

# ICAA

*Opening Doors • Creating Opportunities*



2018 Annual Report

# OPENING DOORS CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

**Our Mission:** To assist individuals in achieving self-sufficiency by providing the resources, education, and services necessary to develop healthy families, sustainable communities, and strong local businesses.

ICAA is one of 16 Community Action Agencies (CAAs) in Wisconsin, which provides services and referrals to individuals in their communities with the goal of helping those individuals move out of poverty and into self-sufficiency. ICAA and other CAAs provide direct services to low-income individuals in areas such as education, skills enhancement, job and business development, energy/utilities, food

security, housing, family support, and health.

Each of Wisconsin's CAAs are members of the Wisconsin Community Action Program (WISCAP) network. WISCAP helps to support Wisconsin's CAAs through public policy and advocacy; training and technical assistance; resource development; promoting poverty

awareness; and managing the job and business development program and the emergency food assistance program.

Together, CAAs in Wisconsin make an incredible difference for low-income individuals in their communities. ICAA is honored to have the privilege of helping to reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency in Wisconsin's rural areas.



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# FROM THE CEO



2018 brought many changes to the landscape of Indianhead Community Action Agency. Some of those changes were challenging, but alongside the challenges came some new and exciting opportunities!

In May, we had to say good-bye to our Weatherization, program, which had a 44-year history in our Agency. While this was not a change we would have chosen for ourselves, we wish to extend our sincere gratitude to all the talented and dedicated staff who worked in the program over the years as well as our amazing clients. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your support and involvement over the years!

A couple of months later, we mourned the passing of Georgette Bembenek, ICAA's Human Resources Director who worked with the Agency for 36 years. We remember her dedication and years of service with fondness and respect.

Near the end of the summer of 2018, an exciting opportunity presented itself, and we partnered with the Family

Health Center of Marshfield in order to help provide a service that is greatly needed in northern Wisconsin! FHC offers drug and alcohol recovery services to help those in our communities who face addictions to those substances by offering services with a holistic approach. We are very excited about this new partnership and the opportunities it presents for individuals living in our communities!

We emerged from the challenges of 2018 excited for what the future holds in new and ever-evolving ways to better serve our communities.

I am grateful to our Staff, Board of Directors, Policy Council Members, Funders, Donors, Community Members, Business Leaders, and Legislators who continue to support ICAA through our challenges and encourage us to leap into new and exciting opportunities in 2019.

Jennifer Shearer, CEO

# Family Foundations Home Visiting

Indianhead Community Action Agency's Home Visiting Program provides support to expectant mothers and families with children ages birth to three. Expectant mothers and families understand the importance of the attachment theory, continuity of care, brain development and other child development information through weekly home visits. At any given time throughout the year, FFHV works with 54 families at once!

In 2018, **135** parents and caregivers (84 households) received services, mentoring, and education that covered topics like nutrition, health, wellness, parenting, and more!

At each completed home visit, caregivers are provided with a free children's book. The goal of this service is to increase school readiness and result in better literacy outcomes in ICAA's service areas.

**39** caregivers reported that they read to their children an average of 6.54 times a week!



*"Katie has been with my family for 3.5 years now with home visitation...she has become our friend and mentor. With the help of [Katie and] this program, I have been able to have more confidence with my parenting, I have learned so much about how my children learn and how to teach them. I have been able to lean on Katie for support through troubling times and she has always stood near me. We have fun during our meetings and she shows me that I'm doing okay as a mom. My children adore when she comes and love the activities we do. I say it a lot, but thank you for always being by our side and providing us with the resources we need."*  
-Jovanah W. • FFHV Parent

# Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

The Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Program provides parenting education to parents, children, and family professionals through evidence based curriculum and activities. Here's what some of the parents had to say.

**Nurturing Parenting:** *"We came from families who used abuse and neglect as forms of punishment and we were going down that same trail. We reached out to Lauren, who used to be our Family Resource Provider, and asked if she could provide additional support... We loved coming to Nurturing Parenting, it was a safe atmosphere where people genuinely cared about our situation and didn't judge us on the decisions we have made in the past but supported us because we want to change... We are very grateful to know someone believes in our parenting abilities and is helping us see that we can be good parents if we have the right tools in our pockets."*  
-Richard N. and Abby G.\*

**Triple P (Positive Parenting Program®):** *"I started Triple P with my home visitor a few weeks ago and I can't believe the difference it makes. I was at a loss with how to handle my kids' behaviors...but this has been great. I realized that yelling and screaming was getting me nowhere and now with the help of Triple P tip sheets and my home visitor I am able to discipline in a way that has worked and doesn't make me feel like a bad or mean mom in the process."*  
-Caroline W.\*



**205** parents and caregivers received education and improved skills related to their roles as parents or caregivers in 2018.

# Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships & Head Start

EHS-CCP supports the development of infants and toddlers through strong relationship-based experiences and prepares them for the transition into Head Start and preschool. **Head Start** promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services.

A photograph of four young children standing on a colorful play structure in a playground. The children are of diverse backgrounds and are smiling. The play structure is made of large, colorful plastic blocks in blue, green, purple, and red. The background shows a chain-link fence and trees.

*“Head Start has helped my family in so many great ways. We are learning activities to help our child learn in new and fun ways. He has learned his numbers, colors, ABCs, and shapes. He is identifying letters and writing. We have seen him become better with social skills and interact more with us and [his] friends. We also receive resources around the community and oral health and nutrition education. We are very satisfied with the program and will recommend it to others.”*  
-Michael R. and Deisy G.

*“Through the EHS-CCP program, I’ve been provided with valuable, in depth information pertaining to the age group of my son. Subject matter of this information provided has included literacy, nutrition, developmental milestones, etc. I’ve also taken advantage of the opportunity, provided to me through the EHS-CCP program, to apply for a scholarship that would greatly assist me in being able to further my education in the field of early childhood education.”*

-Dawn H. • EHS-CCP Parent

Head Start and EHS-CCP track health outcomes to be sure children leave the program physically and mentally prepared to succeed in school and later life. During the 2017-2018 program year, **98%** of Head Start and **94.8%** of EHS-CCP children completed a well child exam.

# Youth Development & Prevention Services

Youth Development & Prevention Services (YDP) provides programs and services to the youth of Rusk County by focusing on three main areas: substance use, mental health awareness, and youth development.



In 2018, Rusk County saw a **7% decrease** in underage substance use since 2017! YDP provides education and training in the community through outlets such as: Teen Leadership Academy, We Are Change, Rusky Business, Tobacco Checks, Mental Health First Aid, Youth Symposium, National Night Out, and much more.

**We Are Change (WAC):** WAC empowers youth to take on issues affecting their peers in areas of drug and alcohol abuse. *Patrick G. says, "From the day I joined WAC, I made lasting bonds and learned powerful truths. Truly amazing."*

**Tobacco checks:** In 2018, Rusk County Youth Council used mail and social media campaigns and partnered with local law enforcement and local youth to conduct tobacco checks at local businesses while providing education about reducing underage sales in Rusk County. *"I got your letter in the mail today at The Foodmill. Left it for my employees to read and we'll talk about it soon. I pledge we will do our part to reduce underage sales! Hope other convenience stores in our area do the same!"*  
- Erin W. • The Foodmill, Conrath, WI

**Rusky Business:** *"We moved to Ladysmith last summer. The thing I was most excited about were the amazing programs they have for families. Rusky business is one I feel is so important... [it] connects me with other care givers and offers non-judgmental education and a safe place to vent. I would highly recommend it for anyone raising kids."*  
-Sarah M. • Ladysmith, WI

# 2018 ICAA IMPACT

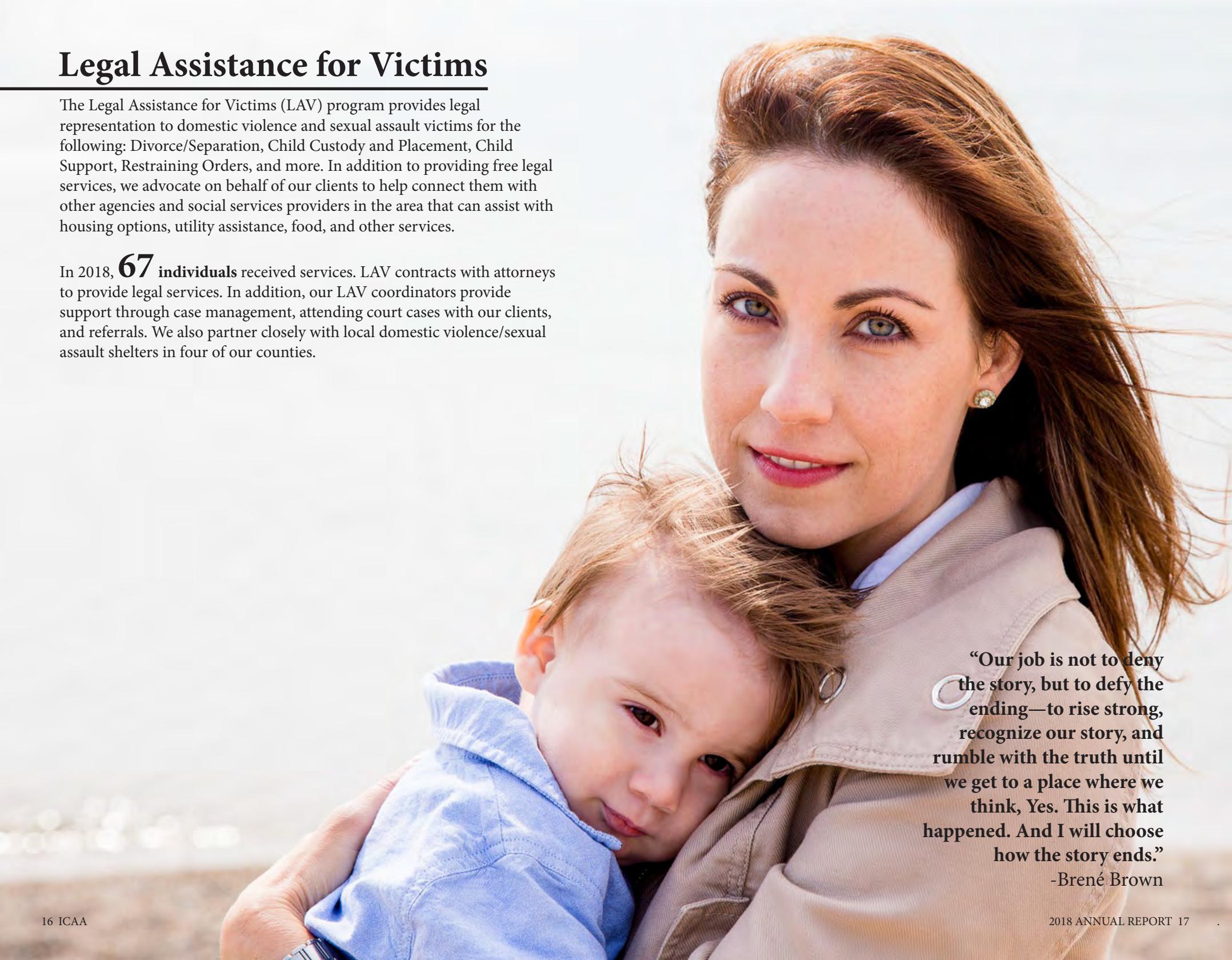
Did you know that dollars invested into our communities through ICAA programs are multiplied by seven times their face value in worth to those communities? *That means in 2018, our economic imprint was \$82.98 million in the areas we serve!* During the year, we served **12,259** individuals in our communities, employed **202** individuals, operated **54** programs in **13** counties, and collaborated with **257** external organizations for referrals and other services. *Below, you'll see a few examples of the many ways our services and referrals help our clients along the path to self-sufficiency as they participate in programs which address basic needs such as housing, food, education, and more.*



# Legal Assistance for Victims

The Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) program provides legal representation to domestic violence and sexual assault victims for the following: Divorce/Separation, Child Custody and Placement, Child Support, Restraining Orders, and more. In addition to providing free legal services, we advocate on behalf of our clients to help connect them with other agencies and social services providers in the area that can assist with housing options, utility assistance, food, and other services.

In 2018, **67 individuals** received services. LAV contracts with attorneys to provide legal services. In addition, our LAV coordinators provide support through case management, attending court cases with our clients, and referrals. We also partner closely with local domestic violence/sexual assault shelters in four of our counties.

A photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a light-colored jacket over a white collared shirt. She is holding a young child with light brown hair in a blue shirt. The background is a bright, slightly blurred outdoor setting, possibly a beach or a park. The woman is looking towards the camera with a gentle smile.

**“Our job is not to deny the story, but to defy the ending—to rise strong, recognize our story, and rumble with the truth until we get to a place where we think, Yes. This is what happened. And I will choose how the story ends.”**

**-Brené Brown**

## Connections & Food Pantries

ICAA's Food Pantries help supplement the diets of low-income households, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost.

**9,294 individuals** received food pantry services in 2018.

Four of the five food pantries we operate are housed within Connections Thrift Stores. Through the stores, we are able to distribute emergency clothing and furniture to clients in need. We also provide referrals to other agencies, businesses, and organizations in our communities.

The thrift stores also worked with **109 individuals** to provide job readiness training through partnerships with Wisconsin Works (W-2) and the Concentrated Employment Program (CEP).

**343 individuals** received emergency clothing and furniture assistance, and **167 individuals** received referrals to other programs and services.



## Skilled Nursing

The Skilled Nursing Program provides services such as medication management, blood draws, and wound care.



**For the Health of It:** Once a month, our Registered Nurse is on hand at Rusk County Connections in Ladysmith, WI to check blood pressure, provide information on health-related topics, answer questions about medications, and more!

In 2018, **25 individuals** demonstrated improved mental and behavioral health and well-being and were able to maintain an independent living situation because of Skilled Nursing services they received. **8** of those individuals received nursing care sessions and **10** were referred to additional services. **All 25** received some level of education about health and wellness related topics.

# Literacy & Skills Enhancement

ICAA's Crossroads Literacy program offers literacy tutoring to adults, with the help of volunteer tutors. The program helps adult learners to get a GED/HSED, learn to speak English, set up a budget, gain basic computer skills, write a resume, enhance job skills, and any other literacy need of the learner.

**119** learners received tutoring in 2018!

ICAA's Skills Enhancement Program provides financial support to low-income, working individuals desiring to go to school to get a better job. Participants may receive reimbursement for transportation costs, assistance with child care costs while attending classes, and funds to assist with education costs like tuition, books, and fees.

**10** students received assistance in 2018 to help them be able to stay in school in order to advance their careers.



**“The future depends on what you do today.”**

**-Mahatma Gandhi**

# Small Business Development

ICAA's Business Development program assists entrepreneurs to achieve self-sufficiency through self-employment. Clients of the program receive technical assistance in all areas of business including financial analysis, bookkeeping, marketing, business plan development, business management, loan packaging, case management, and group training sessions.



In 2018, **11** new businesses were created, **10** existing businesses received services, and **15** jobs were created or retained.

Photo by Fancycrave.com from Pexels

**Webb Lake Pizza:** In 2018, Gary S. from Webb Lake, WI reached out to ICAA's Small Business program for funding, financial projections, and to help him obtain a seller's permit to open Webb Lake Pizza. He is well known and established in his community, and saw a need for a pizza place in town. Gary decided to open a pizza place with the help of his son and other family members. He was able to get his hands on a pizza recipe that was loved by all the locals. Using fresh ingredients, Gary has a pizza that locals and tourists will love. Webb Lake Pizza has created **2** full time and **5** part time jobs.

**TNT Tire and Auto:** TNT Tire and Auto Center in Ladysmith, WI was the dream of a father and son team, Brad and Scott T. Both had decades of experience both in auto part retail and auto mechanics. They had the car stuff down pat but needed help on the business end of things. During 2018, Indianhead Community Action Agency provided help with drafting a business plan, financial projections, LLC registration, obtaining a seller's permit, and funding for their shop. Now, father and son get to work side by side to secure their financial futures. TNT Tire and Auto Center opened in 2019, and created **2** full time jobs.

## Supportive Services for Veteran Families

ICAA's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program offers case management for US veterans, including housing counseling and housing search assistance, referrals to veteran services, referrals to mainstream services, and financial counseling; and temporary financial assistance related to housing.

In 2018, **99 individuals** received services through the SSVF program. During the year, SSVF was able to provide assistance in several different areas including: rent payments, deposit payments, landlord/tenant mediations, utility payments, case management, and more! We were able to network with a number of organizations to help provide safe, affordable housing for veterans and their families who were facing homelessness

In November, **6 SSVF families** received turkeys for their Thanksgiving meals! In December, Santa visited **2 SSVF families** with gifts for their children.



## Weatherization/Housing

Housing: In 2018, **10 households** obtained or maintained safe and affordable housing through down payment assistance and home rehab assistance services. Another **113 households** received affordable housing in ICAA's rental units.

Weatherization and Emergency Furnace: **167 households** experienced improved health, safety, and comfort through weatherization and emergency furnace services. Residents in homes weatherized by ICAA crews saved up to **\$530** a year in energy savings.

2018 was a challenging year as we saw the Weatherization program terminated, divided, and moved to other Community Action Agencies. While we are glad to see that those services remain available in our communities, it was hard to see it go from ICAA. *Thank you to all the staff and clients who were part of the program's 44-year history at ICAA. We appreciate you!*

“It offers children and families opportunities and experiences they may not otherwise have.”

-Michelle Stout,  
Interim Head Start Director

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## Staff Profile: A Legacy of Learning

Michelle Stout has worked with ICAA’s Head Start program since 1992. During that time, she taught Head Start in Bruce, WI, worked as an Education Coordinator, and served as Assistant Head Start Director. Currently, Michelle serves as ICAA’s Interim Head Start Director.

Michelle credits Head Start with giving her a love for learning. This was something that began for her when she attended Head Start in Bruce as a child. At that time, it was a half-day program, and Michelle remembers field trips to a lumberjack camp and a woodcarving museum as well as learning activities in the classroom that sparked her curiosity and interest in learning new things in new places.

When asked why Head Start is important, Michelle said, “It offers children and families opportunities and experiences they may not otherwise have. Participants learn to set and meet goals that give them the tools they need to be ready for the next steps in their education journey. Watching the progress made by families and children during the few years they receive Head Start services, is a great reminder of why the program is vital to their success.”

## Board of Directors



The role of Indianhead Community Action Agency’s Board of Directors is to define and meet its overall responsibility by governing the Agency in a manner that is consistent with its mission and responsive to client needs. ICAA’s board is equally comprised of members of the public, private and elected sectors, and includes people with low incomes.

**Burnett County:** Emmett Byrne, Phil Lindeman, Dorothy Richard

**Taylor County:** Dan Makovsky, Patti Smith, Al Campos

**Clark County:** Mary Fleming, Peter Kaz, Joe Waichulis, Jr.

**Washburn County:** Clint Stariha, Sherrie Wiegand

**Rusk County:** Christine Newkirk, Bill Stewart, Dave Willingham

**Head Start Requirements:** Lisa Costa, Karl Huber, Pamala Johnson, Mary Joslin

**Sawyer County:** Lisa Costa, Bill Voight

## ICAA Leadership Team

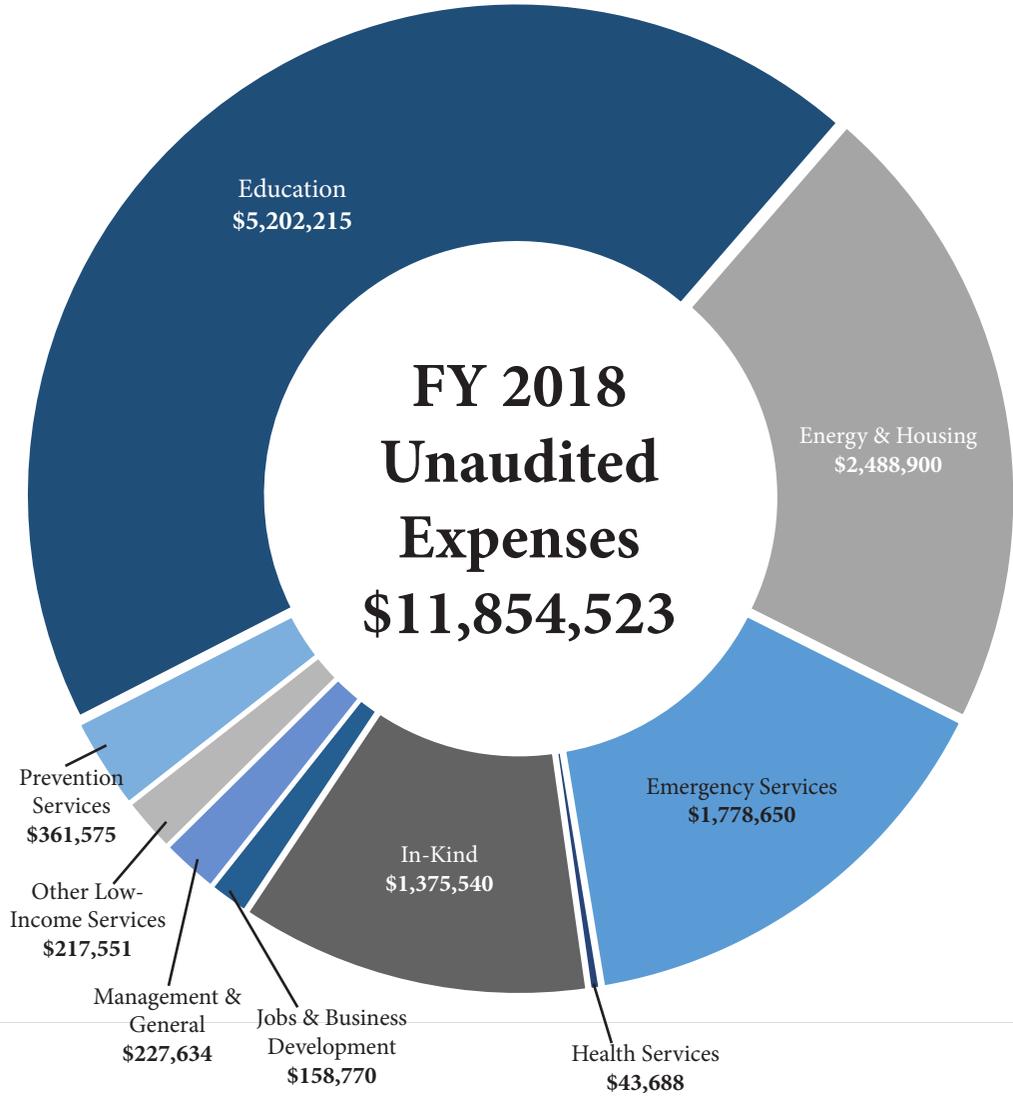


L to R: Julie Bever - Youth Development and Prevention Director, Tammy Holman - Interim Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Director, Michelle Stout - Interim Head Start Director, Jennifer Shearer - Chief Executive Officer, Kerrie Zimmermann - Chief Financial Officer. Not pictured: Alan Christianson - Business Development and Housing Director, Therese Mitchell - Human Resources Director.

ICAA’s Leadership Team is comprised of program directors who drive the Agency in strategic planning, recommending policies, and advocating for clients in the communities we serve.

# Finances

ICAA is grateful to the donors and funders who provide the resources that support the services we provide in our communities. Thank you for your continued investment into the people in Wisconsin rural communities!



## 2018 Staff Awards

**10 years of employment**  
 Heidi Eckert - Head Start  
 Katie Dohm - Head Start

# Donors & Funders

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| Aina Vilumsons                            | Kim Boehme  | Thomas Wilton  |
| Amazon Smile                              | Knights of Columbus - Medford Council No. 1744                      | Time Federal Savings Bank                            |
| American Asphalt                          | Ladysmith Federal Savings and Loan                                  | Tom and Kaye Mehring Fund                            |
| Annette Starlite                          | Ladysmith Lions Club  | Travelers - CyberGrants                              |
| Arts & Crafts Voyager                     | Lakeview United Methodist Church                                    | U.S. Department of Education                         |
| Backpack program                          | Larsen Family Library   | U.S. Department of Labor                             |
| Barb Wibben                               | Lynn and Christopher Paul   | U.S. Department of Agriculture                       |
| Barbara Stellner                          | Margaret Hulerty  | U.S. Department of Energy                            |
| Bethany Lutheran Church                   | Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Cluster         | U.S. Department of Health and Human Services         |
| Brent and Juleen Hallgren                 | Mike Vosatka  | U.S. Department of Homeland Security                 |
| Burnett Dairy                             | Nancy Lewis   | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development     |
| Burnett Sentinel                          | Network for Good  | U.S. Department of Justice                           |
| Carlton & Joanne Spooner                  | New Hope Lutheran Church of Burnett County                          | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs                  |
| Catholic Financial                        | Nicolet National Foundation   | Vasatka Systems Inc.                                 |
| Charity Brown                             | Northview Drive Inn   | Voyager Village - Arts                               |
| Chase Lieser II                           | Northwest Alliance  | Weather Shield Employee Lite Foundation              |
| Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board    | Otis Taylor Post 96   | Webster Library                                      |
| Clam River Tuesday Club                   | Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  | Webster Lutheran Church                              |
| -Karen Mangelson                          | Pamela Guthman  | Webster Methodist Church                             |
| Dan Kaye                                  | Pat Amundson  | Webster School District                              |
| Dan Siebrasse                             | Paul and Linda Parish   | William McAuliff                                     |
| Daniel Brown                              | Quinn and Lisa Seaman   | Wisconsin Community Action Program Association, Inc. |
| Dave Bolden                               | Rich Reeve  | Wisconsin Department of Administration               |
| David and Sally Sawyer Trust              | Sandra Hoyt   | Wisconsin Department of Children and Families        |
| Elizabeth Strong                          | Scott Shaver  | Wisconsin Department of Commerce                     |
| Fidelity Charitable                       | Security Health (on behalf of Marshfield Clinic - Ladysmith Center) | Wisconsin Department of Health Services              |
| First Church of Christ-Harvest of Talents | Siren Lioness Club  | Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction           |
| Frontstream                               | Siren United Methodist Church                                       | Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs             |
| Gary Elliot                               | Skol group  | Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development        |
| GHT WCA Ground Health Trust               | Spooner Agriculture   | Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, Inc.             |
| Girl Scouts                               | St John's Catholic Church-Webster                                   | Yellow Lake Food Distribution                        |
| Grace Lutheran Church                     | Tempoary Assistance for Needy Families Cluster                      | Yellow River Saloon                                  |
| Grace United Methodist                    | Terry Erickson  | Zion Lutheran Marksville                             |
| Harmony HCE                               | The Anderson's  |  |
| Helen Sheffield                           | Theresa LaPorte   |  |
| Hertel United Methodist Church            |   |  |
| Herzl Camp                                |   |  |
| Jan Kelley                                |   |  |
| Jennifer Turrentine                       |   |  |
| John Gustafson                            |   |  |
| Johnson Lake Property                     |   |  |
| Johnson Yellow Lake Lodge                 |   |  |
| Karen Klink                               |   |  |
| Kathleen Savela                           |   |  |



*OPENING DOORS. CREATING OPPORTUNITIES.*

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