PROGRAM

In December, the Food Program continued to provide vital support to participants. Whole chickens were distributed through the Food Boost program, offering nutritious options to those in need. The program has also been actively securing bonus items whenever possible to enhance the offerings.

Looking ahead to January and February, participants can anticipate receiving essential items such as oatmeal, raisins, almonds, and frozen blueberries at most sites. Additionally, February will bring pork loins, a highly appreciated addition, as it has been observed that frozen meats are particularly well-received by participants.

One heartwarming story highlights the impact of the food program. A family reached out for assistance, explaining that their daughter's diabetic condition necessitated specific dietary restrictions, which were challenging to afford with limited food stamp benefits. The mother, who relies on tips as her income, shared her struggles to provide wholesome, unprocessed meals for her family while managing the costs of daily life. Stories like these are a great reminder of how important all of the work that is put into the program is and continues to motivate staff to support the communities in which they live.

In December, the Golden Grocery Food Program experienced increased participation, ensuring that more families had access to essential resources. However, as January's harsh weather set in, there was a decrease in participation due to snow and frigid temperatures. This decline is a typical seasonal pattern for the participants during this time of year.

### February 2024 Giveaway Schedule

**2/6: Alpena County:** Alpena Word of Life Church: 1900 N. Bagley St. Alpena, MI 49707. 9 -10 am

**Alcona County:** Lincoln Senior Center: 205 Church St. Lincoln, MI 48742. 1-2 pm

**2/7: Crawford County:** St. Mary Church (family center) 708 Peninsular Ave, Grayling, MI 49738. 9:30-10:30 am

**Otsego County:** Gaylord Eagle's Club: 515 S. Wisconsin Ave. Gaylord, MI 49735 (under the water tower). 11:30-12 pm

**Vandy/Wolverine:** 7910 Arthur St. Vanderbilt, MI 49795 12:15-12:30 pm

**2/8: Presque Isle:** Onaway C.O.A/Senior Center: Lynn St. Onaway, MI 49765. 9-10 am

**Rogers City:** 131 Superior St. Rogers City, MI 49779. 10:30-11 am

**Posen:** C.O.A/Senior Center: 6520 Darga Hwy. Posen, MI 49776. 11:30 am-12 pm

**2/9: Arenac:** Standish American Legion: 3221 M-76, Standish, MI 48658. 10-11 am

**2/13: 2nd Chance Pick up + Pantry pickup:** 11765 US 23, Ossineke, MI 49766. 9-11 am

**2/20: Oscoda County:** Mio 1889 Caldwell Rd, Mio, MI 48647. 10-11 am

**Montmorency:** Lewiston Senior Center: 2811 Kneeland St. Lewiston, MI 49756. 11:30 am-12 pm

**Atlanta:** Senior Center: 11780 M-33. Atlanta, MI 49709. 12:30-1 pm

**Hillman:** Senior Center: 431 Pineview Court, Hillman, MI 49746. 1:30-2 pm

**2/21: Iosco County:** Hale: Plainfield Twp Community Center: 415 E. Main St. Hale, MI 48739. 9 -10 am

**East Tawas:** Tawas Area Presb. Church: 2095 E. US 23, E. Tawas, MI 48730. 11 -11:30 am

**Oscoda:** Sacred Heart Church: 5300 N US 23 Oscoda, MI 48750. 12-12:30 pm

**2/22: Ogemaw:** West Branch: First United Methodist Church: 2490 W. State Road, West Branch, MI 48661. 10-11 am

**Skidway:** Stephen Pantry: 2811 Greenwood, Prescott, MI 48756. 11:30 am-12 pm

**2/23: Cheboygan:** Cheboygan C.O.A/Senior Center: 1531 Sand Rd. Cheboygan, MI 49721. 10-11 am



# Program Impact

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### Community Resource Coordinator Monthly Update

*"As your Community Resource Coordinator, it's both an honor and a privilege to serve our agency, and communities, connecting with individuals and providing valuable resources."* – Amanda Bergeron

Below is a snapshot of the most recent highlights from the Community Resource Coordinator (CRC):

#### Community Engagement:

NEMCSA is thrilled to announce that there is a newly hired Assistant Community Resource Coordinator who officially joined the NEMCSA family on January 22nd, 2024! This exciting addition will further strengthen the agency's commitment to serving northeast Michigan. As part of NEMCSA's community engagement efforts, CRC had the opportunity to support the team at Iosco Cares, where time and energy were dedicated to assisting the seniors in the community. Together an incredible 315 bags were packed and filled with essentials and love for cherished homebound seniors in Iosco County. Each bag symbolizes the agency's commitment to ensuring no one feels forgotten or alone. The initiative goes beyond just delivering supplies; it's about building a stronger, more caring community. NEMCSA believes in making a difference, one bag at a time, and the success is a testament to what we can achieve together.

#### Volunteer Time in the Community:

In the spirit of the holiday season, CRC organized a heartwarming Christmas Caroling event at Oscoda Fields Assisted Living. The staff and residents were deeply moved and joined in singing Christmas favorites. It was a beautiful and heartwarming experience.

#### Support to Individuals:

Throughout the month of December, CRC had the privilege of assisting 49 individuals with valuable resources, support, and information. The assistance included 18 dedicated NEMCSA staff members. It is a reminder that everyone is apart of a supportive community, and together, great things can be achieved.

# BRIDGES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

In the world of the BOSS program, there is a story of remarkable transformation and accomplishment. Kelli, one of the original BOSS pilot program participants, embarked on a journey that exemplifies the program's power to change lives.

With unwavering determination and the guidance of her dedicated mentor, Kelli achieved her goals and secured a brighter future.

Kelli's journey began with a vision of independence and self-sufficiency. Through the BOSS program, she worked diligently to turn that vision into reality. Today, Kelli proudly resides in her own rental home, where she manages her bills and enjoys a newfound sense of stability.

One of Kelli's most significant achievements is her ability to establish healthy boundaries with those around her. This transformative milestone has not only empowered her but has also enriched her relationships.

The crowning achievement of Kelli's journey was securing full-time employment with CVS Health, a remote position that offers comprehensive benefits and retirement options.

Her graduation from the BOSS program marked the culmination of her hard work and dedication.

At her graduation celebration, Kelli expressed her gratitude for the BOSS program, emphasizing how it has profoundly impacted her life. She shared, "I would recommend the BOSS program to anyone, as the program has helped me so much in so many ways. From helping shift my mindset and instilling a belief in myself to connecting me with other services and resources I didn't know existed. I was able to achieve all my goals, and I knew that my mentor truly believed in me. I am forever grateful."

Kelli's journey is a testament to the transformative potential of the BOSS program and the profound impact it can have on the lives of participants, empowering them to achieve their goals and unlock their true potential.



# Program Impact

# SCHOOL SUCCESS



PARTNERSHIP



AWARD

The importance of partnership! School Success Liaison's Elena Fryer and Arianna VanderVeen, together with School Social Worker's, Samantha Hamilton and Nina Niemetta IRESA 31N, Special Education Teacher, Ellen Doherty, and Kelly Alexander, Branch Manager AAACU, have brought together a much-needed sensory space at Richardson Elementary in Oscoda.

## THE ALPENA NEWS

### Congrats, NEMCSA, on award

A Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency program that's had a real impact on area students recently received an award from the state.

Between 2022 and 2023, NEMCSA's Success Partnership Program served more than 3,500 students and helped drive a roughly 98% reduction in absenteeism in 15 school districts, which include districts Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency, and Presque Isle counties, according to a recent story by News staff writer Mike Gonzalez.

Across districts served by the program, overall academics, reading skills, and math skills improved among the students served by the program 79%, 77%, and 75%, respectively.

For that work, the Success Partnership Program received the 2023 Youth Impact Award at the state's Governor's Service Awards, Gonzalez reported.

It's an old cliché but one of those that ring true: It takes a village to raise a child.

Schools need the help of parents and the community at large to keep kids in school and succeeding while they're there.

We commend NEMCSA for stepping up to the plate and coming up with a program that works.

Congratulations on your award, NEMCSA, it's much-deserved.

An editorial from the Alpena News highlights the award the School Success Program was given. The editorial notes the impact the program has on students including improved academics. *"It takes a village to raise a child."*

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Alpena Public Schools (APS) recognizes the contribution and hard work of staff working in their buildings. As a partner with them, it is always so exciting to see NEMCSA's staff as the APS highlight!

**Nancy Kreis**  
I am a WILDCAT!  
APS Staff Spotlight

Nancy Kreis, School Success Liaison at ACES Academy. Nancy has been with SSP for over 11 years.

Jolene Price, School Success Liaison at Hinks Elementary. Jolene has been with SSP for almost 8 years.

**Jolene Price**  
Staff Member of the Week



*"Nancy is a vital member of the ACES team. Nancy goes out of her way to make each day special for staff and students alike. Always wearing a smile, Nancy assists students in learning and life skills. She excels at building and sustaining impactful relationships with students!"*

-APS Staff Member

*"Jolene is the loving and caring glue that creates a bond between home and school. She is irreplaceable."* - Jean Kowalski, Hinks Elementary Principal

Meet Elexia Hagle! Elexia is joining the School Success Program as our newest addition to Johannesburg School. Elexia started in a new position as the School Success Liaison specifically for grades 5-8. Welcome, Elexia!



# Program Impact

## HOUSING

Homeless Awareness Month Raised \$3,200 and over 1,000 supplies for the Kindness Closet!



Pictured above, NEMCSA Staff & Three Lakes Title & Abstract staff, who, along with four other offices participated in Jeans day where staff could pay a \$1 to wear jeans for November. The owner matched the funds raised to end the month with a donation in the amount of \$742!

NEMCSA Housing Staff took time out to attend a training to become certified in Mental Health First Aid in an effort to fully support program participants and each other.

Luminaries were set up outside the Alpena County Courthouse to represent each of the 80 youth experiencing homelessness this month.

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

**How can you help?**  
Canned food with metal tab, baked beans, canned chicken/tuna, granola bars, water.

To find out more about Homeless & Prevention Services, call: 989-358-4678.

## FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

The Family Self Sufficiency program currently has **41 active participants**. This number is always changing as new people are enrolling or people deciding that they don't have to participate and are exiting.

MSHDA's MIHAF program that was available to homeowners to assist them in getting caught up on their mortgage and/or property taxes, closed on December 8, 2023.

Staff are still available to community members to assist them with applying for programs through their mortgage servicer or county treasurer, and assisting them in finding other options that might be available. Staff are also available to assist with creating sustainable budgets so individuals/families are able to afford their housing costs.

In the month of December, staff worked with **one household** to complete **Pre-Purchase Counseling** to better help them become prepared to complete the homebuying process. **Five households** participated in **Rental Counseling** - these households were all previously homeless and are working with staff to be able to maintain their housing.



# Program Impact

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

### SENIOR COMPANION & FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAMS

NEMCSA's Senior Companion program has expanded by four new volunteers! The program is pleased to introduce from left to right John Kirsch (Iosco County), Scott Ulery (Crawford County), Kevin Hill (Iosco County), Heidi Powers (Project Director), and Jeff Layman (Iosco County). The new volunteers completed their first half of pre-service training over two days in Alpena on January 18 and 23, 2024. The AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers earn the status of "professional volunteer" in part due to their required 20 hours of pre-service orientation. At the orientation, half of their training is spent learning the ins and outs of their respective programs, what to expect from their service, and how best to succeed as professional volunteers from program staff. The second half of orientation will be spent in their respective communities with more hands-on experience of what their actual service will entail with the program's partner organizations. Training doesn't end there though! All Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers are required to participate in a minimum of 24 hours of in-service training per year. The next step for our new Senior Companions will be completing the fingerprint portion of the FBI criminal history check. Following clear results, they will be referred to their stations where they will start volunteering 20 hours per week.



*We ♥ our  
Volunteers*

RSVP



Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" In the spirit of his profound words, RSVP volunteers and NEMCSA staff recently celebrated MLK week by participating in a "Letters to Fight Loneliness" campaign. "Letters to Fight Loneliness" is an effort to bring cheer and comfort to individuals facing loneliness and isolation across the region, especially during these challenging times. All participants strongly believe in the power of connection and the impact a simple kind gesture can have on someone's day. By writing cheer cards, participants had an opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who might be feeling socially isolated. The task is simple, yet incredibly rewarding. Letter-writing volunteers wrote cheerful, uplifting messages on cards/notes that will be shared with individuals in need. Their words of encouragement and support will provide comfort and reassurance, reminding them that they are not alone. To date, RSVP and community volunteers, NEMCSA staff, and regional Head Start classrooms have dropped off nearly 300 cards, notes, and pictures!

For more information contact Amy Cook Otto at 989-358-4650.

# Program Impact

# WEATHERIZATION

## GREAT NEWS TO BEGIN 2024!

Weatherization has just received roughly \$950,000.00 in deferral reduction funds to spend over the next 3 years in an effort to provide assistance to 96 homes the program would otherwise be unable to weatherize.

The program is currently assisting clients within 4-6 months of them joining the waitlist for services. There are also over 60 homes in progress.



**NEMCSA**  
**Weatherization Assistance Program**  
2569 US-23 South Alpena, MI 49707  
989-358-4700 \* [nemcsa.org](http://nemcsa.org)



Alcona | Alpena | Arenac | Cheboygan | Crawford | Iosco | Montmorency | Ogemaw | Oscoda | Otsego | Presque Isle



Studies have shown that Weatherizing your home can result in an average of 15% to 40% reduction of fuel usage which in turn will lower your utility bills.

Program services are **free of charge** to qualified homeowners and renters, providing both short and long-term energy savings, as well as increased comfort in the weatherized homes.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) makes energy-related improvements on the homes of low-income households.

The WAP works on all types of housing, including single-family homes, multi-family units, and mobile homes.

#### Services that may be offered:

- Home Energy Audit
- Weather-stripping, caulking, general air sealing
- Door repair or replacement
- Window Assessment
- Attic, foundation, wall, or sill box insulation
- Blower door testing and diagnostics
- Combustion appliance zone assessments
- Programmable thermostat installation
- Carbon Monoxide Detector installation
- Furnace tune-up or replacement
- Water Heater assessment or replacement
- Refrigerator assessment and possible replacement
- Quality Control Inspection after the completion of the project



Interested & want to sign up or find out more? Contact our Weatherization Department:  
989-358-4700

[Thomank@nemcsa.org](mailto:Thomank@nemcsa.org) or [HammondN@nemcsa.org](mailto:HammondN@nemcsa.org)

**Please Note:** The Weatherization Assistance Program does not include funding for structural (roofs and windows), plumbing, mold or electrical repairs. To clarify, this is not an emergency or a home repair program.

Another congratulations goes out to Cheryl Laban for passing her last of national certification tests needed to become an official BPI Certified Energy Auditor!

USE UP TO  
**40%**  
LESS ENERGY

with the Weatherization Assistance Program.



MDHHS  
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services



# A FEW MORE UPDATES

The holidays are a time when the School Success Program staff dig even deeper into community partnerships to make the season bright for each and every child and family that the program works with. Liaisons work tirelessly to ensure each student will have gifts and other needs met over the holiday break. Partnerships happen with AAACU, local law enforcement, United Way, anonymous donors, and many more. Pictured here from left to right: Michael Robin (Alpena Police Department (APD) Intern), Liz Skiba (SSP Area Manager), Officer Jason Collegon, and Sergeant Donald Leaym. SSP partnered with APD for the Shop with a Cop event and additional gifts for families in need. Thank you, APD!



Dorothy Pintar (Community Programs Director), Lisa Bolen (CEO), and Ashley Gagnon (Financial Coach) attended the Housing Expo @ Art in the Loft in Alpena on January 23, 2024. The event was open to the public and attendees learned about programs and services offered by NEMCSA, lenders, real estate professionals, and more about affordable housing and how to navigate the housing market and the home-buying process. Thank you, Ashley for setting up a great table & shining bright!



## Holidays at The Main Office



During the month of December, staff at the Main Office in Alpena participated in a door decorating contest to help spread holiday cheer. Pictured above are the creative works of staff - a job well done!

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

DETROIT FREE PRESS RANKED TOP WORKPLACE  
2ND CONSECUTIVE YEAR!

JOIN THE  
BEST.

UNLOCK YOUR  
POTENTIAL WITH US.

NEMCSA CAREERS PAGE