

KV CAP Connector

Building Stronger Individuals,
Families and Communities

Kennebec Valley Community Action Program



Issue: Summer 2020

KVCAP Employees Deserve a Gold Star!



Chief Executive Officer
Suzanne Walsh

At the beginning of the pandemic, KVCAP closed its doors to the public, but we never stopped providing assistance to people in need! Our staff members quickly pivoted to using new and creative methods in order to stay connected to the individuals and families in our community.

Chief Operating Officer-
Community Services
Michele Prince

Our Transportation Department reduced the number of riders in our vehicles and equipped all of our drivers with the supplies needed to keep everyone safe and healthy, while maintaining access to essential services. The Fuel Assistance program switched from in-person visits to completing applications over the phone, ensuring that people could receive their benefits and stay warm in their homes. Our Home Visitors moved to the zoom platform to stay connected to their families, offering hundreds of hours of support and guidance – many families actually requested an increase in “visits” as they struggled with the isolation created by Covid-19.

Chief Operating Officer –
Child & Family Services
Tracye Fortin

While our parenting educators and childcare and preschool programs were forced to halt in-person learning, they quickly developed e-learning options and maintained on-going relationships with their families. They distributed hundreds of care packages with food, hygiene and household supplies, along with activities that parents could enjoy with their children during the stay-at-home order. Over 30,000 diapers were delivered to families in need!

Chief Administrative
Officer
Cathy Kershner

The South End Teen Center offered daily virtual “Teen Time” sessions with members, creating an on-going support network for the teens. It also allowed staff to assess any challenges their families were facing, and to identify solutions so that they were able to remain safely at home. The staff also partnered with the Alford Youth Center and Waterville Public Schools to provide on-site food for neighborhood residents without easy access to alternate feeding sites, serving more than 5,000 meals.

Board of Directors

Heather Merrow
President
Dennis Carrillo
Vice President
Richard Staples
Treasurer
Michael Mitchell
Secretary
Denver Brown
Matthew Chabot
Anna Court
Sheryl Gregory
Michael Mosley
Flavia Oliveira
Richard St. Pierre
Pamela Thompson

Using contributions from individuals, businesses, and foundations, our Community Initiatives team swiftly created and implemented an Emergency Covid-19 financial assistance program. They also took on the Maine Housing Rent Relief program, having both up and running in record time. So far



these two programs have helped thousands of people maintain their stability during the pandemic, assisting with rent payments, utilities, food, internet service, cell phone expenses and other basic needs.

“It was so encouraging to watch all of our employees doing everything within their power to make sure people’s needs were being addressed during this unprecedented time,” shares KVCAP’s CEO, Suzanne Walsh. “Everyone has displayed an incredibly positive attitude and their actions highlight the profound compassion and dedication they have for the entire community. I am extremely proud of each and every member of our KVCAP team.”



www.kvcap.org

Covid-19 Rental Relief Program – Round 2



MaineHousing continues to partner with KVCAP to implement the second round of the Covid-19 Emergency Rental Relief program, which began on August 1st. The expanded

Rent Relief Program is for renters who cannot afford to pay their rent due to circumstances related to the Covid-19 pandemic. People can apply for this expanded assistance even if they applied and received funds under the first round of the program. This round provides up to \$1,000 per month for a maximum of three months for rent not covered by any other Federal, State or Local program. The three month period is for prior months and/or the current month. You can apply online at kvcap.org or mainehousing.org or by calling KVCAP at 859-1500.

Cold Nights Coming Soon!

We have begun scheduling Fuel Assistance appointments for the 2020/21 season! The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) serves Somerset, Kennebec, Lincoln and Sagadahoc counties, providing assistance for income eligible household's to offset the rising costs of home energy, whether you have wood, electric, gas, or oil heat. The benefit is paid directly to the client's fuel vendor of choice. This year, due to Covid-19, the majority of appointments will be conducted by telephone. To learn more about the program or to schedule an appointment online visit kvcap.org. People without internet service can call 859-1500.



Mark Johnston Memorial Golf Tournament Update!

Our 6th annual golf tournament was scheduled for June 26th, but due to the pandemic, we have rescheduled the event for **October 2nd at Lakewood Golf Course** in Madison. This fall our tournament will look a bit different than our past events. We are using staggered tee-times and other measures to ensure the safety of all of our players. Instead of a luncheon and awards banquet, we will be providing premade box lunches so players can eat on the course. Just imagine the beauty of the fall foliage in the heart of Maine in October!



This year we have also changed our fundraising focus from public transportation to our highest priority: helping people financially affected by Covid-19. In March and April we received many donations to assist these community members, but the funds are quickly being depleted. For many, the loss of jobs, the recent reduction in unemployment benefits, and lack of childcare continue to negatively affect so many families! Unfortunately, we predict these challenges will continue for some time.

This event continues to be held in Mark's honor. He was our Chief Financial Officer for over 20 years and was a staunch supporter of Community Action. Mark passed away nearly two years ago, but we know he would be proud to represent an event that will help our neighbors preserve their stability during this crisis. To date we have helped over 2,000 people access food and hygiene supplies, avoid eviction, maintain their utilities and vehicles, and access other basic necessities.

We are still in need of event sponsors...and we have room for more teams! If you are interested, please contact Andrea Pasco at 859-1630 or andreap@kvcap.org as soon as possible. October 2nd is right around the corner!

The Explorer – A Safe Transportation Option

At KVCAP, we want to assure everyone that our Kennebec and Somerset Explorer public bus system continues to provide a safe and healthy trip for every rider *and* driver. Our drivers' number one priority is to get their riders safely to their destination. They use personal protective equipment at all times and clean the buses throughout the day. We also have masks and hand sanitizer for any rider in need.

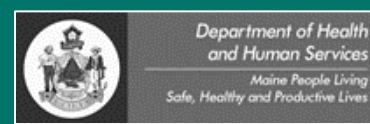
Because of Covid-19, some of our previous routes are not running on a regular schedule...BUT, you can easily arrange a ride by calling 859-1500!

Whether you're heading to the grocery store, to work, to school, or to visit a local business, we have taken all the steps needed to ensure that everyone rides safely on the Explorer, your local public transit system.

Enjoy the ride!



Kennebec Valley Community Action Program
101 Water Street, Waterville
26 Mary Street, Skowhegan
22 Armory Street, Augusta
Phone: 207-859-1500 • Toll-Free: 1-800-542-8227
www.kvcap.org



Thank you to all who provide funding for our services. KVCAP is funded in part by Community Services Block Grant, DHHS, United Way and NeighborWorks® America.