Blue Valley Community Action

Annual Report 2000-2001

Serving the People of Southeastern Nebraska and North Central Kansas. 1966-2002

December 2001

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### From the Board President...

This has been an eventful year. Blue Valley Community Action has celebrated its 35th Anniversary. We began the year coming off the best year ever in 2000 and then there was the political controversy over the election, a change in the economy and then the attack of September 11. It isn't easy to say it was a good year. An eventful year will have to suffice. Blue Valley Community Action saw increased numbers of folks in economic trouble and higher demands on our emergency services such as food pantries, clothing rooms, utility shut-off assistance and shelter. Other agencies tell us they too are seeing higher numbers of needy, particularly in mental health and employment.

As we enter 2002, we see growth at BVCA, but sometimes our growth reflects the bad news in the economy. So we continue to help move our communities toward better opportunity for all residents. We offer a multitude of services coordinated to impact the success of the families we serve. We offer child development care from infants to school age. We offer youth alternatives to misguided directions. We offer families opportunities to move from homelessness to home ownership. We offer free health alternatives to many of those who can't keep up with rising health care costs, such as immunizations, breast and cervical cancer screening, telephone nurse triage, Kids Connection free insurance enrollments and respite options for those caring for loved ones. We help families control energy costs by providing weatherization to homes, which decreases our country's dependency on foreign oil and non-renewable energy sources. We also work hard with others in our communities to help unify our efforts to deal with issues specific to those communities, such as youth violence, housing development, coordinated one stop service centers and other local needs.

It is our hope that others will join with us to better the opportunity for all our residents and improve our rural economies. We depend on generous contributions and dedicated volunteers. We hope together, we can join something larger than ourselves, something that helps people and changes lives. We hope you will join the Community Action partnership.



Richard Nation, Executive Director (left) and Dwight Nichols, BVCA Board President

### ...From the Executive Director

This is Blue Valley Community Action's report on its 35th year. It is a continuing story of the success of this organization. While facing tougher pressures, this anti-poverty agency has risen to the challenge of a faltering economy and of greater demand for its services. The events of September 11 have shown that all Americans, regardless of their national origin or ethnic background, can pull together to overcome great tragedy and severe challenges. This is not a new story. We all knew this. Americans have overcome adversity since the beginnings of our country.

We in Community Action see Americans struggling with adversity all the time. Even during the roaring 1990's, the economy was leaving some folks behind. Since the summer of 2001, with the economy officially in recession, and the sharp drop after 9-11, far more Americans are out of work. The farm economy is far from the days of \$3 corn and small towns continue to lose population as job opportunities leave the area. What is an organization dedicated to "opportunity for all" to do? We at Blue Valley Community Action build upon strengths.

The things that rural America has going for it are enormous. The spirit of the people, of all people—from ancestors of covered wagon travelers to new arrivals making a better life for their families, is a huge asset from which to work. Nebraskans have the highest percentage of two adult workers in a family of all states. It has the highest percentage of workers with two or more jobs. We have workers with high work ethics. We have generous neighbors with an inherent belief in fair play and the rule of law. And we have cleaner air than most cities. We can build on our strengths.

We at Blue Valley Community Action believe that we must not only work hard, but that we must diversify and be innovative. Rural areas must struggle even harder. The wide-ban-width Internet service that the country is coming to depend upon, and that could mean a revival of the rural economy, has not come to rural areas and market forces may never bring it. Rural communities may have to step up to this task, if they wish to see the declines in population halted. We welcome new arrivals for they permit economic expansion in areas of sparse population.

We also believe in personal responsibility. Blue Valley Community Action does not give handouts, as such. We believe that those in need must come forward and be responsible by finding the bargains at our clothing rooms and stores, that volunteering is a noble thing and those in need can give back through volunteering when financial donations are out of the question. We form partnerships with our clients—they do and we help.

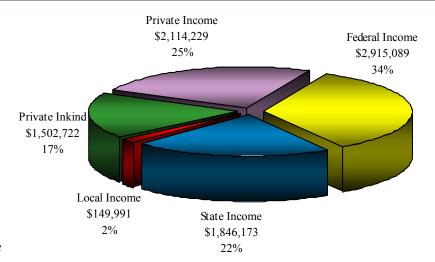
Blue Valley Community Action also believes in the strength of families. Strong families make for strong communities. We try to help families where we can by providing such services as child care, making homes suitable for families and elderly and helping with respite services. We try to help change lives, where families want to change.

We try to live our mission. We hope you will join us through volunteering or contributing toward helping our less fortunate neighbors. And we hope you enjoy this Annual Report.



# Blue Valley Community Hetion Resources & Support

STATE OF NEBRASKA GRANTS:		STATE OF KANSAS GRANTS:	
AmeriCorp	\$31,166	Food Programs	\$4,637
CSFP (Commodity Distribution)	*\$83,689	-	
WIC (Health & Nutrition)	\$138,139	UNITED WAY SUPPORT:	
NHAP (Homeless Assistance)	\$77,252	Cornhusker United Way	\$3,513
HIV/AIDS	\$3,464	Foster Grandparent United Way	\$3,142
Immunization	\$19,755	York United Way	\$2,500
Sexual Assault	\$14,467	United Way of America	<u>\$19,070</u>
Domestic Violence	\$89,522	Total	\$28,225
VOCA (Victims of Crime Assistance)	\$85,830	5 5	
CSBG (Community Services)	\$268,265	PRIVATE FOUNDATION SUPPORT:	
Training Institute (Staff Development	\$4,257	NE Children & Families Foundation	\$3,019
Child Care Food	\$93,950	DDIVATE INVESTMENT DEVENUES:	
Hispanic Healthcare	\$31,542	PRIVATE INVESTMENT REVENUES:	¢242 150
Juvenile Justice	\$31,863	Corporate Pickles	\$242,159
SESAME	\$125,384	Administration Fees	\$70,169
CHDO (Housing Development)	\$54,731		\$43,951
LB 144 (Homebuyer Programs)	\$5,305	Management Fees	\$70,696
ESGP (Emergency Shelter)	\$26,204	Development Fees	\$84,579
FEMA	\$5,529	Revolving Loan Programs	\$62,812
DOE Weatherization	\$75,047	Blue River SPRING Grant	\$24,205
Child Abuse Prevention	\$9,577	Total	\$598,571
Jefferson County Good Beginning	s \$10,963	RENTAL INCOME:	
LIEAP Weatherization	\$72,650	Corporate Rents	\$11,530
Every Woman Matters	\$90,782	Fillmore County Units	\$54,330
Continuity (Child Education)	\$16,365	HOME Rents	\$15,918
Homeowner Assistance	\$315,524	Blue River Family Resource Center	\$24,033
Respite	\$40,475	Valley Heights	\$87,797
Early Childhood Initiative	\$19,839	Diller Units	\$3,640
	\$1,841,536	Dorchester Units	\$14,494
*Value of Commodities Distributed:	\$528,669	Osceola Units	\$22 <u>1</u> \$211,963



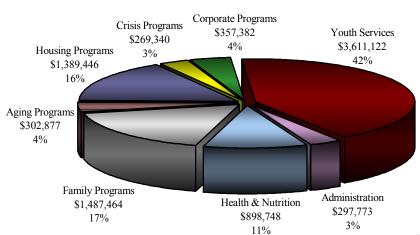
BVCA's 2000-2001 Total Revenues: \$8,528,204

# Blue Valley Community Hetion Resources & Support

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT: LOCAL PRIVATE SUPPORT:	
Butler County \$4,366 Pantries	\$16,919
Fillmore County \$3,287 Clothing Sales	\$135,491
	1,502,722
Jefferson County \$4,161 Local Donations	\$42,461
Polk County \$2,825 Local County Projects	\$171,604
Saline County \$6,883 Total \$	1,869,197
Seward County \$8,219	
Thayer County \$3,031 LOCAL FEES:	
York County \$7,243 Blue River Child Development	\$320,901
City of Lincoln \$25,089 Other Local Fees	\$3,000
Cities of Crete, Friend, & Wilber \$6,175 Total	\$323,901
Communities of Swanton, DeWitt,	
Tobias Western, & Dorchester \$2,276 OTHER REVENUES:	
Total \$84,958 Fillmore Transit	\$63,616
Butler Transit	<u>\$1,417</u>
U.S. GOVERNMENT DIRECT GRANTS:  Total	\$65,033
Head Start \$1 518 621	
Foster Grandparents \$210.907 CONSTRUCTION/ASSET FUNDING:*	
CATCH Network \$129.975 Prairie Wood	\$119,984
Parent Information Center \$429,799 Diller 4-Plex	\$303,986
HUD Supportive Housing \$155,513 Sunset Crown	\$103,574
OCS Technology Grant \$14.489 Other Construction	<u>\$54,531</u>
Rural Health Outreach \$24,831 Total	\$582,075
Early Head Start \$\frac{\$430,954}{}\$ *BVCA is the general partner in six housing p	partnerships
Total \$2,915,089 not included in these figures. See Page 10 for	

BVCA increased cash reserves to \$290,000.

BVCA's 2000-2001 Total Expenses: \$8,614,152



### Blue Valley Community Hetion's Mission Statement

To build upon strengths by providing diverse and innovative opportunities to impact personal responsibility, family well-being, and community development.

### During 2000-2001 12,000 individuals were served by BVCA.

Unknown

0 to 5

### **Client Poverty**

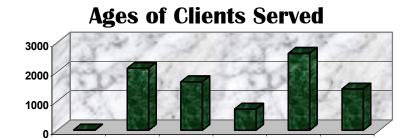
Below 185% of Poverty: 89.5%

Below 80% of Poverty: 43.6%

Between 80% & 125% of Poverty: 33% Between 125% & 185% of Poverty: 12.9%

Above 185% of Poverty: 3.8%

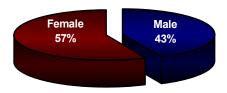
Unknown Income Levels: 6.7%



18 to 23

6 to 17

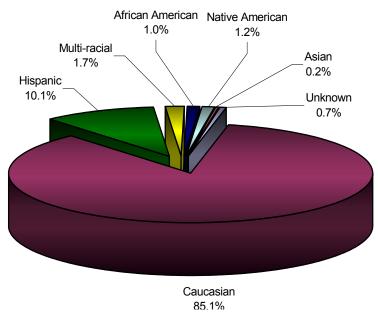
### **Gender Breakdown**



### Poverty vs. Welfare

While almost 96% are below 185% of poverty, only 3.4 % are on welfare (TANF/AFDC)

### **Ethnic Background**



### The Promise of Community Hetion

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.

### **Family Structure Marital Status:** 50.8% Never Married 25.5% Married 8.4% Widowed 7.2% Divorced 5.7% Living Together 2.4% Separated Parental Status: 23.0% Two Parents w/ Children 8.6% Single Parent w/ Children 1.3% Non-custodial Parent 2.4% About to Become a Parent 18.2% Two Adults, No Children 46.5% Has Never Been a Parent Average Family Size: 2.6 persons

Education		
4.8%	College Graduates	
<b>6.7</b> %	High School Graduates and Some College	
26.2%	High School Graduate	
16.7%	Did Not Graduate High School	
21.8%	Current K-12 Student	
23.8%	Pre-School Age	

#### **Medical Insurance**

26.8%	Kids Connection
15.5%	Medicaid
9.0%	Medicare
.1%	Native American Health
23.3%	Private Insurance
25.3%	No Insurance

# The Seven Principles of Community Action

**OPENING DOORS AND LEADING THE WAY** We provide access to the opportunities people need to improve their lives, to help themselves and each other.

**TURNING HOPE INTO REALITY** We identify the needs of the entire community, collaborate with others in the community and take action to improve life for everyone in the community.

**EMPATHIZING** Our staff and volunteers are from the community they serve.

**TREATING PEOPLE WITH RESPECT** We treat people the way we want to be treated.

**SAYING "YES"** If we do not provide the needed service, we will link you to those who do.

**GIVING A VOICE TO THE POOR** Through our advocacy, we seek to make society more flexible and responsive to the needs of the poor.

**MIRRORING THE DIVERSITY OF OUR COMMUNITIES** Our local boards include low-income people, local public officials, business and community groups.

#### A BVCA TEENAGE TENANT WRITES...

To Whom It May Concern:

Have you ever sat down and wondered where you were going to go at the end of the month when your rent was due and you knew you wouldn't be able to pay it? Well, things weren't quite that bad for us, but I'm sure for some people that live in the Blue Valley Community Action service area that is the case.

My dad is a single parent of two and was recently unemployed due to an injury that left him with no source of income. We had no where to go until we were recommended to Blue Valley Community Action. They offered us all the help we had been needing, worked around our problems and actually gave us the benefit of the doubt instead of worrying about what was best for them. They also give you choices...

...that is the difference living here, these people are so caring.



"If it were not for the educational materials and help of your program, I feel this would have ended tragically."

#### **HEALTH SERVICES**

BVCA operates WIC (Women, Infants and Children), EWM (Every Woman Matters), Immunizations, the many CATCH II programs, and certain screenings.

- Nurse Triage Calls: 156 (Oct 00-Sept 01).
- \* 158 children were enrolled in Kids Connection.
- \* 488 individuals received Nurse Case Management.
- \* 1,455 women and children were examined in the WIC program.
- \* Immunizations were given to 4,583 kids for a grand total of 8,853 shots.
- Diabetes was found in 22 persons completing our survey.
- \* EPSDT Reminders (health checks): 870 families.
- \* 1,511 persons enrolled in Medicaid are receiving CATCH services.
- \* 347 Head Start & Early Head Start children received dental screenings.
- 206 families without a family physician were found medical homes.
- \* EWM (breast cancer awareness) applications: 354; 92 women enrolled in EWM.
- \* 180 classes were given by BVCA's Trainer in Adult & Child CPR, First Aide, and AED (Defibrillator).





#### **FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**

Twenty-six families in BVCA's family development projects worked to initiate positive changes in their lives. Both Project FIRST (dealing with homeless) and Project FOCUS (for families trying to make specific, major life direction changes) use the family development process.

During the past year, the Blue River Family Resource Center provided a wide variety of services in the Crete area. Programs included education for children and adults, English as a Second Language classes, Migrant Education for both children and adults, computer literacy training and public computer access, Health and Wellness programs, Hispanic Healthcare Program, community education, parenting education, emergency assistance, mental health and family strengthening programs. The total number of people who utilized a service offered from the BRFRC was 6,489.

"They assisted us in getting everything we needed."



"When we put forth the effort with a family and see someone succeed, it makes us feel good." -BVCA staff comment

#### **NUTRITION SERVICES**

- \* Head Start provided 37,166 meals and 1,265 snacks to children.
- \* Commodity Supplemental Food Distribution: 1,071 families per month.
- \* 63,996 days of food were provided from food pantries.
- \* Pantry users in 2001 (10/00-9/01): 2,135 families.
- \* Volunteer hours at commodities clinics: 1,598 hours.
- \* Value of volunteers at commodity clinics: \$8,230.
- \* Blue River Family Resource Center provided 22,336 meals and 12,422 snacks to children.



"Without this program, my family would still be struggling..."

#### TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

BVCA operates the Fillmore County Rural Transit Service. Rides are available, for a small fee, to the general public, with elderly and handicapped

residents given priority. Last year, 5,227 trips were made for 142

passengers.

"I don't know what I'd do without my ride."

#### **HOMELESS SERVICES**

- Homeless Prevention: 347 families helped with rent and/or utilities.
- \* Shelter nights provided: 1,009.
- Transitioned to Permanent Housing: 109 families.
- Meals provided: 1,898.
- Provided clothing &/or transportation to 99 individuals.

"Look where I was, look where I am now!"

#### **OUTREACH SERVICES**

BVCA provides outreach services to families in need. These services include family development case management, home visitation, education, information and referrals.

Case management families:

- \* 61% raised their incomes by 60% after only 6 months in the project.
- \* 42% raised incomes by 80% within a year of enrollment.
- \* 61% of families entering our homeless case management project now have permanent housing.

Information and referral services: 2,561 referrals for 710 households.

"... a recovering drug addict, who was once homeless, gives partial credit to BVCA's outreach workers for helping her turn her life around."

-Lincoln Journal Star

#### **EMERGENCY SERVICES**







"It can be devastating for people to ask for help, when they don't have enough food at home to feed their children."
-BVCA Outreach Staff

- Value of contributions of food, clothing and other goods: \$884,594.07.
- \* Days of food provided from pantries: 63,996 days.
- \* Ten families were provided with safe furnaces.
- \* 157 homes were weatherized.
- \* 127 domestic abuse victims were sheltered.
- \* 684 shelter beds were provided for abuse victims.
- \* 74 clients participated in domestic abuse case management.
- \* 118 Crisis Intervention Information Presentations were given.
- \* 3,122 individuals attended presentations on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault.
- \* 70 families were served for miscellaneous emergencies.

#### A BVCA CRISIS INTERVENTION CLIENT WRITES...

In October 1999, my son and I left a home we thought we'd be in forever. Due to the situations going on, I know that it was the right thing to do. Through my prayers God guided us to Blue Valley Community Action's Crisis Intervention Program. There I met the most dedicated staff of all time. They assisted us in getting everything we needed: shelter, clothing, food and most of all emotional support. They would say to me, "hang in there, you are doing a great job, look how far you've come." Those words are still with me this very day.

Now, almost two years later, through their warm, caring hearts, their knowledge and support we are getting better. My son is doing very well in school and making new friends. For myself, I'm working and recently purchased a new home.

Yes, I must say, "I hung in there and came a long way." I know in my heart I would not be where I am today without their help. God and Blue Valley Community Action have been with me every step of the way. Thank all of you at BVCA! You have touched our hearts in a very special way.

"My whole life has changed."



Domestic violence happens because we let it. And it will stop when we say it must.



#### HOUSING SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT

BVCA rents almost 140 housing units, which it has built over the past seven years. The organization also manages 17 units for a private developer and is currently developing five units in Geneva, ten units in York, sixteen units in Crete, fourteen units in Beatrice and four units in Odell.

The organization has built apartment houses, but now primarily builds individual family units via its "lease to own" projects for young families struggling to get a start in home ownership. It also helps with affordable housing for senior citizens.

Housing Rehabilitation was completed on 13 homes.

BVCA assisted 50 families with down payment assistance or low interest arrangements, leveraging \$2,628,031.

Bar-None Demonstration: Nebraska Correctional Inmates assist with area housing providing homes built near the prison. Two homes were transported to two BVCA sites.

Educated 55 families on homeownership methods and responsibilities and held regular counseling sessions for CROWN (lease to own) participants.



"We cannot begin to tell you what this program has done for our family."





"Thank you is not enough to express our happiness."



AND CONTRACTOR AND CONTRACTOR	Income	Assets
East Meadows, Ltd., Crete	\$32,620	\$449,775
West Meadows, Ltd., Crete	\$32,885	\$541,055
Pinegrove, Ltd., Wymore	\$28,075	\$683,597
Trailview, Ltd., Hebron	\$25,800	\$617,518
Crestland, Ltd., Beatrice	\$70,709	\$1,752,115
Sunset CROWN, Ltd., Beatrice	\$81,146	\$1,542,378
Total Total	\$271,235	\$5,586,438
Anticipated New Projects:		
Prairie Woods CROWN, Ltd., You	rk \$68,913	\$1,290,000
Blue Terrace CROWN, Ltd., Cret	e \$76,608	\$1,376,000
Total	\$145,521	\$2,666,000

#### **YOUTH SERVICES**

#### Juvenile Diversion:

- \* Eight teenagers graduated from the program.
- \* 13 additional references were received.
- \* Educational Outreach: staff support at risk youth but not yet within the justice system.
- \* Eight kids were referred for BVCA's Outreach Education Program.
- \* Five youth are currently involved in SE Nebraska Youth Council.

"The best thing that I learned in diversion class was that there are people out there who want to help...when we might need a second chance or simply steered in the right direction." -Juvenile Diversion Student

#### CHILDREN SERVICES



"I would highly recommend this center for anyone looking for exceptional child care."

The Blue River Child Development Program (BRCDP) serves families with infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school aged children with a wide range of child development and family services. BRCDP served 150 children last year.



Pictured above is a student and teacher using Language Assistance Technology.



Head Start and Early Head Start programs served 357 children and their families. The main components of the programs are: Early Childhood Development and Health Services; Family and Community Partnerships; and Program Design and Management. Comprehensive child development includes health, nutrition, social interactions, parent involvement, education and caring, dedicated teachers. This is why Head Start shines within the early childhood development field.







#### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**



Youth As Resource teens repairing bleachers at Quinn Field in Fairbury.

AmeriCorps and Nebraska Reads are national service initiatives through which individuals provide service to their community. Members provide conflict resolution skills, one-on-one tutoring, literacy activities, and enhancement programming to aid at risk youth.

- 3,500 kids were given drug and alcohol prevention education.
- \* Youth As Resources: service projects are completed throughout the area.
- 12 kids were helped with the School Suspension Tutoring Program.

BVCA provides volunteer opportunities in our **Community Centers.** includes such opportunities as volunteering in clothing rooms and food pantries, as a classroom aide, or holiday projects. with Volunteers can also serve on local County Advisory **Boards.** Policy Council or Board the **BVCA** 









454 volunteers helped out at Head Start and Early Head Start Centers.

Domestic Abuse Crisis Line had 1,249 hours of volunteer time donated.

The Foster Grandparent Program offers lower-income seniors a chance to pass on skills to needy youngsters. BVCA's program has 69 grandparents working 20 hours per week at 23 sites in 8 counties serving 289 needy children. Our Foster Grandparents have 60-91 years of experience.



"Dear Grandma, Thank you for always being there for me...Most of my math papers all have hundreds on them now..."



# Blue Valley Community Action

#### THE HOME OFFICE

620 5<sup>™</sup> STREET, P.O. BOX 273, FAIRBURY, NE 68352 PHONE: (402) 729-2278 FAX: (402) 729-2801 E-MAIL: bvca@alltel.net

BUTLER COUNTY HEAD START 284½ 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET DAVID CITY, NE 68632 PHONE: (402) 367-6037

FILLMORE COUNTY HEAD START 1600 I STREET GENEVA, NE 68361 PHONE: (402) 759-3699

GAGE COUNTY HEAD START 5109 WEST SCOTT RD., SUITE 412 BEATRICE, NE 68310 PHONE: (402) 223-6035

JEFFERSON COUNTY HEAD START 1303 B STREET FAIRBURY, NE 68352 PHONE: (402) 729-2161

JEWELL COUNTY HEAD START 301 NORTH WEST STREET, P.O. BOX 392 MANKATO, KS 66956 PHONE: (785) 378-3344

> SALINE COUNTY HEAD START 325 EAST 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET CRETE, NE 68333 PHONE: (402) 826-5221

SEWARD COUNTY HEAD START 412 FAITH LANE, P.O. BOX 53 SEWARD, NE 68434 PHONE: (402) 643-6272

SMITH COUNTY HEAD START 221½ S MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 282 SMITH CENTER, KS 66967 PHONE: (785) 282-6011

THAYER COUNTY HEAD START 335 EADS AVENUE HEBRON, NE 68370 PHONE: (402) 768-6727

YORK COUNTY HEAD START 414 DELAWARE AVENUE YORK, NE 68467 PHONE: (402) 362-4299 WYMORE HEAD START 517 NORTH 12<sup>TH</sup> STREET WYMORE, NE 68466 PHONE: (402) 645-3441

EARLY HEAD START, GAGE COUNTY 5109 WEST SCOTT ROAD, SUITE 412 BEATRICE, NE 68310 PHONE: (402) 223-6056

EARLY HEAD START, SALINE COUNTY 214 WEST 3<sup>RD</sup> STREET, BOX 723 WILBER, NE 68465 (402) 821-2335

BLUE RIVER FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER 325 EAST 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET, P.O. BOX 304
CRETE, NE 68333
PHONE: (402) 826-4216

BUTLER COUNTY FCS 416 E STREET, P.O. BOX 22 DAVID CITY, NE 68632 PHONE: (402) 367-4347

FILLMORE COUNTY FCS 130 SOUTH 8<sup>TH</sup> STREET GENEVA, NE 68361 PHONE: (402) 759-3564

GAGE COUNTY FCS 5109 WEST SCOTT RD, STE 402 BEATRICE, NE 68310 PHONE: (402) 223-6034

Jefferson County FCS 608 14<sup>TH</sup> Street Fairbury, NE 68352 Phone: (402) 729-5568

POLK COUNTY FCS 440 NEBRASKA AVENUE, P.O. BOX 63 OSCEOLA, NE 68651 PHONE: (402) 747-2102

> SALINE COUNTY FCS 245 EAST 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET, SUITE 1 CRETE, NE 68333 PHONE: (402) 826-2376

SEWARD COUNTY FCS 640 SEWARD STREET, P.O. BOX 342 SEWARD, NE 68434 PHONE: (402) 643-6425

> THAYER COUNTY FCS 135 NORTH 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET HEBRON, NE 68370 PHONE: (402) 768-6704

YORK COUNTY FCS 3401 NORTH LINCOLN AVENUE YORK, NE 68467 PHONE: (402) 362-3516

FILLMORE COUNTY TRANSIT 1120 F STREET GENEVA, NE 68361 PHONE: (402) 759-3345

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM 5109 WEST SCOTT RD STE 415 BEATRICE, NE 68310 PHONE: (402) 223-6036

SALINE COUNTY ELDERCARE 109 WEST 3<sup>RD</sup> STREET, P.O. BOX 812 WILBER, NE 68465 PHONE: (402) 821-3330

BVCI SALINE OFFICE 235 EAST 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET, SUITE 2 CRETE, NE 68333 PHONE: (402) 826-5727

BVCI YORK OFFICE 605 LINCOLN AVENUE, P.O. BOX 644 YORK, NE 68467 PHONE: (402) 362-4724

BVCI BEATRICE OFFICE 5109 WEST SCOTT RD, SUITE 407 BEATRICE, NE 68310 PHONE: (402) 223-6635

BVCA HOUSING OFFICE 1009½ MERIWETHER STREET, P.O. BOX 656 BEATRICE, NE 68310 PHONE: (402) 223-4221





### Hcknowledgment

Blue Valley Community Action, Inc., wishes to thank the great people of the States of Mebraska and Kansas who have made this nonprofit corporation a success. It is with the support of communities, individuals, volunteers, and dedicated staff that we develop and maintain our programs and services. Without your assistance and dedication, we would not have survived for 35 years. With your past support, we have grown. With your

present support, we thrive. With your continued support, we go forth and meet the challenge

of the future.







Valley / Community

**Action**