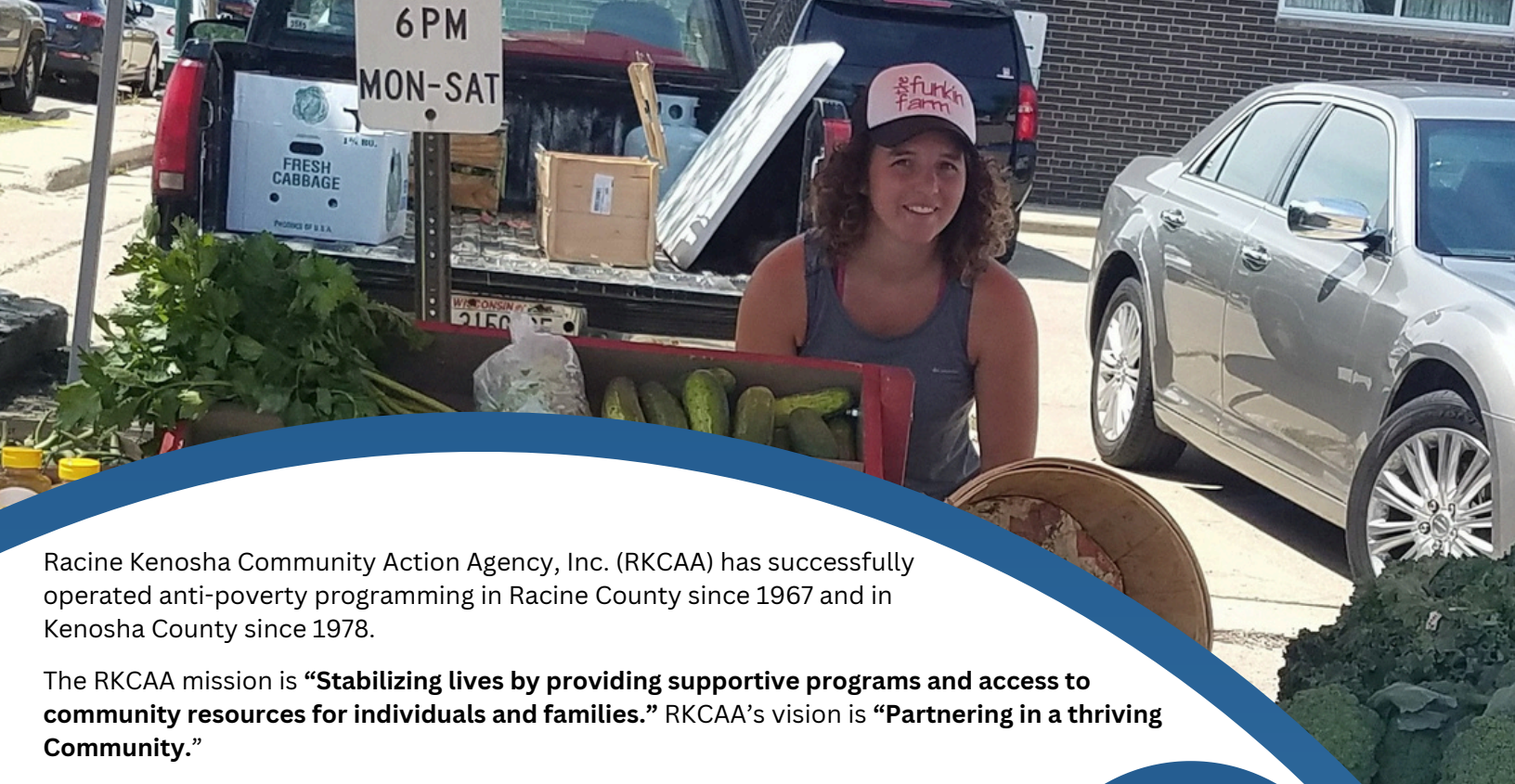


2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Achieving Self-Sufficiency to Create
Lifelong Impact





Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. (RKCAA) has successfully operated anti-poverty programming in Racine County since 1967 and in Kenosha County since 1978.

The RKCAA mission is **“Stabilizing lives by providing supportive programs and access to community resources for individuals and families.”** RKCAA’s vision is **“Partnering in a thriving Community.”**

SUSAN SPICER *Board Chairperson*

I am privileged to serve as the Chair of the Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency Board of Directors. We have an excellent group of community volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors. Along with the wonderful staff of RKCAA, we are happy to bring needed resources to both communities.



Through my work at a food pantry, I see the struggle for families to pay rent, and utilities and still buy food. I am always excited to share with families how RKCAA can help. Our WIC program provides for babies and young children. Our senior food programs provide fresh food through Farmers Market certificates and canned goods through our Commodity Supplemental Food Program. Our Weatherization program is one of the most important in the community. Having a warm and comfortable place to live is critical for families.

Thank you for partnering with us to make our vision and mission a reality in both communities. The Board and staff remain committed to providing essential services and support for families moving toward economic stability.

ESSIE ALLEN *Chief Executive Officer*

In 2023, Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. (RKCAA) served nearly 60,000 residents in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

The team focused on programs that assisted households in meeting their basic needs; providing housing, food and nutrition services, health screenings, weatherization services, emergency furnace repair and replacement services, and educational opportunities that led to higher wages and health benefits.

Community residents, many of them utilizing services provided by RKCAA, continued to face post-pandemic stress. Staff worked diligently with partners and residents to distribute more than 6.4 million dollars in relief to homeowners facing foreclosures, utility interruptions, and unpaid property taxes.

Additionally, The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) assisted more than 5,000 unduplicated participants, ensuring that families were able to access critical services.

The time, energy, effort, skill, and care that volunteers, partners, individual donors, and funders provided are appreciated. Without your support, individuals and families seeking assistance would have few, if any, sustainability options.



Building Up The Community

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

WAP served **666** individuals, increasing the number of households gaining access to cost-saving energy measures, including:

- **263** Dwellings Weatherized
- **391** Emergency Furnace Repairs
- **148** Water Heaters Installed

The Skills Enhancement Program (SEP)

SEP provided opportunities for participants to move closer to becoming self-sufficient, by offering financial assistance for tuition, books, transportation, childcare, and other unmet financial obligations not covered by financial aid.

All 2023 program graduates who obtained a new job are working in their chosen fields, with an average hourly increase of **\$17.03/hr.** or **\$43,729** annually.



"Thanks to everyone who worked on the weatherization process. I am blessed to have a great organization in the community." ~ WAP Client



"I would not be where I am today without the help of RKCAA and The Skills Enhancement Program" ~ Valena

Valena's Story

Valena originally enrolled in SEP in August 2009, pursuing a nursing degree. She was working as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). During that time, she faced many challenges that led to her withdrawal from the program several times. Valena faced a major health issue, the loss of both her parents and her mentor, divorce, and having to retake classes because all her credits did not transfer when she switched schools, all while raising a teenage daughter.

Despite these challenges, Valena continued to come back to SEP. Valena's favorite line, "This is just a setback, for the big comeback." No truer words have ever been spoken. Valena received her Associate of Arts Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) degree from Gateway Technical College in August 2023 and was hired as an LPN, almost doubling her earnings. Her daughter graduated from high school in June that year as well. The story does not stop there, Valena ran unopposed in the April 2024 Spring Election to represent the 1st District as a County Board Supervisor in Racine, Wisconsin!



Helping Families Stay Housed

Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance (WERA)

To decrease the number of individuals and families without a place to live, the WERA program assisted residents adversely affected by COVID-19 to become or remain housing stabilized by assisting with rent/security deposits, utility payments, and access to additional services.

In 2023 RKCAA:

- Aided more than **3,500** individuals/**1,500** households
- Distributed **\$6,184,903** in benefits

Since 2020 (program inception) RKCAA:

- Aided **15,787** individuals/**6,419** households
- Distributed benefits totaling **\$29,206,545**



Housing Stability Services (HSS)

RKCAA provides housing stability services, including budgeting, landlord/tenant mediation, referrals for legal services, and assistance in completing applications for other available community resources, such as rental assistance, subsidized housing, FoodShare, energy assistance, and agency-related programs. HSS provided services to **3,077** households in 2023.



Wisconsin Help for Homeowners (WHH)

WHH supported homeowners in Wisconsin with or without a mortgage, who met income and other eligibility requirements and experienced a qualified economic hardship since January 21, 2020. RKCAA administered the WHH Program in Racine and Kenosha Counties. Participants were assisted with overdue bills such as mortgage payments, property taxes, and utilities.

Racine and Kenosha County homeowners received more than **\$6,000,000** in assistance by the end of 2023.

Jill's Story*

Jill's father passed away leaving her with the family home. She faced an unpaid tax bill. Thanks to the support from WHH, Jill was able to get support to pay the tax bill. The program saved her from losing her home. "I love the WHH Program."

**Name changed to ensure confidentiality.*



Food Security & Nutrition



"Thanks to the WIC staff, I breastfed for an entire year and would not have made it without the peer support." - WIC client

[The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#)

Through WIC, **5,349** pregnant women, new moms, infants, and children under five were supported with resources to keep families healthy and strong in 2023. Hybrid options enabled services to be provided in-person, by phone, or via the WIC on the Go mobile unit.

[The Emergency Food Assistance Program \(TEFAP\)](#)

RKCAA serves as the lead Emergency Feeding Organization (EFO) for Racine and Kenosha Counties. The agency administers programs that assist food-insecure households, focusing on access and nutrition. In 2023 partner programs:

- Distributed **4,155,666 lbs.** of food
- Served **47,571** households & **118,052** individuals
- Served **274,390** meals

[Commodity Supplemental Food Program \(CSFP\)](#)

RKCAA partnered with the State of Wisconsin's Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Festival Foods, The Potato King, Inc., and the Shalom Center, Inc., enabling seniors to gain access to healthier food options.

In 2023, **11,053** seniors received nutritious commodity food boxes in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

[Holiday Food Basket Distribution](#)

RKCAA collaborates with the Racine County Food Bank (RCFB), CNH Industrial America, LLC (CNH), and other local community partners, providing holiday food boxes to individuals with disabilities, senior citizens, and others. During the 2023 holiday season, **2,000** eligible Racine County residents were able to prepare healthy meals.



"My life has been changed for good. I have food in my pantry. Thank you so much" ~ CSFP client

2023 Highlights

58,968 individuals served

824,898 lbs. of food distributed

6,099 referrals made to community partners

2,016 hygiene products & diapers distributed



Improving Access to Healthy Options

Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

In 2023, RKCAA was awarded the SFMNP contract to provide farmer market checks to income-eligible seniors in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

In the inaugural season, **1,128** seniors participated, improving access to healthy food from local farmers in their communities.

WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program

In 2023, **2,660** clients received farmer market nutrition program checks, which provided increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Fit Families

Fit Families is a nutrition education program serving families enrolled in WIC. Fit Families strives to prevent childhood obesity by assisting families in adopting healthy eating habits and physical activity behaviors through coaching. In 2023, **60%** of children ate four or more servings of fruits and veggies per day at graduation, compared to 33% at enrollment. Additionally, **72%** of children drank 6 oz. or less of juice per day at graduation compared to 62% at enrollment.

Partnership with Kenosha YMCA for Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cancer Prevention Program

In partnership with Kenosha YMCA and thanks to the HEAL grant, **76** WIC families participated in a series of nutrition and physical activity seminars around eating healthier and being more active to reduce their risk of cancer. As part of their participation, families received a 3-month Kenosha YMCA family membership.



The RKCAA onsite farm stands provided additional opportunities for families to receive cookbooks, and sample recipes and produce sold at the farm stand.

"I absolutely love The Fit Families program. It has helped and inspired me to be a better mom and make healthier choices for my children and their well-being.

Jessi and Rebecca, my Fit family coaches are knowledgeable and kind. They inspire me to be the best mom I can be... I'm so grateful to have got to know them!!!!" ~ Fit Families client

FINANCIALS

2023 PROGRAMS

Rent Assistance Programs,
5.6%

CSBG, 6.1%

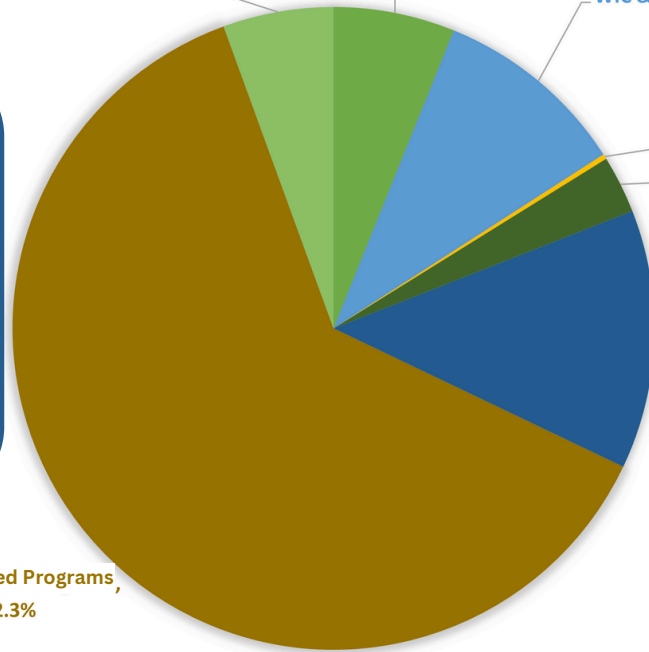
WIC & Related Programs,
9.8%

Skills, 0.3%

Other, 2.9%

TEFAP & Related
Programs, 13.0%

WAP & Related Programs,
62.3%



Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. receives federal, state, local and private funding. During 2023, the agency managed twenty five programs totaling \$9.23 million in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

DONORS AND FUNDERS

- Associated Bank
- Bob's Discount Furniture
- CNH Industrial America, LLC
- Covenant Presbyterian Church
- Division of Workforce Development
- Equus
- Festival Foods, Inc.
- Kenosha Achievement Center
- Kenosha County Department of Human Services
- Kenosha County Division of Health
- Kenosha YMCA Healthy Eating Active Living HEAL Grant
- O&H Danish Bakery, Inc.
- Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc.
- PayPal Giving Fund
- Sam's Club
- State of Wisconsin
- State of Wisconsin, Department of Administration
- State of Wisconsin, Department of Children and Families
- State of Wisconsin, Department of Health Services
- State of Wisconsin, Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility
- The Potato King, Inc.
- United Mechanical, Inc.
- US Department of Agriculture
- US Department of Energy
- US Department of Health and Human Services
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- US Department of the Treasury
- Wisconsin Community Action Program Association

RKCAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023

Susan Spicer– Chairperson

**Melissa Kaprelian – Vice-
Chairperson**

Stephanie Funk – Secretary

John Woodbury –Treasurer

Waleed Ahmad

Andy Berg

Roy L. Carter

Steve Donovan

Hilary D. Edwards

Gary Flynn

Daniel Gaschke

Maurice Horton

Jessica Lee Malacara

Jan Michalski

Rika M. Saliscente-Phipps

Linda Serpe

Kim Serpe-Stauber

Jeff Wamboldt

Terra Wendricks-Lindberg

Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc.

2113 North Wisconsin Street

Racine, WI 53402

www.rkcaa.org

262-637-8377



Helping People. Changing Lives.