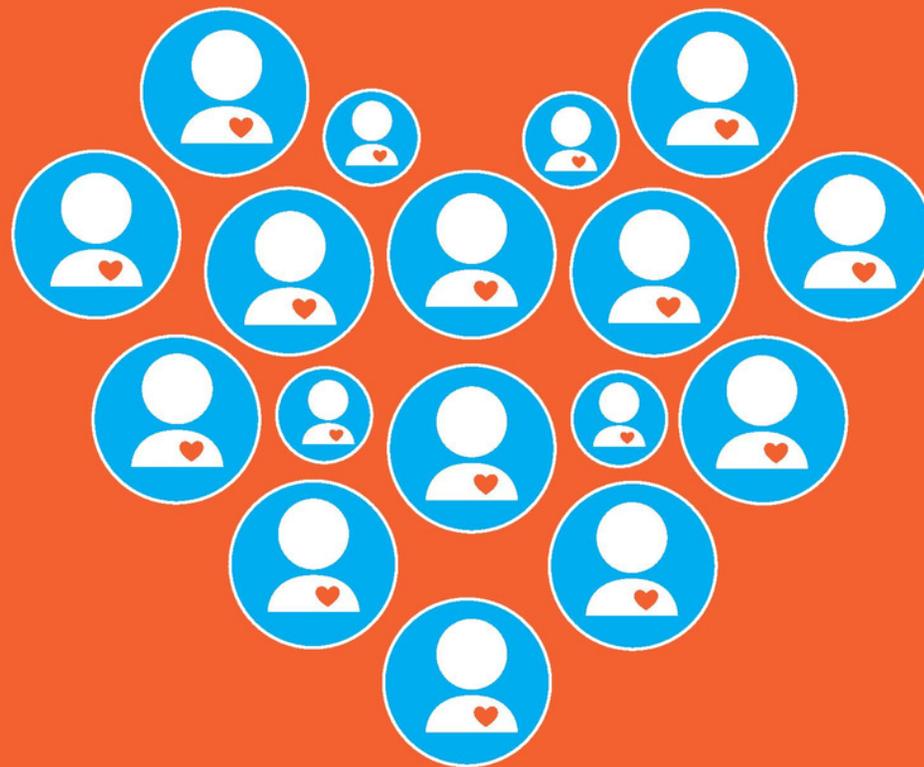


IMPACT OF OPPORTUNITY

C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation

ANNUAL REPORT 2022





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This past year presented a variety of challenges for those we serve. From homelessness to food insecurity to lack of employment and lack of transportation, C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation was here to help people overcome these challenges. C.E.F.S. provides an “Impact of Opportunity” for people in our community through education and support to achieve and maintain stability. These “Impacts of Opportunities” are provided by our highly trained, motivated, and passionate employees that strive to help those in need. These opportunities can be provided by something as simple as a home delivered meal through the Meals on Wheels program to something more complex in helping a single mother through an opportunity to obtain her RN degree through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program (WIOA). These opportunities provide an impact for people in our communities to help themselves and each other.

Last year alone C.E.F.S. provided services to over 12,000 individuals and families. These opportunities were provided by Education, Housing Stability Services, Crisis Assistance, Senior Services, Energy Efficiency Services, and Transportation. Through this annual report you will see specific examples of how these services impacted individuals in our community. You will also see the community support that was provided by businesses and by our dedicated group of volunteers. Last year C.E.F.S. had 2,473 volunteers that provided 83,669 hours of service to C.E.F.S. and the community.

We want to thank all our partners, businesses, volunteers, and our employees in **“Helping People. Changing Lives.”** Without this support, C.E.F.S. could not help the thousands of people in our communities in achieving and maintaining stability.



Kevin Bushur

Kevin Bushur
Chief Executive Officer

Chuck Buchanan

Chuck Buchanan
Board Chairperson

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OUR MISSION

**Provide opportunities
for people in our
communities through
education and support
to achieve and maintain
stability.**



FAMILY OF DISTINCTION



The Families of Distinction Award is given to a family or individual who through utilization of C.E.F.S. programs has overcome great personal and social obstacles in their pursuit of stability and self-sufficiency. This Family of Distinction Award elevates how C.E.F.S. empowers families to identify and utilize their personal strengths to enrich their lives.

Michelle Recsnik first came to the Vandalia Outreach Office in Fall 2020. She had become a dislocated worker and was interested in learning about how the C.E.F.S. WIOA Program could help her pursue her interest in the Medical Billing and Coding certificate program. Michelle wasn't just looking for the opportunity to better circumstances for herself - she was a single mom of two with another one on the way. Michelle qualified for assistance and began classes in Spring 2021. Throughout the process, Michelle also qualified for LIHEAP and food pantry assistance through C.E.F.S. Michelle is an extremely organized person and is a go-getter, taking it upon herself to pick up extra classes to earn two additional certificates while she is working on the goal of Medical Billing and Coding certification. Michelle works part-time, makes exemplary grades, has a positive outlook, and even encourages her WIOA Career Planner. Michelle is an outstanding role model for her two teenage sons, 16 month old daughter, and fiancé - often engaging them in conversations about her assignments. Michelle is excited about graduating in 2022 and obtaining full-time employment to better provide for her family.

C.E.F.S. HAS MADE THE IMPOSSIBLE, POSSIBLE! BECAUSE OF THEIR WIOA PROGRAM, I HAVE GONE BACK TO SCHOOL AND AM ABLE TO SEE A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR MY FAMILY. I BELIEVE IN MYSELF AGAIN. I CAN NEVER BEGIN TO THANK THEM ENOUGH FOR WHAT THEY HAVE DONE FOR ME.

PAUL D. WHITE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Paul White Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an agency staff member, board member, volunteer or individual from a community partner that has dedicated at least 25 years to "Helping People. Changing Lives." The individual ensures that customer needs are first priority and be thought of as a leader and respected by the people they serve and the public at large. The individual must offer hope and opportunities and foster creativity in the community. The Paul White Lifetime Achievement Award is named after former C.E.F.S. Chief Executive Officer, Paul White who retired in 2017.



Elaine Nuding

Elaine Nuding began her employment with C.E.F.S. in 1977 as a Receptionist in Shelbyville for the CETA. She was then promoted to a Case Manager. She worked for the HUD Housing Program for 2 years. In her 45 years of employment with C.E.F.S. and workforce programs, she has worked in all capacities of the workforce program, from Case Manager to Operations Manager.

Elaine has always taken a “customer first” approach with her job. She seeks new ways to better serve the customer without making it any more tedious or a hardship for them. Always willing to listen, Elaine meets the customer where they are and whatever the circumstance. Non-judgmental, Elaine goes above and beyond to make sure customer’s needs are met. Many times she has changed her work schedule to accommodate the schedules of our customers. Elaine’s work ethic is impeccable. She is one of the first to step in to help when there is a need and she will work and work until the job is completed. Coming in early, working through her lunch hour, staying late, or adjusting her work hours to meet the demands of her position, Elaine is someone who shows up on time, every time. C.E.F.S. and Workforce programs have been Elaine’s life for more than 45 years. She is well versed on policies and procedures and takes her roles and responsibilities seriously. A big part of working with customers is maintaining their privacy and maintaining confidentiality. Elaine is diligent in training staff on confidentiality issues on an on-going basis.

Elaine has served as President of the Illinois Employment and Training Association (IETA), received the Family and Community Development Specialist Certification, served as a Girl Scout Leader and as a Volunteer at SWAN (Stop Women Abuse Now) where she also served as Secretary and President of the organization.

Elaine says, “It has been a privilege to serve each and every customer I have had the opportunity to work with throughout my career with C.E.F.S. I am the lucky one. I come to work every day to do a job that I love. I truly believe we have and are making a difference in people’s lives. Throughout my career, there have been many changes. These changes have been made to strengthen the program so we can provide the best services to our customers. I strive each and everyday to make sure our customers are treated with respect and are helped in whatever way is needed to help them succeed.”

EDUCATION



EDUCATION

Education is the core to C.E.F.S. services. Our goal is to educate people in our communities so they can help themselves and each other.



474

Children served by the Head Start 0-5 Program.

21

Individuals obtained a high school diploma and/or obtained an equivalency certificate or diploma.

104

Individuals obtained an associate degree.

95

Kindergarten bound children met or exceeded required level of school readiness skills.

The Story of Education

Head Start is a federally-funded program which has been in existence since 1965 that promotes school preparation by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services. Head Start's services and resources are designed to foster stable family relationships, enhance children's physical and emotional well-being, and establish an environment to develop strong cognitive skills. The Head Start 0-5 Program provides comprehensive classroom and home-based services to pregnant women and children birth to age five including children with significant special needs.

The **Literacy Program** is committed to providing adult literacy program services that will enable participants to fully participate in their family, work, and community toles. Literacy Program administers Adult Literacy, GED preparation, and English as a second language programs that provide basic adult literacy instruction to enhance reading, writing, math or English proficiency for individuals in our communities.

C.E.F.S. offers the **Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP)**. SHIP is a free statewide health insurance counseling service for Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers. SHIP counselors are trained to educate consumers and answer questions about Medicare, Medicare supplements, and Medicare Part D coverage. Counselors will also assist with enrollment in Medicare Part D as well as provide assistance in securing extra financial assistance for Part B and Part D premiums.

The **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program (WIOA)** provides activities that increase employment, retention, earnings, and skills in the American workforce. The WIOA Program pairs motivated job seekers with an experienced Career Planner who will become their partner on a journey to obtain sustainable employment through targeted educational and career development opportunities. C.E.F.S. provide guidance with job readiness, job search, work based learning, and classroom training needed to secure and retain employment and become self-sufficient.

Through our **Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Grant**, Outreach offices are able to assist low-income people attend training programs and classes that will lead to employment. The CSBG Program can pay for tuition, books, uniforms, required tools for the courses, and other supportive services on an as needed basis. The CSBG Scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance to income eligible persons to attend college. Scholarships will go toward providing formal education or occupational training in an accredited Illinois educational institution to CSBG eligible clients, with consideration given to study in high technology areas or other growth occupations.

**EDUCATION IS NOT THE FILLING OF A PAIL,
BUT THE LIGHTING OF A FIRE.**

WB Yeats

Personal Achievement Awards in EDUCATION



Abigail Held came to the office to inquire about services that WIOA offered. WIOA was her last hope of getting help with going to school. Abigail was in the process of getting ready to apply for some student loans so she could attend Lake Land College at the beginning of Spring 2020, when she was laid off from her job due to COVID. Abigail says, "C.E.F.S. means so much to me. Without it I would not have been able to go to school without taking out loans. I was able to go through school without the worry of the cost." Abigail graduated with her Associates Degree in Nursing in the fall of 2021.



Erin Gahimer came to the Mattoon WIOA office in July 2019 after being referred by the Dental Hygiene Program at Lake Land College. She had been accepted in the program, but she needed assistance to help pay for the substantial costs involved. Erin completed her associates degree with a GPA of 3.948 and passed her board exams on the first try. Erin also began working full time in October 2021 as a Registered Dental Hygienist with a significant increase over her previous wage prior to training. Erin says, "C.E.F.S. offered financial peace of mind which allowed to me to focus solely on succeeding in school and my career."



Amy Jones was a recently divorced single mother and was wanting to improve the life for herself and her children by becoming an Occupational Therapist Assistant. She was referred to Outreach and applied and received the CSBG Scholarship. Amy says, "The Scholarship helped pay for books and classes. Since I was a newly single parent, this assistance was very helpful. It provided an opportunity to better myself and my children." Amy now works for TheraKids as an Occupational Therapist, working with children in the Hillsboro and Pana School Districts.



Molly McDonald came to the Mattoon WIOA office in May 2020 seeking assistance to complete the Dental Hygiene Program at Lake Land College. She just finished her first year of training and was in need of assistance to help with the costs of training such as tuition, fees, books, exams, and licensure fees. Molly was still working part time while attending classes, which made it difficult to spend the time needed to devote to her schoolwork; however, she graduated with a 3.741 GPA. Molly passed her board exams on the first try and received her Registered Dental Hygienist licensure and now works as a Dental Hygienist with a significant increase over her former wages.



Brandon Ramsey was a dislocated worker and needed assistance with completing classroom training for Entrepreneurship. Brandon has always wanted to open his own business and be his own boss. Brandon was receiving unemployment benefits while going to school. Brandon earned his certificate in Entrepreneurships and has substantially increased his salary. Brandon says, "Thanks to the WIOA Program; WIOA was a tremendous help in furthering my employment!"



Susan Seals came to the WIOA office in Centralia in November 2021 in need of financial assistance to pay for her tuition for the CDL program and help with childcare. After meeting with WIOA, Susan enrolled in Occupational skills training and received assistance with her childcare and transportation. Susan worked very hard to achieve her goal of completing the CDL program. However, COVID closed the DMVs in IL, which was a set back in Susan's training. Susan was able to overcome the challenges and passed her CDL exam on the first try. Susan says, "The Services that were provided to me were life changing. I am now able to support my family on my own. Receiving my CDL License has given me hope for a brighter future for my children and I."



Kayla Summann expressed interest in obtaining her Associate Degree in Nursing from Lake Land College. Kayla is a single mom of 2 small children wanting to reach the self sufficiency level to better her life for her children. Kayla worked full-time as a CNA while going to school and taking care of her family. Kayla graduated from Lake Land College in May 2022. Kayla says, "This program has made it possible for me to go to school. This has been something I have been dreaming about since I was little, and this program made my dreams come true. I am truly grateful."



Sydney Schottman came into the Robinson WIOA and inquired about the WIOA program for youth. Sydney indicated she was interested in classroom training. Sydney completed her basic nurse training and was accepted into the Nursing Program at Lincoln Trail College in Fall 2019. In May 2021, Sydney completed her Associate Degree in Nursing and passed her state board exam for Registered Nurse. Sydney currently attends Western Governor's University online BSN program and has earned her Advanced Cardiac Life Support Certificate and expects to graduate with Bachelor of Science in nursing in June 2022. Sydney says, "Thank you so much. I couldn't have done it without your help. You really helped keep me on track, and I can't thank you enough."



Virginia Stumborg has been coming to the Adult Literacy Program for the past 22 years. The Literacy staff continues to set attainable life skill goals such as improving reading comprehension, counting change, renewing her driver's license and memorizing her phone number. By practicing these life skills and maintaining her abilities with the assistance of her sister, Virginia can continue independence. Her sessions with Adult Literacy focus on maintaining her abilities, continuing her perseverance, and sustaining her competencies.



Whitney Wolff came to the C.E.F.S./WIOA office after hearing about our program at Lake Land College. As a single parent of 2 children, she wanted to inquire about her eligibility for the WIOA program and she was selected for admission to the Fall 2019 Associate Degree in Nursing program at Lake Land College. The pandemic hit soon after Whitney started the nursing program, but she did not let that detour her. She forged ahead and continued making excellent grades all the way through the program. Whitney has since obtained her RN license and is now working full-time at HSHS St. Anthony Memorial Hospital. "Without C.E.F.S. it would have been impossible to achieve my goals and grow in a career that I am so passionate about. I am more than thankful for them and hope that one day I can pay it forward!"

A NEW HOME FOR HEAD START

After being unused for over six years, the former home to the Effingham Public Library received a new facelift and a new direction while still providing ongoing education to residents within the community. Community Opportunities Inc. purchased the former library and renovated it to meet the needs of the C.E.F.S. Head Start Program. During 2021, the former library building at 100 E. Market Avenue became the new C.E.F.S. Head Start 0-5 Program – Effingham center. This change has allowed C.E.F.S. to combine the location of its Early Head Start and Head Start services together at one site location in Effingham.

The building sustained an extensive renovation which created a total of five classrooms, office and storage areas, large kitchen prep area, meeting/conference room, and outdoor playground space. The renovation also included installing a solar panel array on the roof which was funded through the Illinois Solar for All Program and installed by the Bloomington-based StraightUp Solar. The facility will have 100% of its electricity for the next thirty years which saves on electricity costs while also helping the environment.

“The building had meant so much to so many people for the last fifty years, providing education through the library,” said C.E.F.S. Chief Executive Officer Kevin Bushur. “Our intent is to make sure that this building continues to be used for the same purpose - educating children and their families for many years to come.” Thank you to Community Opportunities Inc. for your continued partnership with C.E.F.S. in "Helping People. Changing Lives."



HOUSING STABILITY



HOUSING STABILITY

There is stability with safe and securing housing. Programs that assist C.E.F.S. communities are working towards this goal.



216

Individuals avoided eviction.

69

Individuals experienced improved health and safety due to improvements to their homes.

264

Individuals obtained safe and affordable housing.

27

Individuals participated in first-time home buyer education and purchased their first home.

The Story of Housing Stability

Rental Counseling and Assistance

C.E.F.S. realizes the struggle households may face with paying rent while juggling unexpected financial hardships or locating affordable housing. Housing Counseling staff will assist people in setting up a budget to address the financial hardship, provide referrals to address any other household needs, educate on landlord and tenant rights, provide case management, and if eligible, provide rental assistance to maintain housing or obtain more affordable housing.

Homeless Assistance

When a family or individual finds themselves homeless with no place to stay, C.E.F.S. has several programs that may be able to assist. Emergency Shelter may be provided through hotel vouchers when funding is available. Staff will work with the families/individuals to determine eligibility. Staff will provide case management and assist in locating housing that will meet the households needs. Through HUD funding, C.E.F.S. can assist households with rent and supportive services while the household participates in case management. Case management will include budget counseling, goal setting, assessment of needs and referrals.

First Time Homebuyer Counseling

For those interested in purchasing a home, this counseling will prepare buyers to make prudent choices during the homebuying and mortgage process. Home-ownership counseling will prepare buyers to keep their largest single investment safe and avoid future hardships.

COMING HOME IS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

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A photograph of a person holding a young child on their back, viewed from behind. The person is wearing a dark t-shirt and has their arms wrapped around the child. The child is wearing a denim jacket and dark pants. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with a blue tint. The text 'CRISIS ASSISTANCE' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

CRISIS ASSISTANCE

CRISIS ASSISTANCE

Offering opportunities for assistance in a time of need through Outreach Offices. The program provides low-income people with immediate life necessities such as food, shelter, water assistance, utility assistance, and emergency furnace assistance.



1,235

Homes received reconnection assistance to electricity or gas through LIHEAP program.

5,407

Homes received assistance with payment to gas and electric companies through LIHEAP program.

6,206

People received food through our food pantries.

76

Homes received a furnace through the emergency furnace assistance program.

The Story of Crisis Assistance

C.E.F.S. is a place where community members can come in times of crisis. Not all crisis assistance looks the same. Some clients are experiencing homelessness and Housing Counselors assist in finding immediate shelter until a more permanent living situation can be obtained. Some clients reach out for help with feeding their families, and that is where our food pantries and food pantry collaborations come in to assist.

Still, other clients come to C.E.F.S. needing assistance with paying for their utilities. The **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program** (LIHEAP) assists in paying for electric, gas, propane, and other heating sources like *direct vendor payment*, which is a one-time benefit, paid directly to the utility company(s) for eligible households. *Reconnection assistance* is also offered to help households that are disconnected from their utilities or are within seven (7) days of shut off. This includes households that use a delivered fuel source who are below 25% in their tank and have been refused delivery on credit. There is also the *cash benefit*, a one-time payment for eligible renters whose utilities are included in their rent. The *percentage of income payment plan program (PIPP)* is a preferred choice of Ameren customers. PIPP customers are enrolled in budget billing with Ameren. Each month the program pays a portion of the monthly budget bill amount and the customer is responsible for the rest. Additionally, when they start the program, customers who owe an outstanding balance will get a monthly credit applied to their old balance for every on time, in full payment.

One of the newest crisis programs that C.E.F.S. offers to clients in need of assistance is the **Low Income Household Water Assistance Program** (LIHWAP). LIHWAP is a crisis program for drinking water and wastewater. Eligible customers may receive a benefit of up to \$1,500 for disconnection fees, late fees, amount to reconnect, imminent disconnection, arrears, and past due balances.



Collaboration Making a Difference

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has operated a crisis assistance furnace program since 1997. This emergency assistance is for eligible LIHEAP homeowners to help restore heat through repair or replacement of the furnace. This past heating season we had the opportunity to participate in the new **Furnace Assistance Voucher Program**. The voucher program placed the responsibility on the participant to select, contact, and schedule the service call with an approved contractor. The contractor's responsibility was to restore heat to the home and the program paid the voucher. This system allowed us a much quicker response time for our customers that were in a heat emergency. This season we were able to help 76 households get their heat restored.

Community Service Award



Muzzy's Hometown Heating & Air Conditioning is a HVAC contractor that collaborated with LIHEAP in a pilot voucher program. The service techs and office staff at Muzzy's treated our customers with care and respect as they worked diligently to alleviate the difficult situation our customers were facing of having no heat and no money to resolve this potential life-threatening problem. The restoration of heat in the dead of winter is a true health and safety issue for our customers and Muzzy's was able to assist us in getting the heat back on! They were true partners with us to achieve our agency mission of "helping people, changing lives." C.J. Swinehart, owner of Muzzy's, says, "Working with C.E.F.S during the heating season was such a great experience. Kathy made everything very simple for us and was always so kind and great to work with! We're so thankful that this program was available and to have been able to help as many people as we did get safe heat back in their homes."



**SENIOR
SERVICES**

SENIOR SERVICES

C.E.F.S. offers a wide variety of services to our senior community as well as providing opportunities for them to continue serving in their communities.



157,287

Hot delicious meals to 2,053 seniors.

429

Enrollments were completed saving Medicare beneficiaries more than \$166,150.

920

Benefits Access Applications (License Plate Discounts) were completed by staff, saving consumers \$230,000 over a two-year period.

18

Participants returned to Strong for Life exercise sessions after the program was shut down for nearly 2 years because of COVID.

The Story of Senior Services

The **Meals on Wheels Program** provides nutritionally balanced meals on a donation basis to people who are 60 years of age and older and their spouses. There are two components to our Meals on Wheels: congregate meals where seniors, share a nutritious meal and enjoy activities and fellowship at a nutrition site, and home delivered meals, where meals are delivered to homebound seniors. A nutritious meal along with a daily check of the senior's well-being are benefits of home delivered meals.

The **Retired and Senior Volunteer Program** is a volunteer recruitment and placement program. Volunteers are recruited and placed in volunteer opportunities that not only interests them, but also gives them an opportunity to utilize their skills and experience from past employment. Volunteers can also choose to explore new areas of interest and learn new skills that can be used for that volunteer opportunity.

The **Senior Health Insurance Program** is a Medicare counseling program. Certified counselors meet with Medicare beneficiaries and advise them on what options they have for taking their Medicare benefits, what plans are available, and assist them with applying for additional benefits if the beneficiary meets specific income and asset requirements.

The **Senior Health Assistance Program** is a program that helps individuals fill out applications for benefits. We assist with applying for programs and benefits such as Medicaid, SNAP, Medicare Savings Program, Low Income Subsidy, and the Benefits Access Application.

Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act are grants to provide outreach and assistance to eligible Medicare beneficiaries to apply for benefit programs that help to lower the costs of their Medicare premiums and deductibles.

The **Strong for Life** exercise program is a strengthening exercise program designed by physical therapists to improve strength, balance, and overall health. The program targets specific muscles that are important in everyday movements such as getting out of a chair and walking.

The **Aging Mastery Program** (AMP) empowers adults to make and maintain small but impactful changes in their behaviors. AMP incorporates evidence-informed materials, speakers, group discussion, and peer support to give participants the skills and tools they need to achieve measurable improvements in managing their health, remaining economically secure, and actively contributing to society.

The **Friendly Visiting Program** matches a volunteer with a lonely, isolated senior who is lacking social support from family or friends. Volunteers would report any concerns they have about the well-being of the senior to the Senior Programs Director who will follow-up with family or make a referral to the appropriate agency for assistance.

Personal Achievement Awards in SENIOR SERVICES



Martha Bushue was looking for something new to add to her life at age 74. Martha began volunteering at the Meals on Wheels site in Dieterich by cleaning off tables, serving food, etc. Martha now goes to Meals on Wheels for a warm meal and friends. Even with all of her challenges, Martha still participates in the card games, and enjoys delicious food weekly at the Meals on Wheels site. Martha says, “Other than my family, this is the only thing I have to look forward to eating lunch with friends and playing cards. It means so much to me to enjoy this on Wednesdays and Thursdays.”



Harold Green has been part of the Hillsboro Meals on Wheels program since 2011. He learned of the availability of a good hot meal and fellowship from one of his neighbors. Harold is currently 97 and is able to receive a hot mid-day meal each day as he is taking a break from farming. Even during the COVID shut down, Harold would drive by the Senior Center and “honk for lunch”. Harold is a very special part of our day as he is able to share some of his humor and wisdom with his Meals on Wheels family. Harold says, “I do not know what I would have done for many years without your assistance. For that, I thank you.”



Deborah Miller is a widow who has limited income and is on disability. Debbie has benefited from the LIHEAP program as well as the Tax Preparations. Although Debbie has very limited income, it doesn't stop her from volunteering with the RSVP and Meals on Wheels programs. Debbie has suffered much loss in the last few years, losing several loved ones. The opportunities through C.E.F.S. give her hope and direction for the future. Debbie says, “I enjoy serving the people and taking care of them.”



Dana Tedrick started coming to Meals on Wheels after attending Senior Renewal and realizing she needed assistance with well-balanced meals. Dana has found a family at Meals on Wheels and has discovered a community that cares for her. She has become an active member of the community by joining the Meals on Wheels and volunteers in the RSVP program by becoming a Pen Pal to students. Dana says, “Meals on Wheels is like family to me. They worry about me and truly make me feel like I matter to them.”

Community Service Awards



The **City of Altamont** has provided space rent-free to the Meals on Wheels in Altamont site everyday Monday-Friday to enable the program to pack home-delivered meals and to provide activities to seniors for almost 50 years. The City of Altamont also makes photocopies for the program and furnishes ice for meals. The City of Altamont employees have always supported Meals on Wheels. They also help C.E.F.S. with the LIHEAP program to aide their customers with electricity and heating. "The City of Altamont is proud to accommodate the Altamont Meals on Wheels program. Offering a place for coordination of delivered meals and a place for participants to congregate is a pleasure. Meals on Wheels is such a beneficial program to the elderly and their families. The Altamont coordinators are the most caring people, taking a special interest in each family and offering personal attention to those in need. The Altamont Community is blessed to have each of them and the program."



Dieterich Bank in Dieterich has been a huge supporter of C.E.F.S. Meals on Wheels. The Dieterich Bank has sponsored the Older American Party and paid for meals and prizes for Bingo. They are true advocates. Each time something was needed, Dieterich Bank in Dieterich was willing to go above and beyond. Lisa Warfel, Retail Banking Lead, says, "Dieterich Bank is honored to be nominated for the Community Service Excellence Award. We have strived to be a bank that is appreciated in the communities we serve. Our unique culture encourages community involvement through volunteering and donations. We are constantly looking for ways to support the local businesses, organizations, people, and events that are making these communities a better place. We would like to thank our employees, board members, and executive team for making all of this possible."

A man with a beard, wearing a dark t-shirt, is shown in profile, working on a white water heater in a utility room. The scene is dimly lit, with a strong blue tint. The man is focused on his task, and the water heater is the central piece of equipment. The background shows a plain wall and some pipes.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

C.E.F.S. provides services to make homes more energy efficient and provides education to help individuals to learn how to become more energy efficient.



90

Homes signed up for community solar to save 50% on electricity costs.

28

Homes received new water heaters.

49

Homes completed weatherization services and increased their energy efficiency.

\$13,500

Is the average total cost spent on each weatherized home.

The Story of Energy Efficiency

The **Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program** is offered as a free service to income eligible applicants within the seven service counties. The Weatherization Program provides energy saving measures to the home which could include insulation, air sealing, caulking, weather-stripping, broken glass replacement, and windows/door repair or replacement for eligible applicants. Funding is provided through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Department of Energy, and the Department of Health and Human Services, and Ameren Illinois. The Weatherization Program also offers retrofit, repairs, and/or replacement of the heating unit in the eligible applicant's home. A heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) contractor performs a cleaning and checks the unit for safety. If the existing heating unit is hazardous and cannot be repaired, an energy efficient furnace will be installed. Various studies by the state have shown that these weatherization measures reduce energy costs on an average of 15% to 25%. This savings allows recipients to devote a larger percentage of their income to other essential needs.

Energy Partnerships

Customers receiving assistance through LIHEAP also receive energy efficiency education through partnerships with Ameren, Resource Innovations, and the University of Illinois Extension.

LIHEAP has also recently partnered with Nexamp, a full-service solar energy solutions company that develops and maintains solar projects through their entire lifecycle. This partnership will provide opportunity for our Ameren electric customers the opportunity to sign up for energy credits that is generated from a community solar project through Illinois Solar for all that Nexamp operates in Urbana, IL. The program guarantees low-income participants a 50% guaranteed savings on their electric supply costs.

Energy Efficiency: Gratitude

"I want to thank you along with everyone that provided so many valuable services to us. Words alone cannot begin to express our gratitude for the many blessings including peace of mind that resulted because of the C.E.F.S. Weatherization Program's commitment and skills. We have been provided warmth, comfort, savings, and peace of mind. For this we are so grateful!"

"I wanted to thank you for all that was done to my home for me. It was such a blessing and I thank God for C.E.F.S. that helps people. So many people need help and has no way of working on their home without someone like C.E.F.S. to help them. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. May God bless you all."

"My family and I wish to thank you for everything you have done for us. We could not have done it without your help. My husband would have been very pleased."

"I really appreciate the work that Toby and his crew did on my house. Thank you C.E.F.S. for taking care of it. My furnace doesn't run near as much as it used to."



C.E.F.S. GOES GREEN



In 2021, C.E.F.S. installed solar panels at their main office at 1805 South Banker Street in Effingham and their Head Start Center at 100 E. Market Ave in Effingham. This opportunity was made available through the Illinois Solar for All program and StraightUp Solar. StraightUp Solar installed the solar panels and both systems were activated in October 2021 and are generating clean energy. Through this partnership with StraightUp Solar and Illinois Solar for All, both projects will save the agency over \$300,000 in energy costs over the next 20 years.





StraightUp SOLAR

StraightUp Solar is
proud to support the
C.E.F.S. mission by
helping them
GO SOLAR.



Find out if solar is right for your
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government, or non-profit.

StraightUpSolar.com | (309) 725-2309



14-31
ILLINOIS
TRANSIT

14-31

EMERGENCY EXIT

CENTRAL ILLINOIS PUBLIC T
Call 855-755-CIPT(2478)
Operated By: CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.

SSURE
BS

TRANSPORTATION



TRANSPORTATION

Transportation plays a vital role for everyone to be self-sufficient. C.E.F.S. offers transportation and assistance in many of our programs.



501,814

Service miles (daily average of 1,953 service miles per day)

84,792

Total trips (daily average of 298 per day)

45,994

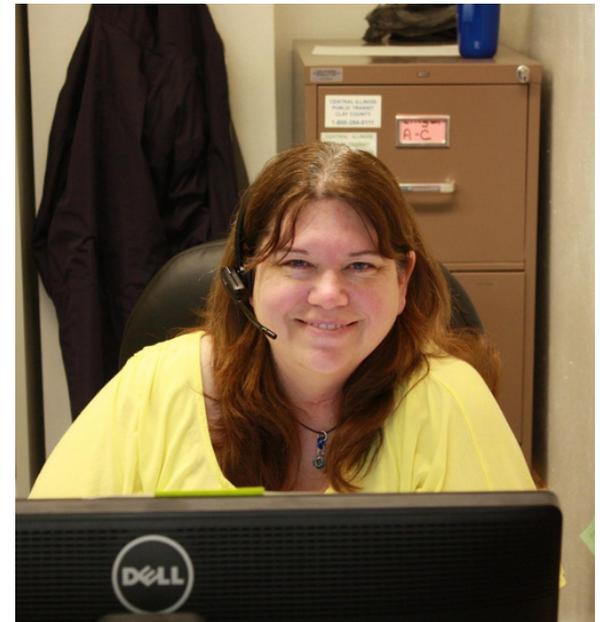
Trips for employment

16,337

Special assistance trips (paratransit)

The Story of Transportation

Central Illinois Public Transit Program is a federal and state funded public transportation system operating in Clay, Christian, Effingham, Fayette, Shelby, Moultrie, and Montgomery counties. The Illinois Department of Transportation provides operating assistance for public transportation in non-urbanized areas. Additional financial support for the system comes from fares, contracts, Title III funding through Area Agencies on Aging, (AgLinc and Midland Area Agency on Aging), Illinois Department of Human Services, and through donations from municipalities. Shelby County serves as the grant recipient and Central Illinois Public Transit is the administrator and service provider for Clay, Christian, Fayette, Montgomery, Moultrie, and Shelby Counties. Effingham County is the grant recipient and Central Illinois Public Transit is the administrator and service provider for Effingham County Public Transportation. Ridership is open to the general public, meaning anyone at any age and income is welcome to utilize public transportation services. The program operates on an advance reservation, and on a demand/response basis. Monthly passes and ticket books are available for purchase at discounted rates.



The **Head Start 0-5 Program** provides transportation for three to five-year-olds for its preschool program. Family Advocates and Parent Educators can provide transportation for children and families for case management services for such as doctor and dentist appointments.

The **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program** (WIOA) provides mileage reimbursement for transportation needed for employment such as going to school.

The **Outreach Program** provides transportation assistance for case management services and also for crisis assistance for gasoline.



A business card for Black T Virtual Assistants. The top left features a photograph of a laptop, a smartphone, and a pen on a notepad. Below this is a circular portrait of Alicia Thompson, the owner, with her arms crossed. To the right of the portrait, the company name 'Black T' is written in a large, elegant script font, with 'VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS' in a smaller, sans-serif font underneath. Below the name, the text 'SMALL BUSINESS SOLUTION' is followed by a list of services: 'Social Media Management', 'Website Management', and 'Print Layout & Design'. At the bottom left of the card, it says 'Alicia Thompson, Owner', and at the bottom right, the website 'www.blacktvas.com' is listed.





VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers play a key role in C.E.F.S. providing services to those in need.



2,473

Volunteers

83,669

Hours of service

48

Students received encouraging Pen Pal letters from RSVP volunteers through the Pencil Pals program.

The Story of Volunteers

Volunteers donate their time, talents and treasures to help those that are less fortunate. Volunteers at C.E.F.S. deliver meals to home bound seniors, work at our senior meal sites, prepare taxes, read at Head Start centers, work as pencil pals, and provide many other key services. Without this work, C.E.F.S. would not be able to accomplish its mission. Thank you volunteers for all your support.

Outstanding Volunteers in EDUCATION



Pastor Maria Bonine spends her time volunteering in the Head Start classrooms every week to read stories to the children. She will usually do a listening game before starting the story and then will ask follow up questions when she is finished with the story to keep the children actively engaged. Pastor Maria says, "Reading books to the children has enriched my life and I desire for kids to love and find joy in reading. Also, seeing the children's excitement brings me joy."



Nicole Hansen volunteers often for the Head Start 0-5 Program. She has been a Policy Council member for several years in the past and most currently serves as the secretary for Policy Council. Nicole says, "volunteering for Head Start for me means I have always wanted to be a mom that wants to do more and give my time and resources as much as possible. My mom was never able to do these types of things for me and I wish she could have. Volunteering is just one of the many ways I can give back to my kids and community."

**VOLUNTEERS DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE TIME;
THEY HAVE THE HEART.**

Elizabeth Andrew

Outstanding Volunteers in SENIOR SERVICES



Connie Pickerill has been volunteering at Evergreen Assisted Living in Litchfield for over ten years and has volunteered for three years at Tremont Ridge Assisted Living in Hillsboro. Connie came through the RSVP program and volunteers in the food pantry and in the office. Connie helps distribute food boxes, unloads the food truck, stocks shelves, and keeping the food pantry clean. Connie always comes in ready to help wherever needed. She has a friendly attitude and works well with everyone. Connie says, "I get a lot of fulfillment from helping others. I enjoy the people I work with."



Dennis Moler volunteers for Meals on Wheels as a delivery driver. Dennis volunteers two times a week if not more. During COVID, Dennis helped on many days when others could not. Many weeks he would volunteer three to four days a week to deliver meals. Besides driving for Meals on Wheels, Dennis is very active in the Christian Church. Dennis says, "Helping my friends at Meals on Wheels makes my day. I feel so good to see them as I drive the routes. They have become very special friends."



Janece Neunaber volunteers in the RSVP program in the food pantry and office. Her skills as a telephone operator come in handy with answering phones. While covering the front desk, Janece greets the clients, makes copies of documents and does filing. Janece says, "I feel that we are at our best when we actively care about the well being of everyone around us. By volunteering for C.E.F.S., I am able to help extend the outreach of their programs. I just want to help! Thank you for letting me be a part."



Steve Brungard volunteers at the Fayette County Senior Center and arrives early to unlock doors and turn the lights on. He will deliver a route daily, if needed, and has delivered two routes in one day when another driver cancels. Steve has made positive changes to the Senior Center as President of the Senior Citizens Service Organization. Steve says, "Talking to the clients make your day and also their pet buddies. I love to talk to them as they have no one else most of the time and whether you are there 5 minutes or 30 minutes is determined by them."



Lynda Hall & Linda Lytle both are volunteer coordinators for the First United Methodist Church in Taylorville. They also deliver meals for the Meals on Wheels program. Both Lynda Hall and Linda Lytle organize the schedules for the Meals on Wheels volunteers during the fourth week of the month. These two women have taught others how important friendships are and how they work together as a team is inspiring. Linda Lytle says, "I love helping the people in the community; it makes me feel so good." Lynda Hall says, "Volunteering means helping the community and helping the church."



Edith Runkel volunteers with Meals on Wheels, RSVP, and Pencil Pals. Edith is the type of person who will help wherever needed. Edith delivers meals for Meals on Wheels and has gotten her entire family involved delivering and helping in the kitchen. Edith is a true asset to all the programs she is involved in. Edith says, "I truly enjoy delivering Meals on Wheels because most of the people are so friendly and are very appreciative of what we do. It is so rewarding to be able to provide for the needs of our community."



Janice Heiden coordinates the volunteers from her church to deliver meals for Meals on Wheels every 6 weeks. Janice has been a volunteer for Bethlehem Lutheran Church by teaching Sunday School and volunteers to help with benefits. Janice has a compassion for others. She serves the elderly and is a good example for our youth. Janice says, "It makes me feel good to help people."



Stephen Courtney volunteers for the RSVP by cleaning the Senior Center in Taylorville. Stephen is very helpful to all patrons, staff, and other volunteers. He spends hours volunteering. He is a hard worker, kind, and giving. Stephen says, "My time here at the Senior Center is a gift. I feel comfortable here and enjoy working as a team member at the Senior Center."



Carol Briggerman has volunteered for RSVP for 10 years and volunteers with the Millred's Quilters and More. Carol also makes pillows and bags that are given to all kindergarten children in Moultrie County through the 'Welcome to Kindergarten' Program. Carol is always willing to help in any way that she can. Carol says, "Volunteering for RSVP gives me a chance to give back to the community. It gives me something to do and I love to sew."

THANK YOU to all of our Community Partners

Ameren Illinois
Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland
Audubon Township
Buckhart Township
Care Horizon
Catholic Charities
Central A & M CUSD #21
Christian County Board
Christian County Health Department
Christian County Mental Health Association
City of Altamont
City of Flora Police Department
City of Shelbyville
City of Sullivan
City of Taylorville
City of Windsor
Clay County Health Department
Colonnade Apartments
Community Care Systems, Inc. Shelbyville
Office
Community Care Systems, Inc. Salem Office
Community Resource Center – Vandalia
Community Support Systems
Continuing Recovery Center
Diel Counseling
Dove Inc. – Moultrie County
Dove Inc. – Shelby County
Effingham City/County Committee on Aging
Effingham County FISH

Effingham County Habitat for Humanity
Effingham County Health Department
Effingham County Housing Authority
Effingham County Sheriff's Office
Effingham CUSD #40
Effingham Park District
Embarras River Basin Agency (ERBA)
Family Guidance Centers/Triangle
FAYCO Enterprises, Inc.
Fayette County Health Department
Fayette County Senior Citizens Service
Organization
Fayette County Sheriff's Office
Flora Meadows Apartments
Fresh Start TLC
HSHS Good Shepard Hospital
Heartland Human Services
Heritage Woods of Flora
Herrick Township
Hillsboro Community School Unit District #3
(HCUSD #3) /Early Childhood Programs
Hillsboro Ministerial Association (Salvation
Army)
Home Instead Senior Care
HOPE of East Central Illinois
Housing Authority of Christian County
I Care - LTC Ombudsman Program
IL Dept. of Children & Family Services (DCFS)
- Carlinville Field Office

IL Dept. of DHS Family Comm Resource
Center (FCRC) - Olney Office
IL Dept. of DHS Family Comm Resource
Center (FCRC) Taylorville Office
IL Dept. of DHS Family Comm. Resource
Center (FCRC) - Centralia Office
IL Dept. of Human Services Rehabilitation
Services (DHS-DRS) -Olney Office
IL Dept. of Human Services Rehabilitation
Services (DHS-DRS) - Mt. Vernon Office
Illinois Eastern Community Colleges District
#529
Lake Land Adult & Alternative Education
Lake Land College
Lake Pointe Apartments
Land of Lincoln Legal Aid, Inc. - East St. Louis
Office
Land of Lincoln Legal Aid, Inc. - Champaign
Office
Liberty Township
Lincolnland Home Care of SBL
Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC)
Adult Education & Literacy Program
Mid-Illinois Senior Services, Inc.
Midland Area Agency on Aging
Moccasin Township
Montgomery County Probation
Moultrie County Beacon, Inc.
Moultrie County Counseling Center

THANK YOU to all of our Community Partners

Moultrie County Habitat for Humanity
National Able Network (Able)
National Runaway Safeline
Nokomis Christian Missions
Pana Hospital Social Services Dept. - Pana
Community Hospital
Prairie Center Against Sexual Assault
Project CHILD: Child Care Resource &
Referral (CCR&R)
Proto-Tykes Child Care Center
Ramsey Township
Raymond Township
Richland Township
Ridge Township
Rountree Township
SAIL - Soyland Access to Independent Living
Salvation Army - Effingham
Sara Bush Lincoln (SBL) Peace Meal
Senior Citizens of Christian County
Senior Citizens of Montgomery County -
Senior Center in Taylor Springs

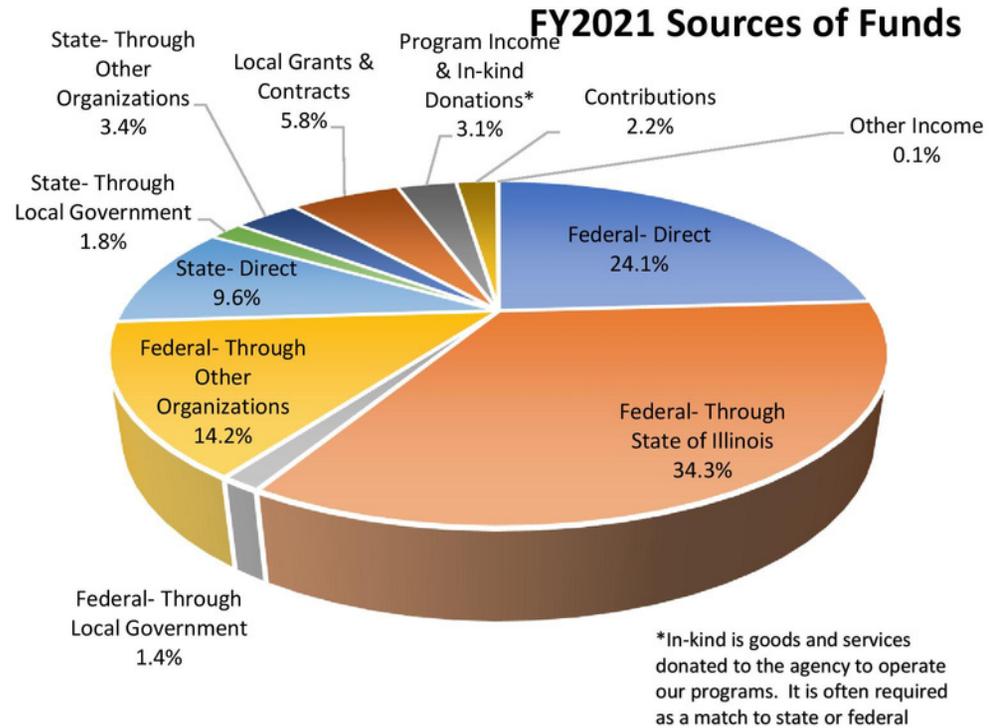
Senior Services of Clay County
Senior Services of Fayette County
Shelby County Health Department
Shelby County Housing Authority
Shelby County Senior Center
Shelby County Sheriff's Office
Shelbyville Ministerial Association - Holy
Cross Lutheran
Shelbyville Police Department
Southern IL Healthcare Foundation (SIHF
Healthcare) Mattoon location
Sojourn Shelter & Services, Inc.
South Fork Township
South Litchfield Township
Spero Family Services (Mt. Vernon)
Stewardson-Strasburg CUSD #5A
Sullivan Ace Hardware
Sullivan Church of God
Sullivan Police Department
Sullivan Township
SWAN (Stopping Woman Abuse Now)

Taylorville Memorial Hospital
Tower Hill Township
United Way of Effingham County
University of Illinois Extension - Christian
County
University of Illinois Extension - Effingham
County
University of Illinois Extension - Montgomery
County
USDA Rural Development - Christian County
Veterans Assistance Commission of
Effingham County
Village Green Apartments/Flora Apts L.P.
Village of Bethany
Village of Brownstown
Village of Findlay
Village of Herrick
Village of Strasburg
West Central Development Council/Job
Center (WCDC) - Office in Carlinville
Zink Apartments (aka Diamond
Development)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation serves as a steward of federal, state, local, and private funds intended to provide opportunities for people through education and support to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency. Throughout the year, the agency undergoes dozens of monitorings, data quality reviews, and a comprehensive financial audit as required by the Federal Uniform Guidance. The most recent audit for the fiscal year of September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021 was presented to the Board of Directors on Wednesday, January 6, 2022. During this audit, Sikich LLP, an independent accounting firm, issued an unmodified opinion and reported that no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies were identified.

<u>Revenue and Support</u>	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2020</u>
Federal- Direct	5,369,887	4,541,480
Federal- Through State of Illinois	7,659,396	5,143,030
Federal- Through Local Government	317,947	283,438
Federal- Through Other Organizations	3,170,376	2,460,577
State- Direct	2,150,922	1,727,864
State- Through Local Government	398,116	478,310
State- Through Other Organizations	763,770	775,914
Local Grants & Contracts	1,296,602	1,869,753
Program Income & In-kind Donations*	696,232	994,800
Contributions	481,336	427,923
Other Income	21,799	47,722
Total Revenue and Support	22,326,383	18,750,811
<u>Expense</u>		
Programs and Services	20,535,477	17,423,048
Management and General	803,454	947,494
Total Expense	21,338,931	18,370,542
Change in Net Assets	987,452	380,269
Net Assets - Beginning of year	5,224,477	4,844,172
Net assets - End of year	6,211,929	5,224,441

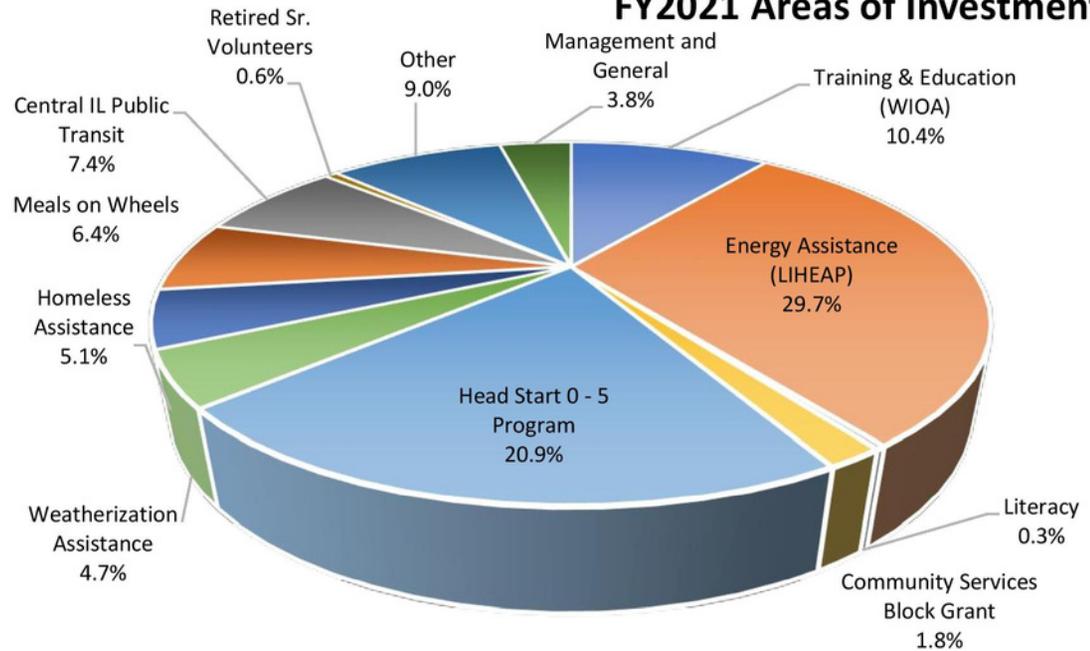


<u>Financial Position</u>	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2020</u>
Assets (Cash, Receivables, Equipment)	8,603,552	7,429,804
Liabilities (Accounts Payable, Payroll)	2,391,624	2,205,327
Net Assets (With & Without Donor Restriction)	6,211,929	5,224,477



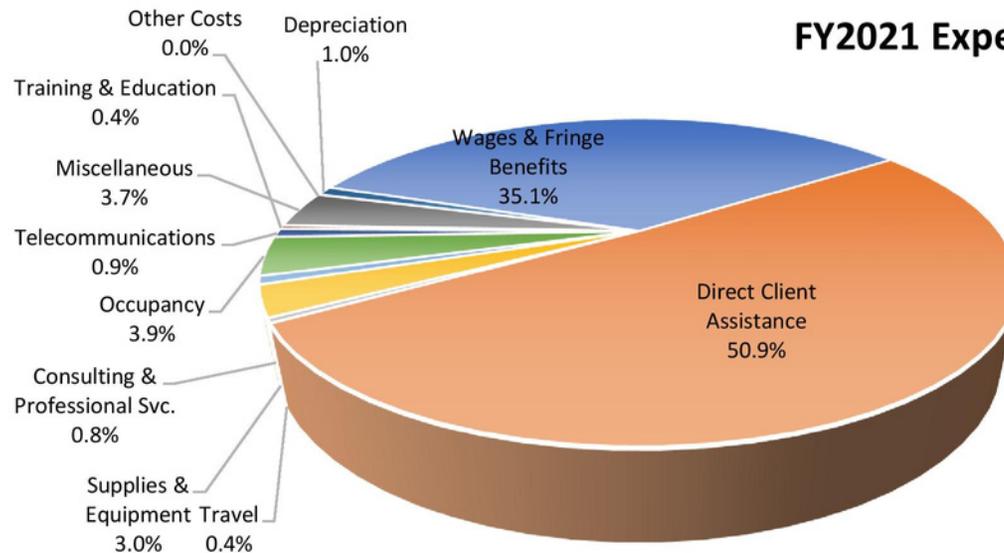
USES OF FUNDS

FY2021 Areas of Investment



<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2020</u>
Training & Education (WIOA)	2,224,439	1,887,988
Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)	6,331,793	4,359,703
Literacy	64,909	69,371
Community Services Block Grant	374,524	493,605
Head Start 0 - 5 Program	4,457,255	4,330,216
Weatherization Assistance	1,009,979	1,241,229
Homeless Assistance	1,084,699	977,418
Meals on Wheels	1,368,230	1,183,398
Central IL Public Transit	1,569,285	1,574,384
Retired Sr. Volunteers	132,984	80,205
Other	<u>1,917,380</u>	<u>1,225,531</u>
Total Programs and Services	20,535,477	17,423,048
Management and General	<u>803,454</u>	<u>947,494</u>
Total Expenses	21,338,931	18,370,542

FY2021 Expenses



<u>Expense Type</u>	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2020</u>
Wages & Fringe Benefits	7,494,614	7,537,869
Direct Client Assistance	10,859,144	7,860,129
Travel	95,614	96,568
Supplies & Equipment	635,579	514,409
Consulting & Professional Svc.	172,191	360,022
Occupancy	822,275	765,168
Telecommunications	183,152	202,565
Training & Education	80,670	72,759
Miscellaneous	782,353	756,539
Other Costs	5,764	1,985
Depreciation	<u>207,575</u>	<u>202,529</u>
Total Expenses	21,338,931	18,370,542

MAJOR SOURCES OF FUNDS

We gratefully acknowledge the support and partnership of the following organizations and individuals that made significant contributions financially to our work in FY2021. Each funding source is listed under the organization from which the funding originates, with any intermediary funders following.

Federal

US Department of Health and Human Services (1)
Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start
Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Illinois Dept. of Human Services
Effingham County
Midland Area Agency on Aging
Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland

US Department of Labor (1)

Lake Land College

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (1)

Community Planning and Development, Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs

Illinois Dept. of Human Services

Housing Action Illinois

US Department of Energy (1)

Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Corporation for National Service (1)

US Department of Agriculture (1)

Illinois State Board of Education

US Department of Transportation (1)

Effingham County

Illinois Dept. of Transportation

(1) *Grants*

(2) *Donors*

(3) *Service Contracts*

Federal (cont.)

US Dept. of Federal Emergency Mgmt. Agency (1)

United Way

US Dept. of Treasury (1)

Illinois Dept. of Human Services

Internal Revenue Service

State and Local Government

Illinois Dept. on Aging (1)

Office of Older American Services

Midland Area Agency on Aging

Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland

Illinois Dept. of Human Services (1)

Division of Family and Community Services

Illinois Housing Development Authority (1)

Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies

Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (1)

Office of Community Assistance

Illinois Dept. of Transportation (1)

Effingham County

Illinois Secretary of State (1)

Literacy Office, Illinois State Library

Shelby County (2)

Montgomery County (2)

Private

Ameren Illinois (1,2)

Community Support Systems (3)

Shelby County Community Services (2,3)

Health Care Service Corporation/BCBS (2)

Clay County Rehabilitation Center, Inc. (3)

Mary Manger Estate (2)

United Way (2)

Mid-America Preparatory School (3)

Washington Savings Bank (2)

Church of Jesus Christ, Sullivan (2)

Cargill Incorporated (2)

Bridget Anne Van Hook (2)

First United Methodist Church, Taylorville (2)

Employees of Agri-Fab (2)

Emilie and Nathan Beagle (2)

Nexamp, Inc (2)

First Community Bank (2)

Fifth Third Bank (2)

Central East Alcoholism & Drug Council (3)

1950 Duff Memorial Trust (2)

Ronald / Kathlene Harshman (2)

The Flora Banking Company (2)

Litchfield National Bank (2)

Prototykes / AF Holding (3)

Logisticare (3)

C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation is a private, non-profit corporation with tax-exempt status. If you are interested in supporting the accomplishment of the results and services provided by CEFS you can do so in several ways.

**You can make a tax-deductible financial contribution directly to the agency.*

**You can make a donation of goods or services to benefit one of our many programs, thus providing much needed In-kind matching support.*

**You can include C.E.F.S. in your estate planning preparations to ensure that a legacy for you or a loved one is remembered. Consult your tax or estate planning professional for guidance.*

**You can support us whenever you shop at Amazon.com by using the following link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/37-6053117>*

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*Retired and Seniors Volunteer
Program/Senior Services*

Cindy Mayer
Outreach Program

Patti Stuckemeyer
Head Start Program

Debbie Weber
Meals on Wheels

Promise of Community Action

"Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and make America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other."

A Special Thank You

We would like to thank our dedicated staff and volunteers for their continued efforts in making a difference in our communities. We would not be able to do everything that we do at C.E.F.S. without you.





*Effingham
Crossroads of Opportunity*

~

*Crossroads Bank
Where Opportunity Begins*



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