

*MACOMB COMMUNITY ACTION*

# **Forward Progress**

*2022-2023 Annual Report*



# Forward Progress

MACOMB COMMUNITY ACTION

## MISSION

Persistent action to diminish poverty and promote independence

## VISION

All Macomb County residents achieve their fullest potential and maintain personal stability and security

## VALUES AND BELIEFS

**People** - We are a community where no one should have to walk alone.

**Diversity & Inclusion** - Embracing diversity and ensuring inclusion strengthens and enriches our community.

**Person-Centered Services** - Maximum feasible participation and all persons are treated with dignity and respect.

**Accessibility, Equity, and Parity** - Barriers to independence exist in our community. Persistent action is required to ensure all persons have opportunities to work toward reaching their fullest potential.

**Advocacy** - To meet our Mission, we encourage collaboration, we inform policy, we impact change.



# Macomb Community Action Advisory Board (MCAAB)

The Macomb Community Action Advisory Board (MCAAB) is the advisory board for Macomb Community Action. MCAAB members are representatives from the public, consumer, and private sectors.

One third of the Board members, appointed by the County Executive, are elected public officials currently holding office, or their representative(s). Appointed representatives shall have responsibilities which require them to deal with poverty-related issues.

One-third of the members represent the consumer sector. Representatives may be selected to represent the community or a specific area or neighborhood served by the Macomb Community Action, or to represent a particular organization designated by the Advisory Board whose membership is composed predominantly of

economically disadvantaged persons, including youth organizations. One seat is reserved for a Head Start Policy Council member.

Finally, the last third belongs to the private sector as representatives of business, industry, labor, faith-based, law enforcement, education, or other major groups and interests in the community served.

The Advisory Board members shall come from diverse backgrounds and life experiences in order to elicit a broad spectrum of knowledge, values and attitudes necessary for comprehensive consideration of issues affecting low-income individuals. Further, Advisory Board members will be selected in such a manner as to assure that they speak on behalf of the group or organization, which they represent.

## Macomb Community Action Advisory Board (MCAAB) Officers:

### MCAAB Officers

Chair: Justin Al-Igoe

First Vice Chair: Tanya Blatz

Second Vice Chair: Carmen Bordea

### Representatives from the Public Sector

Joan Flynn, City of Warren

Mark Hackel, Macomb County Executive, Ex-Officio

Honorable William Hackel III, 42nd District Court – Division II, New Baltimore

Matthew Wallace, Clinton Township

Matthew Micinski, Community Member

Julie Matuzak, Clinton Township Board of Trustees

### Representatives from the Consumer Sector

Monica Bihar-Natzke, Community Member

Michael Bruci, Community Member

Shana Romancheck, Head Start Policy Council

April Fidler, MCREST

### Representatives from the Private Sector

Justin Al-Igoe, Macomb St. Clair Workforce Development Board

Tanya Blatz, U.S. Army Garrison, Detroit Arsenal

Carmen Bordea, Office of Global Michigan

Esperanza Cantu, United Way for Southeastern Michigan

Krista Willette, R.N., M.S.A., Macomb County Health Department

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Macomb Community Action has a long and rich history of providing relief and advocacy for those in poverty or facing financial hardship. Stepping into this role, I am proud to become a part of this rich history and I am humbled to have the opportunity to share all of the ways that Macomb Community Action staff have impacted this County throughout 2023.

Our mission has always been clear: “Persistent action to diminish poverty and promote independence.” This mission is not just a statement; it is a commitment to fostering positive change in the lives of individuals and families who need it the most. It is about recognizing the inherent dignity in every person and providing the tools and resources necessary for them to shape their destinies. Here in Michigan’s third most populous County, the mission endures.

Macomb County continues to be on an upward trajectory of business development, placemaking and community building. Along with that, there are still those who find themselves in challenging circumstances and unable to meet their basic needs. It is in those situations that Macomb Community Action stands in the gap to uphold

this great community and ensure that everyone who needs it can get access to childcare, food, housing and other needs.

In our report, we will highlight the contributions of our action centers, Head Start, food bank, weatherization and transportation programs. We will provide a window into all of the ways that our staff of dedicated individuals operationalizes the mission and values of community action by helping others with our programs and resources. You will also find a snapshot of our financial information. We hope this information will be helpful in developing a better understanding of the benefits we bring to Macomb County residents.

On behalf of the entire Macomb Community Action staff, thank you for your support.



**Edward N. Scott III, M.A.E.**  
**Macomb Community Action**





# Community Services

The Community Services division offers a wide variety of programs to residents and municipalities ranging from transportation services, housing services such as weatherization and rehabilitation, and community development programs. Funding for the various programs includes but is not limited to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the US Department of Energy (DOE), and the US and Michigan Departments of Transportation (DOT and MDOT).

## ACTION CENTERS 586-469-6999

Our Action Centers offer services to income-eligible Macomb County residents to diminish poverty and promote independence through rent/mortgage and utility assistance, and other programs

## TRANSPORTATION 586- 469-5225

This department provides transportation to essential medical appointments and other specific locations for eligible Macomb County residents.

## HOUSING REHABILITATION 586-466-6256

The Housing Rehabilitation Program provides assistance to eligible homeowners to repair their homes to achieve decent, safe and sanitary housing. Assistance is provided in the form of a no-interest loan.

## WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE 586-469-6329

The Weatherization Assistance Program performs the installation of energy efficient items to conserve energy in Macomb County homes. These improvements reduce energy use and can save an average of 30% on heat and utility bills. A home energy audit determines which items will be installed.

## MINOR HOME REPAIR 586-466-6256

The Minor Home Repair Program is a grant-funded program that provides assistance to eligible homeowners to address minor home repairs.



3,277 riders provided transportation



Provided housing services for 788 households



433 residents given rental assistance



480 residents given utility (gas and electric) assistance



1,559 residents given water bill assistance



# Community Services Action Centers

**MCA's Community Action Centers offer services to eligible Macomb County residents to diminish poverty and promote independence through assistance with housing, utilities, and other needs.**

The Central Community Action Center relocated in the summer of 2023. The Central Community Action Center is now located in the VerKuielen Building in Clinton Township and continues to serve the needs of the community from our new location!

## PROGRAMS

### **CERA - Keep Macomb Your Home**

From March 2021 through December 2022, the COVID Emergency Rental Assistance program (CERA) helped thousands of Macomb County residents who faced COVID-related hardships with rent assistance, utility assistance, and other assistance to avoid eviction and provide financial relief. MCA worked in coordination with Michigan State Housing Development Authority to

implement multiple rounds of funding provided by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. This program has now ended and was successful in reviewing over 22,400 applications and providing assistance in excess of \$73 million.

**CSBG:** CSBG provides assistance with rent, mortgage, and utilities for eligible households seeking assistance.

**MEAP (Michigan Energy Assistance Program):** Assists eligible households with electric and gas utilities, such as DTE, Consumers Energy and SEMCO to prevent utility service disconnection.

**WRAP:** Provides households with water bill assistance and minor plumbing repairs and conservation education to reduce water usage.



### **Program stats: Households served**

**CSBG - Rent/Mortgage: 308**

**CSBG - Utilities: 404**

**MEAP: 76**

**WRAP: 907**

**LIHWAP: 652**

**SSVF: 50**

**ESG: 85**

**LIHWAP:** The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program funding was available through September 2023 to assist eligible households with water and wastewater bills. The program started in fiscal year 2022 and provided Macomb County residents in participating communities with financial assistance toward their water/sewer bill arrears.

**SSVF:** Provides eligible veteran households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with services to obtain or maintain housing stability.

**Housing Assessment and Resource Agency and Emergency Solutions Grant:** MCA provides Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing assistance for people at risk of homelessness or who are currently experiencing homelessness. MCA also facilitates the prioritization and referral of households experiencing homelessness through the Coordinated Entry process and maintains Housing Choice Voucher Homeless Preference waiting list in coordination with MSHDA.

**CoC Lead Agency:** In a role that is new to Macomb Community Action, the Housing and Urban Development Homeless Assistance Grants Collaborative Application for the Macomb County Continuum of Care was successfully submitted in fiscal year 2023. This annual application process provides funding to organizations in our

community serving people through housing and homeless services programs.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**SMTMD-** Show Me the Money Day in partnership with CEDAM and MSU Extension promotes access to free financial resources, affordable financial products and services and financial education classes. The 5th annual SMTMD 2023 was held on March 25 and was the first in-person event since the pandemic. SMTMD had 32 participants register and nine different workshops to choose from. Topics included: Energy conservation, identity theft and landlord/tenant rights. SMTMD was held during the VITA Saturday walk in days and was promoted in a feature article in Metro Parent Magazine.

**Walk for Warmth:** The 2023 Walk for Warmth was the 33rd annual event. It brought together approximately 230 participants in a virtual effort from March 3, 2023 - March 11, 2023. Walk for Warmth assists low-income residents with heating bills, furnace repairs, replacements and heat-related

emergencies. Genisys Credit Union provided a contribution of over \$8,000 to support the event in 2023.

**Tax Preparation:** MCA continues to partner with Macomb County Veteran Services and Accounting Aid Society. A total of 2645 returns were prepared with \$2,272,007 in Federal returns with 36% planning to save a portion of their refund. Over 330 individuals received information on financial education topics on:

- *Creating a savings plan*
- *Which bill do I pay first*
- *Tips on budgeting during the pandemic*



**PIT Count:** Macomb Community Action organized and led the Point in Time Count for Macomb County in 2023. The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a HUD-required count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. During this single night, 33 people were found living unsheltered and there were 286 people in shelter locations. Unsheltered people were provided with bags containing resources and referrals to area shelters.



## TESTIMONIALS

*"MCA staff were more than courteous, respectful and very kind. Being in a challenging time that knocks your confidence and self-worth, their kindness has been a soothing and healing balm to me. I gratefully carry their kindness with me. It enriches the kindness I have to share. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"*

*"The Community Action Center has met me with more than I thought I needed. Their financial assistance during a bleak and stressful time has been a Godsend and an enormous relief. On the other side of the relief, I find an ease, and clearness of mind, and a sense of lightness, hope and optimism in the path forward. That is invaluable to me. I am heartened and so very thankful. I am more than satisfied! I am overflowing with a sense of support, encouragement and gratitude."*

*"Communication has been easy and smooth. I greatly appreciate the ability to connect with someone immediately. No automated telephone maze to navigate. The ready presence of the conscientious team goes a long way in creating ease in trying times."*

*"THANK YOU from the fullness of my heart for your much-needed assistance and kindness. Thank you for being there for me and others who reach out. I have always loved to give and share, and what you have done to help me makes me want to find bigger and higher ways to contribute and pay it forward. I am SO grateful to you and thankful for you. Wishing you all blessings overflowing."*

### **Feedback from a customer who received assistance with a water bill:**

*"I appreciate MCA for helping me with my water bill. Very respectful, very specific, and kept me updated at all times. I most definitely will refer whoever I need to come to you guys for help. You guys have been truly a blessing. Again, you guys are amazing. I appreciate everything you have done for me and I most definitely thank God that you guys respond in a timely manner. You were right on time and I thank God for you guys. You are a blessing. You were on time for everything with my water bill, emails and everything."*

### **Feedback from a customer who received help with rent to prevent eviction:**

*"This was my first time utilizing your services, I was not sure what to expect, but here is what I got. I got very detailed information on what it is I needed to do, in order to receive services. I provided that information to you guys the same day. You moved swiftly with assistance while maintaining professionalism, listening, and a kind smile through the phone! I truly appreciate your assistance and I wish that you all continue to provide the great customer service and assistance that you've provided me."*





# Community Services Transportation

MCA Transportation Program in partnership with SMART’s Community Partnership Program provides bus service to Macomb County low-income seniors and disabled individuals to essential medical appointments. MCA operates a fleet of seven wheelchair lift equipped SMART buses and provides rides to destinations in Macomb County and the Veterans Hospital in Detroit.

Through this partnership with SMART, MCA was able to provide 3277 trips to 3277 riders in fiscal year 2023. This allowed Macomb’s most vulnerable populations to receive the medical care they needed to stay healthy and more independent.

## PROGRAMS

### The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

We have partnered with the Community Food Bank of Macomb County to distribute TEFAP (Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program) food to our Transportation customers. This program provides supplemental food at no cost through the USDA. Each MCA Transportation customer who wants TEFAP receives one delivery per month. Our customers have been very grateful for this additional food.



# Community Services Weatherization

Throughout the last program year, The Weatherization Assistance Program assisted **154 households** by providing energy savings measures in their homes. These services include caulking, weather stripping, insulation, furnace repair and replacement and other measures that can save the home **30% in utility bills** annually.

The Agency's Home Rehabilitation program provides home upgrades to homeowners, providing safe, and secure housing for County residents. During the past program year, the program assisted **54 homeowners** with this service.

The Grass and Snow program provides valuable services to County seniors, allowing them to stay in their homes and maintain independence. This program provides grass

cutting services during the warmer months and snow removal services during the winter months. This service was provided to **374 County residents** during the last program year.

With the Agency's portable ramp program, we were able to place over **100 temporary aluminum ramps** in the community for residents experiencing disabilities, mobility issues, or may be recovering from surgeries. Once the person no longer needs the ramp, it can be easily disassembled and moved into the next person in need of that service.

The newest program in the area of housing services is the Water Conservation Program, provided through our partnership with the Great Lakes Water Authority. Residents eligible for this program can receive valuable water saving measures and minor plumbing repair.



## PROGRAMS

Staff from the Housing Services programs take part in outreach efforts throughout the year, providing energy saving tips and tools at a variety of community events. Staff are always proud to volunteer for events such as the annual Walk for Warmth, as those type of events benefit our customers and provide funds for emergency furnace repair and replacement.

## TESTIMONIAL

*"The Weatherization program was a life changer for me and my family. All of the staff were so kind and the contractors were very friendly and professional. We have already seen a big difference in our heat bills and our home is now warm in the winter months. Thank you, thank you!"*

# Children and Family Services Head Start & Early Head Start

The Children and Family Services division consists of Head Start 0 – 5 and the Macomb Food Program. The focus areas of the division include school readiness and food insecurity among the County’s most vulnerable populations. Funding sources include but are not limited to: The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and Head Start/Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership federal grants.

### Head Start 0-5 (586) 469-5215

Head Start is an early childhood development and education program for income-eligible families. The program provides a range of services for pregnant women and families with children ages 0 - 5. We partner with each family to promote high-quality school readiness at no cost. Applications are accepted year round.

### Macomb Food Program (586) 469-6004

The Macomb Food Program provides immediate relief to those in need of food through a network of more than 70 pantries and hunger relief organizations. The program supplies food at no cost to ensure pantry shelves are stocked throughout Macomb County. For emergency food, call the United Way at 2-1-1.

HEAD START	
FED	\$7,975,143
COLA	\$446,608
QI	\$238,303
T/TA	\$78,175
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,738,229</b>
EARLY HEAD START	
FED	\$3,238,867
COLA	\$181,377
QI	\$75,899
T/TA	\$68,724
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,564,867</b>



### ENROLLMENT

	Cumulative Enrollment	Actual Enrollment
Head Start	936	842
Early Head Start	180	232

### DENTALS & PHYSICALS FROM PIR 2021-2022

(Cumulative Enrollment)

Head Start		Early Head Start	
Dental	351	Dental	91
Physical	922	Physical	86

**GSRP - \$960,800.00 for Head Start Only**

**GSRP Start Up Funding (Lil Graduates) - \$25,000**

**PEDALS - \$35,000**

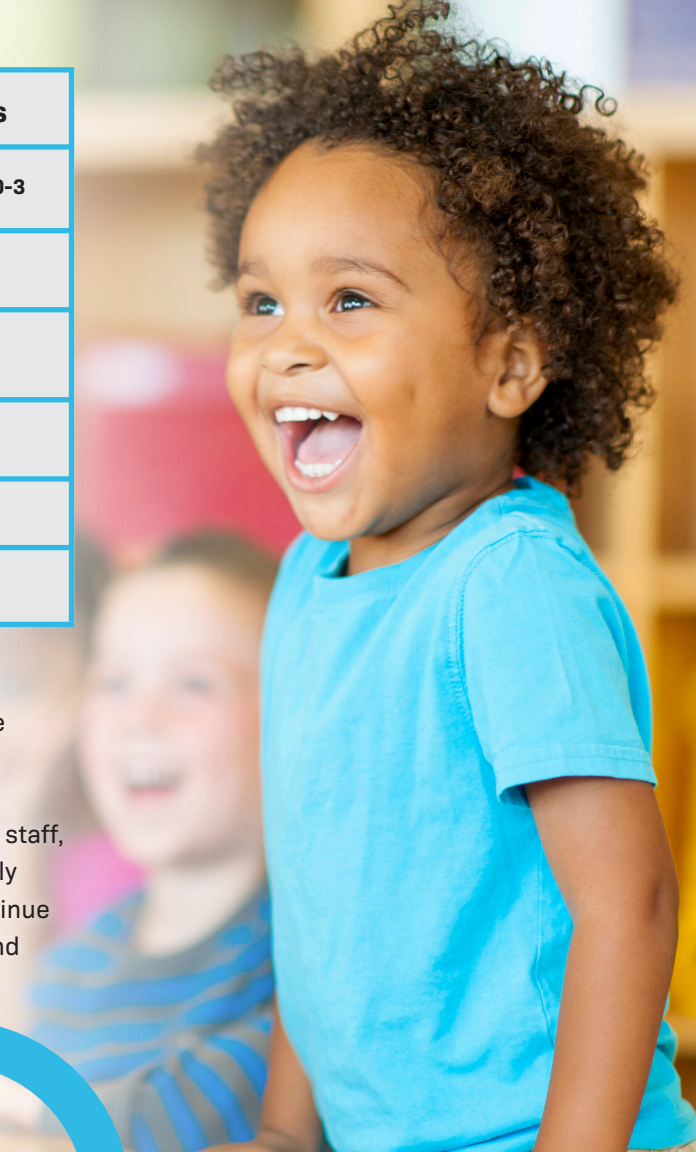
HEAD START SCHOOL READINESS GOALS/SCORES	% Met Expectations		% Exceed Expectations	
	Head Start 3-5	Head Start 0-3	Head Start 3-5	Head Start 0-3
Social/Emotional	64%	65%	13%	6%
Physical-Gross & Fine Motor	62%	64%	27%	15%
Language & Literacy	72%	51%	19%	2%
Cognitive	72%	67%	12%	8%
Math	67%	62%	18%	4%

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## PROGRAMS

- **Head Start** - In order to meet the needs of families Head Start converted all part day programming to full day programming, Monday - Friday for 6.5 hours per day.
- Data, waitlists, and difficulty staffing the home visitor positions conveyed the need to reduce the amount of Home Visiting slots within the

Early Head Start Program. Those funds were reallocated to increase the Early Head Start teaching staff with a salary increase. These increases helped retain and recruit qualified staff, as well as remain competitive with other early childhood programs salaries in order to continue providing high quality services to children and families.



## TESTIMONIALS

*"The Head Start Program has been the best first step in my 4 year olds life."*

*"Head start is a healthy environment to explore, learn and grow up with the Qualified teachers, who provide the kids with love ,care, and respect and big opportunity for education. We are appreciative of this program."*

*"My name is Valentina and I am a mother of three kids who are enrolled into the Head Start program. This program was the best fit for my working schedule and for the benefit of my kids as well more importantly. I wanted to acknowledge my son teacher Sally daycare. The daycare and the teacher everything is more than my expectations. At first , as a mom was worried how my child Elysium will be in the daycare with him being only 2 1/2 years old but it didn't take that long for both of us elysium and i to have more reasons to love this daycare teacher. Elysium comes back home showing me what he learned in his class. The teacher also follows up with me about my child daily routine. She is very understanding, patient and loving to the children. She shares with me the menu*

*of his nutrient and his daily activities that he does with them. Elysium has learned to share toys and gets along with other children. Elysium loves his daycare so much that he feels so connected and comfortable to have been there. He learned more than what i expected of this program . Mrs Sally taught my son how to count numbers and advanced him in what he needs to understand. Elysium is the type of student that asks questions and she is very patient with him to answer his questions multiple times and explaining to him what he is supposed to do and not. How to play with certain toys, how to sit and have meals with manners. Using calm voice to communicate with his classmates. Mrs Sally is a wonderful teacher because she treats Elysium as one of her own family members. I sometimes learn from her how to handle certain situations. Have I known this program before and would recommend this program and the teacher to anyone. Very excited and happy to have Elysium get the best of what he can learn from Mrs Sally in this short time before transitioning him when he turns 3. I know for a fact Mrs Sally will prepare my son for his next year school better than I would have known to do."*



# Children and Family Services Community Food Bank of Macomb County

## PROGRAMS

**NALC Stamp out Hunger Food Drive - May 13, 2023**

**166,758 lbs donated**

**Scouting for Hunger Food Drive - November 12, 2022**

**5,312 lbs donated**

**Pounds distributed in total:**

**2,728,638**

**Households Served**

**127,148**

*Increase of 28% percent from the previous year or 35,132 households.*



### **Catholic Charities-Senior Box Program**

With food provided from our program, the Senior Box Program ensures that seniors and those that are disabled and unable to get to a pantry receive home delivery of food on a monthly or bi weekly basis consistently.



### **Spaulding for Children (SFC)**

In partnership with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Macomb County (MCDHHS) and Michigan State University (MSU). The project is called KINDER-CARES which stands for Kinship Network Development, Empowerment and Resilience and Connection and Relationship Enhancement through Shared Parenting. Our program provides food to kinship families who are in need of food.

### **DHS Office Pantries**

In partnership with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services we stock the food pantries located within each of the 3 DHS offices located here in Macomb County. Individuals or families seeking assistance from MDHHS are able to walk away with food that same day.

### **Habitat for Humanity-Macomb County**

Here in Macomb County our program provides food to help stock the shelves of families moving into their new homes.

## PROGRAMS

### Reach and Resiliency Grant Award to expand The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Food distribution - Home Delivery and Expansion of our Mobile Distributions

- This year we partnered with MCA Transportation services to provide food to individuals and veterans who are transported to and from home. Food is placed on the vehicles and drivers deliver these food to the clients door during pick up or drop off.
- Fresh to You Mobile Expansion-During the fall and spring of 2023 we were able to expand our mobile food distributions from 4 monthly distributions to 7 monthly distributions. Partners for mobile food distribution included MCA Head Start programs at the Kennedy Center in Van Dyke Schools and My Care Health Centers in both Mount Clemens and Centerline Locations.



# BUDGET SNAPSHOT

**Federal \$31,716,528**

**State \$1,146,447**

**Local \$4,339,582**

**Private Resources \$3,205,704**

**In Kind \$6,567,950**

**Changes in fund balance \$714,770**

## **Program Services**

- Administrative Programs **\$3,564,158**

## **Children & Family Services**

- Head Start Programs \$16,548,146
- Food Programs \$6,139,334

## **Community Services**

- Action Center Programs \$16,054,799
- Housing Services \$4,903,961
- Transportation \$480,584

**Total Program Services \$47,690,981**



**Health and  
Community Services**  
Macomb Community Action