

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

August 2023



NEMCSA is proud to have our leader Lisa Bolen, representing low-income individuals on the Commission on Community Action and Economic Opportunity for the State of Michigan. Governor Gretchen Whitmer appointed Lisa to this Commission, which was created to provide an opportunity for low-income individuals to actively participate in the development of policies and programs to reduce poverty. The Commission also serves as a forum to address the needs and concerns of low-income individuals.

# Happy Birthday NEMCSA!



## POVERTY LEVELS OVER THE YEARS

1969

2023

Family Size	Non-Farm	Farm
1	1,600	1,100
2	2,100	1,500
3	2,600	1,800
4	3,300	2,300

Family Size	2023
1	14,580
2	19,720
3	24,860
4	30,000



# Program Impact

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING



Region 9 Area Agency on Aging (AAA) was awarded the 2023 Community-Based Dementia Mini-Grant offered by the Michigan Public Health Institute. The purpose of the grant is to expand its ongoing project by purchasing “mailers” to correspond with three Dementia webinars currently offered by the AAA. The mailers will be boxes filled with items corresponding to the webinar. For example, the Brain Health Mailer will include puzzle books, a hands-on craft, a recipe book, and a “Vial of Life” Lifesaving Kit. Each event participant will receive a corresponding mailer for the webinar they attended.

Another innovative aspect of the grant will be the use of the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America’s “Dementia Experience” using a virtual reality (VR) headset. This will allow caregivers to better understand what someone living with Alzheimer’s may be going through. The experience provides a three-dimensional, 360-degree view with sound, while participants enter the world of “Sally,” a person living with Alzheimer’s. Through the experience, caregivers will witness common symptoms associated with the disease. The AAA plans to bring a demonstration of the units to a future NEMCSA Board meeting. Two of the three dementia webinars have occurred, but there is still time to join in the last session and receive not only education on dementia stress, but also receive a mailer.

Details are below:

**August 11, 2023: Coping with Dementia Care Stress:** Examine ways to cope with the daily stress of caregiving for someone with dementia. While exploring a self-paced virtual Caregiver resource—Trualta, which is an online caregiver resource platform, will be explored during the webinar. Trualta focuses on reducing caregiver burden while improving caregiver self-care, and confidence through virtual trainings that help build the skills necessary to provide care at home (Caregiver Self-Care Mailer). **To attend the last webinar, Coping with Dementia Care Stress, contact Brooke at 989.358.4616.**

Access to Trualta is the result of a joint project by the MSU School of Social Work and Region 9 AAA through a grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund.

With your cell phone's camera, Hover over the QR code below & Tap:  
or go to:  
<https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/podcast.html>

Listen to the New Episode - MMAP Inc. Rati Sijje interviews Podcast Host Kitty Glomski about starting Let's Talk About Aging Podcast – now 1 year old!

**New to Medicare Webinar** – is held on the second Wednesday of each month for anyone that is new to Medicare, starting Medicare due to disability or has questions and wants to know how Medicare works. Appointments with a Counselor are available to talk one on one after the presentation.

The next webinar will be held on Wednesday, August 9 at 10:00. To register: call 800-803-7174 or your local Council/Commission on Aging and ask for a MMAP counselor.

Region 9 MMAP (Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program) is looking for volunteers to assist with the October – December Open Enrollment. Training is provided throughout August and September. **Call 989-358-4612 Kitty Glomski, Regional Coordinator for more information.**

Did you know the AAA now has brochures available in four languages? Minority populations needing assistance are difficult to find in rural communities.

Help us spread the word in your community!

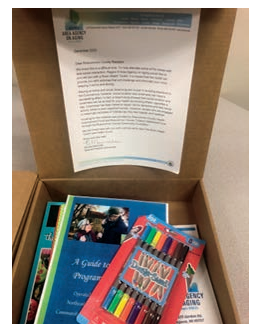
REGION 9 AAA OFFERS TRANSLATED BROCHURES  
Región 9 AAA ofrece folletos traducidos  
تقدم المنظمة AAA 9 كتيبات مترجمة  
Region 9 AAA 提供翻译手册

English	inglês	العربية	汉语
Spanish	español	العربية	普通话
Arabic	العربية	العربية	阿拉伯
Chinese	中文	العربية	中国人

Web: [www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/brochures.html](http://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/brochures.html)  
Vista: [www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/brochures.html](http://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/brochures.html)



Sample Mailers





# NEMCSA Head Start & GSRP

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

989-358-4619

Looking for no cost preschool?!



# Apply Today!!

Competitive Wages    No Cost Employee Health Insurance    Work from Home Opportunities    Paid Time Off

Retirement Fund    Work-Life Balance    Career Development Opportunities    Student Loan Forgiveness

Employee benefits contingent on employment status.



Love working with children?!

[www.nemcsa.org/careers/](http://www.nemcsa.org/careers/)

- Full & Part-Time
- Retirement Plan
- Rewarding Career
- Great Benefits
- Competitive Pay
- Paid Holidays



NEMCSA is a 2022 Top Workplace!

# Program Impact

## BRIDGES OF SELF SUFFICIENCY



## FOOD

## PROGRAM

The Food Program was recently awarded the Community Partner of the Year Award, presented by the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. The Award was based on the growth and establishment of the Home Delivery model and the new Food Boost (TEFAP) model with pantry partnerships.

The Food Program had a great time at the Touch a Truck event in Oscoda, Mi. Many families painted their hands and could touch the big food truck, gain information about the food programs, nutritional information, and take-home food items!

A BOSS family recently attended a community event in the NE MI Region and attempted to win their daughter a bike through a giveaway drawing. They did not win the bike at the event, but as luck will have it, a generous community member won the bike and reached out to see if there was anyone that would benefit from it.

Amanda Bergeron, the BOSS Program Facilitator was able to make a connection and the bike was given as a surprise to Robyn Hart's BOSS family!

As you can see in the photo, there was a lot of excitement and she is excited to have a new bike to ride around on all summer long!



# Program Impact

# SCHOOL SUCCESS



The School Success Summer Program has provided School Success Liaisons and School Success Behavior Techs the opportunity to participate in many exciting activities with their students. These activities include but haven't been limited to:

- S'more Learning & Summer School Activities
- Credit Recovery Programs
- Assisting at local Boys & Girls Clubs
- Assisting with Equine Therapy
- And so much more!



TEAMWORK



School Success Staff participated in the Alpena Fourth of July Parade. The program's float took 2nd place in the non-commercial sector. As a result, School Success received a \$150 donation check from HPC Credit Union (parade organizer).

## AWARENESS

A big thank you to Julie Meyer, who came out of retirement from NEMCSA for the 2nd time to help the School Success leadership team with hiring, supervision, and transition. Julie will continue working with the SSP leadership team until November and said with a smile this will be her last time! Another heartfelt thank you goes out to Sue Riedlinger for her great work as a Senior School Success Supervisor. She will be moving on to the school system as a school counselor. Sue earned her lifelong dream of a Master's Degree in counseling while working at NEMCSA and will be living out her dream in the fall. As Lisa Bolen always says, "we grow great people."



## TRAINING

Exciting news for the School Success Program. For the second year in a row an additional one million dollars was added in to the SSP line item in the FY 24 state budget totaling \$1.525 for the School Success Partnership Program. Great work to all the whole School Success Team & Congratulations!



Thank you Alpena & Hillman School Success Liaisons and Sunset ECS Staff who helped pack Feeding Kids Ministry food bags that have been delivered to students during the School Success Summer Program.

During the months of June & July, School Success Partnership Program staff have participated in many trainings and team-building opportunities. All SSP staff celebrated the end of the school year with an "Engaging the Brain" training with Kim Sumerix, LMSW, with Kountry Folk Consultants and exercised their brains by attempting to ESCAPE from "The Abandoned Cabin", "The Enchanted Forest", and "The Forgotten Island". NEMCSA also had 26 School Success Partnership Program staff complete the 16-hour ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills) Training with Mary Schalk, Partners in Prevention, and Lisa Clavier, Kiersten's Ride, and 11 SSP staff complete a full day of CPR/First Aid training with Lisa Thayer BSN RN, Alpena Public Schools.

**We're thankful for wonderful training partners from right here in our communities!**

# Program Impact

## HOUSING

THANK YOU TO OUR TEAM!

- 21** households out of homelessness
- 14** households prevented from homelessness
- 8** previously were living on the street
- 8** previously were staying in a shelter
- 5** households received a motel paid for by NEMCSA



Coleman has donated 24 bottles of insect repellent for the individuals sleeping outdoors. Thank you!



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



Thank you, Alcona Health Center, for your donation of toothpaste and brushes!

# HELP!

## THE KINDNESS CLOSET NEEDS YOUR HELP!

- Towels
- Shampoo
- Soaps: Hand, Dish, Laundry
- Toothpaste
- Cleaning Supplies
- Pillows
- Broom & Dustpans
- Toilet Brushes & Plungers
- Laundry Baskets
- Dryer Sheets
- Personal Hygiene Products
- Toilet Paper
- Wastebaskets & Trash Bags
- Can Openers
- Paper Towels
- Shower Curtains, Liners & Rings



Welcome Home Baskets support people moving from homelessness into new homes. Drop off in Alpena: 2569 US 23 S or in Gaylord: 403 W Mitchell St or call 989-358-4678.

# Program Impact

## FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

# 56

households assisted in applying for assistance through the Michigan Homeowner Assistance Fund (MIHAF) since the program began in early 2022

### Lender Partnerships & Prepurchase Counseling

Staff have been working in recent months to continue to build relationships with different lenders within our communities. So far staff have established strong affiliations with Nicolet Bank and Huntington Bank. These associations were established to benefit future homeowners that are working with the banks so that they can go into the home buying process fully knowledgeable as well as knowing how to understand all the different mortgage documents. Homebuyers meet with staff to complete Homebuyer Education, which walks through the entire process of becoming a homeowner and then they meet one on one with one of NEMCSA's HUD Housing Counselors to create a budget, discuss individual issues, and determine how much they can reasonably afford given their other expenses.

Since staff started offering Prepurchase Counseling in the fall of 2022, 15 households have participated in counseling. **All 15 households have gone on to successfully become homeowners while 80% of the counseling participants have been referred by our lending partners.**



Homeowners that have fallen behind are able to apply for assistance with the following items:

- Delinquent Mortgage
- Delinquent Property Taxes
- Condo Dues
- Homeowners Insurance
- Mobile Home Lot Rent
- Land Contract Payments
- Utility bills

**HOMEBUYER EDUCATION**

START YOUR JOURNEY TO BECOMING A HOMEOWNER TODAY!

**TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE:**

- IS BUYING A HOME RIGHT FOR YOU?
- DETERMINING AFFORDABILITY
- DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE
- THE HOME BUYING PROCESS
- BASIC HOME MAINTENANCE

To sign up for free class  
call: 989-358-4653.

**NORTHEAST MICHIGAN  
COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCY  
NEMCSA**

“Thank you so much for helping me understand the home buying process. I can’t wait to become a homeowner.”  
-C.S., Alcona County Homebuyer ed & Prepurchase counseling program participant.

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



# Program Impact

# VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

R  
S  
V  
P



Thank you to all of NEMCSA's AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP volunteers for their service and all who were able to join us for the June recognition day picnics! We had great weather and enjoyed two days of fun and joyful celebration dedicated to each of the volunteers. The laughter, conversations, and genuine camaraderie were truly inspiring.

It brought us back together as a community and reinforced the incredible impact each volunteer makes on the communities and those served. We are beyond grateful for not only the hard work they do but their friendship as well. This picnic was just a very small way for the RSVP Staff to say how much we value them, even though their contributions are appreciated every day.

SHINE BRIGHT



## Huntington National Bank Partners with NEMCSA Emergency Food Programs to support Golden Grocery Giveaway Program

In a continued effort to support local communities and address the pressing issue of food insecurity, Huntington National Bank has once again joined forces with NEMCSA's Emergency Food Program. Through this partnership, the bank's employees have actively participated alongside food program staff to bring needed food items to those fighting food scarcity, enhancing the program's capacity and making a positive impact on the lives of vulnerable individuals and families.

Huntington National Bank has a history of volunteering alongside NEMCSA staff at emergency food distribution sites across northeast Michigan, where they help get food directly to low-income seniors at pick-up locations in the community.

Recently, 14 employees from across the region had the chance to work directly behind the scenes in the packing warehouse in Ossineke. Here they were able to work directly with warehouse staff packing individual food items into boxes and made ready for distribution in the coming weeks.

"It is great to partner with NEMCSA to help the local communities that we serve," said Huntington Market President Nick Florian, "Our team came together and had an amazing experience doing our part in helping further NEMCSA's mission. We are always looking for ways to make people's lives better, help businesses thrive, and strengthen the communities we serve."

The most recent collaboration resulted in over 28,000 pounds of food being packed into individual boxes which will make their way across northeast Michigan and help 720 low-income seniors. Tammy Dean, Emergency Food Program Director at NEMCSA, expressed gratitude for the support, stating, "We sincerely appreciate the Huntington volunteers and our partnership. Their commitment to assisting in our food packing and distribution will allow us to continue to reach individuals struggling with food insecurity in our community.

Together, we can do our best to ensure that no one goes hungry."

For more information about volunteering with the emergency food programs or other programs at NEMCSA, please contact Rick Houchin at 989-358-4637 or email [shinebright@nemcsa.org](mailto:shinebright@nemcsa.org).

# Program Impact

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

### SENIOR COMPANION & FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAMS



Systems Administrator, Jack Wierzbicki, presented on scams at the Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Programs in-service at JJ's in Alpena. "I really enjoyed speaking with them about the scams that are out there targeting older folks, what to watch out for, and how to protect themselves from such fraud."



Every July, NEMCSA reports on the progress in meeting grant requirements and share information about the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs. **During the July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 program year, 28 Foster Grandparents mentored and tutored 128 students. Of the 128 students, 61 demonstrated improved academic performance and 43 improved their academic engagement or social-emotional skills. Twenty-two Senior Companions provided companionship to 128 frail or chronically ill older adults and 122 reported having increased social support.** During the process of collecting the above data, program partners were asked to share the impact of the volunteers.

Here's some of what they have to say:

#### Foster Grandparents:

- "In my 19 years of teaching, Allison is one of the best volunteers that I have had in my classroom. She not only abides by professional standards in the classroom but also shows a great deal of kindness toward everyone in our school. She goes the extra mile to make sure students have what they need while not causing any disruptions in the classroom. Students have greatly benefitted from having another person who cares about them." Tiffany Daniels, Standish–Sterling Elementary. Grandma Allison Meyers is pictured above with FGP/SCP Project Director Heidi Powers.
- "Grandma Barker is wonderful, her help with the very young students is beyond Measure! She is very dependable, independent, courteous, kind... we love having her in our classroom." Tami Clark, Surline Elementary
- "Grandpa Stew was so much help to my students and myself. He always helped struggling students with assignments, ran literacy stations, and read daily with students. He really gave students the attention they need." Nicole Kalish, Sanborn Elementary

#### Senior Companions:

- "Helen engages our less interactive clients and gives them as much time and care as those who visit back. I appreciate her dedication to each of her clients." Jennifer Altman, Medilodge of Rogers City
- "Mary is funny and goes above and beyond to make everyone smile with her crazy jokes, outfits, and jewelry." Jennifer Altman, Medilodge of Rogers City
- "Nancy really enjoys Helen's company and Helen is always great at meeting her clients where they are whether in their rooms or out and about enjoying activities." Kathy Gorski, Medilodge of Alpena.

# Program Impact

## WEATHERIZATION

The Weatherization Team was able to reach its State DOE production goal of 58 units completed for this past program year 7/1/22 to 6/30/23 and were able to spend out funding. NEMCSA's total production for that time period was 80 units (BIL, LIHEAP, and DOE Formula). Staff is proud to announce the department has worked tirelessly to get the daunting 1-year waitlist down to 6 months, getting services out much faster to clients than has been done in the past.

Weatherization would like to spotlight Energy Auditor and Quality Control Inspector Mark Whitscell. He began his

journey with NEMCSA in May of 2009, took a voluntary layoff in 2014 and returned in July of 2016 and just celebrated his 7-year anniversary. During his lay off Mark was able to fulfill this childhood dream job by trucking across the country.

Mark is a very busy man as he is the host of the morning show on 99.9 The Wave. Mark says his favorite memory here at NEMCSA was the very first home he inspected. He says "I thought to myself, what have I gotten myself into? Haha and after that, I was hooked". His favorite holiday is his birthday, and unlike most, he embraces getting older. When Mark is not

working you may find him indulging in his favorite food, which is a big messy cheeseburger- maybe even at the bowling alley as bowling is his favorite hobby. We can not thank Mark enough for all his hard work over the years, and look forward to many more years of continued success.

MARK WHITSCCELL



- What is your role within NEMCSA?  
Energy auditor and Quality Control Inspector
- What does that mean in your own words? Provide our weatherization clients with the best energy upgrades to save the utility dollars that our program will allow.
- Years of NEMCSA service: Started in May of 2009, took a voluntary layoff in 2014, and returned in July 2016. Just had my 7-year anniversary.
- What 3 words describe NEMCSA? Compassionate, Caring, Giving
- What about NEMCSA's mission resonates with you most? That the programs and services are meant to help strengthen and enhance the self-sufficiency of individuals, families
- What is your favorite NEMCSA memory? The very first home I inspected. Thought to myself, what have I gotten myself into, LOL! After that, I was hooked and all in to provide the best audits and help for our homeowners!!
- What is the most unique part of working here? The diverse clientele we help.
- Favorite food- A big messy cheeseburger!
- Childhood dream job- Truck driving across the country...which I did for 18 months during my voluntary leave from NEMCSA
- First job- Paper boy for The Alpena News when I was 12 years old.
- Favorite pet- Dog
- Favorite hobby- Bowling
- Favorite holiday- Actually my birthday! I embrace getting older!
- One more quirky fact (thing that people might be surprised to know about you)- I host the morning radio show on 99.9 The Wave.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

✨ ✨ ✨ *Congrats Ladies!* ✨ ✨ ✨



Welcome, and Congratulations to Elizabeth Skiba in her new role as School Success Area Manager. Elizabeth was previously at Thunder Bay Jr. High in a SS liaison role and just recently was hired in May as our newest Area Manager and we are so very excited to have her on our leadership team. Having Elizabeth in her new Area Manager position is near and dear to our hearts as her mother Julie retired from NEMCSA after 15 years as an Area Manager in Early Headstart. Julie sadly passed away in May 2019 from lung failure. Elizabeth describes her mother as an “unforgiving advocate for kids.” I can already see Elizabeth walking in her mother’s advocacy heart.

Four ladies from the HR Team recently completed their Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) certifications. Haley McCartney completed her SHRM Essentials of Human Resources certification within only a few months of being in HR. Courtney Leeck, Tiffany Kaszubowski & Crystal Clark completed their SHRM-Certified Professional (CP) certification which was extremely difficult and time-consuming to achieve. We are so proud of all of you!



# MCA CONFERENCE

Staff recently attended the Michigan Community Action Conference at Crystal Mountain Resort.



Congratulations go out to NEMCSA's 2023 Leadership Development Institute Graduates!



Pictured: Jodie Baker, Amanda Woods, and Brooke Mainville

# A inside the 2022 Annual Report

181

homes experienced  
improved energy  
efficiencies



21,200

people received  
food boxes



2,490

children received  
Early Childhood  
Services

830

youth enhanced  
their academic  
careers



504,992

meals provided to  
homebound  
seniors



165,385

hours donated  
back to  
programs

To view the full  
2022 Annual  
Report, visit our  
website:

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

