



Quarterly Connection

Our Mission

We overcome poverty by meeting basic needs, helping people grow, and collaborating in our communities.

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Our Leadership Team

Shari Weber
Chief Executive Officer
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Ryan Bailey
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Kim Clark
Housing Director
Kyanna Volkman
Children Services Director
Danielle Meade
Health & Nutrition Director
Roxanne Hammond
Human Resources Officer
Ben Schwartz
Communications & Development Director

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BVCA CELEBRATES COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH

2024 marks the 60th year since the Community Action Network was established to help American families and communities overcome obstacles to poverty. Over 1,000 agencies across the country are working every day to create opportunities and transform the lives of their neighbors making communities stronger and helping families across the U.S. thrive. This year, Blue Valley Community Action Partnership (BVCA), a proud member of the Community Action Network, will also commemorate 58 years of helping families throughout southeast Nebraska including the counties of Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Polk, Saline, Seward, Thayer and York (limited services are also offered in surrounding counties).

“Each May, during Community Action Month, we reflect on the impact BVCA and our network has had on families,” said Shari Weber, BVCA CEO. “Last year alone, we served 7,273 locally, and over 15 million across the country with immediately needed services such as shelter and food, and also long-term solutions like education.” BVCA provides services such as financial education, affordable rental housing, homeownership opportunities, weatherization and home rehabilitation, veteran services, nutrition assistance, WIC, immunizations, Head Start 0-5, emergency assistance, volunteer opportunities and so much more.

Community Action Agencies serve 99% of all American counties with life-changing services to help families achieve financial stability. All agencies are locally controlled and represented by the private, public, and low-income sectors of the community. “We are proud of our communities’ participation in the development and oversight of our programs,” said Weber. “Their engagement helps us to be more effective in our approach by determining local needs.” To celebrate the continued success of Community Action and raise awareness throughout southeastern Nebraska, BVCA will be hosting various events throughout the service area and highlighting on our Facebook page.

“There are no problems we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by ourselves.”
— Lyndon B. Johnson

COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH

Budgeting

Insurance Costs

Increases in Cost of Living

Prescription Costs

SAVING FOR THE FUTURE

PAYING BILLS

Heat & Air-Conditioning

Groceries

Diapers

Affording Healthy Food

Income

Baby Formula

Home Repairs

Economy

Homeownership

STARTING OVER

FUEL COSTS

Medical Expenses

Making Ends Meet

Heat & Air-Conditioning

Affordable & Safe Housing

Clothing

FOOD

Rent

Auto Repairs

Cleaning Supplies

UTILITIES

Stress

TRANSPORTATION

FINANCES

Debt

CHILDCARE

What does your family struggle with the most?

This is a question that Blue Valley Community Action Partnership asks those we serve. While their answers may not be all that different than the answers of a family with a larger and stable income, many with a lower income struggle just to meet their basic needs, such as having enough food, ensuring safe and stable housing, and essential health care.

For many of our family members, friends, and neighbors, any one of a hundred misfortunes can spell disaster. This includes unemployment, disability, car breakdowns, child care cost increases, sudden illnesses, and so many other everyday adversities that can be enough to push struggling families over the brink. Blue Valley Community Action Partnership offers solutions that don't just help people stay afloat, but build lives of stability, dignity and whenever possible, prosperity.

Not only does Blue Valley Community Action Partnership provide emergency assistance for food insecurity, utilities, rent, and unexpected expenses; we also help preschool children build the skills they need to succeed in school while ensuring they receive healthy food to assist with healthy development, we provide supplemental nutritional food to the elderly, we help make people's homes more energy efficient and lower their utility bills, we help people build assets and financial skills, we offer safe and affordable housing options, we help preserve homes, and build opportunities in our communities.

As BVCA improves the lives of people in our community, we also need our community to help us as so many of our services rely on grants and local community contributions. We request that you make a special Community Action Month gift. Your generosity will allow us to continue to change people's lives in your community. We have set a goal to raise \$10,000 during the month of May. With your contribution, this goal is within our reach. Please consider giving a donation to Blue Valley Community Action Partnership.

Your tax-deductible donation will be utilized to maintain our emergency assistance programs and services. As a part of our annual campaign, we will strive to double the impact of your donation through our match sponsors. Our top sponsors include: **Bukaty Companies, Reinke Manufacturing Company, Bruning Bank, Beatrice Community Hospital & Health Center, Crete City Bank & Trust, UNICO, Drake Refrigeration, Van Borkum Co., Lichti's Inc., and Fairbury Housing Authority.**

Your gift, of any amount, will make a difference in the lives of those we serve. We greatly appreciate your support! Together, we can **help people, change lives and strengthen our communities.**

Sincerely,

Shari Weber

Shari Weber
Chief Executive Officer

Please scan the QR Code if you would like to make an online donation.



Blue Valley Community Action Partnership | 620 5th Street, P.O. Box 273, Fairbury NE 68352 | (402) 729-2278 | www.bvca.net
BVCA is a 501(c)3, tax exempt organization. Donations are tax-exempt to the extent allowed by law.

YES! I want to support the work of Blue Valley Community Action Partnership.

Enclosed is my gift of:

- \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____

Go to www.bvca.net to give online.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- Select this box if you'd like to be added to our email list and we'll keep you close to what's happening at BVCA.



Thank You

Blue Valley Community Action Partnership would like to thank the businesses who sponsored our 2024 "Make a Difference" Annual Campaign & Advocacy Walk.

Corporate Sponsors Include:



OTHER SPONSORS INCLUDE:

Van Borkum Co., Drake Refrigeration, Lichti's Inc.,
Kiwanis Foundation and Fairbury Housing Authority.

In addition, we'd also like to extend our thanks to the individuals who have personally donated to our Annual Campaign. Your contribution will help those struggling to maintain economic stability.

VOLKMAN NAMED BVCA CHILDREN SERVICES DIRECTOR



BVCA is pleased to announce that Kyanna Volkman has joined the agency as the new Children Services Director. She will oversee the Head Start, Early Head Start, Blue River Early Learning Academy, and the Infant Toddler Quality Initiative programs for BVCA. She will play a critical role in ensuring that all young children are prepared for academic and lifelong success. Kyanna was kind enough to answer some questions about herself so our communities can get to know her a little better!

When did you join BVCA as Children Services Director? I joined BVCA in October 2023.

Can you tell us a bit about your personal, educational and professional background? I received a Bachelor of Science and Business in Agriculture, a minor in Leadership Studies nonprofit option, and earned a certificate in Nonprofit Organizational Leadership from Kansas State University.

I grew up highly involved in 4-H, FFA and other leadership-based organizations. I enjoyed service projects and creating impact on my community. When I was young, my older brother was diagnosed with cancer. My family received a tremendous amount of support from our community and other foundations. This support was a huge determining factor in our success story. It inspired me to join the Leadership Studies Department at Kansas State University to study nonprofit structures so that one day I could offer the support that I had received. The department also allowed me to continue doing service projects and work with the Riley County Community. The projects I took the most interest in were battling food insecurity, poverty, and mental health awareness for youth.

What inspired you to get into the field of Early Childhood Education? Being a witness to childhood cancer at a young age has always given me an extra appreciation for those who work with children in all shapes and forms. As an adult, I remember the support our family received and believe it was this that put me on the path to become who I am today. BVCA's Children Services Department has the ability to build confidence and inspire these children by creating a solid foundation for them in their formative years. That inspired me to want to join their team and continue the impact they make every day.

What have you found most rewarding with BVCA? While I have experience working in nonprofits, I do not have a direct background in early childhood development and education. However, this has been a motivating factor as I grow in this position. I have a great team who are true experts of their craft and have made this transition exciting. I love the mission of BVCA and the people I get to work with every day.

BVCA ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



BVCA Partnership is pleased to announce the recipients of the "Blue Valley Community Action Partnership Scholarship", the "BVCA Partnership Vocational Scholarship" and the BVCA Partnership SCC Scholarship for the 2023-2024 school year.

These scholarships are awarded to individuals with diverse backgrounds. The selection committee, which is composed of members of the BVCA Partnership Board of Directors, takes into consideration such items as financial need, volunteerism, the applicant's aspirations and goals for furthering their education. Scholarships can be used for tuition, books, and fees associated with enrollment. All scholarships are in the amount of \$1,000.

The recipients of the "Blue Valley Community Action Partnership Scholarship" are Jordan Bococle of Crete NE and Julya Metschke of Seward NE. The recipient of the "BVCA Partnership SCC Scholarship" is Cody Colson of Wymore NE. Congratulations to all scholarship recipients!



**Blue Valley
Community
Action**

2023 IMPACT REPORT

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023

Blue Valley Community Action Partnership assisted **7,273** individuals by offering life-changing services that provide solutions to help build lives of stability, dignity and prosperity.

3,290 children | **3,025** adults | **958** elderly

Of the **6,062** individuals enrolled in goal-setting programs, **5,907** achieved one or more outcomes.

housing

346 individuals obtained safe, affordable housing.

59 individuals obtained safe, temporary housing, which was 86% of those enrolled.

453 individuals avoided eviction or foreclosure.
287 evictions prevented | **166** foreclosures prevented

1,588 individuals maintained independent living.

87 individuals received services resulting in their home being weatherized, preserved, and/or otherwise improved.

129 individuals were provided Housing Counseling, which includes homebuyer, rental and mortgage education as well as case management.

financial stability

86 people increased their financial knowledge and skills.

94 people increased their savings and assets.

46 unemployed individuals obtained a job to improve employment skills or increase income, which is 72% of those enrolled.

education & cognitive development

340 children became school ready.

234 children improved social and emotional skills.

223 improved positive approaches toward learning.

1,046 families improved their family functioning skills.

2,841 adults and children received educational case management.

health & well being

3,555 people received nutritious food.

2,229 individuals demonstrated improved health and well being.

1,864 physical health | **365** mental and behavioral health

171 received dental screenings and exams.

376 received immunizations.

2,818 received physicals.

261 received vision screenings.

1,162 received developmental screenings.

1,840 received substance abuse screenings.

604 received mental health assessments.

community building

546 volunteers engaged in activities to support BVCA, themselves and the community.

511 community volunteers | **35** foster grandparents

Volunteers donated **24,251** hours that were valued at **\$527,888**.

14 child care centers and their employees improved their quality of care by participating in professional development training and support provided by BVCA.

human resources

218 individuals were employed.

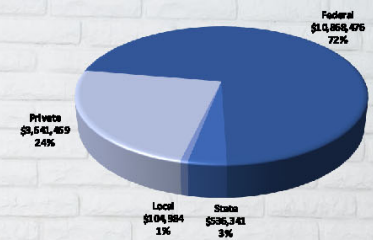
Employees are based throughout our service area:

- 1 employee in Butler County
- 4 employees in Douglas County
- 16 employees in Fillmore County
- 24 employees in Gage County
- 53 employees in Jefferson County
- 0 employees in Polk County
- 43 employees in Saline County
- 10 employees in Seward County
- 5 employees in Thayer County
- 28 employees in York County

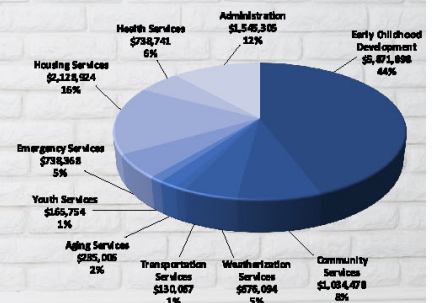
Benefit value per hour is **\$5.61** includes health, vision, dental, retirement, life and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

funding & resources

\$15,151,270 in funding was secured. For each of those dollars, \$.88 was used to meet the needs of BVCA's clients and mission.



\$13,264,635 was expended to provide quality service in our communities.



THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

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. Visit us at www.bvca.net

agency-wide client demographics

Race

- 94% of clients are Caucasian
- 2.2% of clients are African American
- 2.5% of clients are Multi-Racial
- .7% of clients are American Indian/Alaska Native
- .5% of clients are Asian
- .1% of clients are Native Hawaiian

Ethnicity

- 71% of clients are non-Hispanic
- 29% of clients are Hispanic/Latino

Gender

- 54% of clients are female
- 46% of clients are male
- >0% of clients identified as other

Age

- 46% of clients are between the ages of 0-17
- 44% of clients are between the ages of 18-64
- 10% of clients are 65 or older

Education Level

- 12% of clients are college/tech graduates
- 12% of clients are High School graduates with some college
- 45% of clients are High School graduates or received their GED
- 31% of clients have not yet or did not complete high school

Housing

- 62% of clients rent their homes
- 26% of client households own their homes
- 8% of clients are homeless
- 3% of clients have other permanent housing
- 1% of clients have provisional arrangements

Family Structure

The average community family size is 2.51 people per household compared to the average BVCA client family size of 3.

Family Size:

- 39% One Person
- 17% Two Persons
- 15% Three Persons
- 12% Four Persons
- 9% Five Persons
- 8% Six or More Persons

Household Types:

- 39% Single Persons
- 29% Two Parents
- 19% Single Parent
- 10% Couple, No Children
- 2% Multigenerational
- 1% Other

Employment Status

- 53.8% of adults were employed, either part-time or full-time, during the past year
- 31.8% of adults were not in the labor force
- 14.4% of adults were retired

Military Status

- 270 clients reported that they are veterans
- 2 clients reported that they are active military

Income

Percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and percent of clients at those levels:

50% or less	30%	101%-125%	16%
51%-75%	13%	126%-200%	19%
76%-100%	19%	201% or higher	3%
	64%		36%

What does it mean in real dollars for a family of four?

- 50% of poverty is \$15,600 gross
- 100% of poverty is \$31,200 gross
- 125% of poverty is \$39,000 gross
- 200% of poverty is \$62,400 gross

Current Nebraska minimum wage is \$12.00 per hour or \$24,960 full-time gross, significantly below the poverty rate for a family of four.

Community Action Month

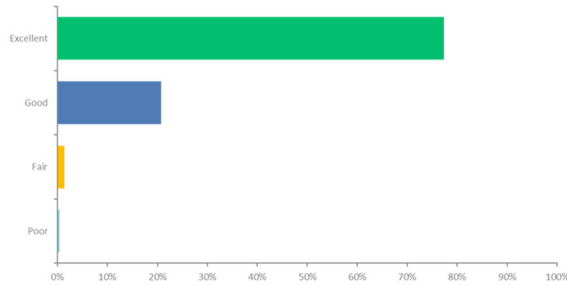
Community Action
VALUES

We believe that with hope, adequate resources and opportunities, everyone can reach their fullest potential, and we are committed to achieving that vision.

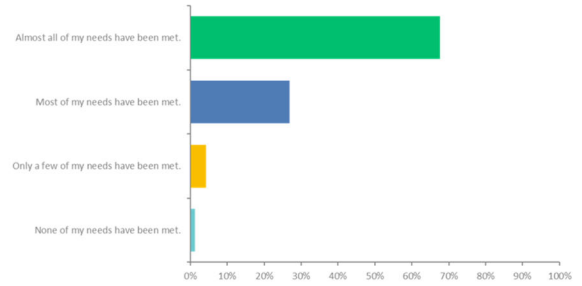
CONSUMER FEEDBACK REPORT—FY 2023

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023 | Total Responses: 703

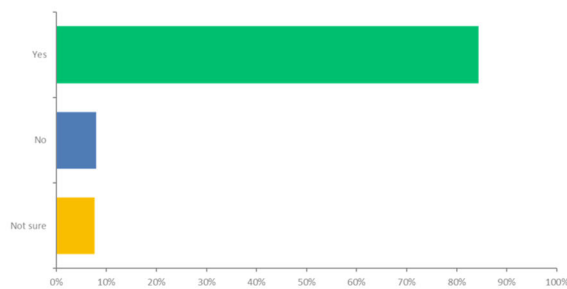
Overall, how would you rate the quality of services received as part of this program?



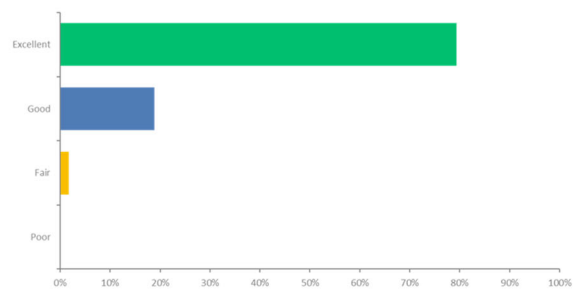
To what extent have the services provided through this program met your needs?



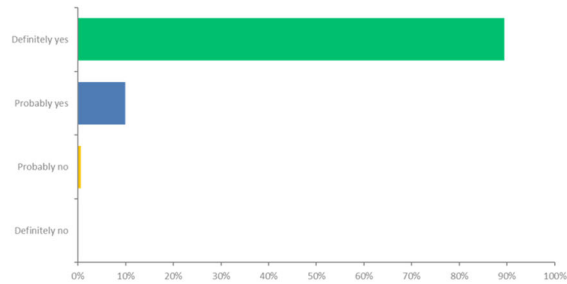
Did staff members offer you additional information about other programs that might help you and your family?



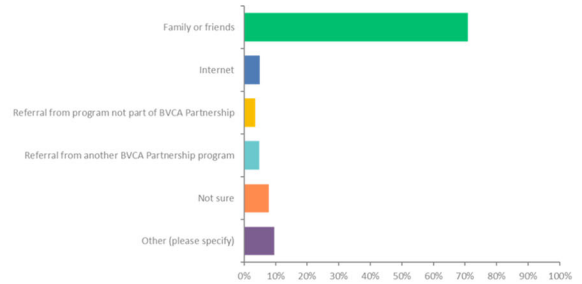
How would you rate staff members' knowledge of BVCA Partnership's programs and services?



Would you recommend this program or service to others?

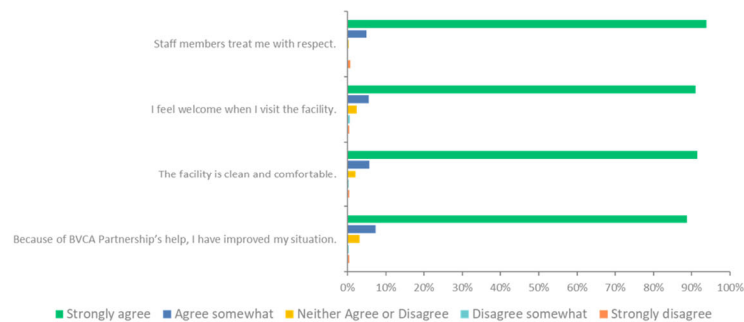


How did you hear about this program or service?



"Other" responses included: Newspaper, Health Care Providers, School, VA, Yard Sign, Past Recipient of Services (themselves or others), Work, Familiar with BVCA, BVBH, Rent Sign, DHHS, Pamphlet, Neighbor, Past Employee, Food Bank, Medicare Office, Welfare Office, Local Shelter, Radio, New Visions, Sixpence

Please mark your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:



WHAT DOES YOUR FAMILY STRUGGLE WITH THE MOST?



Community Action Month

Community Action

VALUES



We believe that this nation has the capacity and moral obligation to ensure that no one is forced to endure the hardships of poverty.

FORMER BVCA CEO INDUCTED INTO HALL OF FAME AWARD IN NATION'S CAPITAL



On March 14, 2024, National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) honored many at their Annual Policy and Advocacy Conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. Two awards included Nebraska natives—former CEO of Blue Valley Community Action Partnership (BVCA), Richard “Rick” Nation, and Community Action of Nebraska’s Executive Director, Tina Rockenbach.

Professionals from all over the United States convened in the nation’s capital to engage in conversation with Congressional leaders regarding the work of Community Action and the people they serve. Attendees also spent a day at Capitol Hill with Nebraska Congressional Representatives to discuss more specifically how to produce effective solutions to current economic challenges.

During the Conference, Rick Nation, Former CEO of BVCA, was inducted in the inaugural class of Community Action Hall of Fame. Rick served as CEO of BVCA for over 40 years and was actively involved in advocacy work that helped lead the way for Nebraska. He engaged with law makers to prioritize advocacy within the state network and became involved with policy makers by being the face and voice of those served in Nebraska. He continues to stay actively involved in advocacy as it relates to Community Action and its fight against poverty.

When asked about Rick’s contributions, current BVCA CEO, Shari Weber, stated, “Rick was an extraordinary leader whose passion was to create programs and effect legislation to improve the lives of those in need. He had a knack for thinking outside of the box and he wasn’t afraid to challenge the status quo.”



Receiving the award for an Outstanding State Association in Supporting NCAF’s Federal advocacy efforts will be Community Action of Nebraska’s Executive Director, Tina Rockenbach. Rockenbach has become a pivotal part of the States advocacy efforts by following in the footsteps of Rick Nation. Rockenbach shared, “When I became the Executive Director of Community Action of Nebraska almost three years ago, one of my goals included increasing advocacy efforts and to get our state back to the level of involvement motivated by Rick Nation. I want to regain our voice on both the State and National Level for Nebraska. To remind people in our state who we are and what we do. That Community Action is available to help anyone.” Rockenbach will be 1 of 10 from Community Action State Associations across the nation to be recognized.

Nebraska is proud to have such leaders in the war against poverty and living the mission of helping people and changing lives. We are honored to celebrate these two individuals who continue to work to fulfill the Promise of Community Action: *“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.”*

JOIN OUR TEAM | BEGIN YOUR CAREER OF HELPING PEOPLE & CHANGING LIVES

BVCA has several positions available! Visit www.bvca.net and select “Careers” to find out more about our career opportunities and benefits. Visit <https://bvca.hireclick.com/jobboard> to apply.



Blue Valley Community Action Partnership's 2nd Quarter Outreach

Case Management	200	Individuals
Childcare Services	17	Individuals
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)	393	Individuals
Compassionate Projects	0	Individuals
COVID-19 Vaccines	7	Vaccinations
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership	34	Individuals
Early Head Start Home Based Services	76	Individuals
Early Head Start & Head Start Childcare Food Program	11,606	Meals & Snacks
Emergency Assistance	69	Households
Financial Coaching	56	Individuals
Food Rescue/Security	422	Households
Foster Grandparent Program	27	Individuals
Friends of Blue Valley Volunteer Program	306	Individuals
Head Start	197	Individuals
Homeownership Opportunity Program	0	Households
Housing Counseling	56	Individuals
Immunization Program	203	Shots
Infant Quality Initiative Program	9	Individuals
Lease-to-Own	46	Households
Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program (Shelter)	3	Households
Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation	0	Households
Project FIRST TH/RRH (Families In Residence with Support in Transition/Rapid Re-Housing)	7	Households
Project FYRES (Focused Youth on Rehousing, Empowerment & Stability)	10	Households
Rental Apartments/Duplexes	94	Households
Rental Elderly Apartments	28	Households
SNAP Outreach (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)	20	Applications
SSI-SSDI Outreach, Access & Recovery (SOAR)	5	Individuals
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)	78	Individuals
Telehealth	0	Individuals
Thrift Stores	800	Individuals
Transportation	1660	Rides
Weatherization	13	Households
WIC Peer Counseling	20	Individuals
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	1010	Individuals



WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Visit us at www.bvca.net for more information about the programs we offer and how to apply.

The Promise of Community Action

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.