

CAP&LP

Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership

2023 Annual Report



Eliminate Poverty. Empower Families. Engage Communities.

2023 A Year in Review

As we move into 2024 and prepare to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Community Action, we reflect on our rich history serving the community. For 60 years the Community Action network has inspired a spirit of hope, helping millions of people each year change their lives and improve communities all across America.



At CAPLP we live by the **Community Action Promise** which is:

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.

At CAPLP we provide essential services to fight poverty within our primary service area of Clay and Wilkin Counties in Minnesota, but our geographic reach is much further for many of our programs. The Child Care Connections program services 27 counties in Northwest Minnesota as well as the entire State of North Dakota for Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) services to support high quality early childhood programs. Programs such as Career Connect and Flourishing Families provide services throughout the FM area.

Last year at CAPLP we provided services to **4,024 unduplicated individuals** across all of our programs and services. This includes 908 children, 477 senior citizens, and 1,450 child care providers. All of our services work together to achieve **our mission to eliminate poverty by empowering families and engaging communities.**

Our services are provided by our 4 broad Divisions which are Child Care Connections, Economic Empowerment, Head Start and Housing. In 2023 our team has grown and expanded and we now have an average of 120 employees on our team at CAPLP. We continue to provide services through our main administrative office located at 891 Belsly Blvd as well as our satellite offices in Breckenridge, Dilworth and at the Family Service Center in North Moorhead.

Our work is tied to our 5-year Strategic Plan and we continue to work to achieve our broad agency-wide goals, which are:

- Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
- Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.
- People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities.
- Agency capacity supports high achievement.
- Organizational culture built on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Employees continue to be engaged and active in shaping the future of CAPLP and understand their impact on the Community Action movement.

Looking toward the future, our team is excited to continue to grow and expand programs and services to meet the unique needs of the communities we serve. Our team lives our vision each day by being a strong, responsive organization that provides hope and life changing opportunities for people to help themselves and each other.

Thank you to each and every person that contributes their time, talents, and treasures to help us on our journey to move families from barely surviving to fully thriving! You are truly **helping people and changing lives.**

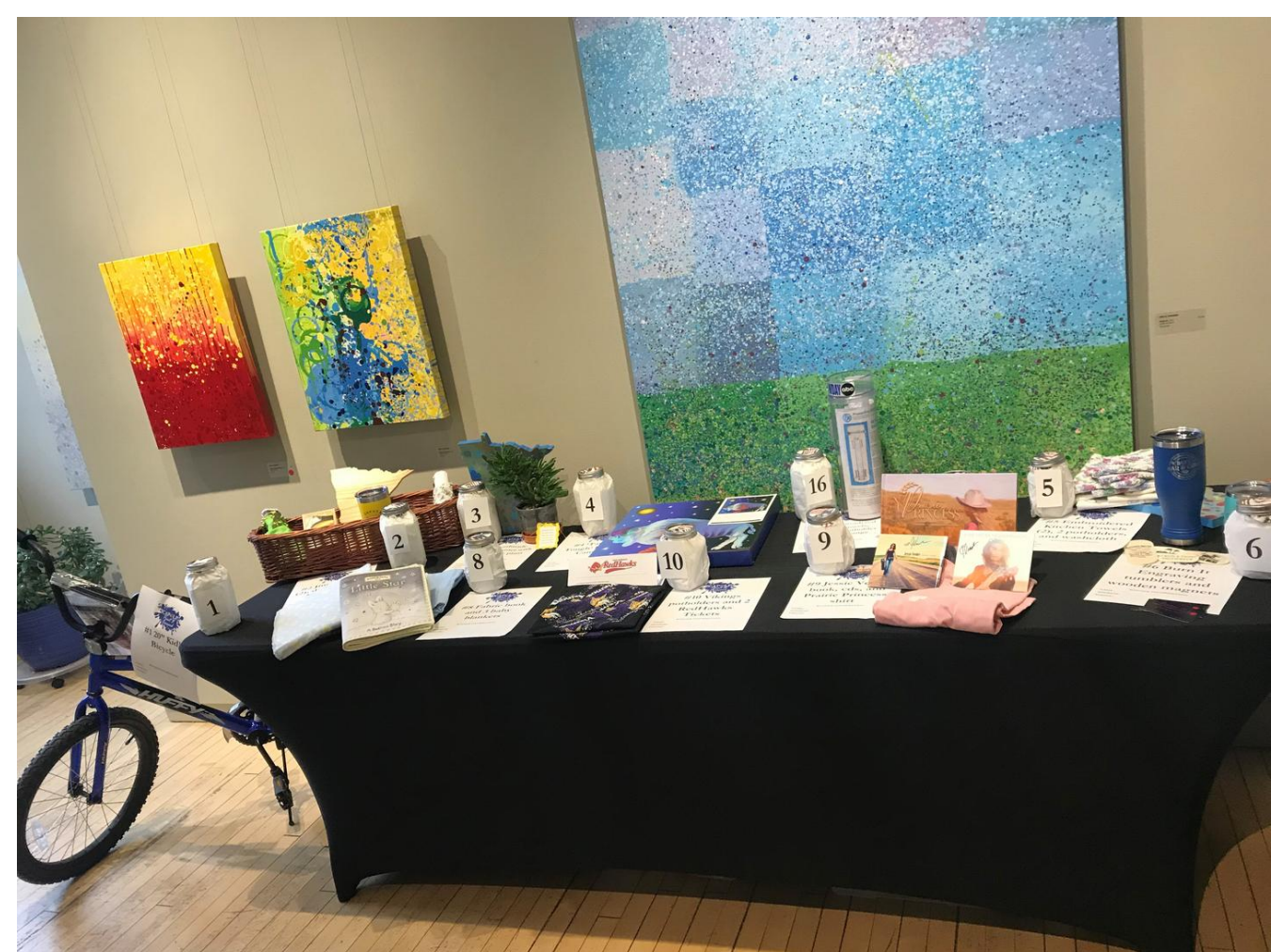
Lori Schwartz, Executive Director

Tiffany Ross, Board Chair

Paint it Forward "Friend-Raising" Event



In 2023 CAPLP brought back one of our all-time favorite "Friend-Raising" events "Paint it Forward." We hosted the event at the Rourke Art Museum and featured a bucket raffle, magnet pull, beer & wine pull and paddle game to raise awareness and support for the CAPLP mission. The event included beautiful artwork created by local artists, along with incredible handmade items donated by CAPLP supporters. It was a fun evening of art, food, games, and prizes to help families defeat poverty!



We are delighted to be bringing back this special event again in 2024! Mark your calendars and plan to join us for the Paint it Forward "Friend-Raising" Event on Thursday, June 6th from 6-8. Funds raised from this event helps us fill the gaps to assist families with overcoming their barriers to success. Attendees will enjoy appetizers while they admire artwork and crafts. All donations are tax deductible and will be used to support local families overcome their unique obstacles to living their best lives.

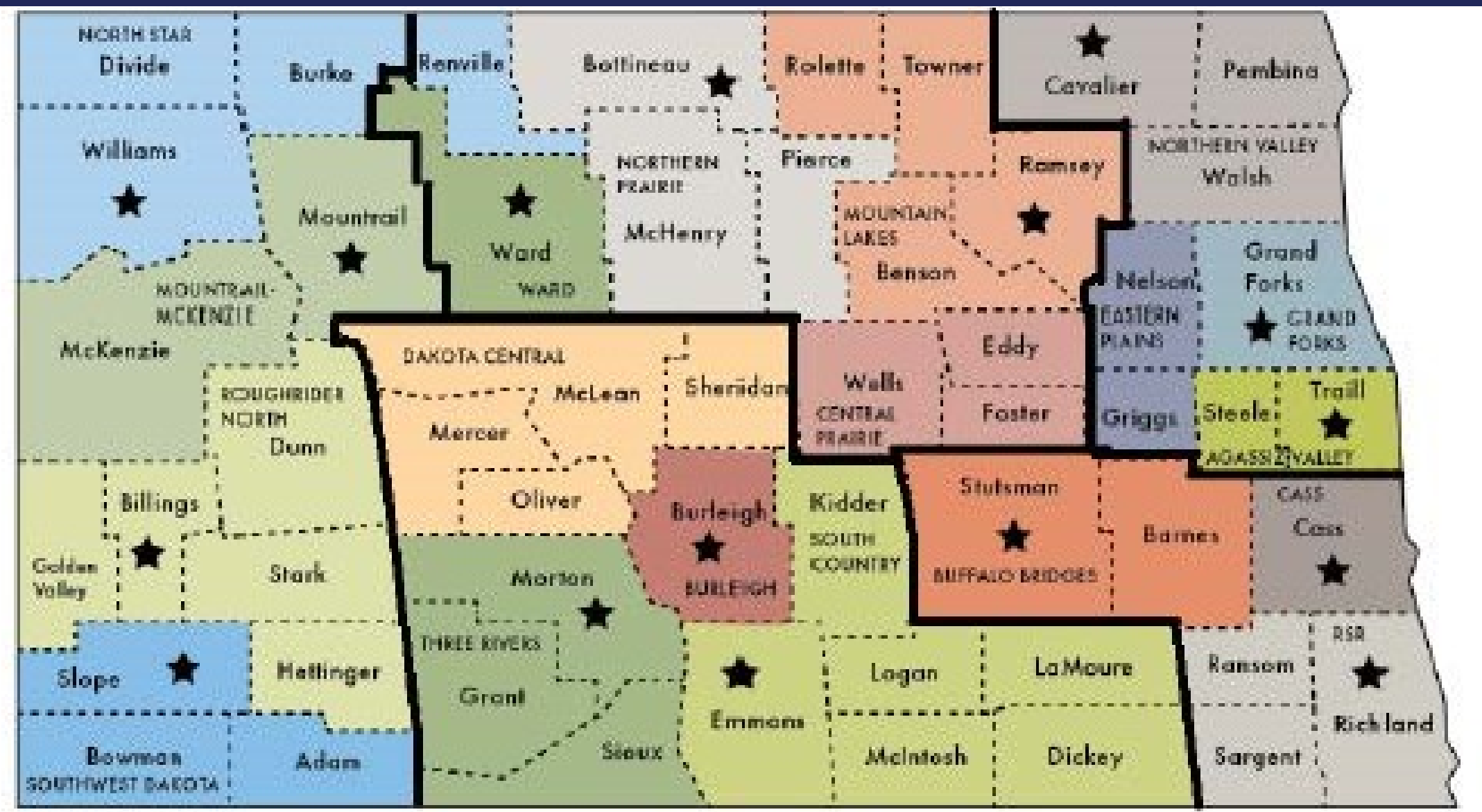
Thursday, June 6th 2024
6:00-8:00 pm
Rourke Art Gallery
<https://www.eventbrite.com>



Click on the QR Code to get your tickets today and save! Early Bird tickets thru May 30th!

Child Care Connections Division Highlight

Child Care Connections has experienced rapid growth as a division, and in addition to 21 counties in Northwest Minnesota we also serve the entire State of North Dakota. In the past year we have been able to add 5 positions across the State of North Dakota due to increased funding to meet the high demand for services. We have added 2 additional assessors, 2 additional coaches, and 1 Navigator, plus a part-time grants purchaser. ND Team members are located in each of the regions of the state.



ND Team Members are located in each region of the state

In addition to the expansion of services in North Dakota, the Early Learning Scholarship Program (ELS) has expanded to better meet the needs for affordable child care in our region. ELS is a program of the MN Department of Education that provides financial support for children to attend a high-quality early learning or child care program as rated through Parent Aware. Scholarships of up to \$15,000 are available for children who are under the age of 5 and whose family meets income requirements. CAPLP administers the Early Learning Scholarships program for families that reside in the following counties: Clay, Becker, Otter Tail, Grant, Douglas, Traverse, Stevens, Pope, and Wilkin. This current fiscal year CAPLP received additional funds for scholarships. With this increased funding, we were able to add 2 additional full-time staff whose main focus is to do outreach in the 9 counties we serve. Also, with the increased funding we have been able to eliminate our waitlist and award eligible children a scholarship when their application is submitted. Thus far, we have awarded scholarships to 151 new children. We currently have 353 active scholarships and expect that number to continue growing.

The CAPLP ELS team is also excited to be piloting a new online application option. The Early Learning Scholarship Hub was created to simplify and enhance a family's experience in applying for an Early Learning Scholarship. The website allows new applicants to save their progress when filling out the application, view the status of their application at any time, and communicate via email if any action is required.



CCC Child Care Provider

To find out more and apply for Early Learning Scholarships visit our website at www.caplp.org or click on this QR Code:



CCC Team at Kidsfest

Child Care Connections provides a wide array of services to help support high-quality, affordable child care in our region:



Grants provided to Early Childhood programs

Provided Child Care Subsidies for 361 Children



Trainings provided for early childhood professionals

Over 200

Economic Empowerment Division Highlight

The Economic Empowerment Division supports individuals and families in their goals of achieving employment, independence and economic security. Several of our Economic Empowerment programs have expanded this year to meet increasing demand for services in our community. We now offer tax preparation services year round with a full time Tax-Site Coordinator, and our Refugee Resettlement program has expanded from one full-time coach to three! The Refugee Resettlement program has served households from 8 different countries that speak 9 languages and have seen an influx in refugees in our community from the Ukraine and Haiti. Our program works with New American families and individuals to help them overcome challenges so they can be stable and successful members of our community.



Tax Preparation Services



Edith in her new Apartment!

One of our Refugee Resettlement clients, Edith, was experiencing homelessness when she came to CAPLP, and expressed interest in completing her CNA. She had previous experience working with persons with disabilities and as a teacher. After completing her CNA in May of 2023, Edith got a job at Eventide but needed to have at least 30 days of income before she could rent an apartment. With no credit history, and very short work history in the US, it was difficult to find housing, but she was able to secure an apartment that she absolutely loves because it has a balcony for her plants. Edith has made strong connections with her church and fellow members of her CNA cohort. From time to time, she talks about perhaps going to M State and completing her LPN training, but for now she is happy to “live a peaceful, calm, happy life” and is focused on “savoring this moment.”

Another service we would like to highlight is our Rural Routes bus service. The Rural Routes bus provides door-to-door transportation to residents of Clay County focusing on providing affordable transportation for seniors to maintain their independent living situation. The bus is handicap-accessible and will pick seniors up at their homes and transport them to their destination of choice. Last year we provided 212 rides on the Rural Routes bus! The bus will provide transportation to residents of Clay County including:

- Barnesville
- Hawley
- Ulen & Hitterdal
- Felton, Georgetown & Glyndon



The Rural Routes Bus

Call today to learn more about this service (218) 512-1500

Economic Empowerment programs provide a wide array of services that support financial independence.

814



Individuals assisted through our Vita Tax Clinic

Provided Homeownership services to



23

Households



43

People received training to secure employment

Head Start Division Highlight



Pilot Eric Visiting the Classroom



Guest Reader Becki Johnson

At CAPLP we provide early childhood programming through our Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. Head Start is a state and federally funded early childhood program for expectant mothers and children ages birth-5 years old. The program offers comprehensive services in a nurturing environment that supports the healthy growth and development of each child in the context of family, culture and community. Programming is for families that are up to 100% of the Federal Poverty Guideline or who meet automatic qualifiers including children that are in foster care, experiencing homelessness or receiving public assistance.

Last year, CAPLP's Head Start Program developed a partnership with the Great Plains Food Bank called Kitchen Coalition. In January, CAPLP Head Start started receiving prepared meals each Thursday to distribute to families. Each meal serves a family of four and families receive two meals weekly. The meals come directly from Brew Catering, a small business caterer working with the Great Plains Food Bank to use food within the local food system to prepare the meals. Families love trying the new foods and flavors such as lemon turmeric soup with chickpeas, chicken pumpkin pasta, and chili. One family shared that the preschool child chose the soup from the meal service over pizza! CAPLP is grateful for this new partnership opportunity!

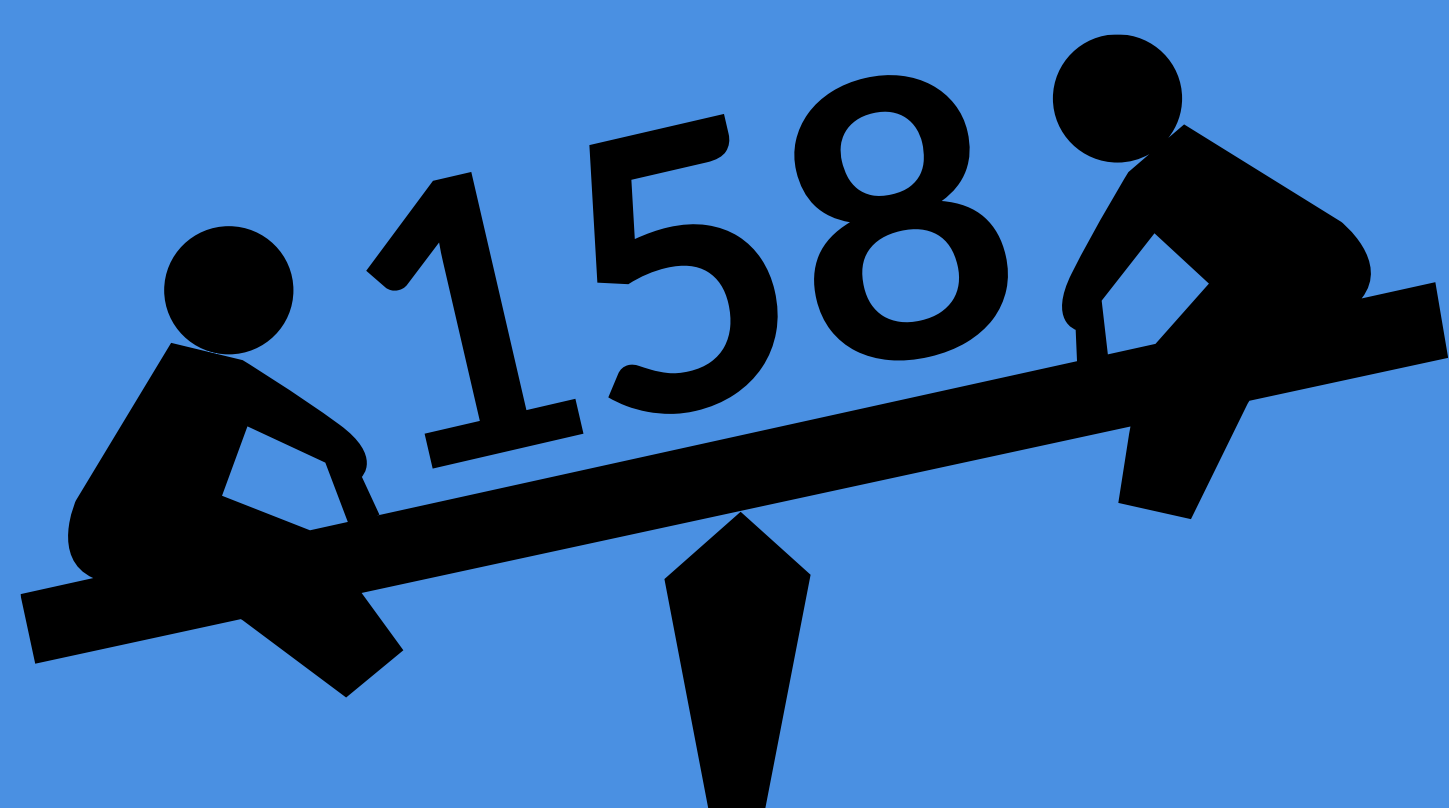


Head Start family with their Kitchen Coalition meal!

**"OMG thank you for those dinners they are amazing!
The boys ate it up tonight for dinner!"**



Head Start provides comprehensive services to families with children under the age of 5 designed to teach children and support families as they get their children ready for Kindergarten.



Children received Head Start services in the classroom.

Over 90%
of Head Start children are up to date on health requirements



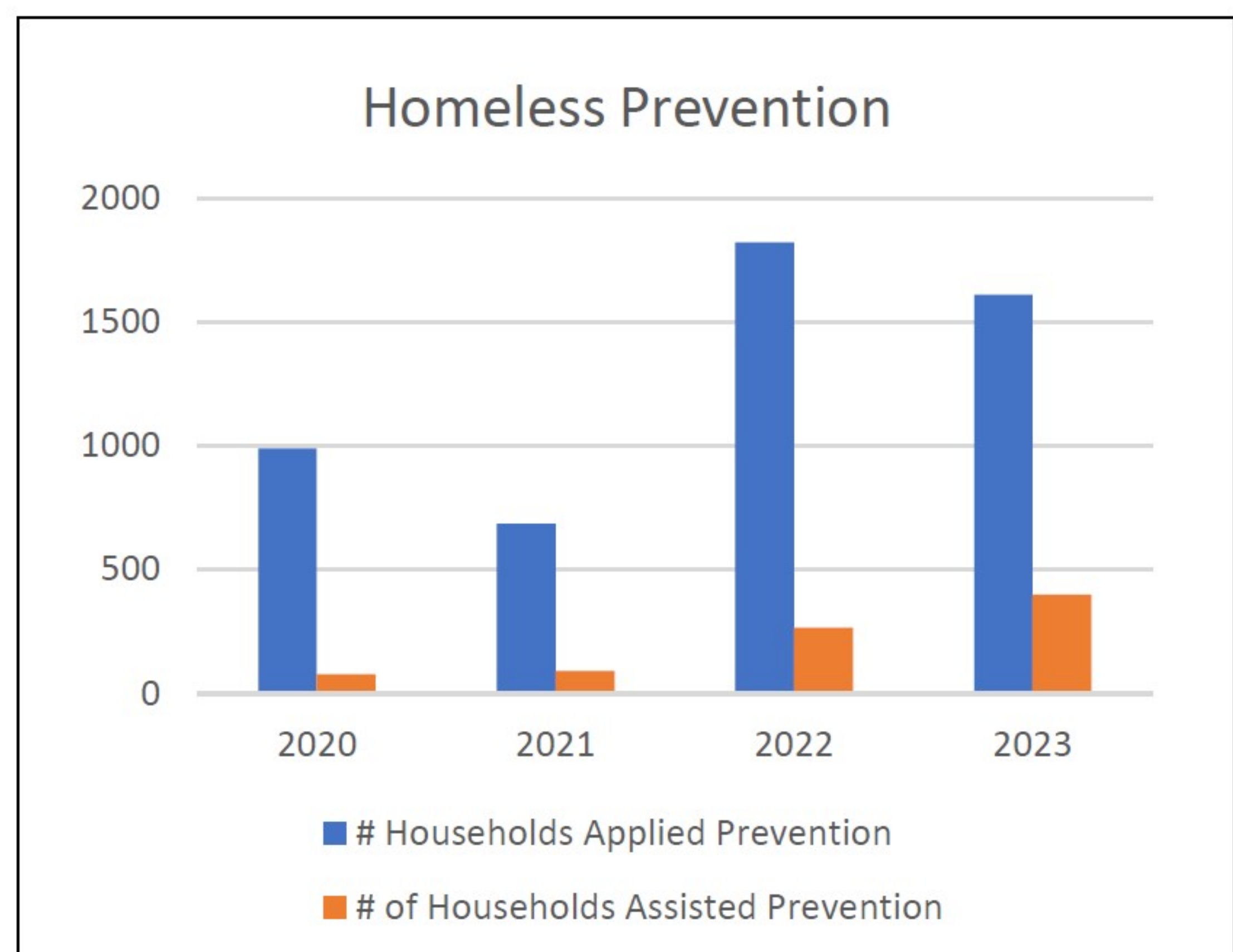
121
Children age 0-3 received Early Head Start services with home visitors.

Housing Division Highlight

CAPLP's Housing Division provides services to help people experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless to secure safe, affordable housing. We provide financial assistance as well as supportive services to ensure that households are stabilized in their housing and able to meet their basic needs. Our team works as part of the Coordinated Entry system to ensure streamlined access to services across the community and we also provide outreach in the community to meet people where they are at and connect them to services. Last year we also formalized our partnership with the African American Development Association (AADA) to serve as a sub-grantee to provide housing assistance to New Americans. Last year we were able to assist over 1,000 people in securing safe, affordable housing through our housing programs, and assisted almost 500 people to prevent falling into homelessness. The need continues to be high in our community however, with our community only able to assist about 25% of those in need each year.

If you or someone you know needs assistance please call FirstLink at any time of day or night to be screened for assistance.

211 or 701-235-7335



**July, 2022 marked the beginning of 211 community-wide coordinated intake*

CAPLP Housing services are guided by the Consumer Action Board, which is a group of people who want to improve the way our community responds to the needs of people experiencing homelessness AND they are people who have all experienced some type of unstable housing at some point in their life. They use what they have learned from their life experiences and come up with solutions to end homelessness in the community. They inform agencies, policy makers, and legislators on ways to work with people experiencing homelessness. If you are interested in joining the CAPLP Consumer Advisory Board, reach out to Sierra at sierram@caplp.org or 218-512-1563.

CAPLP Housing Programs help people who are experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed to obtain & maintain safe, affordable housing.

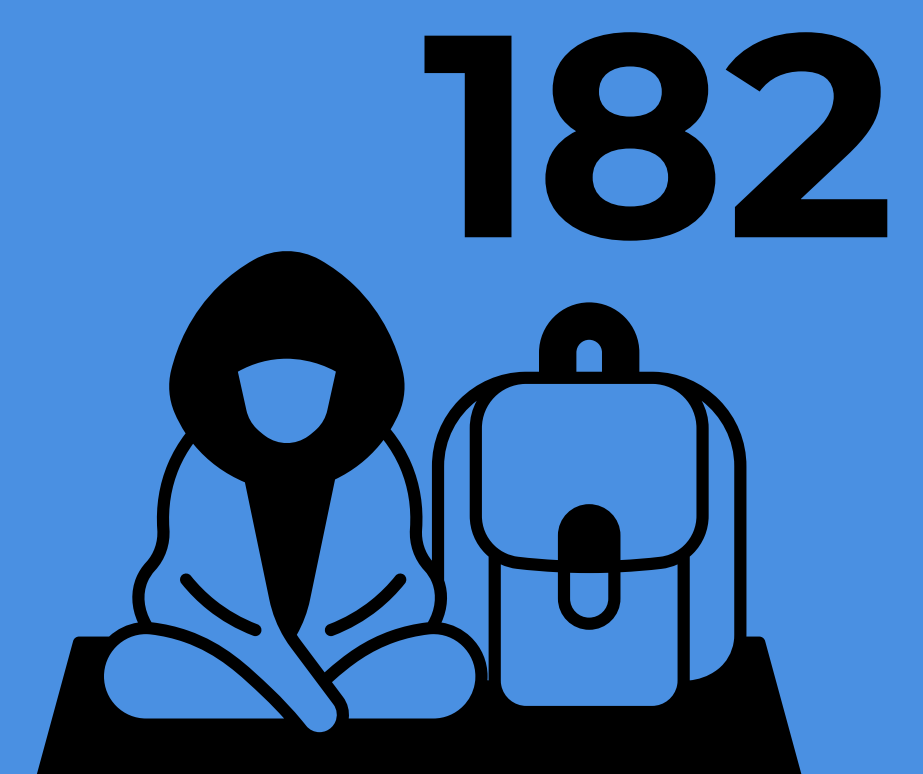


1,048

People obtained safe & affordable housing



Avoided homelessness



People received Outreach services

Wilkin County Office Highlight



Wilkin County Office Building

CAPLP has a satellite office located in Breckenridge, MN that provides a wide array of services. We have two full-time advocates based in this office, Angie Cleveland and Chelsea Reiff. Angie and Chelsea provide assistance with housing, health insurance, food support, tax assistance, and more! CAPLP was able to build this building on a vacant lot in 2020 and we are so glad to have a home for our team to provide services. We are delighted to be part of the community.

Wilkin County Office: 311 5th Street S Breckenridge, MN

Our team in Breckenridge works collaboratively in the community to address the unique needs of the rural community, including creative solutions to food insecurity and basic needs assistance. Last year, we collaborated with North Country Food Bank to coordinate community food drops across Wilkin County to ensure that people have access to nutritious food.



Wilkin County Food Drop 2023



CAPLP also works closely with many other community partners including the Wilkin County Children's Collaborative and Wilkin County Family Services. Last year through this partnership we were able to provide 67 pairs of shoes for kids across Wilkin County and a pair of Bombas socks with every pair of shoes. Through this project we were able to provide shoes to those in need in Breckenridge, Rothsay and Campbell schools. Thank you for your partnership in this important work!



Wilkin County Team members Chelea Reiff and Angie Cleveland Delivering Shoes

Awards & Recognitions



2023 Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) Graduate: *Sierra Mcfaline*

The Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) credential recognizes individuals who have demonstrated knowledge and application of the core competencies required to effectively carry out the vision, mission, purpose, and values of the Community Action movement. CAPLP is proud to have 10 Certified Community Action Professionals (CCAPs) on our team! Current CCAP's include: Lori Schwartz, Colleen Murray, Becki Johnson, Kristin Phillips, Patty Lopez, Emma Schmit, Robin Christianson, Maria Steen, Kelli Rohrer and our most recent graduate in 2023, Sierra McFaline. Congratulations Sierra!

2023 Certified Community Action Leadership Institute (CALI) Graduate: *Jennifer Michel*



The Community Action Leadership Institute brings together a small group of Community Action employees and provides them an opportunity to reflect on the purpose of their work, strengthen their leadership capacity, and gain a better understanding of how they might apply their best self in all aspects of their life. It is designed to equip staff with additional skills positioning them to maximize growth opportunities within the Community Action Network. CAPLP's 2023 CALI Graduate is Jennifer Michel. Congratulations Jennifer!

Awards & Recognitions

MinnCAP Promising Practices Award



CAPLP Team Receiving Promising Practices Award

CAPLP's Child Care Connections Division recently received the MinnCAP Promising Practices award for their work with the Shared Service Alliance. The Shared Service Alliance employs and schedules qualified, subsidized family child care substitutes to child care providers throughout Region 4. The goals of this project are to increase child care provider monetary and time savings, elevate provider sense of support, contribute to improved provider mental health through time off, and support overall recruitment and retention efforts for the field of family child care. The initial pilot project was launched in January 2023 in Becker County, which has experienced a critical child care shortage in recent years. Having access to affordable, qualified child care substitutes gives family child care providers access to take time off without closing their doors to families.

The Promising Practice award in Community Action is given to any program, project, process, procedure, or strategy which has produced a positive measurable change in one or more of the agency's core operations and engages the community in strategies towards the elimination of poverty. Congratulations to the entire Child Care Connections team on your efforts to implement this pilot project and for receiving the Promising Practices Award!

Head Start Hero

Last year CAPLP nominated Jasabel to the Minnesota Head Start Association Head Start Hero Award. Jasabel started out as a kid in our program and now she has been a Head Start parent for more than 5 years.

Jasabel is committed to creating a better life for her four children. She constantly advocates for her children's needs and also works on her educational goals for herself, knowing it will benefit her kids. Initially, Jasabel never envisioned a career in the medical field. When her child's Head Start teacher asked if she was interested in our Career Connect program, she decided to give our Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) class a try.

The class sparked a passion for the medical field and Jasabel is currently caring for older adults at a local nursing home. She is also enrolled at Minnesota State Community and Technical College - M State in the nursing program. She is working towards becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) with the end goal of becoming a Nurse Practitioner. We are so proud of our Head Start Hero Award Winner - Jasabel!



2023 Head Start Hero Jasabel

Awards & Recognitions

2023 Dennis Heitkamp Leadership Award Winner: *Nicole Flick*



The 2023 Dennis Heitkamp Leadership Award was awarded to Nicole Flick who serves as a board member for CAPLP and has worked tirelessly to advocate for early childhood in our community. Dennis R. Heitkamp was the Executive Director of CAPLP for 31 years, and he was instrumental in promoting and supporting self-sufficiency efforts throughout the area. He was an extraordinary leader with a reputation for integrity and a rare commitment to service. Nicole was nominated for her work as a true early childhood advocacy leader over the past few years, and we are so proud to have her voice at the tables she sits at. CAPLP applauds Nicole for lifting up her voice to ensure that child care professionals and the children she cares for are not forgotten!



2023 Volunteer Extraordinaire Award Winner: *Fix it Forward*

“The activity of volunteering is not an end in itself; rather, it is an activity that has some positive outcome for the community. The traditional view of volunteering assumes volunteering is motivated by pure altruism. The more contemporary view is that people engage in volunteer work to achieve a positive result for both the community and themselves.” The 2023 Volunteer Extraordinaire Award was awarded to Fix it Forward for their work in our community to help people secure reliable transportation. Fix it Forward has provided over 400 vehicles to those who did not have transportation and repaired over 800 vehicles to ensure people have access to reliable transportation. Thank you to the team at Fix it Forward for helping address the barrier of transportation in our community!

2023 Service Award Recipients



Cassie Olson



Christina Zimmerman



Dorene Herring

5
Years



Kari Byrnes



Katie Sonsthagen



Marianne Smith



Shanda Dudden

10
Years



Ashley Gonzalez



Beth Bates



Diane Kubischta



Tiffany McKinnon



Roxie Moyer

25
Years

2023 Volunteers



LINDA SANDE

Linda Sande was born in Williston and moved to West Fargo as a second grader. She graduated from the Sheyenne River Academy and attended Union College (NE). Linda worked as a receptionist and bookkeeper before joining DeLendrecie's/Herberger's where she worked for 13 years. She was office manager for several businesses until her retirement in 2011. She embarked on volunteer career, delivering Meals-on-Wheels for eleven years and then learned about helping other people with their taxes. Linda finds numbers "challenging and thrilling" so she completed an IRS certification program and has provided assistance to people with their taxes through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program of the Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership. Her work has helped countless taxpayers get a free and accurate tax return which helps keep many families above the poverty line. Linda appreciates that she and the others helping with taxes work as a team and she is often a mentor for other VITA volunteers. Her mother was influential in Linda's life as a living example of what she strives to be. Linda says, "I'd be a kid all over again if she could be my mom." She claims her work hasn't been exciting but it's been fulfilling.

Nominated by Deanne Schwehr

Linda Sande, was nominated by CAPLP for the 2023 Senior of the Year award. Linda is a regular volunteer at the CAPLP VITA Tax Site. Thank you Linda for your years of service as a volunteer!



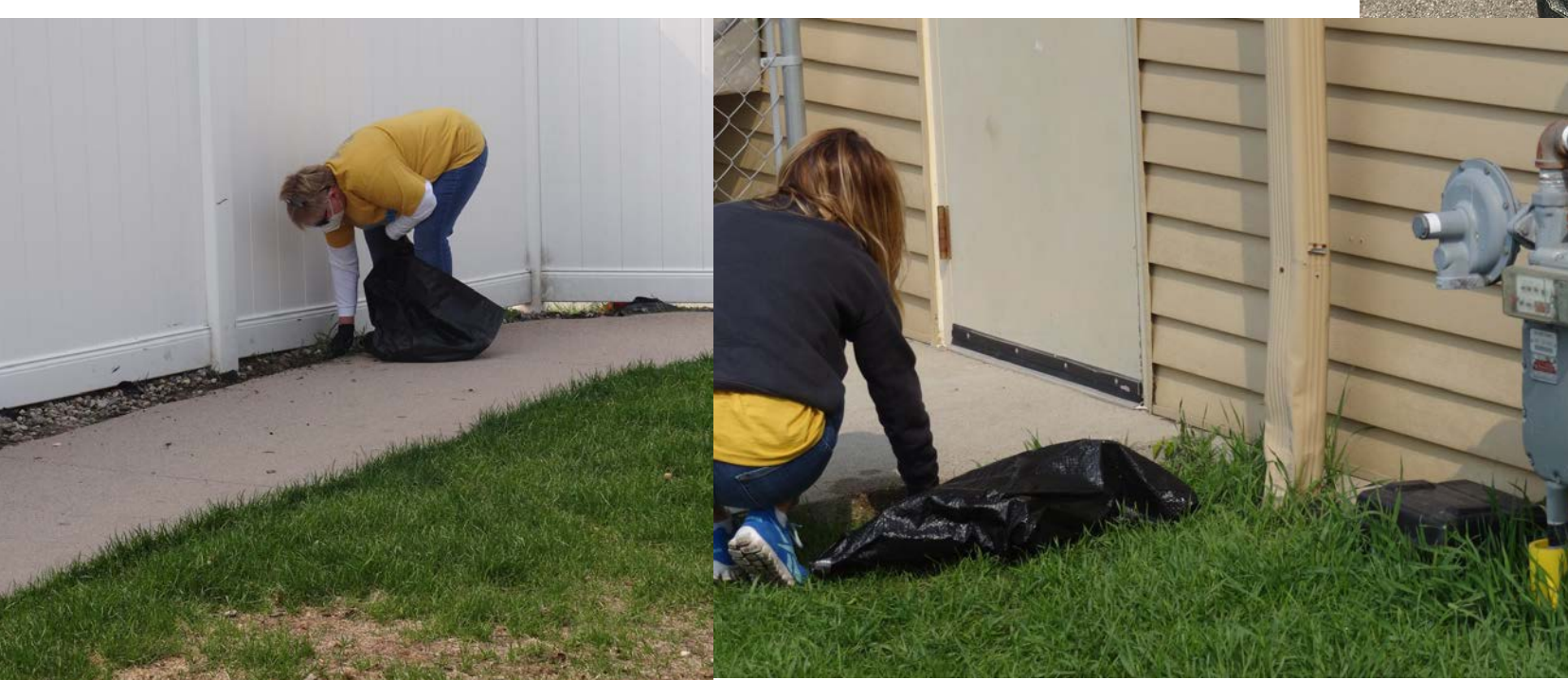
United Way Day of Action volunteers assisted with our spring cleanup!



Volunteers deliver NAPS Food Boxes to Seniors across Clay County every month!



Tax Site Volunteers



Head Start Bike Giveaway



Our work is not possible without the help of our incredible volunteers!

Last Year Volunteers

Provided
29,967
HOURS
of service



Scan above to sign up for current volunteer opportunities

Volunteers Delivered



CAPLP Advocacy



U.S. Senator Tina Smith's Post

 U.S. Senator Tina Smith  · Follow
August 15 at 7:21 PM · 

Childcare enables parents go to work and grow our economy while their kids are safe and cared for – but many communities lack access to affordable options.

I visited Moorhead to hear from childcare professionals directly – because the best ideas come from those on the ground.



2023 Photos



CCAP Recertification



Wilkin County Food Drop



CAPLP Annual Dinner 2023



CCC Tackles the Ropes



MLTC Conference



CAPLP Costume Contest



Feed My Starving Children



CAPLP Wellness Team tackles the Essentia Health 5K!



Soup Cookoff



Clay County Kids Fest

CAPLP Leadership

Board of Directors



Tiffany Ross, Board Chair
Paul Krabbenhoft, Vice Chair
Cyndee Thormodson, Treasurer
Eloisa Pigeon, Secretary
Cani Aden
Jenny Mongeau
Jonathan Green

LaRae Kuhfal
LeRoy Turner
Loren Ingebretsen
Michelle Werner
Nicole Flick
Renee Charon
Rachel Stone
Rob Kupec

Head Start Policy Council Representative: Helan Khalil

Leadership Team



Lori Schwartz, Executive Director
Colleen Murray, Operations Director
Cassie Christianson, Finance Director
Stephanie Thompson, Human Resources Director
Becki Johnson, Learning & Development Director
Emma Schmit, Housing Director
Kristin Phillips, Head Start Director
Robin Christianson, Economic Empowerment Director
Maria Steen, Child Care Connections Director

Financial Report

LAKES & PRAIRIES CAP FINANCIAL REPORT FY 2022-2023

REVENUES	2022-2023	2021-2022
Grant Revenue		
Federal	\$ 7,262,960	\$ 6,248,345
State of Minnesota	3,566,512	3,396,996
State of North Dakota	-	25,573
Local Revenue	130,959	202,209
Foundations	375,750	633,500
Contributions	133,476	258,273
Charges for Services	72,497	133,973
Interest	3,994	503
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Fixed Assets	-	(5,336)
Total Revenues	\$ 11,546,148	\$ 10,894,036
EXPENSES		
Program Services		
Head Start	3,424,428	3,346,372
Child Care Connections	3,581,693	2,548,748
Economic Empowerment	931,021	1,145,477
Housing	2,490,651	2,535,855
Supporting Services		
Management and General	1,222,378	1,036,022
Fundraising	59,469	65,645
Total Expenses	\$ 11,709,640	\$ 10,678,119
Change in Net Assets	(163,492)	215,917
NET ASSETS BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 2,095,450	\$ 1,879,533
NET ASSETS END OF YEAR	\$ 1,931,958	\$ 2,095,450

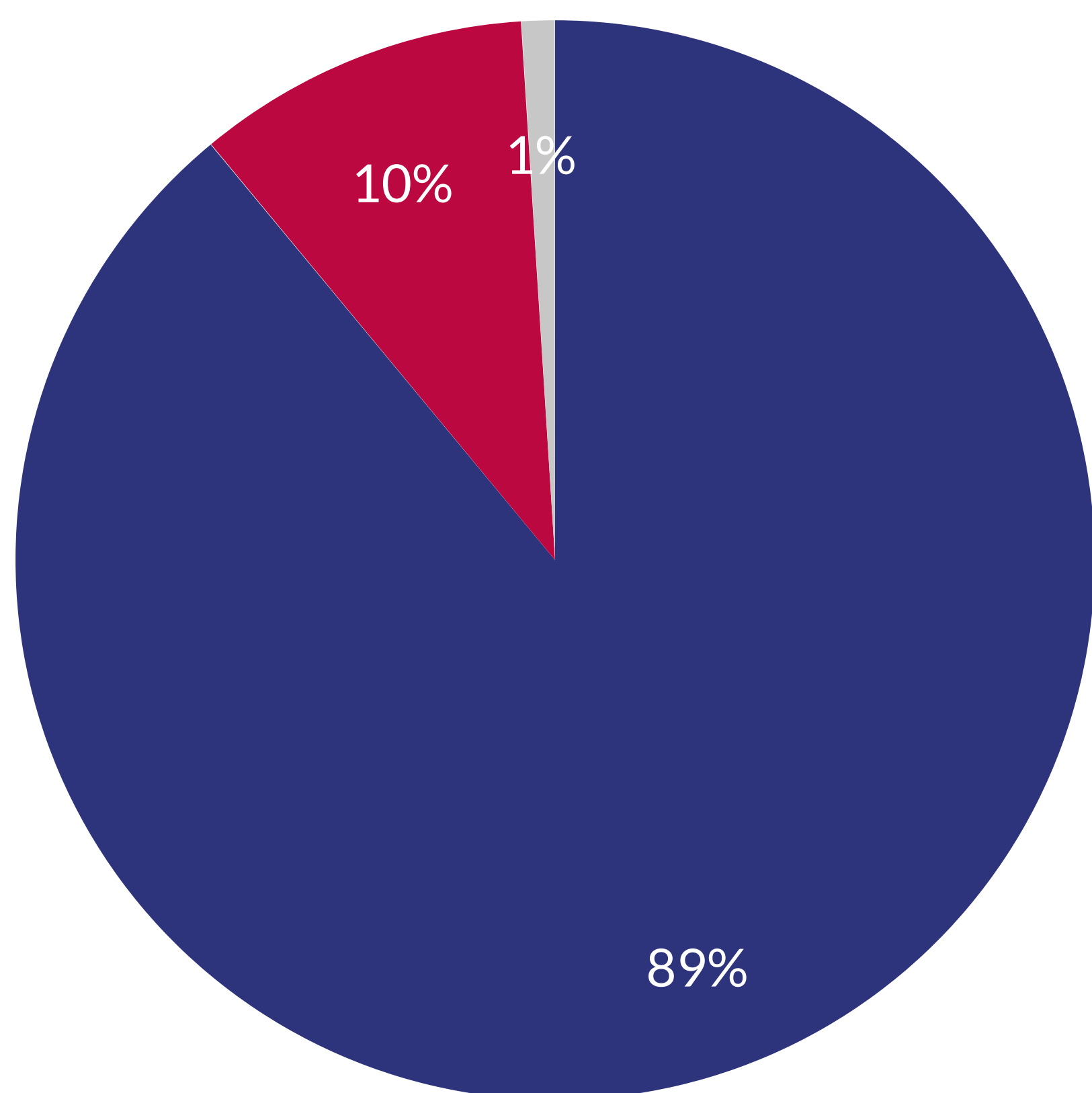
ASSETS	2022-2023	2021-2022
Cash and Cash Equivalents	871,853	1,004,916
Restricted Cash - Unemployment Trust	25,519	96,801
Investments	139,448	87,091
Grants Receivable	1,361,413	1,443,952
Other Receivables	15,675	28,604
Prepaid Expenses	81,529	75,888
Property & Equipment, Net	2,438,276	2,566,407
Certificates of deposit	87,541	87,541
Right-of-use assets - operation leases ⁺	1,438,101	-
Right-of-use assets - financing leases ⁺	11,919	-
Total Assets	\$ 6,471,274	\$ 5,391,200

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Current Maturities of Facility Loan	55,393	53,096
Current portion of operating leases ⁺	196,192	-
Current portion of financing leases ⁺	4,433	-
Accounts Payable	33,063	46,651
Accrued Payroll, Taxes & Related Benefit	430,791	372,660
Accrued Compensated Absences	345,961	377,843
Refundable Advances	237,654	403,423
Total Current Liabilities	1,303,487	1,253,673
Long-Term Liabilities		
Facility Loan, Less Current Maturities	1,986,434	2,042,077
Lease liabilities - operating ⁺	1,241,909	-
Lease liabilities - financing ⁺	7,486	-
Total Liabilities	\$ 4,539,316	\$ 3,295,750

Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions	1,225,572	1,345,488
With Donor Restrictions	706,386	749,962
Total Net Assets	\$ 1,931,958	\$ 2,095,450
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 6,471,274	\$ 5,391,200

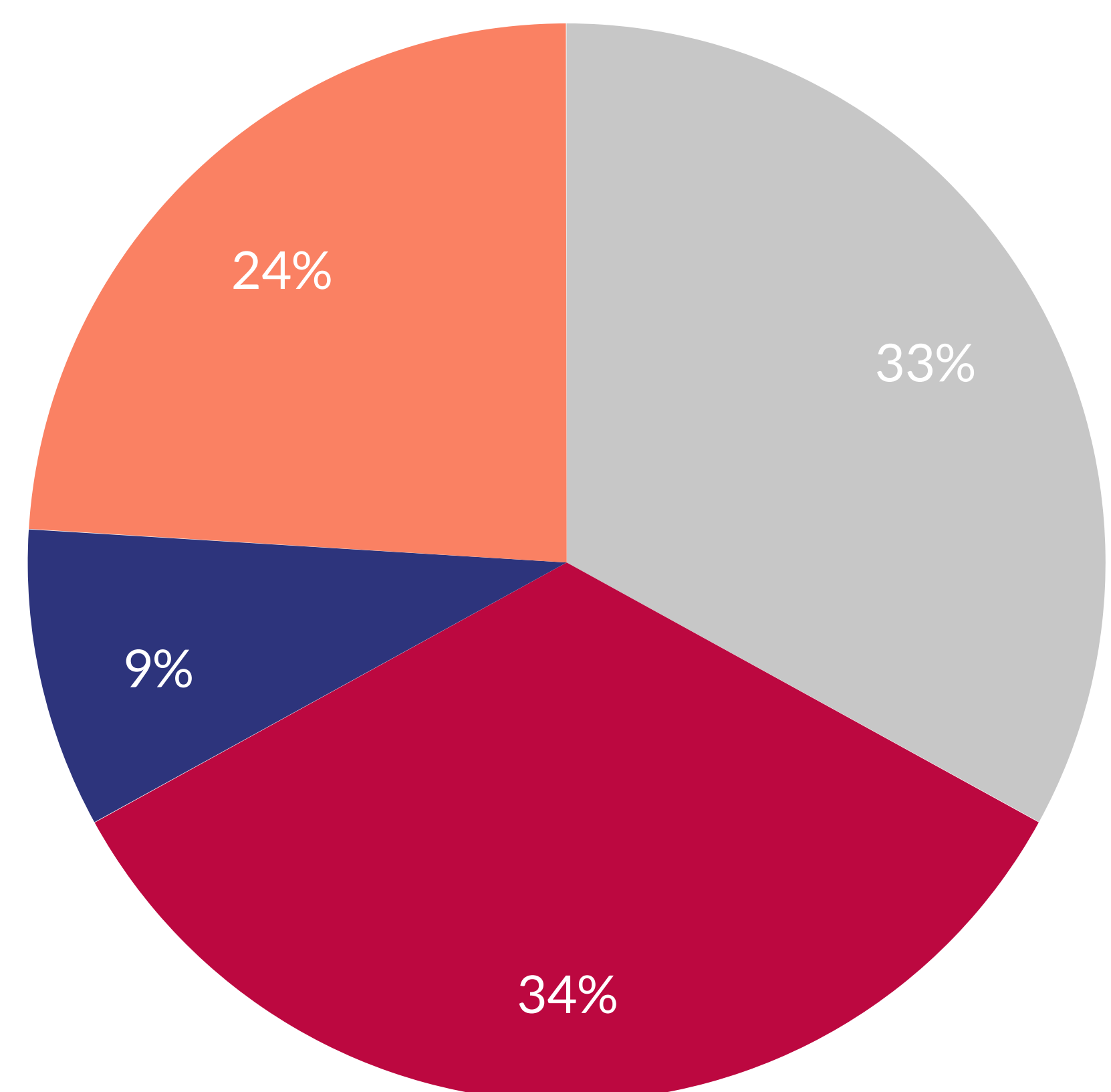
⁺ Effective 3/1/2022 CAPLP adopted new lease accounting guidance in ASU No. 2016-02, Lease (Topic 842)

2022-2023 Functional Expenses



■ Program Expenses ■ Management & General Expenses
■ Fundraising Expenses

2022-2023 Program Expenses



■ Head Start ■ Child Care Connections
■ Economic Empowerment ■ Housing

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CONTACT US



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