

HopeInside

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.

Beacon of Light

Panic. We've all felt it.

That pit in the bottom of your stomach that starts small and grows. Hobbling through Community Action's doors, Mrs. Thompson was beyond panic.

Because of your generosity, Community Action was able to make a real difference for her family. They asked us to share their heartfelt thanks with you.



Meet the
Emergency
Services team:
Angel, Ali & Sarah

Dear Generous Donors,

*Our family is overwhelmed with gratitude for each and every one of you. **Your support has been a beacon of light in an incredibly difficult season.***

On August 7 our world turned upside down when my husband's sudden double vision triggered a whirlwind of urgent medical visits to UNMC. Combined with prior medical needs, neither he nor I were able to work. The weight of these challenges felt insurmountable. We did not have a safety net.

But because of you—your kindness, your generosity—our family found relief and stability. Your donations kept a roof over our heads, the lights on, and the heat running, ensuring our home remained a safe haven for our family.

Yet more than that, your support reminded us that we are not alone. To know that people we've never met care so deeply about our family is a blessing beyond words. If I could, I'd give each of you a big hug to show how much your compassion means to us!

*Your generosity has been a lifeline, easing our burdens and restoring our faith in the quiet goodness of this world. **We will forever carry gratitude in our hearts for you and the incredible difference you've made in our lives.***

*With all our love and thanks,
The Thompsons*



Local Strength

Recognizing the complex issues surrounding poverty, Community Action builds local solutions that are specific to local needs.

It's your generosity at work in your town.

No matter how great or little the need, the real work is the connection we make."

-Sarah Fentress, Emergency Services Administrator

Letter from the CEO

Hope endures because of you

Dear Friend,

On a cold November night, **295 neighbors** found warmth and nourishment at the Gathering Place—a record-breaking evening during the government shutdown and suspension of SNAP benefits. Every guest was a neighbor seeking comfort in a season of uncertainty. **And behind every plate was you**—your generosity, your belief in community, your commitment to making sure no one faces hardship alone.

As we close out our 60th year and share our 40th *Hope Inside* newsletter, one truth stands strong: **because of you, hope endures.** Thank you for joining us in September to celebrate six decades of impact at our birthday block party. Your presence reminded us that this work is rooted in community and that together, we can meet any challenge.

That truth shines whenever the need surges. You make it possible for our teams to respond. You help feed hundreds in cramped kitchens, keep families safe and housed, and ensure dignity when crisis strikes. Your fearless support turns moments of uncertainty into stories of resilience.

The challenges ahead are real, but with you by our side, we will continue to turn cold nights into warm meals and uncertainty into hope, just as we have for 60 years.

Thank you for giving hope.



Chief Executive Officer



Agency Leadership

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Hope within numbers

Stability requires access to food, housing, and education. You ensure Community Action creates a stable impact.

Gathering Place

Served **295 meals** in one hour

↑ 97% increase

Community Action Store

Supplied **137 families** with essential items in one month

↑ 23% increase

Rural Emergency Services

housed **8 households** in two months in one community

↑ 100% increase





Staff Spotlight:

Lisa Janssen

Gathering Place Administrator



“We have a very specific job. We make sure people have access to food.”

When basic needs go unmet, life becomes very challenging. It's hard to learn, work, or be a good neighbor.

That's why, leading with her Motivation Gallup strength and nine years of experience, Lisa and the team keep the Gathering Place pantry stocked, meals prepared, and volunteers ready to serve 150–200 neighbors for one hour every day.

On Thanksgiving, Lisa is even the lead chef creating all the traditional food!

“We Will Make It Work!” is Lisa's motto and the Gathering Place team's mantra. You make this possible.

“We can consistently make great food for our guests and offer all the supports we can to make life a little bit better thanks to the support of our community and donors. “

Together, we will always make it work.
Thank you.

Warmth that lasts

Katie grew up in apartments holding on to a dream, *“I just knew I wanted a house for myself and my kids.”*

She recently made her dream into reality with a cozy 1950s cobblestone house. Homeownership brought joy and stability. It also brought tears, costly repairs, and high utility bills. **On a limited income, she was on a slippery slope towards energy insecurity. Being able to stay began to feel impossible.**

Then came hope. Community Action's Weatherization program found the problem. Not a single inch of insulation was in her home. **In short order our team actively sealed in warmth, safety, and hope.** Katie's bills fell by 30%. As Beau, our Weatherization Program Administrator, says: “Helping someone to stay in their home by breaking the cycle of crippling bills, that's the impact we want.”

Because of you, families like Katie's stay safe and warm this winter. Your support turns energy insecurity into security, and tears into hope. Thank you for making this simple, remarkable difference.

Powerful partners



It's easier to be brave with a friendly face at your side!

Thank you to friends and partners at the Lincoln Fire Department who visited with our Head Start Home-Based families!

Wheee Wheee Wheee! Excitement rang through the crisp fall air. The monthly playdate was about to catch on fire!

Lincoln Fire & Rescue Firetruck 43 was visiting Community Action's home-based Head Start families! Firefighter friends gently helped the students explore the truck while family members learned about fire safety, how to call for help, and job opportunities. **We are so grateful to our community partners who help make learning fun and meaningful!**

Bye-bye, truck. With a whistle and a honk they were off. Until next time!



abendmusik
AT FIRST-PLYMOUTH

**"...and on earth...peace"
Christmas with Abendmusik
& Gathering Place Fundraiser**

Sunday, Dec. 14, 2025
4:00 & 6:30 p.m.
First Plymouth Church
Free will offering to benefit the Gathering Place.



COMMUNITY ACTION'S HOLIDAY TOY & HYGIENE DRIVE

Give joy and stability this holiday season.

Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties is collecting hygiene items and toys for children ages 0-18.



Scan to
purchase a **TOY**
directly from
our wish list.



Scan to purchase
HYGIENE items
directly from our
wish list.



Learn more at
www.communityactionatwork.org



**Through December 31, you can DOUBLE
the power of**



ALWAYS

*"It's good to know you can come here and get a
good meal. **Always** can." Denise*

**THANK YOU to our generous sponsors
who are matching, \$1 for \$1,
your donations to the Gathering Place!**

Lead Sponsor: Acklie Charitable Foundation

Anonymous



Sue Quambusch



**Miriam Moeller
Charitable Trust**



UBT
Union Bank & Trust



PERSPECTIVE
PLANNING PARTNERS

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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