

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Supporting Communities

Overcoming Challenges

Thriving Together



REMEMBERING ESSIE ALLEN

The Board of Directors and staff of Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. dedicate this Annual Report to the memory of Essie Allen, Immediate Past Chief Executive Officer.

In 2024, under Essie's leadership, RKCAA continued to serve vulnerable individuals and families in Racine and Kenosha Counties. Essie's genuine compassion and care for the community were evident in all she did. She believed that everyone mattered and insisted that all who sought the agency's services be treated fairly and with dignity. Essie led with integrity and had an unwavering passion for helping people succeed — values that perfectly aligned with the agency's mission.



Essie leaves behind a powerful legacy of kindness, compassion, and dedication to service. As we move into 2025, the RKCAA team and its loyal partners — volunteers, donors, and funders — remain committed to continuing her work. We will honor Essie's memory by staying steadfast in the fight against poverty and ensuring RKCAA remains a vital resource for families and the community.

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.”**

STEPHANIE FUNK *Board Chairperson*

As Chairperson of the RKCAA Board of Directors, I am honored to contribute to the agency's far-reaching community impact.

Life's challenges are constantly evolving, and meeting the demands of supporting a household can be difficult. Yet, the RKCAA team continues to show unwavering dedication, focus, and resilience, ensuring that individuals and families across Racine and Kenosha have access to the vital resources and opportunities they need to succeed.



The agency's wide range of services supports residents at every stage of life. As a local farmer, I have personally enjoyed seeing multi-generational families embrace healthier eating habits—taking advantage of RKCAA's nutrition education programs and using Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers to purchase fresh, local produce.

Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency plays an indispensable role in strengthening our community. We are deeply grateful for the volunteers, donors, and community partners whose support makes this work possible.



GARY COTTON *Interim Chief Executive Officer*

In 2024, Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. proudly served nearly 50,000 residents across Racine and Kenosha Counties.

Guided by its four pillars—Housing, Food & Nutrition, Health, and Asset Attainment—RKCAA remained focused on delivering programs that address the fundamental needs of households in our communities. Key initiatives included housing counseling, weatherization services (such as emergency furnace repairs and appliance replacements), health screenings, and educational opportunities designed to promote greater self-sufficiency.

Through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), RKCAA supported more than 5,300 unduplicated participants, ensuring that families had access to essential nutrition and health services.

The leadership of RKCAA is deeply proud and grateful for the tireless efforts of our volunteers, community partners, individual donors, and funders. Your support is vital to strengthening Racine and Kenosha communities and helping our neighbors build brighter futures.

Building Up The Community

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

WAP served **498** individuals, increasing the number of households gaining access to cost-saving energy measures, including:

- **197** Dwellings Weatherized
- **265** Emergency Furnace Repairs
- **100** Water Heaters Installed
- **42** Central Air Conditioning System

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 2024 program graduates who obtained a new job are working in their chosen fields, with an average hourly increase of **\$11.67/hr.** or **\$35,238** annually.

The individuals completed post-secondary education, earning an Associate of Arts as Licensed Professional and Registered Nurses, Surgical Tech, and Medical Assistant.

"The Skills Program helped me make my dreams come true, and I can now provide a better life for me and my children"
~ Braeley



"The heater went out and they replaced the whole furnace now I have heat." ~ WAP Client

Braelley's Story

Braelley, a single mother of two, enrolled in SEP in March of 2024, pursuing her Associate of Arts Degree as a Medical Assistant. She worked on campus as a cashier but did not earn enough to support her household.

When Braeley enrolled, she was prepared to complete her education. She never missed an appointment; any document she needed to deliver was brought in the next day. Living with a relative, by definition, Braeley was homeless. However, she was not going to let that defeat her. On December 14, 2024, she completed her degree in Medical Assisting. On December 30, 2024, she began a full-time position at Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee, more than doubling her income, in addition to securing housing for herself and her two children.



Helping Families Meet Their Needs

Wisconsin Help for Homeowners (WHH)

From 2020 to 2024, RKCAA administered the Wisconsin Help for Homeowners Program in Racine and Kenosha Counties. The program supported eligible homeowners, regardless of mortgage status, who faced financial hardship after January 2020.

Assistance covered overdue expenses such as mortgage payments, property taxes, and utilities. The program concluded at the end of 2024, having provided **\$7.4 million** in aid to homeowners in Racine and Kenosha Counties over four years.

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 **2,810** households in 2024.



Diaper Distribution Program (DDP)

Diapers are essential for the daily care of infants and toddlers, yet an estimated 1 in 3 families struggles to afford them. DDP supports families by distributing diapers through TEFAP-participating food pantries in Racine County and the WIC program in Kenosha County.

In 2024, this program assisted **1,366** families, helping to ease the financial burden of basic childcare needs and promote the health and well-being of young children.



Providing Relief for a Grandmother in Need

A grandmother caring for her two infant grandchildren, living on a fixed income, visited one of our partner food pantries to pick up her monthly CSFP box. During her visit, she shared her struggle to afford diapers. Our team immediately connected her with the Diaper Distribution Program, providing much-needed diapers and wipes. Grateful for the support, she expressed how this assistance eased her financial burden and gave her peace of mind.



Food Security & Nutrition

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Through WIC, **5,310** pregnant women, new moms, infants, and children under five were supported with resources to keep families healthy and strong in 2024. 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 2024, partner programs:

- Distributed **1,195,554 lbs.** of food
- Served **38,754** households & **137,767** individuals
- Served **280,125** 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 access healthier food options.

In 2024, **10,009** 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 2024 holiday season, **2,249** eligible Racine County residents were able to prepare healthy meals.



*"Everything was perfect, including Farmers Market checks."
~ WIC client*



"been able to keep food in the house month to month and utilize the food pantry as well and the fresh veggies help with the nutrition a lot."

~ CSFP client



2024 Highlights

49,827 individuals served
1,195,555 lbs. of food distributed
5,075 referrals made to community partners
1,366 hygiene products & diapers distributed

Improving Access to Healthy Options

Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

The SFMNP provides income-eligible Racine and Kenosha County residents 60 years or older with coupons totaling \$45 to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables at local farmer markets and approved farmstands.

SFMNP checks were issued to **618** Racine seniors and **751** Kenosha seniors during the 2024 season. Compared to 2023, **241** more seniors participated in the 2024 season.

WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program

In 2024, **2,178** clients received farmer market nutrition program checks, which provided increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

On-Site Farmstand

Throughout the summer and fall, RKCAA hosts on-site farmstands at its Racine and Kenosha locations. These farmstands offer families and seniors more opportunities to redeem their vouchers, explore fresh, local produce, and enjoy added resources like cookbooks and recipe samples—all designed to support healthy, affordable eating.



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 2024, **90%** of children ate four or more servings of fruits and veggies per day at graduation, compared to 84% at enrollment. Additionally, **81%** of children drank 6 oz. or less of juice per day at graduation compared to 65% 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.

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.

My Fit Families coaches, Jessi and Rebecca are knowledgeable and kind. They inspire me to be the best mom I can be."

~ Fit Families client

FINANCIALS

2024 PROGRAMS

Rent Assistance
Programs, 2.8%

CSBG, 5.3%

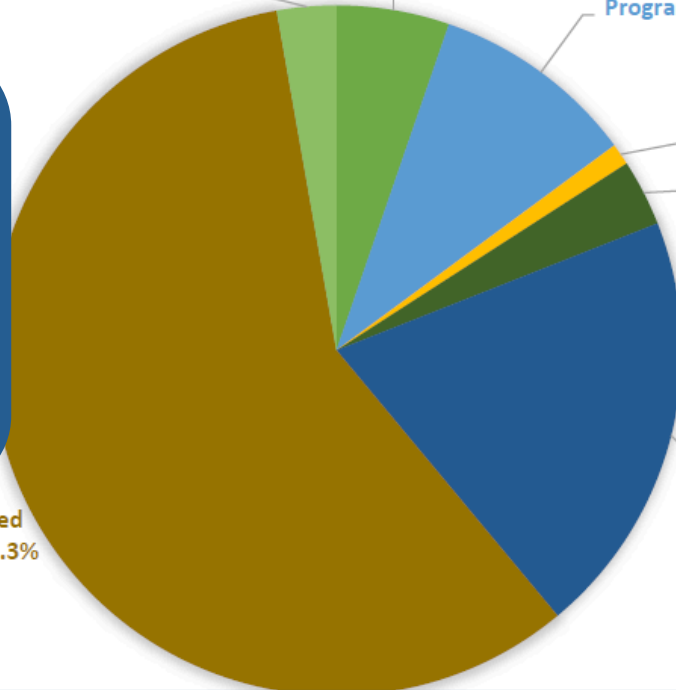
WIC & Related
Programs, 9.6%

Skills, 1.0%

Other, 3.0%

WX & Related
Programs, 58.3%

TEFAP & Related
Programs, 20.0%



Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Inc. receives federal, state, local, and private funding. In 2024, the agency managed 25 programs totaling \$10.32 million in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

DONORS AND FUNDERS

- Associated Bank
- Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation Inc
- CNH Industrial America LLC
- Covenant Presbyterian Church
- Division of Workforce Development
- Dr. Scholl Foundation
- Educators Credit Union
- Equus Workforce Solutions
- Festival Foods, Inc.
- Forest County Potawatomi Foundation
- International Union UAW - Local 180
- Kenosha Achievement Center
- Kenosha County Department of Health Services
- Kenosha County Division of Health
- Kenosha YMCA
- Kiwanis Club
- Kroger Foundation
- Kwik Trip Inc
- Ocean Spray Community Fund
- Progressive Missionary Baptist Church
- Racine Community Foundation
- 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
- US Department of Agriculture
- US Department of Energy
- US Department of Health and Human Services
- US Department of Treasury
- We Energies Foundation
- Western Kiwanis Foundation of Kenosha Inc
- Wisconsin Community Action Program Association

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