

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

August
2024



Many may remember our former Executive Director, John Swise.

He worked for NEMCSA for over 40 years, serving as ED for nearly all of that time. I had the opportunity a few weeks ago to have lunch and catch up. He remains a wealth of information and history. I am proud to call him a friend and mentor.

PACE Northeast Michigan



The PACE Northeast Michigan Board of Directors formed in June and offered valuable guidance that allowed us to reach some very key milestones this month. With the Board's support, the lease of the PACE NEMI building and construction contract were finally executed.

The lease was effective on July 1st, and the construction contract was executed on June 28th. Approval was received on Monday, July 8th to move forward with demolition from the landlord.

The demolition crew worked seven days straight to remove the entirety of the ceiling grid, all the drywall and framing on the exterior walls, 15,000+ sq ft. of tile and carpet, and eliminate the framing for the 9 dressing rooms left from the former Peebles department store.

The week of July 15th brought new subcontractors who laid out the architectural and engineering design for in-floor plumbing, and concrete cutting began. The architect and developer were on site July 16th to review the project. The scope of the work completed in the first two weeks is impressive, and a great start to get back on schedule.

Executive Director, Jeff Meden, had two interviews on WBKB TV's Talk of the Town to discuss PACE Northeast Michigan. The March 17th show is available here: <https://youtu.be/3ybw9peoXA> and the follow up from June 23rd interview is available here: <https://youtu.be/7D5ZeJx9kw8>.

Jeff couldn't help but formulate a plan to get his hands dirty (dusty) during construction. Years ago, Jeff utilized maple hardwood slabs reclaimed from a bowling alley to create custom kitchen counter tops for his family's home in Ossineke. It was a lot of fun, and the 2 ½ inch thick maple is beautiful when cleaned up. Jeff sourced the same material and is working hard to create custom tables and desks for administrative spaces at PACE NEMI. In the first half day of work, Jeff has 3 desks cut, sanded, and ready for a few coats of polyurethane before hardware/drawers are mounted. These will be unique, beautiful, and a big cost savings as the materials are about 1/3 the price of equivalent Steelcase type office furniture. A desk example will be at the NEMCSA office in August.



Program Impact

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

NO EXCUSE FOR ELDER ABUSE

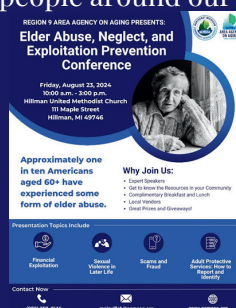
Elder abuse is any act that causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust such as a family member, friend, or caregiver. The abuse may be physical, social, financial, psychological, or sexual and can include mistreatment and neglect. According to the State of Michigan, Aging and Adult Services Agency, it is estimated that more than 73,000 of the state's older adults are victims of abuse annually.

This year, the Region 9 Area Agency on Aging will be hosting an Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Conference on August 23, 2024, at the Hillman United Methodist Church to raise awareness about elder abuse.

It is important to raise awareness about elder abuse as it can be experienced by an older person, no matter race, gender, or socioeconomic status. This is a social issue that affects the health, well-being, independence, and human rights of older people around our local communities and this issue deserves attention.

The conference will discuss the following topics:

- Types of Elder Abuse
- How to Recognize and Report Abuse
- Scams and Fraud
- Financial Exploitation



Older people can reduce the risk of elder abuse by making sure their financial, medical, legal, and other affairs are clearly stated and recorded. Older people must also be empowered to recognize the signs of elder abuse and encouraged to state when they are not comfortable with an arrangement.

If you would like to find out more about the Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Conference please contact: Brooke Mainville at 989.358.4616, mainvilleb@nemcsa.org or visit our website at nemcsa.org

Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less

This new online class will help you reshape your dietary and exercise habits!

This 15-week workshop uses strategies proven to work for weight loss and maintenance. Each lesson informs, empowers, and motivates participants to live mindfully as they make choices about eating and physical activity.

The class is open to older adults (60+), family caregivers, or Kinship Caregivers who live in the twelve-county region served by Region 9 AAA.

Multiple workshops begin each month.

- August 4, 2024
- September 1, 2024

MMAP UPDATE:

New to Medicare Event: Region 9 MMAP (MI Medicare Assistance Program) is hosting a first-time, 12-county event on Wednesday, August 14 from 10:00 to 11:00. It's popular *New to Medicare* webinar will be made available through Region 9 at viewing sites hosted by Council/Commissions on Aging, HUD Housing and medical clinics located throughout Region 9's twelve-county service area. The webinar is geared toward anyone who wants to know how Medicare works, how to start Medicare and avoid penalties, low-income subsidies, prescription drug coverage, what to do if you are planning to work or have employer coverage, and more. For more information and to locate your local viewing site, call 800-803-7174.

STAFFING UPDATES

Long Term Care Ombudsman, Maija Aikens, recently resigned her position as the local ombudsman.

Until a replacement is found, concerns regarding nursing home residents can be made to the State Long Term Care Ombudsman at 517-827-8040 or mltco@meji.org. In addition, the AAA recently welcomed Tyler Sluck to its team. Tyler will be handling the nutrition program and other functions within in the division.



Today we bid farewell to Maija Aikens. Maija is leaving to pursue other interests.

Her work and dedication to our program and agency have been very much appreciated.

We wish you all the best, Maija!!

Welcome Region 9 AAA's New Nutrition Service Coordinator Tyler Sluck!



Tyler grew up in Houghton Lake, MI. He attended Schoolcraft College for his Associate's degree and Central Michigan University for his Bachelor's. He received a BAA in Communications from Central Michigan in 2020.

A few favorite hobbies of his include reading (especially classic books), metal detecting, weightlifting, and golfing.

As the Region 9 AAA Nutrition Services Coordinator, he is most excited to get out in our service areas to meet the folks we serve and offer direct services and support. He is extremely grateful for this opportunity, and looks forward to learning and growing with Region 9.

PODCAST

Two new Let's Talk About Aging podcast releases are now available:

- Preventing Medicare Healthcare Fraud with Kitty Glomski
- "Help I've Fallen and I Can't Get Up" PERS Devices with Jenna Lindholm

Find them at:

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



Program Impact

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Leaders have the Skills and Courage to Care

In June, 63 Early Childhood Services staff members attended “Our Community Listens” training which has been utilized by large corporations, non-profits, and human services organizations. It is a three-day communication skills training offering a transformational learning experience to strengthen relationships, align teams, and build stronger communities.

In the training, staff:

- Examined their behavioral tendencies and how to better communicate with others
- Explored how the Communication Cycle forms the foundation of their interpersonal communication
- Learned how to listen to connect with others
- Appreciated the impact their nonverbal behavior has on their verbal communication
- Developed a more effective way to handle confrontation
- Learned how to see and celebrate the good in others



Where leaders have the skills and courage to care.

NEMCSA 2024 Our Community Listens Outcomes

Quotes from Participants

WHAT THE
STAFF HAD
TO SAY
ABOUT THE
TRAINING:

“This was such an interactive training that I really feel like I can move forward with putting these new skills into practice. The Trainers kept us so well engaged that the 3 days flew by and left me wishing for a 4th day. Their real-life examples were key to helping me be able to see places in my own life where I can improve my communication skills. Also, even though initially I was not comfortable with the role play, etc. at all..... it is the thing that helped me to see that I can do this stuff AND be successful at it.

“Everything was impactful but most of all, I was able to learn more about effective confrontation and going forward will use this method.”

“I feel like I have been able to not only learn skills but actively use them. Even in my personal life, I had interactions with strangers and found myself utilizing the skills. It also will help improve my relationships with others, hopefully with families too at work.”

“This was probably one of the most meaningful trainings I have been to in many years.”

“I felt the training was a safe space for all in attendance. I work with so many wonderful people and to have the ability to see and visit with them in person. Many impactful moments - confronting with a bat versus open hands was very meaningful. I have been a receiver of the bat, and I honestly can say, I have forgiven but not forgotten. I will make every effort to listen without “noise”. I am a true believer that each situation life offers, makes me a better person. Thank you for a wonderful training.”

“Thanks for pushing me out of my comfort zone enough to gain real value from this training. I’ve already been practicing!”

Program Impact

BRIDGES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Recent Key Achievements:

- Community Resource Corner launched on the NEMCSA website
- In June, the team helped 123 individuals, families, and partners
- Vehicle Repair Program paid \$10,181.86 for auto repairs
- Christopher Powroznik joined as a Self-Sufficiency Mentor in the BOSS Program
- BOSS Program Mentors empower families for self-sufficiency
 - Georgina graduated from BOSS 1.0, excelling in an apprenticeship at Kalitta, and was approved for a mortgage.

Recent BOSS Program Participants' Achievements:

- New job opportunities for participants, leading to financial independence.
- Improved mobility with a new vehicle purchase.
- Increased work hours for higher income.
- Family engagement strengthened through mentorship activities.
- Participants transitioning to new housing and focusing on budget management.
- Educational advancement through GED programs.
- Recognition for outstanding job performance.
- Progress towards self-sufficiency with reduced support.
- Ensured housing security and prevented homelessness for families.



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.

Program Impact

SCHOOL SUCCESS

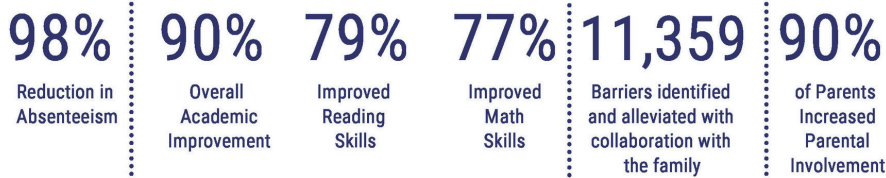
Program Dashboard 2023 - 2024



Performance Objectives to be measured and reported

1. Increasing school attendance and decreasing chronic absenteeism
2. Increasing academic performance based on grades with emphasis on math and reading
3. Identifying barriers to attendance and success and connecting families with resources to reduce these barriers
4. Increasing parent involvement in child's school and community

Performance Objective Results



Top 3 Referral Reasons

Academic Attendance Crisis



Top 3 Barriers Addressed

Social Emotional Skill development
Education /Skill Development
Family Support Systems

515

Students assisted with College Readiness



922

Students served Formally



6,938

Students served Informally



1,244

Groups/group sessions held

Student Insecurities Addressed

2,200 34,903 632 6,462

Students provided School Supplies

Food Items Provided to Students

Students provided Holiday Gifts

Students provided Non Food Items (Hygiene, Cleaning, Clothes)



May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Gina Murphy, School Success Liaison, along with the School Social Worker at Tawas Schools hosted activities that focus on taking care of self.

In May, Alpena's Shriners Club generously donated much-needed clothing for students at Besser Elementary School in Alpena. Thank you for your support, Shriners of Alpena! (Pictured with Senior School Success Liaison, Lisa Werth)

School Success Staff are making quite a difference in the schools and communities. See the story that was submitted to NEMCSA.

SUCCESS STORY

TRANSFORMING LIVES WITH COMPASSION AND DEDICATION

EMPATHY, COMPASSION, AND TRANSFORMATION: A JOURNEY WITH NEMCSA'S SCHOOL SUCCESS PROGRAM



NEMCSA'S IMPACT

At the beginning of the 2023/2024 school year, a young elementary student was struggling profoundly. Unable to stay in class even for a single hour, their outbursts echoed through the hallways, disrupting not only their own learning but that of their peers. The student's behavior included running through the halls screaming, flipping desks, and causing significant chaos, leading to frequent classroom evacuations. Recognizing the need for intervention, a formal case was opened with the NEMCSA School Success Program. A dedicated School Success Liaison stepped in, working tirelessly every day with the student, their mother, teachers, school administration, and staff. Despite various strategies initially showing little long-term success, the collaborative effort did not waver.

Through persistent teamwork and support, the child's mother and school staff collaborated with health providers, leading to a crucial diagnosis of ADHD. With the right medication and continuous support, the student's transformation began. Today, this once struggling student is a testament to the power of compassionate intervention. They attend class every day, only visiting the School Success Liaison for positive breaks. From being one of the most challenging cases, this student is now a shining success, excelling academically and behaviorally. They are passing all their classwork with flying colors and are more than ready to advance to the next grade level.

NEMCSA's School Success Program is dedicated to turning struggles into successes. By working closely with students, families, and educators, we create lasting positive change in young lives.



Program Impact

HOUSING

Spreading cheer and wheels, the housing team has been hitting the streets to donate supplies and deliver bikes to those in need!

Street Outreach Specialist Simone Latuszek generously donated several of her bicycles to individuals experiencing homelessness and lacking transportation. These bicycles will benefit those currently living on the streets.

Thank you



Transportation can be a lifeline to those in rural Michigan. Pictured to the right is Joel who received a donated bicycle from a local Gaylord community member. It not only helped him get to appointments and meet his basic needs but also became a source of mental and physical relief, helping him cope with everything he had been through.

Year to Date Expenditures!

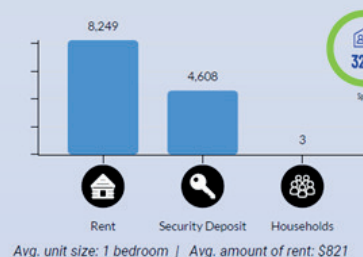
Rapid Rehousing



Prevention



Permanent Supportive Housing



A cargo rack holder installed on the vehicle used by the Street Outreach Specialist, is essential for transporting supplies to support individuals experiencing homelessness.

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

Program Impact

FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

In the month of July, staff worked with 3 households to complete Pre-Purchase Counseling to better help them become prepared to complete the homebuying process, completed 5 Homebuyer Education classes, and 4 households participated in Rental Counseling, these households were all previously homeless and are working with staff to be able to maintain their housing.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The Family Self-Sufficiency program currently has 30 active participants. This number is always changing as new people are enrolling or people decide that they don't have to participate and are exiting.

In the last month, our Financial Coach met with a former homeless client to complete Pre-Purchase Counseling as she moves towards her goal of owning a home. This participant met with the Financial Coach in the spring of 2022 after our Homeless staff assisted with securing safe housing for her and ending her homelessness, and completed Rental Counseling in order to help get a grip on her finances while she dealt with a contentious divorce. Participants like this help to illustrate how important counseling is to ending homelessness in our region.

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

WATER PROGRAM

During the Month of July:

\$16,213

WATER BILLS PAID

\$3,502

PLUMBING REPAIRS

\$29,255

**TENATIVE PAYMENTS
PENDING JOB COMPLETION**

72

PEOPLE ASSISTED

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

WEATHERIZATION

Dear NEMCSA Weatherization Staff,

"I want to thank you all for all the work and improvements that have been done to make my home energy efficient and economized. Thank you for the new furnace and hot water heater. I am already seeing a reduction in my power bill. There would have been no way that I could afford all the improvements you have made. All the people that were involved have been really friendly and professional."

Sincerely,

A very happy and thankful client!

To find out more about the Weatherization Program, Call: 989-358-4700.



MECHANICAL MEASURES	HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES	BUILDING SHELL MEASURES	ELECTRIC BASELOAD MEASURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean, tune, repair or replace heating systems.• Install duct and heating pipe insulation.• Install programmable thermostats and other HVAC controls.• Repair/replace water heaters.• Install water heater tank insulation.• Insulate water heating pipes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete combustion appliance safety testing.• Repair/replace vent systems to ensure combustion gas draft safety inside.• Install mechanical ventilation to ensure adequate indoor air quality.• Assess fire hazards. Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms when needed.• Perform incidental safety repairs when needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Install wall, floor ceiling, attic and/or foundation insulation.• Complete Blower Door Testing.• Perform air sealing.• Install storm windows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Install efficient light sources.• Replace refrigerators with energy efficient models.

Program Impact

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

SENIOR COMPANION & FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAMS

At the end of the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion program year in June, the program seeks information regarding the inputs and outputs of the programs and asks for stories demonstrating program impact from partner organizations where the program volunteers serve. This year, staff were truly stunned to hear the impact of one of the Foster Grandparents, Ms. Allison. Ms. Allison's first-grade teacher shared the following: "All four of the specified students assigned to Ms. Allison suffered from a loss. At the beginning of the year, these students were struggling with staying on task, work completion, and causing many class disruptions. Her mentoring skills helped to show them the proper way to act while reminding them to finish their work. Their confidence improved because of having someone else care about them. Everyone trusts and respects Ms. Allison. One of the other students in the class was confiding with Ms. Allison about unhealthy behavior. He is receiving help thanks to Ms. Allison. The entire class and I benefit from Ms. Allison's compassionate ways. We are lucky to have her in our classroom."



R
S
V
P

NEMCSA's senior volunteer program, RSVP, was informed that there would be additional funds provided by the state through the Commission on Services to the Aging to use toward the program. The program offers mileage reimbursement to the volunteers as a perk for their service. The reimbursement is for round-trip mileage from their home to their volunteer station with a monthly cap of 50 miles for a total of \$25. Generally, the program runs low on funds each month with approximately 100 volunteers and occasional requests for additional reimbursement.

NEMCSA applied for funds and was recently awarded \$6,000 for volunteer mileage reimbursement. Many of the volunteers drive over 100 miles a month to serve in their community at one location, and several volunteers at 2 or more locations each month. The additional funds will greatly help with the mileage reimbursement and funds from other areas won't be needed.

Heidi Powers, Project Director of the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteer programs, joined RSVP Project Director Amy Cook Otto at the Ogemaw Commission on Aging to talk to seniors about the volunteer programs and hope to get some new volunteers signed up. Heidi and Amy will be attending several community and senior fairs in the coming weeks to share information on the AmeriCorps Senior Volunteer Programs and NEMCSA services.

Program Impact

FOOD PROGRAM



On May 15, 2024, NEMCSA's Food Programs and the Weatherization Program donated much-needed office equipment to the Center of Charity. These items included desks, a conference table, multiple file cabinets, a flat-screen TV, chairs, shelving units, and much more. The amazing crew from NEMCSA's Food and WX Programs took time out of their morning to load up all the items and unload them at the Center of Charity site in Alpena. A big thank you to Tammy, Norm, Pete, Doug, and Kristin B. for your kindness, hard work, and muscles. Thank you to Chistina Kihn, Director of the Center of Charity for pitching in as well. We look forward to seeing the Center of Charity site filled with all of NEMCSA's donated items once everything is in place and ready to go.

Pictured: Tammy Dean- Food Program Manager, Norm Apsey- Warehouse Operations Supervisor, Peter Muszynski-Warehouse Specialist, Christina Kihn- Director of Charity, Dorothy Pinter- Community Programs Director, Doug Tallant-WX Program Manager and Kristin Berles-Community Programs Budget Manager



In the past month, the Food Program has had the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan join each of the distributions. Their staff stood with NEMCSA as recipients were checked in and attendance was taken. This process ensures that everyone will show up on the list when the Food Bank takes over. Tammy Dean, NEMCSA Food Program Coordinator, is very happy to say that the Food Program staff has done an amazing job at collecting and passing on the applications to the Food Bank. The program has been also liquidating the equipment and clearing out the Ossineke Warehouse. To date, there are two forklifts, both trucks, and the outdoor freezer that have not yet been spoken for out of our large items. There are still some manual pallet jacks, dollies, load braces, and items of that sort. The warehouse staff again has done an amazing job of helping organize and sell items. This has been bittersweet for the staff as a small, but well-oiled department. The staff are sad to pass the torch to the Food Bank, but have faith that they will take care of the clients just as NEMCSA has.