

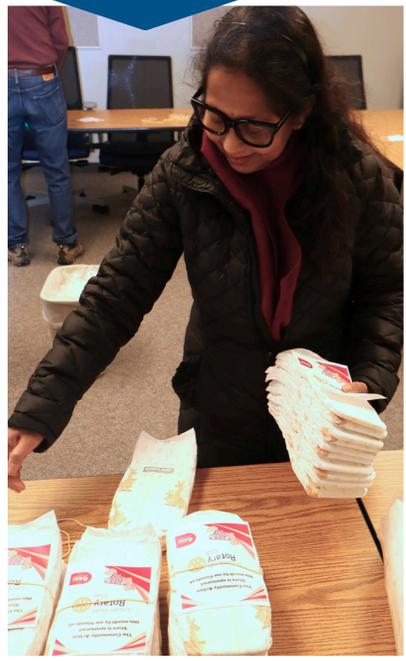
# Hope Inside

## Community Action news and updates

We partner with our community in fearless pursuit of anti-poverty solutions so we all have the opportunity to live well.

**Community Action Guiding Principal:**  
*Collaboration*

We build meaningful relationships to create positive outcomes.



## A little store with a lot of heart



“Every little part of Community Action changes people’s lives.”

One late winter morning, Syd was folding clean clothes. **“I am volunteering to help however I can,”** he said. He then cleaned shoes and stocked the soap and detergent shelves. The next day, his friends DeEtta, Bob, Suchitra and Rita were busy bundling diapers. All are members and friends of Lincoln South Rotary.

Together, they were helping the Community Action Store, a space probably smaller than your first apartment. **It’s where over 100 neighbors find a bit of hope every month.** “One time I couldn’t figure out how to simply get toothpaste for my kids,” shared one participant, a mom of three. “Then I came here and got toothbrushes and toothpaste.”

**“People of Action”** is a Rotary International theme, and **Lincoln South Rotary is living up to it by becoming monthly Store supporters.**

“We realize that there are people in need all around us,” said Syd, Lincoln South Rotary President.

“And we wanted a project with a broad, encompassing impact,” DeEtta added. “And that’s Community Action.”

**The Store’s biggest need is diapers. Nearly 4,000 are distributed every month.** Babies grow fast, after all. The club’s first effort restocked the shelves with 1,587 diapers. They have big plans to do more. **“We are able to chip in and do our part,”** said Syd.

“Every little part of Community Action changes people’s lives,” said a Community Action participant.

“And really, you encourage us to keep doing more,” countered Syd.

**We’re grateful to Lincoln South Rotary, and to all of you, who partner with us to care for our neighbors and lead by example.** Thank you.

“ You encourage us to keep doing more. ”  
Syd Widga, Lincoln South Rotary President

## Letter from the CEO

# Shared Solutions



Dear Friend,

At Community Action, we know anti-poverty programs are most effective when they are designed by the people participating in them. That belief shapes everything we do. It's why our work doesn't start with assumptions, but with listening. And it's why your support has such lasting impact.

Throughout this issue, you'll see what that looks like in practice. In the Community Action Store, neighbors tell us what they need most to care for their families, and partners like Lincoln South Rotary respond with action. In Head Start's Parent Place, caregivers are not just receiving support, they are building it together, shaping a space that meets real needs in real time. In our Financial and Family Well-Being program, participants work alongside coaches like Taef to set their own goals and build the skills that matter most to them.

You also helped make possible some powerful moments of generosity at the close of

last year. Because of you, thousands of toys reached children through our holiday drive, and the Gathering Place Match Campaign exceeded expectations. Those successes are not just numbers. They represent dignity, stability, and people moving forward with confidence.

This is the strength of Community Action. It is neighbors working together, programs shaped by lived experience, and supporters like you who believe that solutions are strongest when they are shared. Thank you for partnering with us, for trusting this approach, and for continuing to show up for our community.

With gratitude,

Heather Loughman  
Chief Executive Officer

### Agency Leadership

#### Board of Directors

**President:** Brodey Weber

**Vice President:**

Michelle Suarez

**Treasurer:** Ana Jelavic

**Secretary:** Chris Marvin

#### Members:

Deborah Tosin Ajeboriogbon

Tiffany Back

Marta Boucher

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Carl Eskridge

Michael Harpster

Thuy Ngoc Ho

Michelle Libal

Kelley Porter

#### Leadership Team

Pam Benner

Jill Bomberger

Deanna Briley

Jessie Hedrick

Heather Loughman

Michelle Martinez

# You did this in 2025!

## COMMUNITY ACTION'S HOLIDAY TOY & HYGIENE DRIVE

1,720 TOYS DISTRIBUTED TO  
309 FAMILIES

HUNDREDS OF HYGIENE SUPPLIES DONATED, HELPING US  
TO KEEP OUR SHELVES FILLED YEAR-ROUND



## The power of ALWAYS

Over \$375,000 raised  
for the Gathering Place!

With our partners: Acklie Charitable Foundation

Miriam Moeller  
Charitable Trust

 Marsh McLennan  
Agency

Sue Quambusch

 BUKATY  
COMPANIES  
Expertise you experience

 INSPRO

 BREWSKY'S  
FOOD & SPIRITS

Anonymous

 ROBINETTE  
Farms

 UBT  
Union Bank & Trust

 PERSPECTIVE  
PLANNING BARBERS



# Staff Spotlight:

**Taef Sayah**  
Financial Coach



Taef works with participants to build essential financial literacy skills and gain confidence in managing their money and reaching their personal financial goals. This includes lessons on debt management, improving credit, and building strong spending and saving habits.

**“My mission is to break that cycle of financial stress.”**

Towards that mission, Taef is also a bridge. She understands money is a learned language.

“As a native Arabic speaker, I’ve seen firsthand how many people struggle to fully understand key financial concepts in English. I connect what they know and what they need to know to reach their desired financial independence.”

**Thank you for your support and belief in this as well.**

*I believe every individual deserves tools, education, and support that helps them to be successful in their life.”*

Taef Sayah, Financial Coach

## A note from the Parent Place

My name is Katherine. I am a Head Start mom. My child spends their days in their amazing Head Start classroom. I get to spend my days in this room called The Parent Place.

**This room is made for me, an adult who is raising little humans while carrying big worries.** I thank Carol and Don Burt for this space.

When I first came to Nebraska, everything tilted. After our move, my husband lost his job. I didn’t know anyone. I didn’t have a community.

Poverty isn’t just about money. I

learned firsthand that it’s also about loneliness, stress, and feeling like you’re doing everything on your own.

And then **this room helped center my world.**

Here, parents don’t just receive help—we build it together. We share skills, lead workshops, and support each other. There are no expectations, no fixing. Just coffee, conversation, and space to exist. **The message is clear: we are resilient, we are enough.**

Now, I help shape this place as part-time staff, alongside Head Start parent Haylee. In this room, we’re leveling the playing field. **We’re building a healthier future—for ourselves and our kids.**



The Parent Place is located in the Bansal Family Home for Head Start.

Read the full story and see the video on our partner CHE’s website: <https://chelincoln.org/whatwedo/parent-place.html>

# Hope within numbers

Stability requires access to food, housing, and education. You ensure stability for neighbors across our community.

Financial and Family Well-Being programs increase financial stability and independence.

### In 2025:

#### Financial Literacy Classes

Cohorts offered: 6

Individuals completed: 80

#### Assets Purchased

Home: 2

Vehicle: 23

Business Improvement: 4

Post-Secondary Education: 2



## Shared commitment, shared impact

Every donor comes to this work with a story. Here is one reflection on why giving matters.

*"I give to Community Action, in lieu of gifts, to honor the way my parents live their life, and because simple acts of love for others makes our community better and stronger!"*

Nicole Orr, Community Action donor since 2023

Thank you for your passionate support of our neighbors. Together, we move our community forward.

Community Action creates opportunities for success in its four impact areas:



**Early Childhood Education**



**Financial & Family Well-Being**



**Homelessness Prevention**



**Hunger Relief & Healthy Food Access**



### Join the Action Crew!

**Make an impact on poverty. Every month.**

Your monthly contribution to the Action Crew **ensures resources** are there when needed; is a **catalyst** for immediate action; **fuels the pursuit** of solutions for all to live well.

**Become a monthly donor today.**



### Save the Date!

**Give to Lincoln Day**  
Thursday,  
May 28, 2026

**YES,** I want to help empower people living in poverty to reach economic stability.

Please accept my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to learn more about monthly giving.

**Your donation will go toward supporting:**

- Feeding those who are hungry at the Gathering Place
  - Preparing children for success in school
  - Preventing and eliminating homelessness
  - Helping families learn financial skills/save for major asset purchases
- I would like to designate my gift to the following program (e.g. The Gathering Place, Head Start, Basic needs supplies for families)

I have included (or intend to include) Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties in my will or estate.

My name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

May we publish your name?  Yes  No

If so, how would you like your name(s) to appear?

**Payment Options:**

- Check payable to Community Action  
 Credit Card:  Visa  MasterCard  Discover

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date (mo/yr) \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**For more information contact:**

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