



Dear Friends,

As we look back on the first five decades of service by Aroostook County Action Program to the people and communities of northernmost Maine, we reflect on that legacy while also acknowledging the critical time we currently find ourselves in.

Never have our services been needed more, and at no time have the challenges seemed to be as many and varied as they are today for the families and individuals we serve County-wide. Through it all, we remain true to our vision as we "Make Life Better" for the people of Aroostook.

ACAP is so capably able to meet the urgent and emergent needs of our region because of the people who comprise our team. The staff and volunteers who dedicate their time, energy and talent day in and day out, to not only deliver services and programs, but to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors are to credit. Although much has changed over the five decades since the Central Aroostook Action Program and St. John Valley Action Council formally merged to form Aroostook County Action Program, this constant has remained.

As the work to help our customers achieve economic independence and social mobility is tested by the strongest of headwinds and roughest waters in the challenges of the day, we share with you this Impact Report which provides a glimpse into how working collaboratively with others, we have helped our community weather the enduring storm.

With Gratitude,

Trudy Gorneault
ACAP Board Chairperson

Jason Parent

ACAP Executive Director/CEO



Recognizing the need for additional housing, and specifically supportive housing, ACAP has worked diligently with partners and community stakeholders to establish Aroostook County's first supportive housing project. The building, located at 1 Edgemont Drive in Presque Isle, will be home to 13 apartments and the Hope and Prosperity Resource Center. The project will provide housing insecure individuals the opportunity to rent an apartment with a long-term lease as they work with ACAP staff towards successful independent living. The project is scheduled to be completed and ready for occupancy by early 2024.

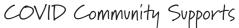
Inflation Relief Payment Assistance

Getting dollars into the hands of vulnerable Aroostook seniors and individuals with disabilities, ACAP assisted nearly 3,000 Aroostook County residents to access the State of Maine Inflation Relief Payment. The dedicated team at ACAP assisted local households, primarily seniors and those who are not required to file Maine tax returns, access the \$850 payment along with other state tax returns that were due to them. The team provided services countywide and in total helped bring nearly \$4,000,000 to some of the most vulnerable in Aroostook County.



Keep the County Warm Day 2022

ACAP hosted its first Keep the County Warm Day on March 17. This countywide event provided over 1,000 new winter coats to area children at locations in Fort Kent, Madawaska, Caribou, Presque Isle, Houlton and Dyer Brook. The same day, the Home Energy Assistance Program Team took to the phones and provided on the spot appointments to dozens of income eligible households who had never before applied for the assistance program. With the increased cost of fuel and increase in income eligibility, it was the ideal time to encourage households to seek our services.



ACAP continues to provide support to households countywide who are required to quarantine or isolate at home due to COVID-19. This support can include a grocery shop, a prescription pick up or connecting the household to other community programs or services. From January 2022 to September 2022, ACAP supported 721 individuals impacted by the pandemic.



Back to School Bash 2022

On August 10, ACAP held its annual Back to School Bash at the Agency's Customer Service Center at 771 Main Street in Presque Isle. The day long event included community partners and members of Team ACAP representing many of the Agency's 40 programs and services. Hundreds of children and their families attended the event and received backpacks filled with school supplies. Gently used clothing, new socks, new winter jackets, snacks and lots of other great giveaways were part of the event. In addition to the fun and prizes for the children, families had the opportunity to connect with both ACAP programs and those provided by community partners. Backpacks were distributed to hundreds of registered children at the event, and were also distributed to students in Northern and Southern Aroostook, totaling over 900

backpacks countywide in partnership with United Way of Aroostook.













Anniversary Celebrations

ACAP has been celebrating 50 years of service to the community all year long with celebrations at multiple ACAP locations countywide. The organization's official 50th Birthday Party was held on Wednesday, June 1. The special day marked the date 50 years ago when the St. John Valley Community Action Council and Central Aroostook Community Action Program merged to officially form Aroostook County Action Program.



50th Anniversary Potato Plot Project

From planting to harvesting, the community embraced this season-long project which called attention to the significance of the County's agricultural industry, raised awareness of food insecurity in the region, and celebrated the 50th anniversary of Aroostook County's most comprehensive provider of social services.

The ACAP 50th Anniversary Potato Plot was a collaborative project of ACAP, G. B. and D. Pelletier Farms of Fort Kent and Northeast Packaging Company (NEPCO) in Presque Isle/Caribou. The Pelletier Family donated the field and the Dark Red Norland potatoes and NEPCO donated the production run of specially designed ACAP 50th Anniversary five pound bags that held the potatoes that were given to County food pantries and stocked in community cupboards region-wide. The unique artistic design on the bag was created by Fort Kent Artist Gert Thibodeau who was the winner of a countywide art design contest to help promote the project.

Pre-school children enrolled in Aroostook County Action Program's Fort Kent Head
Start Program took part in the ceremonial planting and sign unveiling for a special
potato plot on Route 161 in St. John Plantation while nearly 200 local students from the Fort

Kent Elementary School helped harvest and bag 15,000 pounds of potatoes.



The Goughan's Farm family of Caribou honored Aroostook County Action Program for its 50 years of "making life better" in northernmost Maine, dedicating the theme of their popular corn maze to celebrate the Agency's milestone anniversary.

A special ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the maze entrance co-hosted by the Goughan family and Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce. Preschool children attending ACAP's nearby Early Care and Education Programs in Caribou and Limestone, along with their teachers and families, were on hand to help cut the ribbon with officials, and were among the first to enjoy the corn maze as it officially opened for the season. In an effort to provide the community with updated information about the over 40 programs and services offered by the Agency, the maze design, and educational ACAP-themed games, were enjoyed by those taking this year's challenge.

Business After Hours Event

The Business After Hours Event, co-hosted by ACAP and the Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce, at the Agency's Customer Service Center at 771 Main Street in Presque Isle brought the business community, ACAP Team Members from across the organization, and family and friends together for a great evening.

The event included a ribbon cutting for the new Katahdin Trust Community Service Suite, tours of the renovated building, County inspired refreshments, and mocktails served up by members of ACAP's Prevention Team and other agency volunteers. ACAP's Workforce Development Team also shared the programs and services they provide regional employers to help grow and enhance their workforce.











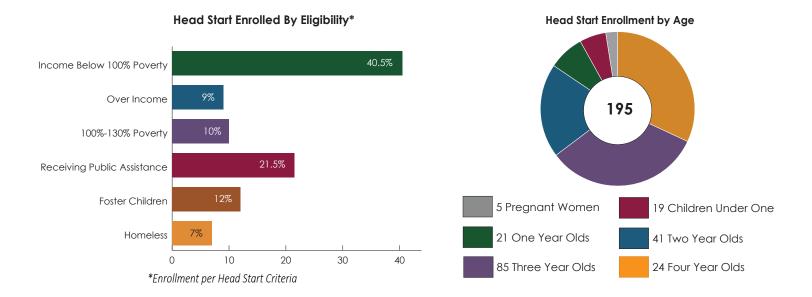


Families served through Head Start Programs

91Single Parent Households

Two Parent Households Families Experiencing Homelessness

Families found housing during the program year



Early Care & Education Expands Services to More Communities



At a time of critical shortage of available child care options for parents across the region, state and nation, unique partnerships between several area school districts and Aroostook County Action Program are making a difference locally. ACAP Early Care and Education (ECE) and Limestone Community School applied for and received a Pre K Expansion grant to offer full day Pre-K/Head Start at the Limestone Community School. ACAP ECE and Van Buren District School collaborated to add a 3-year-old classroom to offer Head Start services. ACAP ECE also entered into partnerships with SAD 27 to offer Pre K services, in addition to Head Start Services, for 4-year olds at the ACAP Fort Kent Center and the addition of a 3-year-old classroom to provide

Head Start services to eligible 3-year olds. Additional opportunities to collaborate with Valley Unified School District are being explored. RSU 39 and ACAP ECE collaborated to offer Pre K services at the ACAP ECE Center in Caribou. This builds onto the additional partnerships in Presque Isle, Dyer Brook and Houlton.



"Archer loves riding the bus and is excited when he comes to school."

"When my niece and her family were evicted from their home, I took my great-nieces and great-nephew in to live with me. ACAP helped in getting Archer enrolled in Early Head Start and in September, he was able to transfer to the 6-hour collaboration room and received early intervention services and support.

Archer loves riding the bus and is excited when he comes to school. I am so appreciative of the co-workers that made this happen for my greatnephew."

Kimberly Kelley ACAP Teacher



Head Start Financial Statement 2021-2022

Head Start Revenues			Head Start Expenses		
Category	Budget	Actual	Category	Budget	Actual
Federal	\$4,070,029	\$4,302,721	Personnel	\$2,899,649	\$3,040,387
State	\$245,464	\$245,464	In-Kind	\$1,005,389	\$573,863
Other	\$106,000	\$75,635	Travel	\$81,646	\$33,674
In-Kind	\$1,005,389	\$574,069	Occupancy	\$350,145	\$455,352
Total Revenue	\$5,426,882	\$5,197,888	Supplies	\$235,697	\$170,512
			Food for Children	\$52,400	\$57,836
			Bus Service	\$77,600	\$58,653
Aroostook County Action Program was audited by Chester M. Kearney for the period of October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. The auditor's opinion of statement reflected we were fairly presented. There were no findings or questioned identified costs.			Training for Staff	\$20,000	\$53,905
			Administration	\$638,156	\$726,568
			Client Services	\$9,500	\$19
			Contractual	\$27,000	\$9,157
			Other	\$29,700	\$17,962
			Total Expenses	\$5,426,882	\$5,197,888



Comprehensive Services Help Families to Thrive

Vivian, a WIC participant and Head Start Parent, is thankful for all the services ACAP has provided for her and her two children. Working with the WIC program for the past few years has provided nutritional food and formula for her children. An ACAP Family Coach has been available to offer support, especially during recent difficult times. Vivian utilized the Emergency Rental Assistance Program which helped her obtain housing and assisted with paying utility bills.

Vivian's oldest child has been enrolled in the Head Start program for the past 2 years. This program has been beneficial in providing early intervention services. Her youngest child is also enrolled at ACAP in the Early Head Start program. Because her children attended Head Start programs, it allowed Vivian to go back to school to better support herself and her children. Vivian is thankful to the ACAP staff for all the help they have provided to her family.

Early Care & Education Center Earns National Accreditation

ACAP's Early Care and Education Center in Caribou earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC is the largest organization committed to promoting high quality early learning for all children, birth to age 8. Accreditation consists of a rigorous self-study and quality improvement process, followed by an on-site visit by a NAEYC Assessor to verify and ensure the program is meeting each of the 10 NAEYC program standards for high quality early learning.

ACAP Teacher Receives National Award

Jackie Putnam, Early Head Start Teacher for ACAP'S Early Care and Education Program, was awarded the prestigious Marcia Lovell Award. Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network for early childhood education professionals created the Marcia Lovell Award for Innovation in Early Care and Education to recognize outstanding early childhood practitioners who make significant contributions to the children, families, and communities in which they work and embody the ideals for which Marcia advocated: better lives for children; high-quality early education experiences; support for all children, including those most at risk and with disabilities; and the belief that the arts are an integral part of early education programs. This year, there were nine recipients chosen to receive this award for their outstanding work in early childhood education in the state of Maine.



Head Start Programs Children's Health and Disability Services*



56

Federal Early Head Start Children

147

Federal Head Start Preschool Children

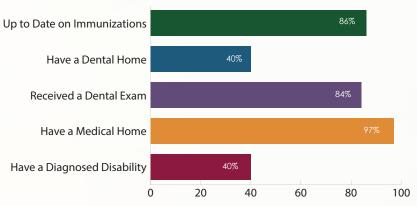
83

Child Care Preschool Children

54

Child Care Infant and Toddler Children

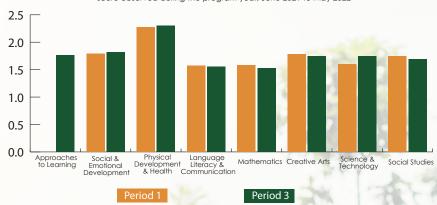
Enrollment numbers where impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.



*Numbers were impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic

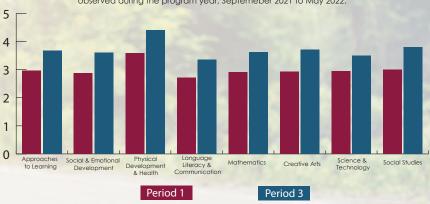
Early Head Start Assessment Data

The Assessment describes the growth as the average of the highest score observed during the program year, June 2021 to May 2022



Head Start Assessment Data

The Assessment describes the growth as the average of the highest score observed during the program year, Septembber 2021 to May 2022.





MaineHealth

LET'S GO!

53 County early care and education sites provided with gardening items and resources

4 Networking and Training meetings held for School Nutrition Directors representing 30 Aroostook County school kitchens

1,500 Water bottles distributed countywide with information on the importance of drinking water

25 Easton Recreation Department participants provided healthy snacks, educational materials and physical activities.

10 Schools and communities provided with Story Walks

4,200 Children and families provided no cost physical activities at multiple events countywide



54 Head Start children in Houlton and Dyer Brook received 24 Eat Well, Play Hard Classes

77 Adults received nutrition tips and recipes at the Houlton Farmers Markets

54 Children participated in a nutritional scavenger hunt bingo at the Houlton Farmers Markets

217 Aroostook County employees received Workplace Wellness Recipes

30 SNAP-Ed Cookbooks distributed to Ashland School parents

873 Wellness tip booklets distributed



31 Home child care sites participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

6 Child care centers participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program



MyPlate





75.7% of total fruit and vegetable vouchers were redeemed totaling \$185,127

\$774,933 spent in 16 Aroostook WIC approved grocery stores

\$4,000 in Farmers Market benefits distributed

11 Aroostook County WIC Approved Farmers Markets & Stands

WIC Clinic Locations Caribou Fort Kent Houlton Madawaska Presque Isle Van Buren

5,250+

Social Service Referrals

WIC Team of Experts

2 Nutritionists

Nutrition Educators

1 Registered Dietitian

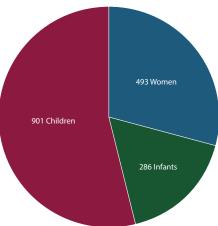
International Board-Certified Lactation Counselor

4Certified Lactation Counselors

Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

- **2,180** Cans of formula provided during recall (March-September)
- 138 Breastfeeding moms utilized Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs
- **75.5%** of pregnant enrollees that re-certified after delivery initiated breastfeeding
- 23.4% of participants breastfed for 3 months or more
- 13% of participants breastfed for 6 months or more
- 36 Electric Breast Pumps were loaned to participants
- **13.8%** of pregnant enrollees who reported smoking 3 months prior to pregnancy, reported quitting before child was born

WIC Participation Rates



Total WIC Participation: 1,689

6,900

Outreach Miles Traveled

- WIC Annual Report dates are 7/1/21 to 7/1/22
- Health Data unavailable due to COVID-19 closures and State of Emergency Declaration
- WIC Staff may occupy more than 1 role





Promoting and Protecting Healthy Smiles

The ACAP Oral Health Program Dental Hygienist provides sealants and fluoride varnish to preschool through grade 5 children at all ACAP locations and Aroostook County schools, twice annually. This service is offered to all students with or without dental insurance.

832

Children Screened

48

Urgent Care Referrals

504

Sealants Applied

County Youth Participate in Grateway to Opportunity

ACAP participated in Maine Youth Action Network's Gateway to Opportunity program as a host site. This summer youth employment program is designed to give young people a work experience that develops the 21st Century Skills required for success in their future careers. The team conducted research among their peers and developed a recommendation on how ACAP might build connection and a sense of belonging to prevent substance use among youth in Aroostook County. Four youth and a Team Leader from University of Maine at Presque Isle presented their findings and recommendation to ACAP's Leadership Team. Thanks to new funding from Maine Children's Cabinet, three of the young people are continuing the critical work they began this summer!



County Restorative Practices provides alternatives to detention and suspension for youth involved with conflicts at school and in the community. Restorative Circles promote accountability and repair relationships. Referrals can come from Department of Corrections, schools, families, community organizations and concerned community members.

County Restorative Practices

13

Youth diverted through the Department of Corrections

diverted d

Youth diverted directly from local police departments

Wisdom Reaches for Restorative Practices

ACAP's partnership with the Maine School Administrative District #33 began in March 2022 when the school expressed interest in a youth mattering presentation for their middle school students. ACAP assisted in developing a student wellness day. The student wellness day included four different stations that provided age-appropriate interactive and educational activities. The topics included communication, drug awareness, the damage smoking and vaping does to your lungs and the importance of being physically active. The students were also provided with a mindfulness activity and were given important tips on oral care. The day was a huge success with the students as well as with the teachers and administrators within the district. Interest in restorative practices for the school as a whole, policy improvement, and learning sessions that could be provided to the school, students, staff and parents has been expressed for the future.



ACAP's Community Educators visited Aroostook County retailers to assess the use and need of smoke-free resources and training. They also wanted to address any resource-related questions retailers might have. While completing the assessment, we heard management staff indicate interest in more resources and more up-to-date training for employees. These conversations led to questions about their smoke-free policy, and how ACAP could help them improve or implement one for their workplace.

19 Smoke-Free Policies implemented or improved

19 Tobacco Retailer Assessments completed

77 Youth and adults trained in Sidekicks, Quitting Tobacco Together Training



'For the first time in many years, we will not have to worry that our home will not make it through another winter."



House Before:



Thanks to a partnership between Aroostook County Action Program and the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, a couple from Crystal have a new mobile home to replace their former residence which was beyond repair.

Roger and Shirley Smith originally reached out to ACAP for assistance with a roof replacement. Upon inspection of the home, it was determined the structure unfortunately did not meet the standards for roof replacement as it had too many other deficiencies.

"We are so thankful that we learned about this program and the other assistance ACAP provides as we truly could not have made it much longer in our old home," said Shirley Smith. "We recently had to take in our grandson to live with us, and I feel so much better about having him live in the new mobile home. For the first time in many years, we will not have to worry that our home will not make it through another winter," said Smith.

Through its partnership with the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, ACAP was able to secure \$30,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds for the project. The Smiths worked with their local lender, County Federal Credit Union, who after learning more about the first-time project for their institution, preapproved the couple for a loan to pay the remainder.

- **230** Repairs or Replacements of Heating Systems Completed
- 95 Weatherization Projects Completed
- 202 Heat Pumps Installed
- **58** Home Repair Projects Completed
- 26 Home Heating Fuel Tanks Replaced

- **10** HomeBuyer Education Classes held
- 119 Students received HomeBuyer Education Certification
- **81** Clients Counseled through eHome America





2021-2022 Heating Assistance in Aroostook County

\$4,465,566 Total Amount of Heating Dollars Spent in Aroostook County



The Home Energy Assistance Program Served: 4,465 4,270

Invididuals Seniors Children

6,525 Home Energy Assistance Program Applications Processed in 2021-2022 Season



"Just wanted to say thank you so much for our recent fuel delivery! We have never had a full tank before, only 100 gallons at a time. This generosity gives us peace for many months knowing we have fuel to count on. Thank you again."

- Stockholm



"I would like to thank all the people who made it possible for me to get fuel assistance, and everything else, that all the employees at ACAP do. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. You all change people's lives."

-Limestone



"I want to personally thank you, for helping my family and I during these difficult times. We truly appreciate the help and are grateful there are organizations out there like this one. May God bless your organization and all those that work hard to help others."

- Fort Fairfield





Workforce Development

921 Services provided to Workforce Development participants

48 Individuals received credentials, certificates or a degree related to achievement of educational or vocational skill

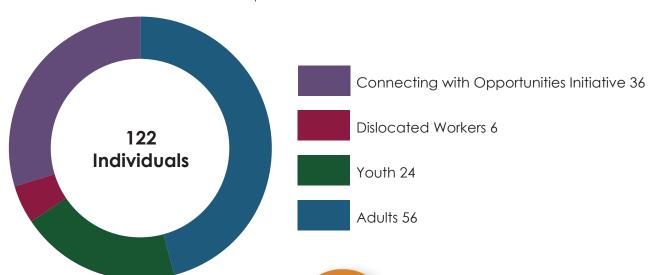


When Nick stared working with ACAP he stated: "I was fired from my jobs and had a new baby, I felt hopeless, had no positive support, no one to talk to. Not knowing how I was going to be able to provide for my family caused me to have a lot of anxiety. ACAP went over the top, above and beyond to help us. (They) helped me connect to programs and apply for things I would not have done on my own, that gave me some financial breathing room. HEAP, help with electricity, unemployment, groceries when I had COVID, fix my truck so I would not lose my part time job. Helped me get a new job. Worked with me to be better able to focus and transition to a new job. Helped me maintain my part time job, not give up, gave me hope and restored my confidence. ACAP services and supports helped me regain a positive mindset and was a huge relief for me and my family. I am very , very grateful."

- Nick, Workforce Development Participant

Workforce Development Participation

Workforce Development served a total of 122 customers.





Coaching

Is a client driven approach in which families/ individuals complete regular ongoing assessments and goal planning while being provided with one-onone support to ensure they have personal guidance, appropriate tools and advocacy to face any obstacles they may be facing.

734

356

Participants

Households

5,350

Services Provided

Navigation

Navigators provide assessment and connection to any and all individuals seeking support services. Navigators refer all individuals to any existing programs they may qualify for.

4,741

3,041

Participants

Households

14,314

Services Provided

M.D. is in recovery for substance abuse and making positive progress each and every day. She is currently enrolled in the FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) program and works regularly with an ACAP Family Coach. M.D. had lost custody of her children due to an addiction, but has worked very hard and has regained custody of her two boys! While enrolled in our family coaching program, M.D. enrolled in classes at Adult Education and will complete her HiSET within the next six months. M.D. continues to work with an ACAP Family Coach to reevaluate and achieve her goals of continuing her recovery journey, pursuing higher education and to raising her boys in a safe and healthy environment.

Family Coaching Success Story

Emergency Rental Assistance Program



Maine's Emergency Rental Assistance Program provided rental and utility relief payments to help income eligible renters. From October 2021 to September 2022 ACAP provided Emergency Rental Assistance to:

2,003 Households

3,591 Participants

\$13,821,930 Direct Client Benefits

The Hope and Prosperity Resource Center

The Hope and Prosperity Resource Center is a "Place with a Purpose". It is a warm, safe, and inviting space for individuals to work on goals. ACAP Coaches and Navigators work with individuals and families interested in creating a plan that is customized to their needs.

13,720 Services Provided 532

Rides Provided

213 Households

254 Individuals





ACAP Strategic Plan 2022-2027



Increase Access to Affordable Quality Childcare



Increase Access to Affordable Housing





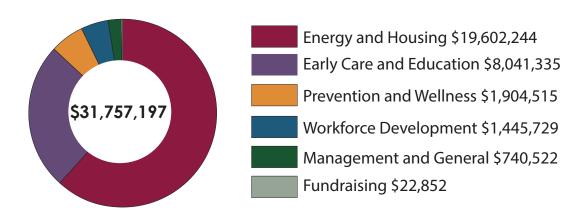


ACAP's Strategic Plan looks to address the most pressing needs identified by the people of northern Maine through a region-wide community needs assessment. This plan will be in effect until 2027.

In 2022, ACAP employed 202 individuals across the Agency's over 40 programs and services. The Human Resources team has been actively supporting recruitment efforts in all areas of the Agency, including on-boarding and orienting new staff, as well as assisting in program reviews, including the Head Start review.

The HR team at ACAP consists of Alyssa Levesque, Director of Human Resources; Monica Yeater, HR Generalist; Cathy Edmunds, Compliance Specialist; Roger Pelletier, Recruiter; and Mattie Hui, Health and Safety Manager.





Based on ACAP's September 2022 unaudited/preliminary Revenue and Expense Report.

Our most recent audited financials can be found at www.acap-me.org.



Three of Aroostook County Action Program's very own-Jason Parent, Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer; Sherry Locke, Director of Advancement; and Heidi Rackliffe, Director of Programs-received their highly esteemed Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) endorsements. CCAP is designed for those who are leaders in the Community Action Profession. By attaining the certification, these three leaders are positioned to further ACAP'S service delivery to those in our community. The triad joins existing agency CCAP's Jamie Chandler, Chief Operating Officer; Sue Powers, Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives; and Amy Murchison, Program Coordinator.



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