The graphic features the ACAP logo, which consists of the letters 'ACAP' in a bold, green, sans-serif font inside a white circle with a green border. Below the logo, the text 'Aroostook County Action Program' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. To the right of the logo, the year '2024' is written in a large, stylized, green font. Below the year, the words 'IMPACT REPORT' are written in a large, black, sans-serif font.

ACAP 2024 IMPACT REPORT

Aroostook County
Action Program



Norman L. Fournier Place Official Opening and Dedication August 5, 2024



Dear Friends,

Celebration, Challenge, and Change—three words that capture our shared year of service to the northern Maine community.

Celebration: We have much to be grateful for this year. Most notably, the opening of the Norman L. Fournier Place, where our first residents have moved in, demonstrates our commitment to community support. As of this writing, 15 individuals, previously experiencing chronic homelessness, now have a safe and warm place to call home, along with essential support services provided on-site by the Hope & Prosperity Resource Center. We also shared in the path of totality during the Great American Solar Eclipse and commemorated the 60th Anniversary of Community Action in America. Most importantly, we celebrated our dedicated team—heroes who tirelessly work to help families and individuals achieve greater economic and social mobility every day.

Challenge: This year has also brought significant challenges. A pressing issue remains the struggle many community members face as resources and support services are increasingly strained. The high cost of living has made it nearly impossible for many low- and moderate-income households in Aroostook County to make ends meet. Despite being asked to do more with less ourselves, the ACAP team remains steadfast in our commitment to making life better for all the residents and communities we serve.

Change: Change is the only constant in life, and our work in Community Action is fundamentally about responding to the evolving needs of those we serve. We continuously adapt our strategies and focus areas to meet these challenges and celebrate our successes. This adaptability relies heavily on partnership and collaboration. We are incredibly grateful to our many partners who stand shoulder to shoulder with us, helping to drive positive change. Together, we bring about the Change to help our community overcome Challenge and Celebrate meaningful success.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.

With gratitude,

Trudy Gorneault
ACAP Board Chairperson

Jason Parent
Executive Director/CEO



Norman L. Fournier Place Officially Opens

A dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony for a first-of-its-kind supportive housing facility in northern Maine was held on Monday, August 5, 2024, at 1 Edgemont Drive in Presque Isle.

Norman L. Fournier Place, a project of Aroostook County Action Program, opened its doors to the first tenants in September. The region has widely recognized the need for additional affordable housing, and ACAP has identified supportive housing as an ongoing need in the community.

The Agency has been working for the better part of the last four years to convert the existing building at 1 Edgemont Drive in Presque Isle into 13 one-bedroom and studio apartments to assist individuals who are experiencing homelessness. ACAP's efforts are centered on securing housing to help with Aroostook County's shortage of affordable housing and to assist people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity achieve housing stability. The supportive housing units will allow residents to stay in the apartment building with long-term leases as they work with ACAP staff towards successful independent living.

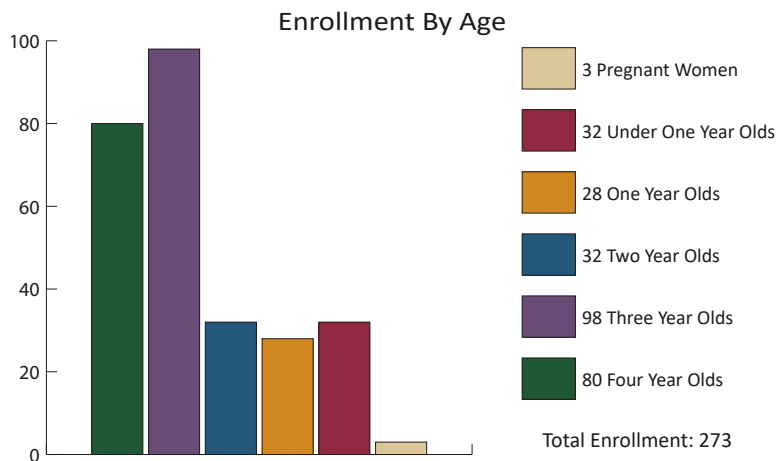
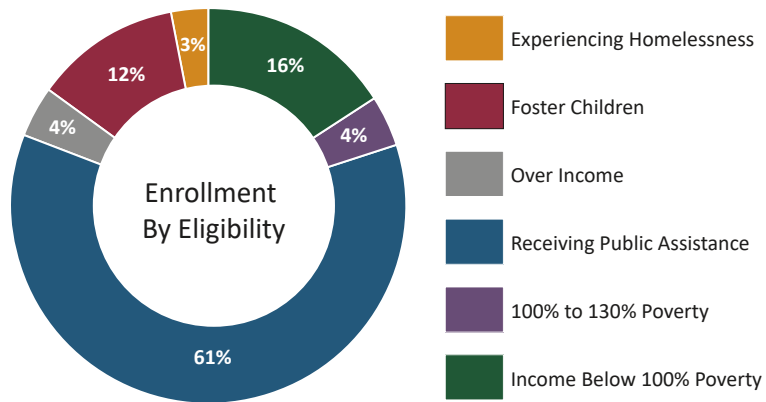
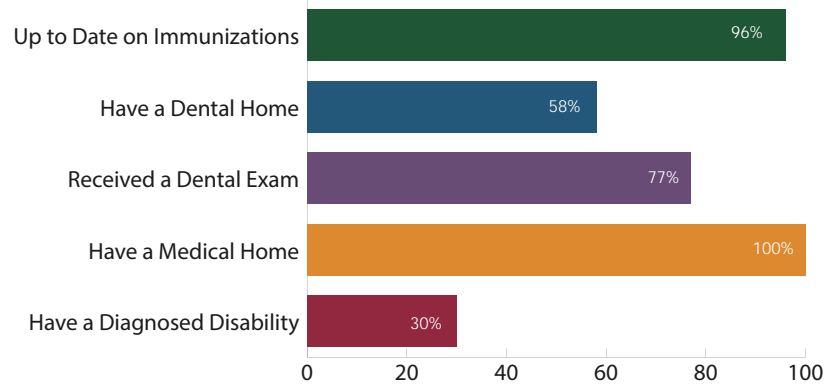
The building is dedicated in honor of a gentleman who committed himself to making life better for people across Aroostook County and the State of Maine. The epitome of a good and faithful public servant, Norman L. Fournier, a lifelong resident of Wallagrass, Maine, devoted husband and father, Veteran, scholar, elected official, community leader, volunteer, and champion of all people created a lasting legacy of outstanding service recognized by Aroostook County Action Program and the people of northern Maine.

Norman L. Fournier Place, and more importantly the purpose it serves, is a testament to its namesake's commitment to community and to his fellow citizens. As the Executive Director to lead a newly merged ACAP from 1974 to 1988, Norman L. Fournier's dedication and persistence provided not only the agency with steadfast leadership, but helped to drive economic and social mobility of tens of thousands of residents across the largest county east of the Mississippi River.



Nurturing Futures: Early Care and Education for Children and their Families

Head Start Programs Children's Health and Disability Services



ACAP's GroMoreGood project, made possible through the GroMoreGood Grassroots Grant, has been instrumental in promoting the benefits of gardens and green spaces for children across the United States. At our Fort Kent Center, we worked closely with community members to bring this garden project to life.

Raised beds were constructed for growing vegetables and flowers, providing a hands-on learning experience for the children. They learned about the life cycles of plants and the importance of water conservation through rainwater collection. Additionally, Fort Kent Public Pre-K classrooms visited the Center and received grow kits to cultivate their own plants.

This initiative not only fosters a love for gardening but also teaches valuable lessons about sustainability and the environment, helping to nurture a new generation of environmentally conscious individuals.





“ I have heard wonderful things about ACAP and I have now enrolled all of my children into it and it has made the biggest difference for us. ACAP is truly wonderful. Because they have the right tools to help both of my children and they are so kind and absolutely love the children there. ”



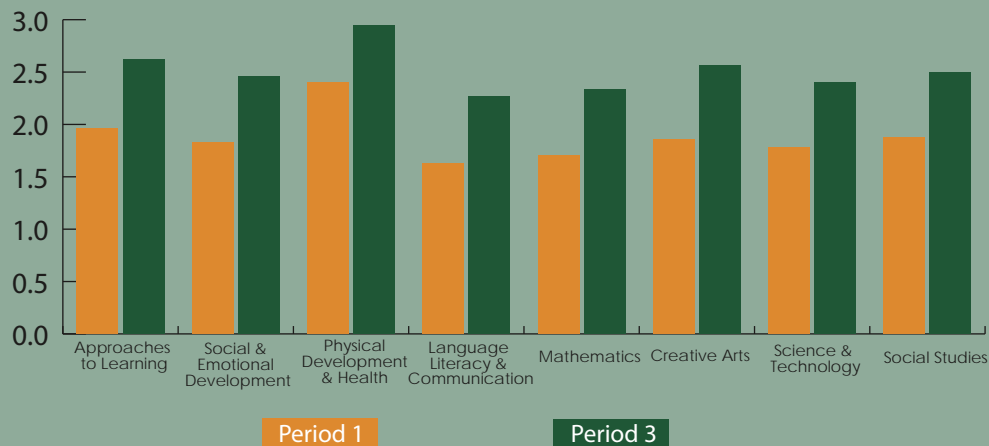
“ We like that it is a consistent place for our children and allows them so many great learning opportunities. ”

“ ACAP does a lot for the children they work with. There is a lot of care and consideration in everything they do. ”



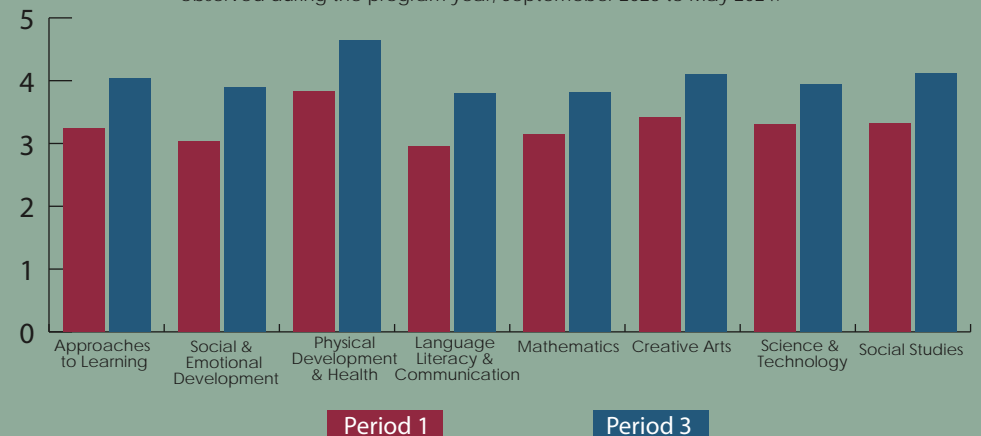
Early Head Start Assessment Data

The Assessment describes the growth as the average of the highest score observed during the program year, June 2023 to May 2024



Head Start Assessment Data

The Assessment describes the growth as the average of the highest score observed during the program year, September 2023 to May 2024.



Brushing Up Bright Futures

In partnership with St. Apollonia Dental Clinic, we proudly offered preventative dental care at the Limestone, Caribou, and Presque Isle Technical Center locations for enrolled Head Start children. This initiative, sponsored by the Children's Oral Health Network of Maine, brings critical dental services directly to community-based settings.

Through this program, children received essential preventive care and early intervention within their own communities. Additionally, the initiative helps establish a dental home with the providing dental practice, ensuring that any necessary restorative care can be seamlessly provided.

This collaboration underscores our commitment to improving children's oral health and ensuring that every child has access to the dental care they need for a healthy future.



First4ME Provides Quality Care and Healthy Child Development

In May 2023, ACAP was awarded the First4ME Grant, a significant milestone in our mission to promote quality care and healthy child development. The First4ME model, established through legislation in 2021, is designed to support local community needs based on a successful Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership in central Maine.

The First4ME Pilot grant aims to prepare children for kindergarten and lifelong learning, support child care providers in offering high-quality education, and assist families and providers in identifying and addressing needs to maintain children in the child care setting. This initiative is crucial in meeting the needs of each child and family in our community.

The four primary goals of First4ME are:



- Increasing successful early learning transitions for children, regardless of risk factors, leading up to kindergarten entry.
- Enhancing sustained, high-quality child care and early childhood education across the mixed delivery system.
- Developing a coordinated system of support, both statewide and locally for families, providers, schools, and communities.
- Strengthening the continuity of care for families from birth to school age with community support for all participants.

In the second year of the Pilot Program, ACAP's First4ME is collaborating with four providers throughout The County and plans to add an additional site before year three. Coaches are assisting providers and their staff with professional development, access to evidence-based curriculum, TeachStone's CLASS Assessment, and connecting with local resources as needed. They are also supporting families and children at the providers' sites with access to community resources, vision and hearing screenings, behavior and developmental screenings, goal setting, kindergarten readiness, and connections to community schools. This grant represents a significant step forward in our efforts to ensure that every child in our community has access to the high-quality care and education they deserve.





First Aroostook County Early Childhood Conference

On Saturday, June 1, 2024, ACAP, in partnership with Maine Roads to Quality and the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children, hosted the First Annual Aroostook Early Childhood Conference at Northern Maine Community College in Presque Isle. The event saw over 65 early care and education professionals in attendance, along with 16 vendors from across the state.

The conference featured a keynote address by Tara Williams, the Associate Director of Early Care and Education at the Office of Child and Family Services, Maine Department of Health and Human Services. Her insights set the tone for a day filled with valuable learning and networking opportunities.

Cathy Bohls conducted an engaging session on the Pyramid Model, focusing on practices that foster social-emotional development and offering practical strategies for addressing behavioral

challenges in young children. Julia Macek led an informative session on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), discussing their impact on behavior, cognitive processes, and emotions. She provided strategies for supporting children through trauma and promoting a sense of safety and security.

This inaugural conference was a significant step in enhancing the professional development of early care and education providers in Aroostook County, fostering a community dedicated to the well-being and development of young children.



Head Start Financial Statement 2023-2024

Head Start Revenues			Head Start Expenses		
Category	Budget	Actual	Category	Budget	Actual
Federal	\$4,484,612.00	\$4,476,214.01	Personnel	\$3,252,633.16	\$2,954,321.00
State	\$438,043.31	\$438,043.31	In-Kind	\$1,043,919.00	\$1,344,402.95
Other	\$92,500.00	\$112,843.50	Travel	\$43,676.00	\$22,604.83
In-Kind	\$1,043,919.00	\$1,344,402.95	Occupancy	\$405,024.48	\$426,999.34
			Supplies	\$176,721.70	\$108,905.44
Total Revenue	\$6,059,074.31	\$6,371,503.77	Food for Children	\$56,360.89	\$81,220.68
			Bus Service	\$77,680.00	\$55,813.70
			Training for Staff	\$54,629.74	\$36,034.93
			Administration	\$888,144.34	\$694,080.58
			Client Services	\$9,500.00	\$1,888.45
			Contractual	\$23,000.00	\$10,220.05
			Other	\$27,755.00	\$58,955.09
			Total Expenses	\$6,059,074.31	\$6,371,503.77

Chester M. Kearney audited the financial statements of Aroostook County Action Program which comprise the statements of financial position as of Sept. 30, 2023 and 2022, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the years then ended and the related notes to the financial statements. In their opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Aroostook County Action Program as of Sept. 30 2023 and 2022 and the changes in its net asset and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.



WIC Works! Participants Receive:

- Quality Nutrition Education and Services
- Breastfeeding Education and Support
- Free Healthy Foods Monthly and Seasonally at Farmers Markets

Every \$1.00 spent for the WIC program more than doubles its return investment (\$2.48) in future health costs (reduction in pre-term births and infant mortality, increased prenatal care and enhanced long-term health outcomes).



WIC Clinic Locations

Caribou	Madawaska
Fort Kent	Presque Isle
Houlton	Van Buren



2,081 Unique WIC Participants
(an increase of 374 participants from last year)

87.4% of Total Fruit & Vegetable Benefits
Issued were Redeemed for a Total of \$300,033

\$951,175 Spent in 16 Aroostook County WIC
Approved Grocery Stores

\$7,581 Spent at 6 WIC Approved
Local Farmers through the Farmers Market
Nutrition Program

7 ACAP WIC Farmer Days Held at
Presque Isle location

300 Women Given Free Prenatal Vitamins

26% of Pregnant Enrollees who Reported
Smoking at Enrollment Reported Quitting
before the Child was Born or Directly After

25 Hospital Grade Electric Breast Pumps
were Loaned to Participants including
Pumping Supplies

123 Moms Utilized the Breastfeeding Peer
Counselor Program

76.2% of Pregnant Women Initiated
Breastfeeding

WIC Team of Experts*

3 Certified Lactation Counselors	1 Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
4 Nutritionist & Nutrition Educators	1 International Board Certified
1 Registered Dietitian	Lactation Counselor

*WIC Staff may occupy more than 1 role

In Aroostook County:

15.6% of Families Live in Poverty (Maine average is 10.9)

1 in 5 Children are Food Insecure

18.9% of Children Live in Poverty

16.2% of Families are Food Insecure (with that number rising
due to increased food costs & decreases in post pandemic benefit loss)



Healthy Eating, Active Living

In partnership with Full Plates, Full Potential free meals for adults were served at locations across Aroostook County in conjunction with the school summer feeding program for children. In addition to providing nutritious meals, ACAP staff offered physical activity opportunities and supplies for creating container gardens.

ACAP also provided navigation services to support participants with accessing services they might not otherwise be aware of, offering on site information and assistance. Through this initiative, 170 adults received free meals and had the chance to work with an ACAP Navigator to connect with comprehensive services offered by the agency.

Navigators played a crucial role in ensuring families learned about programs addressing food insecurity. They connected families with services such as SNAP and MaineCare applications, childcare applications, heating and energy assistance, and workforce development. These efforts helped families meet their basic needs and supported their overall well-being.



1,085

Individuals Reached through the Lending Library

8

Free Community Pop-up Food Stands

2,380

Individuals Served through Community Events

34

Local Organizations Implemented Physical Activity, Nutrition and Breastfeeding Strategies

5

Communities Received Breastfeeding Supports

1,745

Outreach Support Materials Regarding Nutrition, Physical Activity & Breastfeeding Disseminated

15

Schools with Systems in Place to Support Students with Food Insecurity

10

Entities Received Farm to Institution Support and Gardening Initiatives



Bright Smiles: School Oral Health Program

2,959

Students Received Fluoride and Oral Health Screenings

30

Schools Received Oral Health Program Services

196

Students Received Sealants

85

Students had Urgent Care Oral Health Needs Identified



Empowering Schools, Students and Communities



Post-pandemic, teachers have reported increased mental health challenges among students. The 2022 Maine Shared Community Health Needs Assessment Report noted a rise in mental health emergency visits in Aroostook County. High school staff observed that students with mental health issues might also be vaping, raising concerns due to nicotine's harmful effects on developing brains.

In response, ACAP Community Educators initiated evidence-based vape education at the start of the 2023-2024 school year, targeting previously unserved schools. They offered programs like CATCH My Breath, IN DEPTH, a peer leadership program, and technical assistance.

As a result, ACAP:

- served 7 alternative suspension students.
- trained 2 faculty members as CATCH instructors.
- implemented 5 peer leaders.
- taught the CATCH curriculum to 110 middle school students.
- provided anti-vape training to middle and high school faculty.

These efforts addressed immediate student needs and established ongoing support for mental health and vaping prevention.

352 Individuals Provided with Substance Use Prevention Education

161 Youth Participated in Social Emotional Learning

7 Schools Partnered in Substance Use Prevention Education

14 People Trained in Responsible Beverage Service

4 School Partners Requested Full Year Curriculum

42 Students Completed the Breakthrough Youth Program

73 Students Participated in Lions Quest Social Emotional Learning

2,800 Contraceptives Distributed

451 Students Received Anti-Vape Education

13 Schools Partnered in Tobacco Prevention Education

14 Students Participated in an Alternative to Suspension Initiative

10 Peer Leaders Trained in Tobacco Prevention

3,460 Tobacco Prevention Resources Delivered

8 Smoke-Free Policies Signed

4 Restorative Circles Completed

6 Connections Made with Juvenile Community Corrections

6 Connections Made with Schools about County Restorative Practices

Substance Use Prevention Services Positively Impacting County Communities

In February 2024, ACAP's Substance Use Prevention Services (SUPS) team reached out to three local retailers in central and northern Aroostook County. During these calls, the team discussed the importance of safe storage for all cannabis products with store managers. ACAP offered locked storage bags free of charge to the retailers, asking them to help educate customers on the importance of safe storage, especially in homes with individuals under the age of 21.

Through these efforts, ACAP's SUPS team successfully formed collaborative relationships with two of the three retailers contacted. This resulted in the distribution of storage bags to five different locations in central and northern Aroostook County, including Fort Kent, Grand Isle, and Presque Isle. A total of 130 locked bags were given out free of charge to help decrease access to cannabis for those under the age of 21 and promote safe storage practices.

ACAP staff were present to witness the first two lock bags being distributed at one of the locations. Customers were enthusiastic about participating in the initiative to reduce cannabis access for underage individuals and ensure safe storage in their homes.

1,560

Safe Storage and
Disposal Options
were Given Out
Countywide



153

Students Participated
in Talking Circles

Prevention Team Talking Circles Positively Impact County Youth

The ACAP prevention team has been instrumental in providing talking circles to schools throughout Aroostook County, creating safe spaces for open communication. These circles allow youth to discuss social and emotional topics, fostering a respectful and inclusive environment.

At Pathways, an alternative education program in Presque Isle, ACAP met with students monthly. Surveys revealed that students improved their communication skills and confidence, enhancing the classroom community. Many students shared that the talking circles helped them grow personally and feel more connected with their peers, ACAP staff, and teachers.

By nurturing open dialogue, ACAP supports the personal growth of youth and builds a more connected community. These efforts are crucial in fostering a supportive environment where everyone's opinions and experiences are heard and respected.

Creating Warm and Safe Homes

A Year of Service & Compassion: Going Above & Beyond



One of our core values is ensuring no one faces difficult situations alone. During the last heating season, a fuel company acquisition caused concern for a customer about new contracts, costs, and service disruptions.

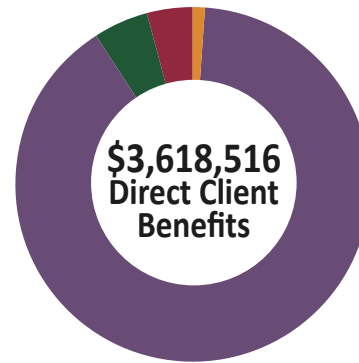
A dedicated HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) associate, with ACAP for over 10 years, stepped in to help. She made calls on the customer's behalf and ensured a smooth transition to the new fuel company, alleviating their worries.

Thanks to her efforts, the customer avoided complications, saved on potential costs, and continued receiving heating

services without interruption. The customer later expressed their gratitude:

"The problem with the change-over from one provider to another has been resolved and delivered. So great not to worry about trying to stay warm. Thank you for your kindness and gracious help, you're the best!"

This experience highlights our team's commitment to genuine care and problem-solving, making a real difference in the lives of those we serve.



Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	\$31,306
Energy Crisis Intervention Program	\$153,074
Home Energy Assistance Program	\$6,437,135
Heating Specific Donations	\$132,189

Expanding Weatherization: Impact in the County

ACAP received funding from the Department of Energy through MaineHousing, via the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, to expand our weatherization program for low-income homes. This funding will allow us to weatherize over 200 homes in Aroostook County!

Weatherization ensures homes are energy-efficient and safe by addressing ventilation, health, and safety hazards, and performing necessary home repairs. The program helps save money by reducing fuel usage, improving air quality, enhancing heating, ventilation and cooling systems, and preventing ice dam damage.

Weatherization Audits, a key part of our program, assesses energy efficiency and potential hazards. Measures may include air sealing, insulation, weather stripping, moisture controls, and health and safety improvements.

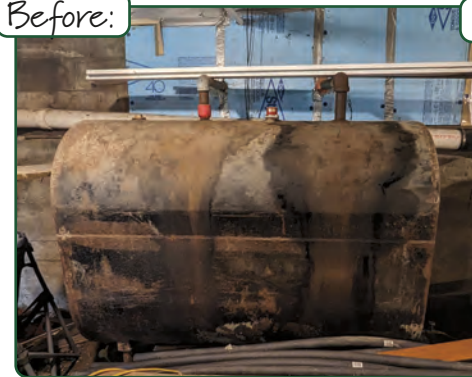
Before:



After:



Before:



After:



Housing Services By the Numbers

32

Weatherization Projects Completed

39

Community Aging in Place/Older
Adult Home Modifications Completed

98

Heat Pumps Installed

21

Home Heating Tanks Replaced

93

Repairs or Replacements of
Heating Systems

32

Home Accessibility Repair
Projects Completed

Swift Resolution of Weatherization Issues in Wallagrass

ACAP recently ordered weatherization for a family in Wallagrass, Maine. After the job was completed by one of our contractors, the family reported significant humidity in their attic, with water accumulating on their plastic storage bins.

Our Quality Control Inspector (QCI) promptly visited the home and discovered the cellulose insulation, beams, and floors were soaking wet. The issue was traced to improperly installed ventilation, which was covered by insulation. We immediately consulted with our Technical Officer at MaineHousing to devise a resolution plan. Given the urgency to prevent serious damage to the home and roof, we took swift action. Our Energy Auditors removed the wet cellulose insulation from the attic. We added more ventilation and our spray foam contractor applied a moisture barrier on the attic floor. Finally, we installed fiberglass insulation, effectively resolving the moisture issue before any damage occurred.

When our QCI and Housing Manager left the home, the homeowners were in tears, expressing their immense gratitude for our quick response. This incident highlights the critical role of a QCI in weatherization projects. Our funder was also very pleased with our prompt and effective resolution and has since used us as an example of best practices in issue resolution.

Neighbors Supporting Neighbors

The Helping Hands Telethon is a collaborative effort of ACAP, WAGM and United Way of Aroostook to raise funds to keep families warm and safe in their homes. Because of the generosity of Aroostook County residents, organizations, and businesses, the 2023 telethon raised \$100,496.08. This funding helps our friends and neighbors in northern Maine facing a fuel emergency put fuel in their tanks, wood in their sheds or pellets in their hoppers.

Keep ME Warm provides emergency heating assistance through a statewide partnership of Maine's United Ways and Community Action Agencies. Through this statewide fuel assistance partnership, ACAP received \$31,693.28 to distribute to Aroostook County households facing a heating emergency between December 2023 and June 2024.



Career Pathways: Supportive Coaching Programs for Workforce Success



Pursuing a Passion for Animals

A young participant recently relocated to Maine from Oklahoma. Seeking guidance to explore potential career paths, she was placed in a work experience at the Central Aroostook Humane Society where she is learning how a shelter operates. This opportunity aligns with her aspiration to one day open her own animal shelter, demonstrating her dedication to her goals and her community.

Finding Stability

A young man who had been couch-hopping and struggling to find stability recently secured employment at Walmart. With temporary housing support and guidance from ACAP, he has moved away from a precarious living situation. His determination to stabilize his life illustrates how job placement, combined with supportive services, can dramatically improve a young person's circumstances. This success story is a testament to resilience and the power of community support.

Returning to the Workforce

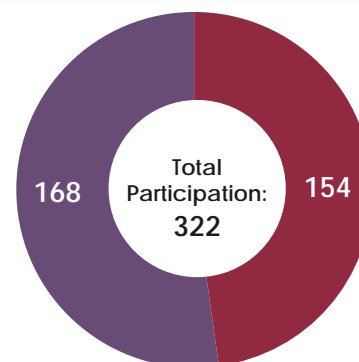
A QUEST participant aimed to utilize his degree as a Health Information Technologist. After a gap in employment due to being the primary caregiver for his child with special needs, he is now back in the workforce. He began working as a Pharmacy Technician at City Drug in Presque Isle on March 4th in a full-time position with benefits. His journey highlights the importance of perseverance and the support provided by ACAP in helping individuals reclaim their professional paths.

My coach is very kind and understanding, always helpful even though I was unsure of what I was applying for in the beginning.

My coach was very helpful, kept me focused, and listened to my concerns, fixing issues along the way.

My coach is amazing at what they do. I always felt good after speaking with them. Very resourceful!

My coach is excellent, caring, and tries hard to help. They helped both my wife and me return to college and navigate our uncertainties.



Workforce Development Participation

Youth - Aged 16 to 24
 Adults - Aged 18+

Hope & Prosperity Resource Center

2,564 Services to 89 Unique Participants, Including:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 21 Participants Supported in Obtaining Temporary Housing | 281 Instances of Transportation Assistance Provided |
| 10 Individuals Supported in Securing Permanent Housing | 19 Individuals Assisted to Obtain Driver's License |
| 20 Landlord/Tenant Mediations Facilitated | 8 Participants Assisted with Obtaining Social Security Card |
| 39 Instances of Rental Counseling Provided | 24 Individuals Assisted with Obtaining Birth Certificate |
| 16 Participants Provided with Job Referrals and Coaching | 51 Referrals to Internal and External Programs |
| 6 Participants Secured Full-Time Employment | 61 Individuals Supported with Paperwork Completion |
| 681 Meals Served to Participants | |



A New Beginning for a Young Mother

In July 2024, a young woman welcomed a healthy daughter into her life, receiving crucial support through ACAP. With assistance, she secured SNAP and TANF benefits, accessed a psychological evaluation, and obtained essential baby supplies. While still on short-term disability, she is grateful for the guidance and resources that have allowed her to focus on her family while preparing for the next steps in her career. Her journey reflects the importance of support during significant life changes.

Ensuring Safety for Children

In Madawaska, a family faced a safety issue when a nearby paper mill removed a fence that was crucial for keeping their children safe in their yard. Despite assurances from contractors that the fence would be replaced, months went by with no action taken. ACAP contacted the human resources department at the mill and advocated on behalf of the family to resolve the safety concern. We recently received confirmation that the mill has committed to replacing the fence, providing peace of mind for the family and ensuring the safety of their children.

A Father's Return to Work

Staff worked with a father who had been out of the workforce for over a year. Together, we created a resume, conducted job searches, and practiced interview skills. Through our efforts, he successfully landed employment with benefits at Presque Isle International Airport. This achievement marks a significant milestone in his journey back into the workforce, showcasing the impact of dedicated support and preparation.

Celebrating our Team, Supporting Our Community



The Great American Eclipse Day activity on Monday, April 8, 2024, was part of a specially themed eclipse and mission-inspired year at ACAP with the catchphrase "ACAP... Lighting the Way." The messaging, and related community awareness building about all that ACAP does, was designed to coincide with the celestial activity, but more importantly to reflect on the work to advance economic and social mobility that the agency leads or supports for people and communities in the largest geographic county east of the Mississippi River.

The Aroostook CA\$H Coalition, sponsored by The County Federal Credit Union, was a remarkable success, assisting 1,099 tax filers and securing over \$1.3 million in federal and state refunds. This achievement was made possible by the dedication of 21 certified volunteers who collectively contributed an impressive 1,956 hours of service. Their hard work not only provided essential support to the community, but also highlighted the impact of volunteerism in helping individuals navigate the complexities of tax filing. This initiative underscores the importance of accessible financial assistance and the power of community collaboration.



Many working parents in Aroostook County are struggling to find adequate child care for their children, leading to increased absenteeism and decreased productivity in the workforce. This, in turn, is affecting the overall economic growth of the County as businesses are unable to operate at full capacity. Furthermore, the lack of child care options is also deterring potential employees from moving to or staying in Aroostook County, as they may not have access to the necessary resources to support their families. Many County businesses, large and small, are reporting that this crisis is hindering their ability to grow and expand.



To address this issue and mitigate the negative impact on the economy, a group of leaders came together to create a stakeholder's group to address this crisis. Together they have worked to find a solution that will increase the availability of affordable and quality child care options in the area by soon opening the Aroostook Childcare Resource Center (ACCRC). This center will be led by part of United Way Aroostook. ACCRC will provide trainings and support for child care providers, assistance for individuals interested in entering the child care field, resources for families and businesses on what is currently available and will collaborate with community organizations to not only support and sustain current child care providers but also create more child care enrollment opportunities. By taking proactive measures to address the child care shortage, Aroostook County can support the economic well-being of its residents and businesses.

The 2024 Back to School Bash was a tremendous success! Thanks to the collective efforts of many over 1,300 backpacks were provided to students across The County. In addition to the backpacks and school supplies, gently used clothing, a healthy lunch, and a wealth of community resources, including a job fair for those seeking new employment opportunities were part of the event. We extend our heartfelt thanks to partners, donors, and team members whose contributions made this event possible. Your support made a significant difference in our community!



The 2024 Cinderella Project of Maine Comes to Aroostook season was a huge success, providing over 300 dresses and formal wear free of charge to Aroostook County students. Pictured here are just a few of ACAP's Fairy Godmothers (volunteers) showing off some of the magical dresses that our Cinderella's choose to wear to the ball.

ACAP has partnered with the Cinderella Project of Maine and Waldo County Action Program to help make dreams come true by providing free new and gently used prom and formal dresses to all Maine students. The project, which began in 2006 as a grassroots effort to provide free prom dresses to high school seniors in Waldo County, has grown in the last two decades to distribute hundreds of dresses each year during prom season to students statewide.



U.S. Senator Angus King joined with local community members at Aroostook County Action Program's Presque Isle Customer Service Center on Thursday, August 15, 2024 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Economic Opportunity Act, signed by President Lyndon Baines Johnson on August 20, 1964, and to discuss the enduring impact of the programs and initiatives it introduced.

Local agency representatives and community members who have benefited from the Act's programs and initiatives were present including Community Action, Head Start, Job Corps, VISTA, Adult Education and Small Business. The roundtable discussion allowed Senator King to hear firsthand about the programs' benefits and to address any questions he had for the participants. After the discussion, participants recreated the iconic 1964 photo taken in the White House Rose Garden when LBJ signed the Act (above).

Senator King, seated at the small table, symbolically taking LBJ's place in the photo, signed special letters marking the 60th anniversary of the Act. Each participating agency received a letter to display at their respective locations to commemorate this milestone anniversary.



Mi'kmaq Farms and Fish Hatchery, grower and producer in Aroostook County, has been a most valuable partner this year. Their dedication to cultivating healthy, wholesome foods has greatly benefited our community. Thanks to their generosity, we were able to distribute thousands of pounds of fresh produce free of charge, nourishing countless families and fostering a spirit of community support.



Nurturing our Workforce



ACAP employs approximately 170 team members across multiple locations in Aroostook County, from Fort Kent to Dyer Brook. Our commitment extends beyond improving the lives of our clients; we are equally dedicated to enhancing the well-being of our employees.

In 2024, ACAP engaged insurance brokers Power & Walsh and changed insurance providers to enhance benefit coverage and reduce costs for the agency. This change allowed us to maintain 100% employer-paid coverage at the lowest tier, with no increase in premiums for all other medical plans, and improved dental coverage. Additionally, we introduced a Lifestyle Spending Account, a zero-cost drug benefit, and increased coverage for specific conditions and medications.

Beyond enhanced benefits, we began an Agency Culture Initiative that will continue into 2025 to help identify and define core values, enhance culture at the agency and provide the tools to help further serve our community. We are committed to supporting our dedicated team, ensuring they have the resources and training needed to thrive in their roles.

Our Human Resources Team continues to strive for process improvements and automation to simplify tasks for employees and reduce administrative overhead.



Sunday, March 17, 2024, was officially Pat Good Day in Aroostook County - as proclaimed by the County Commissioners in honor of ACAP's longest-serving Team Member Pat Good of Presque Isle! ACAP Team Members celebrated early, on Friday, March 15, as the holiday's namesake, along with ACAP Executive Director/CEO Jason Parent, "made the rounds" to all ACAP locations from Fort Kent to Dyer Brook with special Elvis-inspired whoopie pies made by a local baker for all to enjoy!





Thank you board members for your dedication and support!

2024 Board of Directors

Consumer Sector:

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Bruce Thibeault
Carolyn Kimball
Nina Bradstreet
Robin Levesque
Suzanne Senechal-Jandreau
Trudy Gorneault

Public Sector:

Ammie London
Dan MacDonald
Gary Sanfacon
Nancy Troeger
Peter Johnson
Senator Troy Jackson
Senator Trey Stewart

Private Sector:

Andy Grass
Billi Griffeth
Erik Vaughn
Jeff Ashby
Jennifer Buckingham
Paula Sperrey
Tracie Papsadora

Aroostook Policy Advisory Council

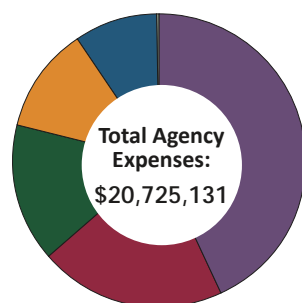
Bobbie Chasse Robin Levesque
Brian Bouley Shelby Wilson
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Dawn McCrossin

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Jennifer Smith

Parent Policy Council

Bruce Thibeault Matthew Orcutt
Jennifer Smith Molly Orcutt
Lisa Rubin Nina Bradstreet
Martha Jane Book Stephanie Meckler



Energy and Housing	\$4,272,408
Early Care and Education	\$8,950,220
Prevention and Wellness	\$2,418,539
Workforce Development	\$1,930,044
Management and General	\$3,128,689
Fundraising	\$25,231

Based on ACAP's September 2024 unaudited/preliminary Revenue and Expense Report.
Our most recent audited financials can be found at www.acap-me.org.



Thank you to our entire team for everything you do to
Make Life Better!

