

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.



WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA *Communities Action*

2022: ANNUAL REPORT



Our Mission **EMPOWERING PEOPLE**
 while providing **SERVICES & RESOURCES**
 that **IMPACT** individuals & communities.

Our Vision

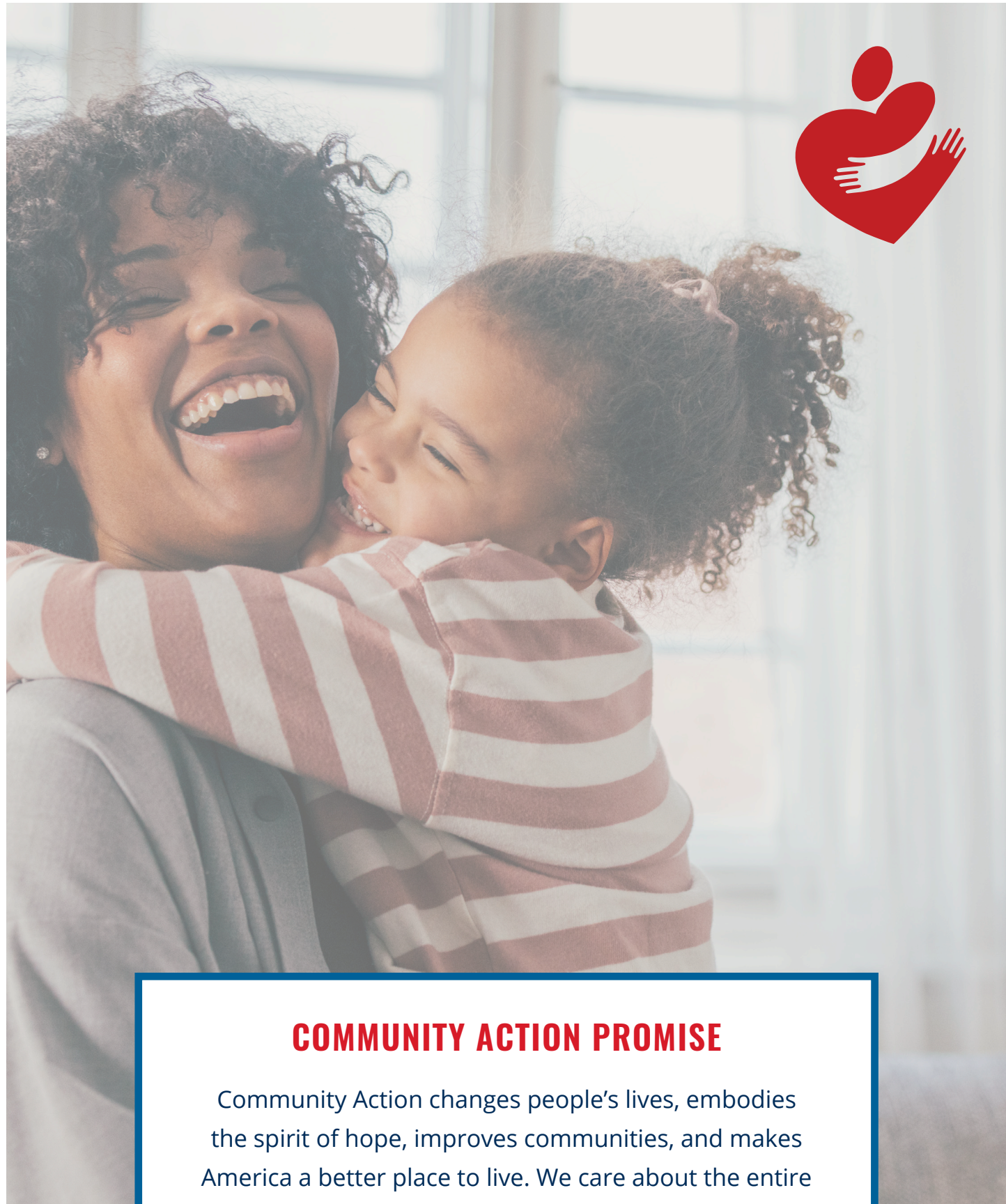
PARTNERING to build
RESILIENCY in **Greater MINNESOTA.**



Our Values

- RESPECT**
We trust, honor & care for all.
- INCLUSION**
We accept all, while striving to eliminate injustice.

- PASSION**
We strive for empathy & compassion.
- INTEGRITY**
We expect honesty & accountability.
- TEAMWORK**
We are stronger when we work together.



COMMUNITY ACTION PROMISE

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

WCMCA LEADERSHIP

WCMCA LEADERSHIP TEAM

Missy Becker -Cook
Chief Executive Officer

Jim Haugen
Head Start Director

Heather Carlson
Fiscal Services Director

Andrea Goeden
Energy Assistance Director

Heather Molesworth
Director of Family & Community Services and Operations

Joe Niehaus
Housing Director

Toby Weigand
Weatherization Director

Danie St. John
Coordinator of Administration

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Teresa Gustafson — Chair
Traverse County, Low-Income Rep

Ken Johnson — Vice Chair
Grant County, Co Commissioner

Bob Staples — Treasurer
Stevens County, Private Sector

Jessica Boyer — Secretary
Douglas County, Private Sector

Donny Wohler — Past Chair
Stevens County, Co Commissioner

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Hannah Michaelson
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Jerrel Olson
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Michelle Rinke
Traverse County, Private Sector

Lori Triebenbach
Douglas County, Low Income



A LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

US Senator Amy Klobuchar spoke at the National Community Action Foundation conference in Washington DC, in March 2023. Pictured L to R: Amanda Mackie, Jenny Larson, Amy Klobuchar, Maria Steen, and Missy Becker-Cook

Dear Board members, colleagues, staff and friends of West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc.:

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about West Central MN Communities Action, Inc. (WCMCA, Inc.) in our Annual Report for 2022! We are excited for you to read about the many ways we are “Helping People, Changing Lives!” We are beyond proud of the staff at WCMCA, Inc., and their ability to connect to children and families and provide help where it is needed.

2022 was a year where flexibility was still vitally important to clients in need. As you will see in this report, WCMCA, Inc. helped with a variety of programming and saw a large increase for rental assistance. Many more clients were facing homelessness, and providing a warm, safe environment was key to their moving to self-sufficiency. We have witnessed a surge in needs in all our programs, and you will see those results in the next several pages. Our “COVID” extra money is almost finalized, with a few exceptions.

WCMCA, Inc. never closed our doors during COVID, we maintained safe and socially-distanced office space for staff and clients in Alexandria, Elbow Lake, and Moorhead. One of the ramifications of COVID has been hiring, and we have found that more challenging than ever before. We have filled open positions, but in some cases it has taken longer, with more demands from prospective employees.

WCMCA, Inc. is 57 years strong – we have supported children and families living in poverty with respect, care, and compassion. Our staff are dedicated to this service delivery, and we are so fortunate to have them. Our mission is “Empowering people while providing services and resources that impact individuals and communities” – words we live by. It is our job to empower and coach.

Thank you to our Board of Directors, staff members, and funders in supporting WCMCA, Inc. and working beside us to help people help themselves and each other.

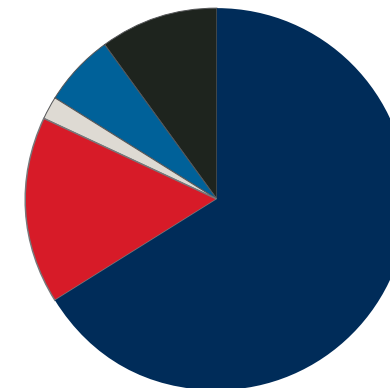
Missy Becker-Cook
Chief Executive Officer

Teresa Gustafson
Board Chairperson

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

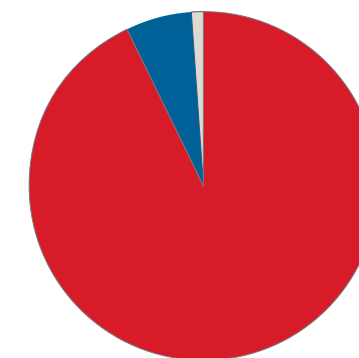
FINANCIALS

A YEAR IN REVIEW



REVENUE – \$11,852,874

- Federal Grants – 67%
- State Grants – 16%
- Sales / Fees – 2%
- In-Kind Contributions – 6%
- Other – 10%

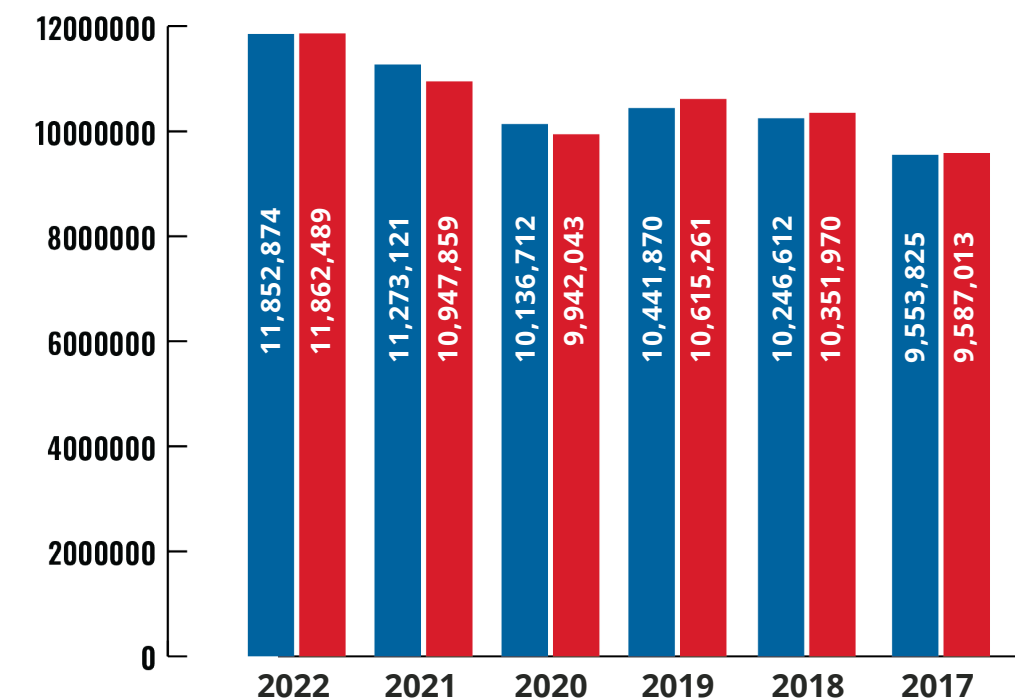


FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES – \$11,862,489

- Program Services – 93%
- Management & General – 6%
- Fundraising – 1%

REVENUE VS. EXPENSES

- Revenue
- Expenses



WCMCA received a clear audit with no significant findings for the 16th year in a row!

HOUSING ASSISTANCE



Offering a full spectrum of housing services, from emergency housing and rent assistance, to rehab and new single family home construction and many services in between



LAUNCH PAD TEMPORARY SHELTER HOUSING



This Launch Pad home pictured above is coming soon! The home is fully furnished. WCMCA pays the rent and utilities, and provides all cleaning supplies and personal hygiene items.

241
HOUSEHOLDS ASSISTED WITH RENT
Both short- and long-term programs

28
HOUSEHOLDS USED PRE-PURCHASE HOMEBUYER COUNSELING

1
NEW HOMES BUILT BY THE ICW CREW

The households utilize the time in Launch Pad to accomplish goals created by the client with the assistance of their case manager, during intensive case management required of the program.

Goals may include but are not limited to:

- Securing or increasing employment/income
- Securing daycare
- Applying for benefits such as SNAP, Medical Assistance, MFIP, and daycare assistance
- Resintating a driver's license
- Paying off fines
- Searching for safe, stable, and affordable housing, in whatever capacity that may be.

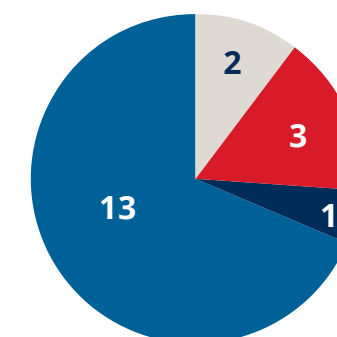
There is no set amount of time households are able to stay, as long as they are working toward completing their goal plan.

Launch Pad began providing shelter for clients in June 2020. Since then, 21 households have been served, including five unaccompanied youth households.

Of the 19 who have exited, two exited to an unsubsidized rental, one exited to college, three to subsidized housing, and 13 to a subsidized program through WCMCA. Two households are currently enrolled in the program, as of April 2023.

38 HOUSEHOLDS SERVED
Since June 2020

19 WITHIN FISCAL YEAR
As of April 2023



HOUSEHOLD EXITS

- 1 – College
- 3 – Subsidized Housing
- 2 – Unsubsidized Rental
- 13 – Subsidized Program through WCMCA

COMMUNITY LAND TRUST



A Community Land Trust, providing affordable homeownership, buys or receives donated land and builds new homes and/ or acquires and rehabilitates exiting homes, and makes these homes available for sale to limited-income homebuyers, writing down the purchase price to an affordable level through the use of public and/or private subsidies.

The CLT sells the home at an affordable price to an eligible, qualified homebuyer household, but retains ownership of the land parcel on which the home sits, leasing the parcel to the homeowner through a 99-year, inheritable, renewable ground lease.

The West Central Community Land Trust Program will have placed:

4 HOMES IN THE TRUST

9 ADDITIONAL HOMES THROUGH SPRING 2024

These homes include new construction, acquisition rehab, and two Habitat for Humanity homes.



2022 CARDBOARD BRIGADE FOR HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS

On November 15, 2022, the Family and Community Services Department along with volunteers from other departments, partnering agencies, community members, and agency clients held our annual Cardboard Brigade in Alexandria, MN.

This event is held yearly during National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness week.

From 3:30-5:00pm, those partaking in the Cardboard Brigade held statistics about hunger and homelessness along the busy Broadway Street. Some stopped to read our signs, some thanked us for the work we do and awareness we were spreading, while others were not as friendly.

This event is extremely eye opening every year and gives a very slight glimpse at the treatment of our homeless community members.

In 2021, we began a homeless drive for needed items for the homeless households we serve. We collect winter hats and gloves, winter jackets, hand warmers, non-perishable food items, person hygiene items, and monetary donations.

111

HOTEL
VOUCHERS

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

32

LAUNCHPAD SHELTERED
HOUSEHOLDS

Since June 2020

29%

HOUSING ASSISTANCE
CLIENTS

are escaping
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



1 IN 6 CHILDREN
LIVE IN POVERTY



ENERGY ASSISTANCE & WEATHERIZATION

Helping eligible households maintain affordable, continuous and safe home energy through bill payment assistance, home energy crisis intervention and more.

4,896

HOUSEHOLDS UTILIZING
ENERGY ASSISTANCE

\$5,300,281

Primary Heat Benefits Paid



+452 HOUSEHOLDS
\$2,603,350 from 2021

2,779

HOUSEHOLDS IN
CRISIS SERVED TOTAL:

\$2,179,081



+767 HOUSEHOLDS
\$843,789 from 2021

309

FURNACE REPAIRS /
REPLACEMENTS TOTAL:

\$287,196



+117 HOUSEHOLDS
\$315,649 from 2021

413

WEATHERIZATION
HOUSEHOLDS

\$1,433,000

Primary uses: Appliances, furnace replacements, water heater replacements, insulation of homes, air sealing of homes, and many other health and safety related home expenses.

1,046

LOW-INCOME WATER
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

\$574,531

2022 SPRING STORM RELIEF FUNDS

In May of 2022, tornadoes left a great deal of damage within the counties we serve, primarily Douglas County in the Forada area.

Many people were left with extensive amounts of damage and many the loss of their homes. Households affected were thrown many additional obstacles including long wait times for insurance adjusters and contractors, high insurance deductibles, and insurance not meeting the needs of the damage.

\$44,573

TOTAL FUNDING

40

HOUSEHOLDS

The Alexandria Community Giving Foundation raised funds for the storm victims. Those funds were then awarded to WCMCA to assist the storm victims with needed items and work such as tree removal, gift cards, mortgage payments, rent payments to temporary housing, insurance deductibles, utilities and other miscellaneous needs.

18 GIFT CARDS DONATED & PROVIDED TO STORM VICTIMS

Family and Community Services staff provided referrals to partnering agencies and other sources of funding and grants, contractors, and assisted in fulfilling needs to eliminate stress.

FUNDING DISTRIBUTIONS

- Rental Assistance – 3 Households
- Tree Removal – 6 Households
- Utilities – 8 Households
- Gift Cards – 25 Households
- Mortgage Payments – 2 Households
- Insurance Deductibles – 2 Households
- Miscellaneous – 6 Households



HEALTH & FINANCES



4 CURRENT PARTICIPANTS

A matched savings project that helps Minnesota resident low-wage earners build assets. Participant savings may be matched by the program at a rate of 3:1



3 MATCHED PAYOUTS COMPLETED

- 2 Small Business Development
- 1 Home Purchase

\$24,002

TOTAL SAVINGS/MATCH PAID OUT

70

PEOPLE ASSISTED BY MNSURE NAVIGATORS

FREE TAX PREPARATION

980

FEDERAL TAX RETURNS

978

STATE TAX RETURNS

176

PROPERTY TAX REFUNDS

NEARLY TOTALING:
\$900,000

BACK TO THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT MN RURAL ECONOMY



THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

1,097

VOLUNTEERS

19,533

HOURS

\$479,730

TOTAL VALUE

Sign-up to volunteer, donate, and join our email list: [WCMCA.ORG/TAKE-ACTION](https://www.wcmca.org/take-action)

CHILDREN & EDUCATION



THE HEAD START APPROACH

WCMCA Head Start supports children's growth from birth to age 5 through services that support early learning and development, health, and family well-being. Head Start staff actively engage parents, recognizing family participation throughout the program as key to strong child outcomes.

107

**HOME-BASED
EARLY HEAD START**
Pregnant women & children (Prenatal to 3-years old)

298

**CENTER-BASED
HEAD START
PRESCHOOL**
(Children Ages 3-5)

393

**PARENT
VOLUNTEERS**
Head Start & Early Head Start

12,638

**VOLUNTEER
HOURS**
From parent volunteers

PROGRAM SUCCESSES

85%

Of 4-year-old Head Start children met or exceeded expectations for Kindergarten readiness.

To meet Head Start Performance Standards, and optimal school readiness, Head Start ensured 99% of enrolled children participated in timely, well-child exams and health screenings (developmental, mental health, hearing/vision) with community providers and 93% established dental care exams.



HEAD START'S WINTER GEAR INITIATIVE SNOWBALLS

Building off the success of the 2021 initiative, the Grant County Lions Club expanded financial support of winter wear for enrolled WCMCA Head Start and Early Head Start children. These funds, combined with COVID-19 recovery funds, provided new winter gear to 262 children across Head Start's seven county service area.

"This is beautiful and very much appreciated!"

- Head Start parent recipient

"What a fabulous program!"

- Head Start parent recipient

262

**CHILDREN RECEIVED
NEW WINTER GEAR**

Across the Head Start seven-county service area



Serving children and their families in the counties of Douglas, Morrison, Pope, Stearns and Todd along with 28 surrounding counties, and the states of North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

257

PARENTS SERVED

649

CHILDREN SERVED

334

SAFE EXCHANGES

727

**PARENTING TIME
VISITS**

178 parents were below the 200% of federal poverty guidelines.



This volunteer-driver program serves adults 65+ in Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens and Traverse Counties. Rides may go outside of the five-county area and can be used for medical appointments, grocery shopping, visiting family, and more. Riders pay per mile based on their net income. We have an annual cost-sharing fee for each rider.

8 VOLUNTEER DRIVERS
61 RIDERS
272 TRIPS TAKEN
18,497 MILES DRIVEN
 Both loaded & unloaded



READY RIDE

This volunteer-driver program serves adults 18 – 64 in Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens and Traverse Counties who have Medical Assistance through PrimeWest Insurance. It may only be used for medical appointments and going to the pharmacy. Rides may go outside of the five-county Area and are billed directly to PrimeWest Insurance, so there is no cost to riders.

8 VOLUNTEER DRIVERS
49 RIDERS
172 TRIPS TAKEN
14,986 MILES DRIVEN
 Both loaded & unloaded

THANK YOU VOLUNTEER DRIVERS!

1,621 Hours volunteered between both programs above.



The WCMCA Home Care & Repair program offers homemaking and chore services through a full-time Maintenance Provider and volunteer staff.

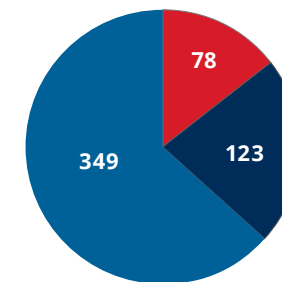
Our full-time maintenance provider or a friendly volunteer works within residences to complete home projects. Services are billed at an hourly rate which is calculated using the client's net income. There is an annual cost-sharing fee for each client.

The goal is to provide these services so older adults can continue to live in their home as long as it is safe for them to do so. This program is intended for adults age 65 and older living in Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens or Traverse county.



Home care repair client

61 CLIENTS
550 APPOINTMENTS



APPOINTMENT BREAKDOWN

- Chores – 63%
- Homemaking – 22%
- Light Maintenance – 14%

HOME CARE & REPAIR SUCCESS STORY

Excerpts from a thank-you letter written by our client, Carol Swanson.

Dear Home Care and Repair,
 This letter is to share with you how very pleased I am to have your services. The Lead Maintenance Provider is such a blessing! He has become like a friend to me, always ready to help, and at times will call to see if I need anything.

After I had my fall and couldn't get out of the house for days to get my mail, he made sure to come by and retrieve it for me.

This program is like family! I have family in the area, but they have their own families and busy lives. Please continue the wonderful work you provide for us Seniors.

I can truly say that you make like worth living.

Carol's letter exemplifies what the Home Care and Repair Program is about, assisting older adults in our communities with services that enable them to stay in their homes safely.



EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS, WORKSHOPS & CLASSES

A MATTER OF BALANCE

West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc. works in partnership with funding through the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging, in order to present A Matter of Balance workshops.

A Matter of Balance is among 19 nationally recognized evidence-based programs represented by the Evidence Based Leadership Collaborative (EBLC).

The mission of the EBLC is to increase delivery of evidence-based programs that improve the health and wellbeing of diverse populations.

The program is specifically designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels among community-dwelling older adults. The program includes eight two-hour classes presented to a small group of 8-12 participants led by trained coaches.

The program enables participants to reduce the fear of falling by learning to view falls as controllable, setting goals for increasing activity levels, making small changes to reduce fall risks at home, and exercise to increase strength and balance.



2 WORKSHOPS HELD
24 PARTICIPANTS

ENHANCE FITNESS

West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc. works in partnership with the Alexandria Area YMCA to teach Enhance Fitness Classes.

Enhance Fitness is an evidence-based group exercise program for older adults that uses simple, easy to learn movements that motivate individuals (particularly those with arthritis) to stay active throughout their life.

Throughout the county, a growing number of Y Associations are offering Enhance Fitness Classes.

The Enhance Fitness Group Exercise Program consists of 16-Week sessions, where classes are held 3 times per week and are 60 minutes in length. Each class session includes cardiovascular, strength training, balance and flexibility exercises and the fostering of strong social relationships between participants.

Those with chronic conditions, such as arthritis, need not worry as they will not do anything that hurts. Participants can use chairs for support if necessary, can remain seated doing modified movements and increase the weight they use for strength training at their own pace.



3 16-WEEK SESSIONS
62 PARTICIPANTS

LOOKING TO VOLUNTEER?

Home Care & Repair Volunteers Needed!

Older adults have a great need for help with basic chores and homemaking services, so they can remain living safely in their home. Make a difference in their life and experience the joy of giving back!

CALL: 218-685-7008

Ready Ride Volunteers Needed!

As a Volunteer Driver, you pick your driving schedule and choose where you would like to drive. You will receive mileage reimbursement for all miles driven.

CALL: 218-685-7433



WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA
Communities Action

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