



mid michigan  
**COMMUNITY**  
*Action*

"Helping People, Changing Lives."

## 2009 Annual Report

Mid Michigan Community Action

1574 East Washington Road

PO Box 768

Farwell, MI 48622

Phone: 989-386-3805

Fax: 989-386-3277

[www.mmcaa.org](http://www.mmcaa.org)



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Serving Our  
Communities

# Board of Directors

Mid Michigan Community Action's 18 member Board of Directors is comprised of three members from each of the agency's six county service area. From each county there is a democratically elected representative of low-income people, a public official and a member from the private sector.

This board make-up ensures that low-income families and individuals are represented by every sector within our communities. In addition to the current board members listed below, the following people served on the Board in FY 2009: Beth Reynolds, Kimberly Booher-Hammer, Tom Tucholski and Ron McKay.

## **BAY COUNTY**

Vaughn Begick  
Bill Reder, Chairperson  
Carol Goulet

## **CLARE COUNTY**

Lynn Grim  
Norm Gage

## **GLADWIN COUNTY**

Don Kehoe, Vice-Chairperson  
Kathy Wilton

## **MECOSTA COUNTY**

Jerry Williams  
Matthew Klein, Treasurer  
Helen Chappell, Secretary

## **MIDLAND COUNTY**

William Hargreaves  
Otis Wilson  
Sharron Such

## **OSCEOLA COUNTY**

Larry Morlock  
Alan Tiedt

# Moving Forward

## Clarecastle Senior Housing

Ground was broken on the 24-unit senior housing complex on October 29, 2009. This project is the culmination of efforts by Mid Michigan Community Action and the City and County of Clare to provide an affordable housing option to area seniors. In addition, the ground floor will house the Clare County Senior Center and meal site. The agency is partnering with P.S. Equities in the project, which will be completed the summer of 2010.



## Communities in Need

Times in mid-Michigan continue to be difficult for individuals and families. Within the next fiscal year it is expected that thousands will see their unemployment benefits run out, meaning a whole new wave of families will be looking for help. The agency will continue to be a part of the recovery of our communities through the provision of direct services, the strengthening of partnerships, and advocating for low-income families.

## Stimulus Funds

In FY 2010 Mid Michigan Community Action's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funded programs will be fully operational. The Weatherization program, which received nearly \$8 million in ARRA funds, will be making 40 or more homes more energy efficient each month. Additionally, the agency will be providing increased support and case management for homeless individuals, emergency assistance for Veterans, emergency support and financial management counseling for Mid Michigan Community College Students, foreclosure prevention and additional program enhancements. The agency is committed to maximizing the impact of every stimulus dollar.

# Community Needs

To best meet the needs of our customers, a formal Community Needs Assessment is completed every three years in the six counties we serve. This assessment is conducted by a third party objective professional to elicit feedback direct from the source—our customers. We also ask for comments from community leaders, partner agencies, and local residents so that we may develop services and goals reflective of the local area.

In 2009, the assessment was completed by Ferris State University, Community Studies Institute. The researchers used surveys, interviews, and demographic data to gather information and identify the most leading concerns and needs of our low-income residents. This information, coupled with the economic status of the area offered a unique view of the issues facing our local communities.

Although, we are not able to respond to all areas addressed, we were able to establish several new services through our new stimulus funding (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) or enhance our existing programs. The following outlines the most pertinent areas of need identified through the Community Needs Assessment:

## Top 15 Perceptions of Community Needs

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Jobs that support families          | 9. Ability to pay rent                                  |
| 2. Affordable prescription drugs       | 10. Ability to obtain a mortgage loan                   |
| 3. Affordable preventative health care | 11. Jobs for teenagers                                  |
| 4. Affordable transportation           | 12. Ability to travel to services                       |
| 5. Heating assistance                  | 13. Affordable day-care                                 |
| 6. Emergency food assistance           | 14. Ability to acquire rent subsidies                   |
| 7. Adequate emergency health care      | 15. Adequate school preparation for jobs and/or college |
| 8. Affordable health care for children |   |

# Executive Message



Community needs can vary from town to town, family to family, or person to person. When planning our programs and service delivery, it is critical for us to remember these differences. This past year, we have completed several exercises to ensure that we can meet the needs of our communities to the best of our ability.

Every three years, we conduct a comprehensive Community Needs Assessment to evaluate the needs of our consumers—this was completed in 2009. We asked them directly for input as well as gathered feedback from our partner agencies and area leaders to provide the most inclusive viewpoint. Secondly,

we are finalizing an agency-wide Strategic Plan. Information was gathered from administrative and program staff and the Board of Directors. They viewed our current programs, outcomes of the Community Needs Assessment, and developed specific goals for our future. Lastly, our departments conduct assessments of their services throughout the year to identify program participant's needs and develop their services accordingly.

Through a comprehensive approach of assessing community needs, we are able to align our services accurately and efficiently. This was the key to planning our fast paced growth this past year as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We were fortunate to receive significant increases in funding, but had to determine how to best use the funds for our local area.

We will continue to strategically plan our services and evaluate the effectiveness of our programs. If you have suggestions to offer, please feel free to let us know by emailing us at [contactus@mmcaa.org](mailto:contactus@mmcaa.org).

Thank you for your on-going support as we continue to enhance the lives of our consumers by providing resources and opportunities promoting self sufficiency and successful futures.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill Sutton".

Jill Sutton, Executive Director



# Fiscal Policy

Mid Michigan Community Action increased both the number of households assisted (19%) and the amount expended (19.3%).

Outreach Services	Households	Amount
Outreach & Migrant Services	5,170	\$827,833
Utility Assistance	1,783	\$1,167,542
Shelter Assistance	1,037	\$572,063
Emergency Church Fund	96	\$7,683
Food Assistance--TEFAP	3,613	\$600,774
Food Assistance--CSFP	2,740	\$1,348,097
County Food Pantries	669	\$58,070
Bay City Dental Program	44	\$15,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>15,152</b>	<b>\$4,597,062</b>
<b>Housing Services</b>		
Home Energy Improvements	266	\$1,686,010
Home Repair CDBG & HPG	6	\$97,777
Housing Counseling/FSS/IDA	69	\$60,615
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>\$1,844,602</b>
<b>Early Childhood Services</b>		
Women, Infants & Children Program	2,829	\$1,394,412
Early Head Start	265	\$1,493,963
Head Start	253	\$1,463,069
Preschool Services	300	\$665,541
Midland Baby Court	73	\$15,258
Child Care Food Program	3,222	\$77,740
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6,942</b>	<b>\$5,109,983</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,435</b>	<b>\$11,551,647</b>

# Housing Services

## An Overview

The agency's Housing Services faced incredible opportunities and challenges this year as the Weatherization program received \$7.6 million in stimulus funds in addition to standard funding. While these funds presented the opportunity to significantly expand the program, helping hundreds more families, the process of expanding program capacity that quickly can be difficult. With the addition of three staff, including two energy auditors, the program has begun the process of significantly increasing production. Stimulus funds will allow the agency to weatherize 1,100 additional homes over the next three years, saving homeowners on average 35% on annual heating costs, and injecting millions of dollars into local economies.



## Addressing Community Needs

Heating Assistance continues to be one of the primary needs in our communities; it ranked number five in our Community Needs Assessment. Weatherization addresses this need with long-term improvements to the home that will reduce heat loss, lower utility bills and provide a safer, healthier and more affordable home. Once a home is weatherized, the average homeowner will save 35% in annual heating costs amounting to hundreds of dollars in savings realized every year. The savings can then be utilized by the family in other budget areas improving financial stability.



*Weatherization Works*

# Outreach Services

## An Overview

This year has been particularly difficult for individuals and families in mid-Michigan, as evidenced by the massive increase in the number of families seeking assistance for the first time. It is estimated that nearly 75% of the appointments made were first-time customers. Overall, the number of households served in FY 2009 increased by 22% from 2008, including a 132% increase of households receiving emergency services. In addition, applications for quarterly food distributions have doubled and the agency's emergency food pantry has been operating at 200% of capacity. To match the increasing demand for Outreach Services, the agency have added additional staff including three energy specialists, three case managers and one financial educators/counselors.

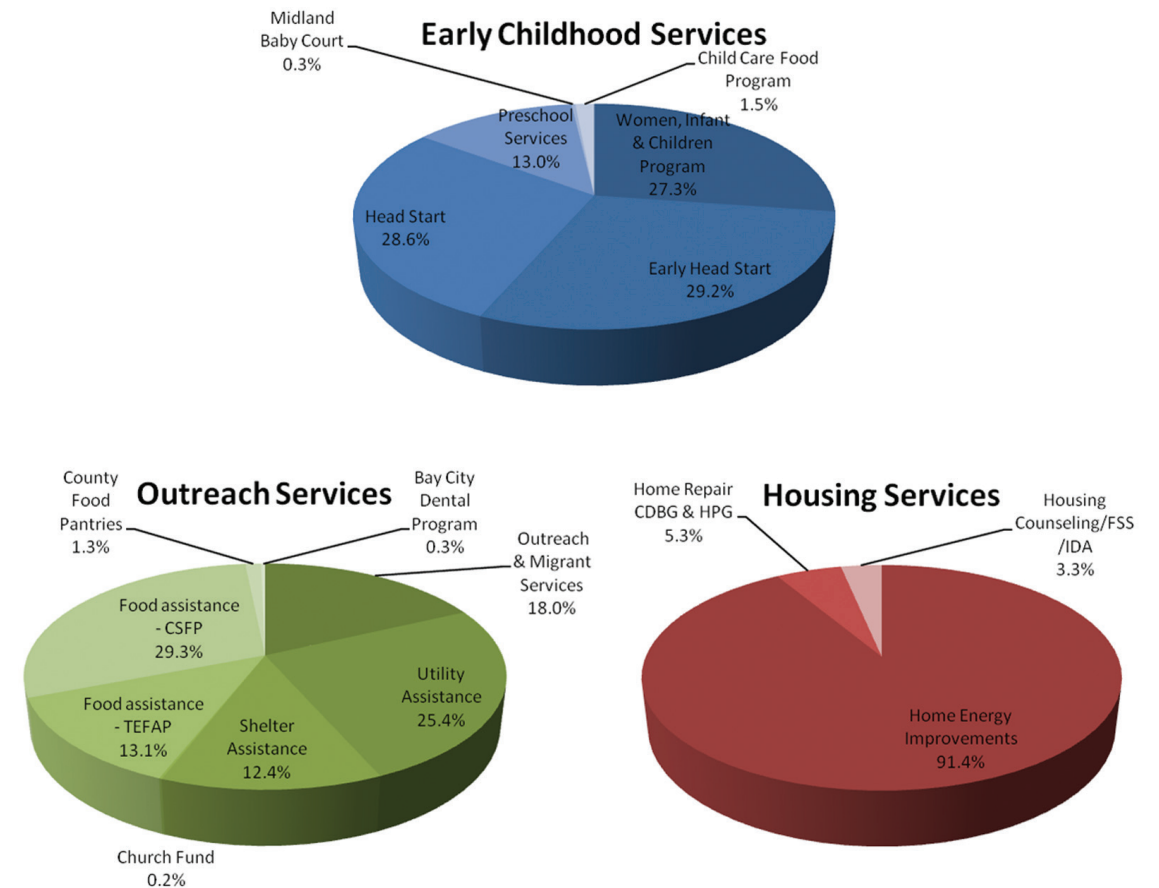
## Addressing Community Needs



Transportation, heating assistance, emergency food and assistance with rent were all identified as top 10 needs in our communities. A prevailing theme in the assessment was that our communities' needs were stemming from the depressed economy. Based on this information, the agency has put an emphasis on providing basic necessities such as food, shelter and heat. Where available, stimulus funds were used to expand, enhance and create programs to address these needs. For example, stimulus funds were utilized to expand emergency service offerings and financial management classes. A comprehensive case management program was developed; the agency's emergency food pantry received additional funds; and seven community gardens (cover photo) were funded providing over 6,000 pounds of fresh produce.

# Fiscal Policy

Mid Michigan Community Action's services are divided into three departments: Early Childhood Services, Outreach Services and Housing Services. The following is a breakdown of the dollars spent on each department's services.



# Early Childhood Services

## ECS 0-3 An Overview

Early Childhood Services 0-3 comprises Early Head Start and the Women, Infants and Children Clinic in Midland County. During FY 2009 an increased focus was placed on education and enhancement. Continual efforts are being made to educate the community on the importance of all aspects of child health and development. Early Head Start has held events, attended community events, health fairs, county fairs and more to help get the word out to parents. In addition, the agency's Fatherhood Involvement program has expanded; four Fatherhood Involvement Events were hosted; program staff were appointed to the Michigan Fatherhood Coalition Board; resources were provided to ECS 0-5 families and the agency's collaborative network was expanded. Additionally, the agency began a partnership with the Midland County Family Court to have ECS 0-3 staff work with families who are facing the imminent removal of a child from the home. All of these program enhancements are focused on strengthening families thereby strengthening the community.



## Addressing Community Needs

Mid Michigan Community Action's Early Head Start program is a home-based program meaning an EHS home-visitor comes into the family's home once a week. Home-visitors not only assist families through the education of 0-3 year-olds, but they also provide some case management to the families. Based on assessments, home-visitors provide access to agency programs and external agency referrals to address the families' needs.

# Early Childhood Services

## ECS 0-5 An Overview

Fiscal Year 2009 was a year of perseverance for Mid Michigan Community Action's preschool services. As the state of Michigan struggled to find a feasible balance of budget cuts, funding for the Great Start Readiness Program was a potential target. Despite the uncertainty of funding and job security and the temporary closing of three classrooms, program staff maintained a positive, professional attitude and helped to mobilize community parents to advocate for the program and preschool children. As a result funding for the program was restored and all of the agency's preschools are operational. It is a testament to the dedication and professionalism of program staff that despite challenging circumstances, the program maintained a level of excellence in early childhood education.



## Addressing Community Needs

In times of economic recession, services such as preschool education can be taken for granted. Even though preschool may not address a pressing need, it helps promote family stability and relationships. To be in need of basic necessities can be extremely stressful on a family leading to strained familial relationships. ECS 3-5 services not only provide a safe, healthy environment for young children to develop, but also information, resources and support to families. Being a part of the agency's ECS programs is an access point to assistance with heat, shelter and other emergencies. Family development and comprehensive service continues to be a cornerstone of ECS programs.