



# Hope Inside



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## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 } Summer at Head Start
- 2 } Letter from the CEO
- 2 } Need grows. You meet it
- 3 } Independent success
- 3 } Living well in Lincoln
- 4 } Rebuilding with community

## A Head Start on summer learning

*You provide critical early childhood education and family support services all year long.*

Summer is here at Community Action Head Start but learning and fun never take a season off! Our early childhood program takes place all year long. This not only provides stability for parents and caregivers who need to work, attend classes, or otherwise take steps to achieve their own goals, but also gives young learners the chance to build important support systems and routines as they prepare for kindergarten and beyond.

Throughout the spring and summer, Head Start family activities abound. At our 210 O Street location, families in our Home-Based program recently came together for an afternoon of gardening. They helped plant new vegetables to be harvested and enjoyed later this year. Of course, plenty of playing and learning ensued!

At our three early childhood centers, classrooms have helped plant green beans, tomatoes, garlic, and more. Studies show that involving children in the gardening process increases their interest in eating fruits and vegetables and can help establish healthy eating habits for years to come.

By investing in Community Action, you create a positive impact that can last a lifetime!

We're also celebrating big news at our K Street center. **Renovations are nearly complete!** Classrooms and restrooms have been added for young learners and training spaces improved for staff and partner organizations. We've improved the playground space and are putting the finishing touches on a community classroom, complete with a teaching kitchen! Soon this classroom will be available to all, helping to create a community resource space within the neighborhood.

Last month at K Street, we were able to make great use of our renovated space by hosting our annual Family Wellness Festival! Partner agencies from across the community joined Head Start families and members of our team for an afternoon

of education, music, food, and celebration. Seventy families attended the event, which included raffle prizes donated by Lincoln Sunrise Kiwanis and the Lincoln Bike Kitchen. At Community Action Head Start, it's always a fun day to celebrate learning something new!

**Thank you for supporting Community Action, our Head Start program, and our Home for Head Start capital campaign, which has made this sort of community learning possible.** You invest in the future of our students, their families, and our entire community. Thank you.

*P.S. This fall, we'll be hosting a celebration to welcome our community to our fresh new K Street building. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months! We hope you can join us. It won't be a party without you!*



*Last month 70 families attended our annual Head Start Wellness Festival!*

# Celebrating you this summer



*This month Community Action was recognized as one of Lincoln's Best Places to Work for the seventh year!*

*You made so much opportunity bloom this past spring. Thank you!*

Dear Friend –

Summer has officially begun. As I write to you, we're in the midst of the hottest week of the year so far. We've opened our lobby at our main office to anyone who may need a break

from the heat and know that many who visit the Gathering Place in the evenings will dine in to find safety and respite in the air conditioning. Seeing how our team adapts and responds to new needs is incredible. You provide the support our team needs to do their best work for the community.

Needs in our community continue to grow. And you continue to step up and meet them in so many ways.

Your tireless, fearless support of our mission led to a tremendous spring season.

**During Give to Lincoln Day, for example, you contributed over \$85,000 to advance our anti-poverty work.** Your generosity will create so many opportunities for your neighbors to live well. [Thank you.](#)

**Construction at our K**

**Street Head Start center is nearly complete!** If you've driven past the center at 18th and K recently, you may have noticed the new accessible playground ramp and improved fencing. Your support of our Home for Head Start campaign is creating joyful learning opportunities for Lincoln's youngest learners that will impact generations to come. [We look forward to celebrating the success of this campaign and renovations with you later this year.](#) More information forthcoming!

Recently, we also received the opportunity to improve our Financial Well-Being programming. Within our matched savings program, Free to Save, participants will now be able to save up to \$2,000 to purchase their asset (home, vehicle, post-secondary education, or small

business start-up or expansion) which will be matched 4:1 for a total of \$10,000. This change was made possible thanks to the program's primary funder, who, like you, recognizes the importance of creating more opportunities for all.

Another bit of fun news—this month **Community Action was recognized as one of Lincoln's Best Places to Work** by Woods Aitken LLP, the Lincoln Journal Star, and the Lincoln Human Resource Management Association.

This is the seventh time we've received this honor! Of course, the recognition belongs to our team. They work tirelessly each day to make our mission a reality.

Fearlessly,

Heather Loughman

## Meeting goals and moving forward

*You give neighbors like Tina the opportunities needed to live well.*

When Tina moved to Lincoln last year, she didn't know anyone in town—but she knew she needed support. Tina was looking for a fresh start. She was fleeing a bad situation and searching for employment. She needed community. She needed support in her journey to remain safe and sober. And while she had the skills and determination to do so, she also needed resources and the opportunity to build a life that met her definition of "living well."

When Tina enrolled in our Supportive Housing program, she found all this and more.

**"I just really felt like I had someone in my corner,"** she said. **"Community Action was there for me. They believed in me. It made me feel like I could really do this."**

Tina worked with her Family Advocate to set goals, such as finding permanent employment. Soon after she found work through a temp agency. The company she joined recognized her skills and work ethic and after a few months, she was hired permanently.

With a place to live and a steady, well-paying job, Tina felt a great sense of relief. She continued working with her Family Advocate for a few more months, investing in herself and her independence. **Recently, Tina graduated our program early.**

**She is secure, stable, confident, and living well.**

Your support of Community Action gave Tina the opportunity to rebuild her life in the way that was most meaningful to her. Thank you.

*You gave Tina the chance to set her own goals and build the safe, stable, ambitious life she deserves.*



## Need for meals grows and you continue to meet it

*The Gathering Place continues to set record numbers of meals served. You show up for your neighbors and make this possible.*

May was another historic month at the Gathering Place. Last month, 5,667 free hot, nutritious, home-cooked meals were served from the old brick house on the corner of E St. and Goodhue Blvd in Lincoln. This represents the greatest number of meals ever served at the Gathering Place in one month. It's also an over 1,600-meal increase from May 2023.

Recently, we were speaking to volunteers who have been serving at the Gathering Place since July of 1990. While reminiscing, they shared that they remembered serving 20 people on their first night of meal service. Now, they're regularly serving over 140 when they volunteer.

"It's amazing to be so efficient in such a small space," they shared. **"We're so glad the Gathering Place has been able to stay accessible to people and continue to meet the need."**

Recently, a guest also shared with us that she was thrilled to get fresh produce and other resources when visiting the Gathering Place—a result of partnerships we've built with other local nonprofits. "It makes it easier to be in one spot," she said. **"And this is a place I trust."**

The increased levels of need we've seen at the Gathering Place over the last several years has been exemplary. But so, too, has been the passion and drive we've witnessed to get folks whatever they need. **We are so thankful to you. You make this possible.**

*Gathering Place guests regularly have access to fresh produce distributions, thanks to your generosity and our partnerships with other local nonprofits!*



## Living well today and tomorrow

*You give families like Adam and Magbola's the chance to build strong financial futures.*

Adam and Magbola immigrated to the United States from Sudan in 2005. Taking care of their family of seven in their native country wasn't easy, and they moved to America in search of new opportunities and growth. *Immediately after moving to Lincoln, they began looking for resources that would help their family live a better life.*

Soon after moving, Adam and Magbola were able to enroll in a local program to

support first-time homebuyers. With a family of their size, they knew purchasing a home would be key to reaching and maintaining financial stability. After months of hard work, saving money, and learning about the responsibilities of home ownership, **Adam and Magbola were able to purchase a home.** This first asset purchase made a tremendous difference in Adam and Magbola's economic stability. They continued moving forward to meet their goals and found Community Action.

Several months ago, Adam and Magbola enrolled in our Free to Save matched savings

program with the goal of improving their financial literacy skills and eventually purchasing a vehicle. A vehicle, they know, will greatly improve their quality of life as a family of seven. With work, medical appointments, children's activities, and more, access to reliable transportation is essential.

**Thanks to you, Adam and Magbola will have the opportunity to create additional opportunities for themselves and their children.** You've given Adam, Magbola, and their children the opportunity to live well.

To you, they say, "Thank you."



*You give families like Adam and Magbola's the chance to build a solid foundation for their future success.*



Thank you to our current classroom sponsors:  
 Brodey Weber  
 Sue Quambusch and John and Nancy Wiederspan  
 Raybould Family Foundation  
 Chris Marvin  
 Mick, Lisa, Jordan, Katie, and Elizabeth Hale  
 Drs. Bob and Lisa Rauner  
 David and Lynn Lux  
 Lincoln Southeast Kiwanis  
 Lincoln Sunrise Kiwanis

## Will you sponsor a Community Action Head Start classroom?

*One gift can support a classroom for the entire year!*

You can give opportunity and inspire hope. As a Community Action Head Start classroom sponsor, you'll make so much possible. Classroom sponsors provide critical support to teachers as they plan activities to support children's learning. For example, they keep classrooms stocked with essentials like diapers, wipes, and formula, as well as the fun stuff, like books, CDs, toys, and art supplies.

**With a gift of just \$1,500 you can sponsor a Head Start preschool or infant/toddler classroom for the**

**2024-2025 school year.** Gifts can be made in multiple installments!

As a classroom sponsor, you'll receive exclusive communications, volunteer/engagement opportunities, and more. A plaque will also be placed outside your classroom recognizing your support!

You can make a difference today and help create the quality learning environment your youngest neighbors need to succeed. We can't do this without you.

**If you're interested in classroom sponsorship or want to learn more, contact Jessie Hedrick at [jhedrick@communityactionatwork.org](mailto:jhedrick@communityactionatwork.org) or (402) 875-9338!**

## How do you want to be remembered?



*Leave your legacy through a planned gift to Community Action.*

Have you asked yourself this question? **What legacy will you leave?** Certainly, you've spent some time over the past year considering your passions – the causes closest to your heart. And you've taken time to consider what the world will look like for future generations. How you might make it better, brighter, and kinder.

Making a planned gift to support the work of Community Action is a powerful way to impact generations to come. **By committing to a planned gift today, you will become a member of our Legacy Circle**, a special group of donors who will play a significant role in advancing the work of Community Action well into the future. It's the perfect way to make a big impact for tomorrow without affecting your financial situation today.

Want to learn more or get started? Contact Heather Loughman at (402) 875-9319 or [hloughman@communityactionatwork.org](mailto:hloughman@communityactionatwork.org), or Jessie Hedrick at (402) 875-9338!

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

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

**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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