

60TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

CREATING A PATH TO OPPORTUNITY SINCE 1965

FOUR

THE FARGO FORUM and

Today's Editorial

Program Which Will Help People Help Themselves Council's Goal

"We seek to develop workable programs in our two counties that will develop human resources . . . programs that will help people to eventually help themselves."

ing in May 1965 in the Clay County Courthouse, through a series of 1965 meetings here, in Barnesville and Breckenridge there has run some feelings of

Sactre and Dr. Tonn spelled out at a meeting last July in Breckenridge.

"We can strive to develop new imaginative programs to help develop self-supporting self-respecting citizens



A YEAR IN REVIEW

60th

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to present CAPLP's 2025 annual report and to share the progress we have made together in advancing our mission and strengthening our community. This year was especially meaningful as CAPLP celebrated its 60th anniversary in August, a milestone that honored 6 decades of partnership, service, and commitment to fighting the war on poverty. While the past year brought new and ongoing challenges for the individuals and families we serve, it also highlighted the resilience of our community and the dedication of our staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters.

Throughout 2025, CAPLP continued to respond to growing needs with compassion, innovation, and determination. From expanding services to strengthening partnerships and supporting families through difficult times, our team remained focused on ensuring that people have access to opportunity, stability, and hope.

We are incredibly proud of what has been accomplished and grateful for the role each of you plays in making this work possible. Most importantly we are proud to stand alongside an amazing team whose passion and commitment drive our mission forward every day. Their work reminds us that even in challenging times, progress is possible when we work together.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in CAPLP's mission. We invite you to explore this report and celebrate the impact we are making together as we continue building a stronger future for the communities we serve.



Lori Schwartz
joined CAPLP in
1997 as a Head
Start Teacher!



Lori Schwartz
Executive Director
CAPLP



Paul Krabbenhoft
Board Chair
CAPLP

CAPLP AT A GLANCE

MISSION

We Eliminate Poverty by Empowering Families and Engaging Communities.

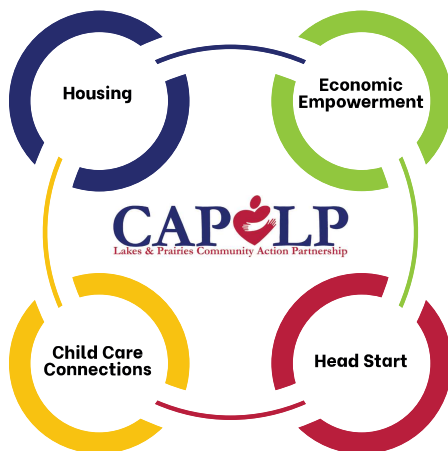
VISION

We are a strong responsive organization that provides hope and life-changing opportunities for people to help themselves and each other.

VALUES

- Raise the Bar
- Be Brave
- Do the Right Thing
- Care for Each Other
- Help People

PROGRAMS



There is no one program that can solve poverty alone, which is why CAPLP's programs are dispersed amongst four divisions that work together to help build stability, opportunity and hope for those that are struggling the most.

CAPLP takes a whole family approach to fighting poverty. Our programs are not standalone; they are interconnected supports designed to help people move from crisis to stability to opportunity.

We meet people where they are and surround them with resources that work together to build strong foundations for success.

In 2025, over 130 team members provided services throughout Northwest Region of Minnesota as well as the entire State of North Dakota.

BY THE NUMBERS

5,515

Clients Served

278

HEAD START & EARLY
HEAD START KIDS SERVED

443

OBTAINED SAFE,
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

1,281

RECEIVED TAX PREP
ASSISTANCE

234

CONNECTED TO
HEALTH INSURANCE

26

OBTAINED LIVING
WAGE EMPLOYMENT

457

CHILDREN RECEIVED
CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES

41

CHILD CARE START-UP
GRANTS PROVIDED

67

RECEIVED FINANCIAL
SKILLS TRAINING

225

AVOIDED EVICTION

2,923

ACHIEVED AT LEAST ONE OUTCOME

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

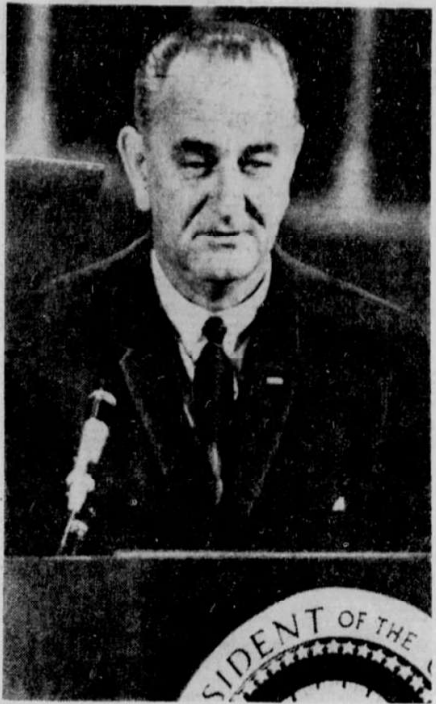
- Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
- Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.
- People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities.
- Agency capacity supports high achievement.
- Organizational culture built on embracing perspectives.
- Employees continue to be engaged and active in shaping the future of CAPLP and understand their impact on the Community Action movement.

THE WAR ON POVERTY

THE BEGINNING OF COMMUNITY ACTION

LBJ's Message on Poverty

HELPING PEOPLE, CHANGING LIVES



President Lyndon B. Johnson, in his United Nations speech, called for the establishment of an "alliance for man" to fight poverty, the arms race and the population explosion around the world. AP Wirephoto

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared an "unconditional war on poverty," recognizing it not just as an individual struggle, but as a national challenge. This call to action led to the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act, which created Community Action Agencies across the country.

These agencies were built on a powerful idea: that local communities are best equipped to understand their needs and create meaningful solutions. By focusing on both immediate support and long-term stability, Community Action shifted the approach from temporary relief to lasting change.

More than 60 years later, that mission continues, carried forward by Community Action Agencies like CAPLP.

President Johnson says: "The war on poverty is not a struggle simply to support people, to make them dependent on the generosity of others. It is a struggle to give people a chance." Then he proposes government job training and employment programs.

The Economic Opportunity Act offers opportunity for those who serve and for those who will be served.

No community needs to remain untouched by this truly national effort. The Congress, by joining the President's war on poverty, has made it an American war on poverty.

We intend to fight and win it that way.

Attack on Poverty

In this budget I have provided over \$1 billion of new obligational authority to begin an all-out attack on the problem of poverty in the United States. In a nation as rich and productive as ours we cannot tolerate a situation in which millions of Americans do not have the education, health, and job opportunities for a decent and respected place as productive citizens

Poverty stems from no one source, but reflects a multitude of causes. Correspondingly, a number of individual programs have been developed over the years to attack these individual problems of job opportunities, education, and training. Other specific programs deal with the closely related areas of health, housing, welfare, and agricultural services. I propose to establish a means of bringing to-

establish a means of bringing together these separate programs—federal, state, and local—in an effort to achieve a unified and intensified approach to this complex problem, in which each separate element reinforces the others.

Under this proposal, locally initiated, comprehensive community action programs would be developed, to focus the various available resources on the roots of poverty in urban and rural areas. I shall shortly transmit to the Congress legislation initiating this attack and authorizing, in 1965, \$500 million of new obligational authority specifically for this purpose... All told, in 1965 more than \$1 billion of federal resources under existing and proposed legislation would be concentrated, through local community action programs, in an intensive and co-ordinated attack on poverty...

Facts about Community Action Agencies:

■ Community Action Agencies are governed by tripartite boards of directors whose members come from three diverse segments of the local community. At least one-third must represent the low-income community, up to one-third from the private sector and exactly one-third must be public official appointees.

■ Community Action Agencies serve 99 percent of the nation's cities and counties and are primary sources of support for the more than 38 million Americans living in poverty in both rural and urban areas.

■ The core source of funding comes from the Community Services Block Grant which was created in 1981 by the Omnibus Reconciliation Act. CSBG funding accounts for less than 8 percent of the Community Action Agency funding. CAAs have been consistently successful in leveraging an average of \$13 for every \$1 of CSBG funding.

Local Efforts

Second, through a new community action program we intend to strike at poverty at its source—in the streets of our cities and on the farms of our countryside, among the very young and the impoverished old.

This program asks men and women throughout the country to prepare long-range plans for the attack on poverty in their own local communities.

These are not plans prepared in Washington and imposed upon hundreds of different situations. They are based on the fact that local citizens best understand their own problems, and know best how to deal with those problems.

These plans will be local plans striking at the many unfilled needs which underlie poverty in each community, not just one or two. Their components and emphasis will differ as needs differ.

CAPLP HISTORY

IN THE HEADLINES

First Step Taken to Establish Clay-Wilkin Anti-Poverty Plan

Clay County DFL leaders were elected to key roles Wednesday as first steps were taken to form a Clay-Wilkin council to encourage establishment of the administration's Economic Opportunity Act (anti-poverty) program in the area.

This is the first step in forming a non-profit corporation that will establish and staff a full-time office to aid communities of the two counties in applying for federal aid.

Federal approval of a local program, according to the fact sheet, "depends on a community's determination to (1) mobilize its own public and private resources, (2) develop programs of sufficient scope and size that promise to eliminate causes of poverty, (3) involve the poor themselves in developing and operating the anti-poverty attacks and (4) administer and coordinate the programs through public or private non-profit agencies or a combination of these."

Clay-Wilkin Group Meets Opportunity Council Emphasis Expected on Youth Programs

BRECKENRIDGE, Minn. — Proposed articles of incorporation for the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council reviewed here Wednesday by the temporary council place particular emphasis on using federal Economic Opportunity Act programs to aid underprivileged youths.

The articles, drawn by Clay Juvenile Judge Gaylord Saetre of Moorhead, will be formally adopted at a joint meeting of the Clay and Wilkin county commissions, expected next week.

Once the articles are adopted by the commissions and approved by the secretary of state, official council members from the two counties can be seated and formal steps taken to apply for initial program grants.

SATURDAY, July 17, 1965

Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Articles Adopted

BRECKENRIDGE, Minn. — Members of the Clay and Wilkin county commissions, in joint session here, adopted articles of incorporation as a first step in organization of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council.

The council will supervise the launching in the two counties of federal government programs created by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

THE FARGO FORUM and Moorhead News

Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Directors Named

Names of the 15 persons appointed by the Clay and Wilkin county boards to serve as the first board of directors of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council have been released.

After formal organization has been accomplished, the council will apply to the federal government for funds to staff a bi-county administrative office, which will help various governing bodies and other organizations establish aid programs under the federal government's Economic Opportunity Act.

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Clay-Wilkin Poverty Group Chooses Name, Officers

Dr. Martin Tonn, chairman of the special education department at Moorhead State College, was elected Tuesday to head what will be called the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council, according to the Fargo Forum.

They also decided to have their ten-man executive board draw up articles of incorporation and make suggestions about hiring a staff.

A full-time director, assistant director and secretary will be chosen to help communities in the two counties get federal aid for their anti-poverty projects.

WEDNESDAY, June 23, 1965

EVENING

Anti-Poverty Director Qualifications Topic

BARNESVILLE, Minn.—Members of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council agreed here Tuesday on general qualifications for the director and assistant director they intend to hire to develop the federal anti-poverty programs in the two counties.

Though the embryo council does not yet have its articles of incorporation or any approval from federal authorities for a program development grant, members indicated written applications may be submitted now.

The 19 council members present agreed applications for the two top staff posts should be sent to Dr. Martin Tonn, council chairman, at Moorhead State College.

They agreed, also, that the council's 10-man executive board will do the actual hiring. Women may apply as well as men.

Clay-Wilkin Unit Okays Budget

The board of directors of the newly formed Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council approved a budget of \$33,548 for a year at a meeting Wednesday evening.

Of this amount \$29,813 is being requested from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) for the administration of the program. The budget allows for two staff people, secretarial help and other expenses such as travel.

Clay-Wilkin Council Names Subcommittee

A subcommittee has been named to enumerate the duties and benefits of an executive director of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council, the local anti-poverty program board.

CAPLP HISTORY

IN THE HEADLINES

Today's Editorial

Program Which Will Help People Help Themselves Council's Goal

"We seek to develop workable programs in our two counties that will develop human resources . . . programs that will help people to eventually help themselves."

This statement was made by Dr. Martin Tonn, chairman of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council, just after the local council received notification of its initial federal grant of \$27,424 to establish an office and hire a full-time director.

"The majority of council members I'm sure look on this program as an investment in a better future, not as a dole type of welfare give-away," he added.

Such a goal may not be unique in the young history of the federal government's Economic Opportunity Program. It may already be successfully guiding antipoverty program development in other parts of the state and nation.

Thursday, June 2, 1966

Opportunity Unit Hires Principal

A rural Moorhead man who has been a high school principal in North Dakota the past four years has been hired as full-time director of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council.

He is Frank McLaughlin, 47, a resident of Oakport and principal and teacher in North Central High in Colfax, N. D.

Dr. Martin Tonn of Moorhead, council chairman, said it is anticipated McLaughlin can start his work June 8. Office quarters for the bi-county council are expected to be established in the old post office building in Moorhead.

Clay-Wilkin Anti-Poverty Group Seeks Funds for Six Projects

Requests for all six projects will be submitted in September, after preparation of them has been completed by Clay-Wilkin's 3-member antipoverty staff — McLaughlin, a former high school English teacher and

principal at Colfax, N.D.; Asst. Director James Moulsoff, a former county highway worker at Breckenridge, and Mrs. Gaylord Ahneman, their secretary. Scarcity of funds may require several projects to be delayed for a year, McLaughlin said.

Head Start Plan Urged In All School Districts

The federal government's Head Start program for pre-school children from low-income families should be adopted by all school districts, even small ones, a Head Start administrator said in Moorhead.

"We know we have a lot to learn about this thing called the educational process, and that a lot of change is going to come about in education.

"Head Start intends to be the catalyst for this change.

"Head Start is much more important than your schools—or in a few years we will find ourselves in such a burden of welfare payments to the unemployed that we will never be able to pay the bill unless we start on it today."

The Moorhead School District, which this summer enrolled about 90 children in Head Start, is the only district in Clay and Wilkin counties to enter the 8-week summer Head Start program, which is supported 100 per cent by federal grants.

The answer, he said, lies in educating every person to the fullest of his abilities — and Head Start has proven successful in getting low-income children off to a good start in their schooling, he said.

(Head Start is one part of

President Johnson's War on Poverty that has gone almost without criticism from Republicans, as Capitol Hill debate this week on the fiscal 1967 budget demonstrates.)

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Opportunity Unit Receives Funds

The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Inc. has received its \$27,424 federal anti-poverty grant and is now able to go ahead with its plan of action for the coming year, Chairman Martin H. Tonn of Moorhead said Monday.

The council will meet next Tuesday to hire a full-time director to supervise their projects, Tonn said.

Wilkin Man Appointed to Poverty Post

Directors of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council hired a full-time assistant executive director at a meeting Tuesday in Moorhead to help develop and administer council programs.

He is James Moulsoff, 32, Breckenridge, Minn., an employee of the Wilkin County Highway Department the past six years.

Moulsoff was recommended by a 3-man directors' committee appointed to interview prospects and by Frank McLaughlin of rural Moorhead, executive director. Six applicants were considered.



Opportunity: The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council office in Moorhead's old post office building is now fully manned with last week's appointment by council directors of James Moulsoff (left) of Breckenridge as assistant executive director. Pictured with Moulsoff in the office are Frank McLaughlin, rural Moorhead, executive director, and Mrs. Gaylord (Marion) Ahneman of Moorhead, office secretary. These three will handle the administrative details involved in efforts by the bi-county 60-man citizens council to formulate new educational and welfare projects in the two counties that can qualify for various aids under the federal government's Economic Opportunity Act. (Forum Photo)

CAPLP HISTORY

IN THE HEADLINES

Children Said Key to Breaking Many Family Poverty Patters

The place to break the poverty pattern of relief dependency many families have grown into is by working with the children, according to Frank McLaughlin. A former teacher and principal, who has served since June as first director of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Office, he made this point in giving background on the seven titles of the Economic Opportunity Act to an Eggs and Issues Breakfast meeting today.

He added that the ultimate value of those programs serving youth, such as the Head Start Program to provide kindergarten training for underprivileged children, may not be readily apparent for years.

"While we regard ourselves as a relatively well-to-do area, we find that a substantial number of our citizens are poverty-level people," McLaughlin noted.

Heitkamp Heads Clay-Wilkin Poverty Unit

Dennis Heitkamp, 28, has been named executive director of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council, the local anti-poverty agency.

There's No Lack of Opportunity in Clay-Wilkin Council

The "opportunity" in Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council stands for something—a nudge upward for folks bewildered by lack of money or a job, illness, other hardship.

Dennis Heitkamp, the young director, describes it as an agency that cares about the needs of low income people in the community and tries to do something about them in a way that encourages the people to help themselves.

Heitkamp lists outreach workers as among the most important programs of the Council. "We have had them since 1968," he says. "The community action agencies were the first to start with outreach workers."

Each outreach worker is trained and oriented for a week before beginning the job. "They were low income people so they know what others need," Heitkamp says. Also a part of the worker's job is to check back and see whether the person in need did contact the appropriate office. "Referrals are no good if you don't have a follow-up," the director says.

10 Fargo — Moorhead

Opportunity Council Director Outlines Agency's Long-Range Goals

Main goal of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Board of Directors has been to establish programs that will provide participants and their communities with long-range improvements, Frank McLaughlin said Monday.

McLaughlin, executive director of the council, which establishes and supervises local operations under the federal government's anti-poverty programs, detailed for the Clay County Board of Commissioners that the

Additional programs the board may seek to establish, according to McLaughlin, are: Operation Mainstream, aimed at helping unemployed and underemployed adults; day center programs to offer a variety of activities for the retired elderly and day care centers for se-

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Clay-Wilkin Council Votes to Hire Aide

The anti-poverty program in Clay and Wilkin counties will be bolstered by the addition of an "outreach aide," who will work in day-to-day contact with low-income families.

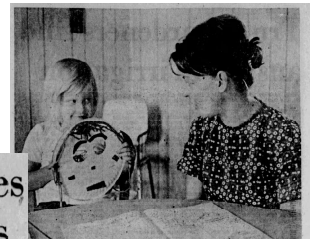
After approving hiring an aide on an experimental basis Tuesday in Moorhead, the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Inc. board of directors discussed expanding its community action program to include activities for aged persons in nursing homes.

The aides, selected from low-income families and most likely to be elderly people, McLaughlin said, would receive \$1.80 an hour for 30 hours a week.

They would be trained in county welfare, volunteer agency, juvenile court, employment agency and other anti-poverty, job training and welfare services available in the community, and would refer low-income persons to offices which could help them.

Clay-Wilkin Unit Sponsors Corps

The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council, Inc., of Moorhead is sponsoring the Neighborhood Youth Corps, a year-long work-training program for disadvantaged young people from low income families.



Karin Leavitt shows her mother, Karin, guided work made from paper plates in Home Start program. (Fergus Pomeroy)

Home Start receives plaudits of parents

Home Start, an individualized program which helps parents guide the educational and physical development of their four-year-olds, is going into its new season in Clay and Wilkin Counties with a three-year record of success behind it.

The program is conducted by the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council and funded by the Office of Child Development of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The assessment shows that al-

The distinctive point about the program is that it is parent-child centered; the parents help the child make improvements. The parents are provided the know-how and guidance of staff of the Opportunity Council. None of the staff is professional, but they have a good pipeline to all the professional agencies in the community and they use these whenever and wherever needed.

The philosophy of Home Start is to help parents achieve goals for their children to learn, since the basic responsibility for early pre-school education rests in the home.

Other services provided by Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council during 1977 included: tax assistance for 70 people, home weatherization (insulation, caulking, door and window repair, and heating system repair) of up to \$350 for 200 homeowners, home improvement grants totaling \$14,467 to five households, Home Start (helping parents increase the intellectual and physical development of their children) for 60 children, bus transportation giving over 52,000 rides to senior citizens around the county, and information and referral.

CAPLP HISTORY

IN THE HEADLINES

Housing aid program begins

Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Inc. of Moorhead has instituted a program to aid low and moderate income people in purchasing, repairing, maintaining and improving their housing situation.

The new program, available at no charge to families or individuals, is not intended to compete with existing programs, but to increase accessibility to those programs, a spokesman said.

The council will assist these people by counseling them on rights and responsibilities of home ownership, including budgeting and matching their housing needs and financial resources to existing housing programs available through federal, state and commercial sources.

Full Headstart program operating in Clay-Wilkin

The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council now operates a full day Headstart program in addition to Homestart services available to low income pre-kindergarten children in the area.

The new program currently occupies the kindergarten room in Sharp School and runs from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily.

The full day Headstart program will operate from September through May and has 23 students enrolled.

Some children attend for half

days but most are in the program all day. Breakfast is served as the children arrive and lunch is brought in purchased from the Moorhead schools.

Children must have a medical exam to be involved in the full day program and Headstart covers the cost of the exam. Headstart can also cover the cost of a dental examination.



Painting is one of the many activities for the children enrolled in Headstart Program at Sharp School in Moorhead. (Photo by Bruce Cronin)

Workshop scheduled on career decisions

The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council and the YWCA Displaced Homemakers Program of Fargo will sponsor a career decision-making workshop June 23 at Plymouth Congregational Church from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The workshop is intended to help people who would like to enter the job market for the first time, re-enter after an absence or make a complete career change.

The day-long workshop, in the basement of the church at 901 Broadway, Fargo, will focus on assessing values and skills. Goals will be set to help participants begin planning for the future.

Outreach workers

It takes a big heart and a level head to do outreach work. Kolness says the most important consideration is the individual's capacity for caring about others.

But an outreach worker's mission is to help others find ways of helping themselves — not to attempt to solve all the problems on his own. It takes resourcefulness and the ability to distinguish between helping and interfering in clients' lives.

An outreach worker needs knowledge of the resources available to provide clients with the help they need. The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council has a number of such programs — senior citizens' programs, Homestart for children, weatherization for low income persons facing a cold winter without funds for fuel and emergency assistance to help people acquire fuel, food and nutrition programs, tax assistance and other programs.

But the outreach worker should also be aware of programs sponsored by the government or private organizations that could provide assistance.

Outreach work is the backbone of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council, says Kolness. Since outreach workers are always aware of their clients needs, the council can develop programs that meet those needs and can be sure services are going to the people who need them.

Outreach workers don't end their relationship with a client by simply referring the client to another source. Follow up is vital to good outreach work, explains Kolness. Workers will contact the client after making a referral to be sure that the help provided met the needs and that the agency to which the person was referred handled the client's needs appropriately.

Sometimes, an outreach worker may accompany a client to an agency to help the client find the right source of help and to make

sure the individual doesn't slip through bureaucratic cracks.

Clay-Wilkin Head Start Program picked

The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council's Head Start Program has been selected by the Department of Health and Human Services as the only training site for its home-based program in Minnesota.

As a training site, the program will serve as a model for visitors from other agencies. Staff from the Clay-Wilkin program will assist in training of staff and visitors from other agencies.

The Clay-Wilkin program may also serve as a field test site for new ideas, methods or materials.

Clay-Wilkin council plans food distribution

The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council will distribute more than 48,000 pounds of federal government surplus butter, cheese and non-fat dry milk to low-income families in the two counties beginning next week.

Dennis Heitkamp, executive director, said each household meeting program guidelines will be eligible for a minimum of five pounds of cheese, four pounds of butter and nine pounds of dry milk. Larger households will receive additional quantities.

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Tuesday, Sept. 28, 1982

The Forum

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CAPLP HISTORY

IN THE HEADLINES

Training program aims to get clients off welfare



Lorene Wohlwend works at assembling a grocery ad on her drawing table. (Forum Photo)

Lorene Wohlwend is one of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council's success stories. Two years ago, the Wolverton, Minn., woman was a frustrated farm wife and mother. She wanted a career as an artist but didn't know how to get started.

Now with the help of a Clay-Wilkin self-sufficiency program, Wohlwend has a successful freelance commercial art business in Fargo and is a second-year student at the Moorhead Area Vocational Technical Institute.

The self-sufficiency program was started by the community action agency in March 1982 when two programs, client advocacy and career and education services, were combined. During the first year under the combined program, 17 people of the 113 involved became financially independent from public assistance and satisfied with their situations. About 20 clients were enrolled in an educational or training program, according to the one-year figures.

"In the program we look at why someone is in the economic situation they are in and what can be done to change it," says Stenson.

Instead of just dealing with the immediate crisis, she says, the client and the counselor look more at a person's whole situation including the family.

If a client needs immediate help with bills or fuel assistance, that problem is solved first and then the long-term situation is considered, said Stenson.

Economic barriers are the main problem for most people, she says, but every individual is different.

Some clients are high school dropouts, others have spotty employment records, physical or mental health problems, chemical dependencies or legal problems.

Stenson, who was a career counselor with Clay-Wilkin before the self-sufficiency program was started, says she found many people stuck in the welfare system.

Wohlwend doubts she would be managing as well as she is without the help. She had been out of school for 10 years, had gotten married and had two children.

"I wanted to get back on the path, but I didn't know how," she said.

"I didn't know where I would get the money, what to do about child care or how I could manage everything at home and go to school."

Wohlwend spent several months working with Stenson.

The two discussed values and goals, checked out schools and financial aid and worked on time management exercises.

Wohlwend said she also got "generally good counseling."

She found she could keep her family as her first priority and also have a career.

After going through the self-sufficiency program, Wohlwend says: "I look different. I cut my hair. I'm much more outgoing. I feel better about myself and everything."

She has also offered to design a brochure for Clay-Wilkin to publicize the program.

In other business Tuesday, the board approved a plan to establish half-day kindergarten sessions at two child care centers in Moorhead. One would be on the Moorhead State University campus and the other in a center planned for the Family Service Center operated by the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council in what used to be St. Ansgar Hospital.

Volunteers get food to seniors

Dozens of volunteers gather on the first Friday of every month at the Moorhead National Guard Armory to do something that is very important to many senior citizens in Clay County.

"Every month we distribute food to families in Clay County, mostly senior citizens," says Joseph Pederson, executive director of Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, formerly known as the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council.

"We generally deliver about 250 boxes of food to senior citizens and 50 boxes to families with young children."

Pederson and his staff were on hand Friday to offer a special thank-you to the many volunteers who step forward each month to make certain these needed government commodities get distributed.

"We're thanking all of our community partners who help us with this project," says Pederson. "If we didn't have our community partners, this program couldn't exist."

Child food care program feeds 52

Fifty-two children are receiving either free or reduced-price meals in two Head Start classrooms in Moorhead.

Sponsored by the Clay-Wilkin County Opportunity Council, the child care food program is being offered at classroom centers in the former North Junior High School and in Head Start facility at Concordia College.

The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Minnesota Department of Education. It gives financial assistance to child care centers such as Clay-Wilkin so nutritious meals can be integrated with non-residential child care services for children.

Head Start celebrates 25 years

Clay Wilkin Opportunity Council Head Start will sponsor a 25th anniversary celebration and dance from 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday in the Dilworth Community Center.

The dance will celebrate the accomplishments of Head Start and the families it has served for the past 25 years. Tickets will be sold at the door.

Clay-Wilken council names Pederson to executive position

The Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council's board of directors has named Joe Pederson, of Hawley, Minn., as its new executive director.

Pederson succeeds the late Dennis R. Heitkamp.

Local housing and homeless advocates detailed their struggles and successes, while pointing out telling statistics.

Joe Pederson, executive director of the Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership, said 45 percent of Clay County renters pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing.

Housing is typically considered affordable if it costs less than 30 percent of a person's income, Pederson said.

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CAPLP HISTORY

IN THE HEADLINES

System to rate child care

A first of its kind program in North Dakota will help parents gauge the quality of their kids' child care provider.

Online

► Minnesota's site: www.parentawareratings.org

United Way of Cass-Clay unveiled plans Thursday for a

quality ratings system that will set and evaluate uniform quality standards for child care providers in Clay and Cass counties while revealing results online for the public.

Lakes and Prairies Child Care Resource and Referral, which was contracted by United Way to carry out the program.

United Way is supplying a \$135,000 grant for the program, which is slated to launch in January.

Child care providers, both home-based and center-based, will receive \$2,000 to \$12,000 grants as incentives to help support and sustain quality care.

Lakes & Prairies FAIM lasts much longer than 15 minutes

American artist Andy Warhol coined the expression, "In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes."

You may not be famous, but the people at Lakes & Prairies Family & Community Services know you are important. They are concerned about you right now. As a result, they are offering FAIM and this FAIM will last much longer than 15 minutes.

This program, FAIM, is one of many offered at Lakes & Prairies.

The letters, F-A-I-M, stand for Family Assets for Independence in Minnesota. For those who qualify, this is a matched savings program that helps people purchase a first-time home, start or expand a business, or complete an education.

"This is a great initiative that is really aimed at helping people to be financially successful in the long run by giving them the tools and skills to be out of poverty permanently," Johnson said.

Lakes and Prairies promotes Schwartz

Lori Schwartz has been promoted to executive director

Connecting with families

Grant funding sets Family Resource Center in motion in Clay County

Organizations in Clay County, including Clay County Social Services, Creating Community Consulting and Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership have been working to launch a family resource center to serve families in the county. After Clay County Social Services received grant funding in January, the final steps to launch the service have been set in motion.

The family resource center model serves as a community hub for families to access support services and opportunities. In Clay County, the center will connect families to resources provided by a number of established organizations in areas like housing, social services, immigrant resources and youth resources.

Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, or CAPLP, is in the process of hiring two employees to run the

future family resource center, said Senior Director of Agency Operations Colleen Murray. One employee will be a family outreach coordinator, while the other will be a family advisory board coordinator that works with members of the Family Resource Center's board.

"They'll work in tandem in collecting feedback from families in the community, what some of the barriers and needs are, where the best places in the community are to find families and connect them to resources," Murray said.

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The child care seesaw

Lakes and Prairies helps balance work and parenthood

Parents can't work unless their children are cared for. That fact intrinsically links employers to the child care industry.

The organization helps parents find and evaluate child care and offers training opportunities for child care providers. It also reaches out to employers, offering consultations about child care benefits and "helping them understand the role child care plays in a vibrant community," Lembke said.

The North Dakota Department of Human Services is hoping child care and day care providers in Stutsman County will take advantage of a new program that rewards providers that provide quality early childhood development programming. The Bright & Early North Dakota program, being administered through DHS' Early Childhood Services, is a voluntary program that recognizes day care and child care providers for reaching given levels of quality, according to Jennifer Barry, DHS' early childhood services administrator.

Linda Lembke
program director,
Child Care Aware for
eastern North Dakota

Program seeks to keep, attract quality day care providers

Lembke said the Bright & Early program will help Child Care Aware achieve another of its goals by bringing positive attention to the providers offering quality services to children and their families.

"Part of what we're trying to do is bring in more professionalism and recognition for the job they are doing in getting our children ready for school," she said.

Community groups to offer poverty simulations

FARGO — Community Action Agencies will host a poverty simulation from 1-4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 16, at Olivet Lutheran Church.

The goal is to show participants the realities faced by low-income people and to start a community dialogue about poverty. The

Coming together in Clay County

A change is coming for the organization in the new year. On Jan. 1, the organization will be acquired by Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, or CAPLP REACH will continue to operate as a program of CAPLP.

Lori Schwartz, executive director of CAPLP, said both organizations have similar goals and were already working together in some capacity. "Our missions aligned so well that when we started discussing becoming one entity, it was very natural,"

Hawley nonprofit to continue services under umbrella of Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership

"All we want to do is to enhance and expand already very well-done services," Schwartz said.

WHAT'S NEW IN 2025

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (FRC)



The Clay County Family Resource Center (FRC) is a newly launched collaborative effort between CAPLP, Clay County Social Services and Creating Community Consulting. The goal of the project is to strengthen families in a proactive and preventative way by focusing on The Five Protective Factors. The FRC is led by a team of community partners and informed by a family advisory board, who provide input on service gaps and lived experiences of families in the county.

The Family Resource Center aims to help families access available resources and programming, as well as to support families in building connections to one another. FRC staff host drop-in navigation services within the community; and develop programming that is free and available to all families (with children under 18) in the county. The FRC is also working to provide culturally responsive support and programming led by family voice. In the first year of implementation, the FRC has enjoyed connecting to families to provide support in navigating resources and concrete support in times of need, as well as participating in community events throughout the county. We have hosted a number of events with much valued guidance and hard work from our family advisory board; including: an event focused on helping families cope with back to school stress, a make and take meal kit event in celebration of World Kindness Day, and a series of community playdates for caregivers with children under 2 years.

We are excited to see how Clay County's Family Resource Center will take shape and grow to meet our diverse community's changing needs.



REACH ACQUISITION

As 2025 came to a close, CAPLP took an important step toward expanding our impact by finalizing plans to acquire Rural Enrichment & Counseling Headquarters (REACH).

This transition, which was effective January 1, 2026, reflects a shared commitment to strengthening services for rural families in Clay County. By bringing REACH under the CAPLP umbrella, we are building on a longstanding partnership and ensuring the continuation of vital programs, including the Hawley-based thrift store and food pantry while positioning both organizations for a stronger future together.



HEAD START

We build strong foundations for children and families through high-quality early learning, health services, and family support – preparing children for kindergarten and families for long-term success.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS



- 22% Head Start children receiving Early Intervention Services
- 14,364 Meals Served
- 278 Head Start & Early Head Start kids served
- Hosted 4 Dental Days with a total of 169 appointment slots available
- 50 Bikes given away in December to Head Start kids
- Successful Focus Area 1 conducted by Head Stat Office
- Successful licensing visit
- Fully enrolled all year with waitlist for 2026
- Staff completes average of 55 hours of training a month
- Implemented Conscious Discipline training & the importance of Brain Smart starts – the connection and opportunity to be playful.

IMPACT



Joshua Jackson - 2025 Head Start Hero

Joshua is a ray of sunshine in our Head Start program. Full of personality and a big smile, he is loved by teachers and classmates, and everyone enjoys watching him grow.

Joshua began Early Head Start at age 2 with delays in motor skills and speech. Through home visits and early intervention services, he began receiving the support he needed to thrive.

When he transitioned into a Head Start classroom, Joshua faced challenges with routines and group settings. With consistent support and simple strategies, he built independence and confidence.

Today, Joshua writes his name, recognizes letters and numbers, communicates in sentences, and builds friendships with his peers.

His parents describe his progress as “life changing,” sharing that without Head Start, he would not be where he is today.

Joshua is a true Head Start Hero.

HOUSING

We work to prevent and end homelessness by providing financial assistance, outreach, and supportive housing – helping individuals and families secure and sustain safe, stable homes.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS



- Food drop in Wilkin county: CAPLP joined forces with [North Country Food Bank, Inc.](#) to host a mobile food drop, making sure families in the community had access to fresh produce, meat, and pantry staples. Thanks to the hard work of CAPLP & North Country staff, 112 households were able to feed themselves and their families.
- Youth Action Board provided trainings and technical assistance for the creation of 2 new housing projects: CAPLP Rapid Rehousing Program and Youthworks Transitional Housing in Moorhead.
- United to End Homelessness is a collaborative effort of the United Way Cass-Clay and the Fargo Moorhead Coalition to End Homelessness. As a part of these efforts, CAPLP joined the Cass-Clay Interagency Council on Homelessness to create a regional plan to prevent and end homelessness. CAPLP staff have also worked to house people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, high visibility homelessness through this collaborative project.

- **443 People** obtained safe, affordable housing
- **225 people** avoided eviction



IMPACT

LaTeals's story

For years, LaTeale experienced homelessness, often sleeping outside, including near a church in Moorhead where she felt a sense of safety during the cold months.

CAPLP's Outreach Team worked alongside her for over two years, building trust and connecting her to support. When she enrolled in the PATH Program, she began taking important steps forward.

With assistance accessing benefits, securing a housing voucher, and connecting to community resources, LaTeale moved closer to stability.

On December 1, LaTeale moved into her own apartment. A place she can now call home.

LaTeale would like to thank CAPLP for sticking with her throughout the process and providing supports she needed to succeed.



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

We connect people to the resources, trainings and coaching they need to move out of poverty. Whether it's resettling refugees, supporting older adults, helping families reach their goals, or preparing taxes for free, our programs empower families to succeed.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS



- Our team has grown, with 9 new staff joining our division in 2025!
- 1,281 People received tax prep assistance
- 708 federal tax returns filed
- 320 hours of volunteering during the tax season
- 234 applications for health insurance completed
- 67 People received financial skills training
- Our first Career Connect client to obtain their Commercial Driver's License happened!



IMPACT

Maya's Story



When Maya first connected with CAPLP, she was experiencing long-term homelessness as a single mother, often sleeping in her car during the winter.

Despite overwhelming barriers, she remained determined to build a better future for herself and her daughter.

With consistent support from her CAPLP Coach, Maya set goals, built routines, and began moving forward. She enrolled in college as a business major and is now in her second semester.

Through community partnerships, she secured childcare, full tuition support, and access to essential resources, removing barriers that once stood in her way.

She recently completed the Jeremiah Program's Empowerment Course and has been approved for housing. Soon, she and her daughter will move into a safe, stable home.

Maya's journey is a powerful reminder of what's possible when determination is met with support.

CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS

We partner with early childhood professionals to provide the training, resources, and support they need to help children thrive and programs succeed. Through grants, coaching, and family connections, we strengthen high-quality, accessible child care in our communities.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- Supported 85 child care & FFN caregivers with coaching & training support through the Wayfinder & FFN programs.
- Gave out 29 Health & Safety Backpacks to FFN caregivers,
- Trained 18 caregivers on CPR & 1st Aid in their primary language (Spanish, Somali & Swahili)
- Issued 367 grants to child care programs in our 21-county service area, totaling \$808,787 in financial supports to grow or sustain quality child care.
- Awarded 128 new Early Learning Scholarships for MN children to attend Parent Aware-Rated early learning programs.
- Won the competitive award for \$1.95 million in Child Care Aware Northwest District/Region 4 services.
- The MN Parent Aware Team supported 182 child care programs to achieve a Parent Aware Star Rating. 55 of those programs received a rating for the first time ever!
- The Bright & Early ND Team supported 114 programs to achieve a Bright & Early Step Goal. 52 of those programs participated in B&E for the first time!
- Our Family Child Care Substitutes provided 2,022 hours of substitute and second adult caregiver support to 33 FCC educators in 5 counties of Region 4.
- CCC teams actively engaged in advocacy at the state and federal levels, participating in events in North Dakota, Minnesota, and Washington, DC to educate policymakers on the importance of investing in quality early learning and child care programs.



IMPACT

Shared Services

"I'm grateful to participate in the substitute program, which allows me to have extra support on field trips and ensures proper coverage when I have appointments. Having an extra set of hands makes the experiences smoother and more enjoyable for the children. It provides peace of mind knowing my program continues to run when I need to be away. The sub program has truly enriched my child care program."

"We are an amazing home daycare and the sub program created more amazing things! She has implemented circle time where we now have a welcome song and sing other childhood favorite songs. She brings craft projects and does them with the kids! The sub program has been a huge difference for us and we are so truly thankful!"

Early Learning Scholarships

"It gave my youngest two children the opportunity to go to preschool; they wouldn't have been able to without the scholarship."

"It's allowed me to go to work and help pay off debt to eventually buy a house!"

"It has made it financially possible for me to continue to work and have quality care for our adopted children."

"I am the case manager, and the scholarship has positively impacted many families I have worked with to afford childcare, and for children to find permanency."

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2025 EMERGING LEADER ACADEMY GRADUATES:

The Emerging Leaders Academy is designed to cultivate leadership potential in both staff and participants with lived experience, empowering them to step into leadership roles with confidence and purpose.

This interactive program provides practical skills in communication, decision-making, conflict resolution, and team building while fostering self-awareness, resilience, and emotional intelligence.

Through mentorship, real-world applications, and collaborative learning, participants will develop the mindset and tools needed to lead with authenticity, empathy, and strategic vision.

Whether aspiring to leadership positions in their organizations or seeking to create positive change in their communities, graduates of this academy will be equipped to lead with impact.



Victoria Galindo



Lexi Centers



Kendra Tarara



Hannah Watson



Chelsea Reiff



Brianna Sollom



Tyler Schroeder



Angie Cleveland



Bri Glenn



Tiffany Ross

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2025 CERTIFIED COMMUNITY ACTION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (CALI) GRADUATE:



Angela Wheeler
(far right)

The Community Action Leadership Institute brings together a small group of Community Action employees and provides them an opportunity to reflect on the purpose of their work, strengthen their leadership capacity, and gain a better understanding of how they might apply their best self in all aspects of their life.

It is designed to equip staff with additional skills positioning them to maximize growth opportunities within the Community Action Network.

CAPLP's 2025 CALI Graduate is Angela Wheeler! Congratulations!

2025 CERTIFIED COMMUNITY ACTION PROFESSIONAL (CCAP) GRADUATES:

The Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) credential recognizes individuals who have demonstrated knowledge and application of the core competencies required to effectively carry out the vision, mission, purpose, and values of the Community Action movement.

CAPLP is proud to announce our most recent graduates in 2025: Hilary Hafner, Jenna Cronen and Alissa Bata! Congratulations!



**Hilary
Hafner**

**Jenna
Cronen**

**Alissa
Bata**

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2025 SERVICE AWARDS

5 YEARS



Alicia Bauman



Kellsie Mahar



Megan Siewert



Brenda Hample



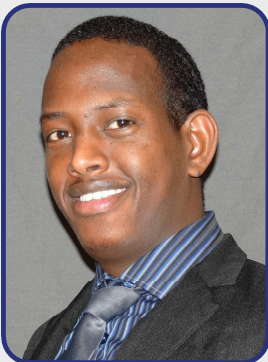
Elsa Krueger



Mahlet Teferra



Lauren Anderson



Abdullahi Ali



Ann Sauvageau

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2025 SERVICE AWARDS

10 YEARS



Alissa Bata



Naomi Kreidlkamp



Cheryl Walker

20 YEARS



Robin Christianson

25 YEARS



Kristin Phillips

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2025 DENNIS HEITKAMP LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER: **TOM IVERSON**



Dennis R. Heitkamp served as Executive Director of CAPLP for 31 years and was instrumental in promoting and supporting self-sufficiency efforts throughout the region. He was an extraordinary leader, known for his integrity and rare commitment to service.

The 2025 award honors Tom Iverson for his exceptional dedication and impact. He has been a steadfast supporter of our work and an outstanding mentor and friend to so many. Through countless hours of leadership and executive coaching across the agency, Tom has made a lasting difference. His unwavering commitment and genuine investment in our mission continue to inspire and strengthen our entire organization.

“A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle”

Heitkamp Heads Clay-Wilkin Poverty Unit

Dennis Heitkamp, 28, has been named executive director of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council,



Heitkamp

the local arm in Clay and Wilkin Counties in Minnesota of the national anti-poverty program. Headquarters are in Moorhead. Heitkamp moved up from his former position of assistant director to succeed James Moulsoff, who has resigned to accept a position with a U.S. Department of Labor office in Breckenridge, Minn.

As head of the Council, Heitkamp will direct various programs including the Alcoholic Referral Center, Headstart program for pre-school children, Neighborhood Youth Corps for high school age youngsters, senior citizens' organizations, and various other community groups.

Heitkamp is a native of Barney, N. D., and a graduate of Wyndmere, N. D., High School and North Dakota State University in Fargo. He lives at 921 10th Ave. S., Fargo.

A candle with light to share

Dennis Heitkamp honored for 31 years of helping people in need

By Karyn Spencer
The Forum

Dennis Heitkamp brought light into the lives of low-income families and the people who work with them for 31 years.

During a ceremony in his honor Wednesday, a white pillar candle was lit to symbolize his years of giving. The event's theme was "A Candle Loses Nothing by Lighting Another Candle."

Heitkamp, who is dying of cancer, has been the executive director of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council for nearly the life of the nonprofit organization. It includes Head Start, programs for child care and senior citizens and a safe-exchange center for divorced families.

A parade of local and state officials praised Heitkamp as a dedicated, principled and inspiring man who fought to raise the self-worth and stability of families living in poverty.

Heitkamp, 57, personally greeted each of the hundreds of relatives, current and former employees, representatives of local and state government, softball team members, friends and neighbors.

See HEITKAMP, Back Page



Dennis Heitkamp, executive director of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council, honored at a reception Wednesday. Heitkamp has helped low-income families for 31 years and continued to work the past year despite terminal cancer.



Dennis Heitkamp, director of Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council. (Forum Photo)

A10 THURSDAY, MAY 13, 1999

HEITKAMP from Page A1

These are "all the people here who've had their candle lit by Dennis Heitkamp," emcee Rita Hagen Alemán said.

Alemán explained that Heitkamp always considered himself an ordinary man.

"He thinks ordinary is getting up every day, going to work and doing the best you can," she said. "We are here to tell you, you are an ordinary man who did extraordinary things."

She explained that Heitkamp had four rules for his successful career: He showed up, paid attention, asked questions and never quit.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2025 LYLE HOVLAND COMMUNITY BUILDER AWARD WINNER: THE GREAT PLAINS FOOD BANK

Lyle Hovland was a dedicated member of the CAPLP Board of Directors and a respected community leader whose quiet, steady service made a lasting impact. As a County Commissioner and lifelong farmer, he demonstrated a deep commitment to strengthening his community, believing everyone plays a role in its success. His passion for supporting children and improving their futures was evident through his involvement in numerous initiatives. Lyle's integrity, leadership, and commitment to service embody the spirit of the Community Builder Award, which honors those who have made significant, positive contributions to their community through intentional and impactful partnerships.



The Great Plains Food Bank's Ending Hunger 2.0 team was selected as this year's Community Builder Award recipient for their innovative and impactful approach to addressing hunger in the Fargo-Moorhead community. Through the Kitchen Coalition program, they have removed barriers to food access by delivering nutritious, ready-to-eat meals directly to families where they are. Their partnership with CAPLP Head Start has been especially meaningful, growing from 70 meals per week to 160, all provided at no cost and delivered with care by staff and volunteers. This collaboration has ensured that families receive consistent, high-quality nutrition in a way that is accessible and respectful, directly supporting children's readiness for kindergarten. Their commitment to meeting community needs with creativity and compassion embodies the true spirit of the Community Builder Award.



He did not consider himself a politician, Hovland told Daily News in August 2020. What Hovland did consider himself was someone who thought local governance was a way to be influential in helping a community.



Noteworthy accomplishments highlighted at the presentation ceremony include: 37 years as a director and former president of the Rothsay Farmers Co-op board; a current fourth term commissioner on the Wilkin County Board; an active lifetime member of Little Bethany Lutheran Church; one of the founding board members of the Golden Growers Cooperative; serving 15 years on the board for the Lakes and Prairies Community Action Council; election as a Farm Service Agency county committeeman and past chairman; current vice chairman of the Richland, N.D./Wilkin Joint Powers Agreement working group; service on the board of the Northwest Farm Managers Association; active participant in the Agassiz Club, an agricultural education and promotion group in the Red River Valley; and serving for 27 years as a board member and past president of the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2025 VOLUNTEER EXTRAORDINAIRE AWARD WINNER: **DAHKWAZ GARDI**

“The activity of volunteering is not an end in itself; rather, it is an activity that has some positive outcome for the community. The traditional view of volunteering assumes volunteering is motivated by pure altruism. The more contemporary view is that people engage in volunteer work to achieve a positive result for both the community and themselves.”

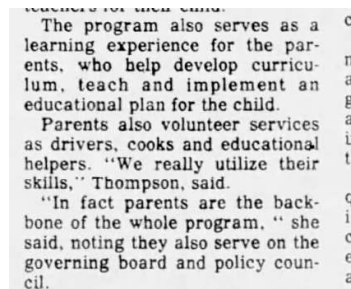
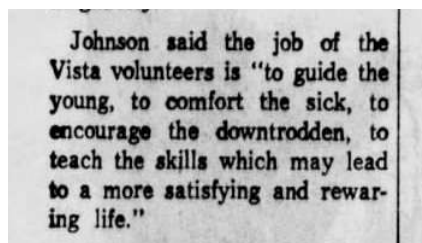
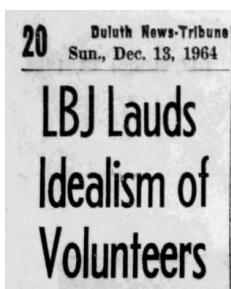


Dahkwaz Gardi was selected as this year's Volunteer Extraordinaire Award recipient in recognition of her exceptional dedication, leadership, and commitment to CAPLP Head Start.

As a parent of two children in both Early Head Start and Head Start, Dahkwaz quickly became an engaged and reliable member of Policy Council, attending every meeting in her first year and even volunteering to participate in the program's Federal Review.

Now in her second year, she continues to serve while also taking on the additional role of Policy Council Representative to the CAPLP Board of Directors. Dahkwaz consistently uses her voice to ask thoughtful questions, deepen her understanding, and help strengthen the program.

Despite working full time, she remains actively involved by volunteering in the classroom and participating in parent engagement activities. Her dedication to her children's education and belief that parents are their child's first teacher is evident in all she does. Dahkwaz's passion and commitment truly embody the spirit of volunteerism and excellence that this award represents.



2025 PHOTOS



ADMIN



CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS



HOUSING



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



HEAD START

2025 PHOTOS



2025 PHOTOS



2025 PHOTOS



FINANCIALS

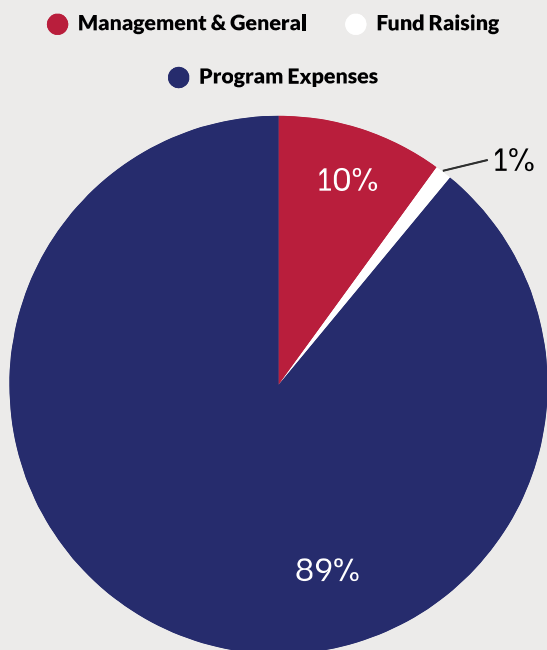
LAKES & PRAIRIES CAP FINANCIAL REPORT FY 2025

REVENUES			2024-2025	2023-2024
Grant Revenue				
Federal		\$	8,323,751	\$ 7,181,409
State of Minnesota			4,871,480	4,564,969
State of North Dakota			803,566	262,279
Local Revenue			211,107	193,659
Foundations			419,869	370,322
Contributions			135,819	83,585
Charges for Services			95,648	129,995
Interest			24,308	17,970
Loss on Disposal of Property & Equipment			-	(439)
Total Revenues		\$	14,885,548	\$ 12,803,749
EXPENSES			2024-2025	2023-2024
Program Services				
Head Start			3,356,453	3,299,822
Child Care Connections			4,728,624	4,165,802
Economic Empowerment			1,311,338	937,992
Housing			3,144,546	2,793,735
Supporting Services				
Management and General			1,707,796	1,374,303
Fundraising			80,728	77,173
Total Expenses		\$	14,329,485	\$ 12,648,827
Change in Net Assets			556,063	154,922
NET ASSETS BEGINNING OF YEAR		\$	2,095,450	\$ 1,879,533
NET ASSETS END OF YEAR		\$	2,651,513	\$ 2,034,455

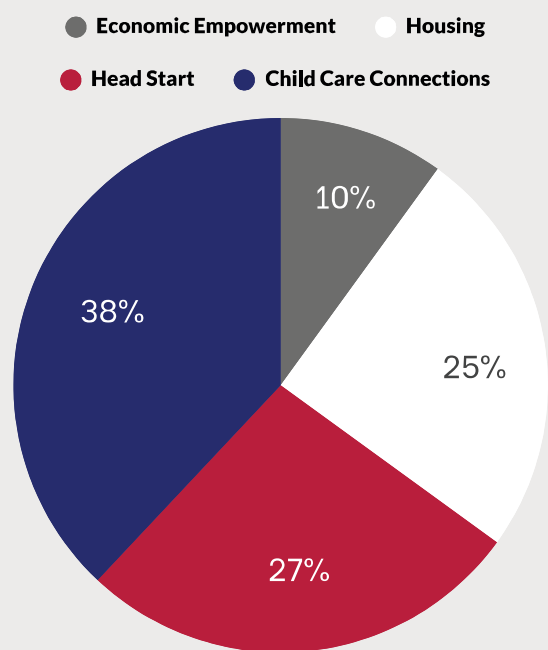
ASSETS			2024-2025	2023-2024
Cash and Cash Equivalents			1,760,958	1,162,569
Restricted Cash - Unemployment Trust			51,432	41,773
Investments			-	-
Grants Receivable			1,644,252	1,477,897
Other Receivables			10,304	8,315
Prepaid Expenses			116,140	115,660
Property & Equipment, Net			2,785,230	2,558,501
Certificates of deposit			94,976	89,815
Right-of-use assets - operation leases ¹			857,984	1,227,660
Right-of-use assets - financing leases ¹			3,085	7,423
Total Assets		\$	7,324,361	\$ 6,689,613
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			2024-2025	2023-2024
Current Liabilities				
Current Maturities of Facility Loan			332,957	57,299
Current portion of operating leases ¹			211,860	205,372
Current Portion of finance lease liability			3,500	4,617
Accounts Payable			115,588	69,726
Accrued Payroll, Taxes & Related Benefits			515,498	482,384
Accrued Compensated Absences			465,056	387,972
Refundable Advances			793,288	436,052
Total Current Liabilities			2,437,747	1,643,422
Long-Term Liabilities				
Facility Loan, Less Current Maturities			1,596,162	1,929,141
Lease liabilities - operating ¹			647,509	1,026,690
Lease liabilities - financing ¹			-	3,480
Total Liabilities		\$	4,681,418	\$ 4,602,733
Net Assets			2024-2025	2023-2024
Without Donor Restrictions			2,108,582	1,548,925
With Donor Restrictions			534,361	537,955
Total Net Assets		\$	2,642,943	\$ 2,086,880
Total Liabilities and Net Assets		\$	7,324,361	\$ 6,689,613

¹ Effective 3/1/2022 CAPLP adopted new lease accounting guidance in ASU No. 2016-02, Lease (Topic 842)

2024-2025 Functional Expenses



2024-2025 Program Expenses



LEADERSHIP TEAM



Listed from left to right:

- Robin Christianson**
Economic Empowerment Director
- Lori Schwartz**
Executive Director
- Stephanie Thompson**
Human Resources Director
- Megan Callahan**
Finance Director
- Kristin Phillips**
Senior Director of Program Operations

Listed from left to right:

- Colleen Murray**
Senior Director of Agency Operations
- Angela Wheeler**
Child Care Connections Assistant Director
- Becki Johnson**
Learning & Development Director
- Patty Lopez**
Head Start Director
- Maria Steen**
Child Care Connections Director
- Emma Schmit**
Housing Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



McLaughlin

JAMES MOULSOFF
1968-1969

DENNIS HEITKAMP
1969-1999

JOE PEDERSON
2000-2015



Schwartz

Clay-Wilkin Opportunity
Council Seeks Director

FRANK MCLAUGHLIN
1966-1968



Moulsoff



Heitkamp



Pederson

LORI SCHWARTZ
2016-CURRENT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Krabbenhoft, Board Chair
Jonathan Green, Vice Chair
Cyndee Thormodson, Treasurer
Jihan Brifki, Secretary
Jenny Mongeau
Loren Ingebretsen
Mark Arnold
Renee Charon

Rob Kupec
Jim Hamer
Sheila Stadstad
Jill Magnell
Charlotte Pikarski
Michelle Werner
Sarah Hasbargen

(Non-Voting)
 Head Start Policy Council
 Representative:
Amber Neirby-Conway
 Moorhead City Council Member:
Deb White

THE FARGO FORUM and Moorhead News

Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council Directors Named

Names of the 15 persons appointed by the Clay and Wilkin county boards to serve as the first board of directors of the Clay-Wilkin Opportunity Council have been released.

The council, composed of 60 persons from the two counties, also to be named by the county board, has taken steps to incorporate as a non-profit organization.

After formal organization has been accomplished, the council

One-third of the new board must be comprised of individuals from low-income families in the two counties, elected by voters who are classified as low-income. Gruenberg said the Clay-Wilkin Council office is awaiting further word from the Minnesota Office of Economic Opportunity on just how such elections are to be conducted.

One-third of the new board must be comprised of officials from county, village or city governing boards or parties designated by such officials to represent them.

Once the two-thirds composition of the new board is chosen in accord with the new requirements, the new members seated will pick individuals from a broad cross-section of the two-county community for the remaining director seats.

Efforts will be made to continue proportional representa-

CONNECT WITH US!

Phone: (218)512-1500

Email: info@caplp.org

Mailing Address:

891 Belsly Blvd
 Moorhead, MN 56560

Walk-In Services

715 11th St N. Suite 101
 Moorhead, MN 56560

REACH Office:

421 5th St
 PO Box 237
 Hawley, MN 56549
 (218)483-3145

Wilkin County Office:

311 5th St S
 Breckenridge, MN 56520
 (218)512-1500

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