



# 2019 Annual Report



## THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

AEOA STRENGTHENS COMMUNITIES BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

# Community Needs Assessment

## LISTENING TO THOSE WE SERVE

Every three years, Community Action Agencies conduct community needs assessments to learn more deeply about the lives of those we serve. In 2018, AEOA performed the triennial community needs assessment utilizing several methods to reach low-income and elderly households, as well as the larger community.

*A minimum wage worker in the Arrowhead would have to work from 55 to 61 hours a week to afford a two-bedroom apartment.*

The process included the following:

- A review of demographic, economic, housing, and social characteristics of Cook, Lake, and St. Louis Counties to identify the causes of poverty;
- One-to-one surveys of program participants from the five service departments of AEOA and 50 surveys performed by the North Shore Area Partners;
- Electronic surveys of the general community population, community partner agencies, and AEOA staff;
- Agency data including Head Start Program Information Reports, CSBG annual reporting, Agency county service grid and descriptions, and other Agency data reports.

Staff collected 368 responses from clients and the broad community online survey solicited 307 responses. This is the highest response rate we have seen over the last three community needs assessments. Given survey implementation and content has not largely changed over the years, this increase in response is attributed to the current rise in community activism across Minnesota.

Respondents were asked to answer questions regarding quality of life, health, housing, employment, education, transportation, children and youth, and senior issues.

In addition, separate employee and community partner surveys were performed. A total of 48 responses were collected from staff and 60 responses from community partners.

Needs identified will help AEOA set funding priorities and our strategic planning goals for the next three years.

### Top Five Needs of People We Serve

1. Enough money to pay bills
2. Enough money to buy clothing
3. The ability to get credit, pay debt, or take care of bad credit
4. Enough money to buy a car
5. A job that pays enough to support basic needs

### Top Five Needs of the General Community

1. Enough money to participate in fitness activities
2. Enough money to participate in recreational activities
3. Enough money to afford repairs on their home if they need it
4. Enough money to repair their vehicle
5. Not able to afford healthy food options



# Senior Care Consultation Services

## HELPING SENIORS LIVE WELL AT HOME



AEOA's Senior Care Consultation Service is provided in partnership with municipalities providing financial and other support to ensure the elders of their communities can remain at home as they age.

Since spring of 2018, over 63 households have been served, 48 needing minor home aids/repairs and 15 needing home modifications to remain independent. The project targets homebound individuals at risk of nursing home placement age 60+ who are: receiving home-delivered meal service; at high nutrition risk; have two (2) or more ADL limitations; and/or are receiving care from a family member who is overwhelmed due to their caregiving role.

The Senior Care Consultation Service begins with an in-person visit to a senior's home by the Care Consultant conducting reassessment for home-delivered meal service. The process screens nutrition risk, Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), and Independent Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). The staff also provide the Live Well at Home Rapid Screen and a Home Safety Checklist.

The Home Safety Check identifies safety and health issues that may need to be addressed immediately, such as fall hazards and accessibility issues. AEOA's Housing Department construction staff develop a scope of work. From that scope, the senior can choose whether to have the issue(s) resolved or not.

Repairs may easily be performed by family members or volunteers, while others need additional assistance from AEOA's Housing Department to complete the work. When appropriate, seniors are connected to community funds or provided a sliding scale fee service. For seniors who are unable to afford the repairs, AEOA has secured funding from municipalities to provide financial assistance. AEOA is also able to connect seniors to our single-family rehab programming and funding.

In its first year of operation, the Senior Care Consultation Service has been very successful. In years two and three, AEOA intends to build further partnerships with municipalities and others in our communities seeking to help our elders remain independent in the communities they love.



*"My mom fell and if it wasn't for the grab bars in her bathroom, she would have fallen to the floor and hit her head on the toilet or sink and ended up in the hospital. This program has made a difference between staying in her home or relocating to a nursing facility."*

### **Before & After Pictures**



Pedestal sink not properly secured to the wall. Client fearful of holding onto the sink.



Installed a vanity and grab bar near toilet.

# Legacy CareerForce

## INSPIRING SENIORS TO THRIVE IN THE WORKFORCE

AEOA's Employment and Training Department was awarded funding to perform a Legacy CareerForce Demonstration pilot. The pilot uses a team of Career Navigators (a hybrid between a Case Manager and a Job Developer) to provide intensive one-to-one services and support. Career Navigators customize solutions to the needs of each individual participant and connect participants directly to employers. The model also leverages existing programs within the CareerForce system.

This focused approach will help bridge the gaps that many 55 and older workers with multiple barriers to employment face in achieving successful employment and retention outcomes.



Minnesota's Legacy Service Model contains components including assessment, individualized participant employment plans, support services, enhanced foundational skills, enhanced skills building, as well as job placement and retention. Engaging communities, businesses, and participants, this participant-centered program respectfully leverages the considerable talents, experiences, and work ethic of the "Legacy CareerForce" to optimize outcomes for both participants and employers. This service model is tailored to low-income unemployed or underemployed adults 55 and older and is delivered through a collaboration of partners and in a manner driven by the needs and circumstances of each participant.

The goals of this pilot program are as follows:

- design and implement a supportive framework for participants;
- provide the support needed to place participants into suitable full- or part-time employment based on participants' needs;
- increase/create sustainable and self/family supporting income for participants;
- create supplemental income for participants that will add to their current income stream and/or add to their quality of life - strengthening sense of self, community connections, and contribution to society;
- address barriers to employment;
- inspire participants to thrive, not just survive, by empowering them to step into employment that matches their skills, experiences, and interests;
- create a talent pipeline for employers who are seeking skilled workers;
- advocate for participants to capitalize on their value, talents, experiences, and work ethic;
- partner and engage employers to hire participants;
- position Minnesota for future economic stability.

The Legacy CareerForce Demonstration pilot program began January of 2019 and is slated to run through October, 2020. To date, we have served 32 individuals and met 84% of our enrollment goals.

# AEOA BY THE NUMBERS



AEOA is legislatively-designated to serve Cook, Lake, and St. Louis Counties, but the Agency's programs reach ten counties in the Arrowhead region.

AEOA employs roughly 385 full- and part-time staff



## NEED IN THE ARROWHEAD

## OUR IMPACT - 2018



Nearly 55,000 residents live in poverty



36,521 individuals served  
10,521 households served



16.8% of children age 0-17 live in poverty



446 children were provided with school readiness skills



8% of seniors age 65+ live in poverty



9,973 seniors were able to maintain an independent living situation



4% regional unemployment rate



492 successfully exited workforce programming



On average, households spend 32% of their monthly income on transportation



71,132 transportation services were provided (bus rides, passes, car repairs, and gas vouchers)



Over 1 in 5 renter households pay more than half their monthly income on rent\*



417 households were assisted in maintaining safe and affordable housing

\*Data excludes Cass, Crow Wing, and Pine County



## Programs and Services

**Central Services:** *To guide, support, and unify AEOA services to maximize resources and ensure progress and accountability in carrying out the mission of the Agency*

- Administration
- Fiscal Services
- Information Technology
- AEOA Foundation Fund
- Human Resources
- Planning

**The mission of *Employment & Training*** is to enhance the employability and skills of individuals so that they may achieve their life goals.

- Adult Basic Education
- Adult Scholarship Program
- Career Pathways
- Diversionary Work Program
- Dislocated Worker Program
- English Language Learning
- Free at Last and Freestyle
- Family Assets for Independence in Minnesota
- Lives in Transition
- Minnesota Family Investment Program
- Senior Employment Programs
- SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Outreach and Employment Services
- YouthBuild

**Arrowhead Head Start** works in community partnerships to provide comprehensive support to young children and families in need on their journey toward social and economic growth; together, we build a stronger future.

- Pre-school Center-Base
- Pre-school Home-Base
- Early Head Start Home-Base

**The mission of *Housing Services*** is to build communities by helping people meet their basic living needs; have affordable, quality housing; and to improve their quality of living.

- Business Energy Retrofit
- Downtown Building Revitalization
- Emergency & Transitional Housing
- Energy Assistance
- Homeless Youth Housing
- Homeownership Education & Financial Assistance
- Homeless Prevention & Re-housing
- Housing Support Services for Adults with Serious Mental Illness
- MNSure Marketplace Assistance
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Single-family Rehabilitation
- Weatherization

**Senior Services** helps older adults meet the demands of daily living while providing opportunities to improve the quality of their lives.

- Aging Eye Initiative
- Arrowhead RSVP
- Bone Builders Exercise Classes
- Cruising to Wellness
- Food Shelves
- Grocery Delivery Service
- Juniper - Healthy Living as You Age
- Live Well at Home
- Medical Equipment Loan Closet
- Nutrition Services for Seniors
  - Bundled Services
  - Meals on Wheels
  - Senior Dining
- Northland Volunteer Services
- Rutabaga Project
- Senior Carnival
- Senior Partners Care (20% Medicare Write-off)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Outreach
- Tax Assistance

**Arrowhead Transit** provides affordable, safe, accessible public transportation and supports independent living and self-reliance.

- Arrowhead Transit
- Dial-a-Ride
- Volunteer Driver Program

# Arrowhead Transit Looking Forward

## PLANNING FOR GREATER MINNESOTA'S TRANSPORTATION FUTURE



Over the last year, Arrowhead Transit has been completing an operational strategic plan under the guidance of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). By developing individual five-year plans, MnDOT hopes to better identify specific priorities for each service system based on the themes in the *Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan*. Additionally, the information identified in the plan will help local transit systems work with local government officials, planning agencies, and others to address the needs of a broad range of community members, ensuring Minnesota achieves its goal of meeting 90% of transit service need by 2025 in Greater Minnesota.

The process was guided by the consultant AECOM, the Office of Transit and Active Transportation (OTAT) at MnDOT, and the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA). Arrowhead Transit staff met with the AECOM consultant to identify capital and operational needs and determine priorities over the next five years. The Five-Year Transit System Plan for 2020-2025 was completed in August of 2019 and can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/2MypZgt>

### Highest Priority Operational Needs

- ☞ Expand Dial-a-Ride service in Cloquet, Grand Rapids, Hermantown, Pine City, Virginia/Mountain Iron, and Sandstone
- ☞ Discontinue the Hill City-Grand Rapids "shopping run"
- ☞ Guarantee service on the following runs:
  - Pine City-Duluth
  - McGregor-Palisade-Aitkin-Brainerd
  - Moose Lake-Cloquet
  - Meadowlands-Culver-Duluth
  - Sandstone-Hinkley-Pine City
  - Pine City-North Branch-Cambridge
- ☞ Make the Aitkin-McGregor-Cromwell-Duluth service a seasonal, summer-only service
- ☞ Streamline Duluth services

### Highest Priority Capital Needs

- ☞ New maintenance facility in Gilbert
- ☞ Comprehensive facilities study and fleet replacement plan
- ☞ Farebox system implementation
- ☞ Additional mechanics
- ☞ Continuation of Rural Rides



# Making a Mark

## AEOA STAFF RECEIVE STATEWIDE HONORS

### Minnesota ABE Teacher of the Year



Terri Ferris, AEOA Adult Education Lead Instructor, received the Minnesota Literacy Action Network ABE Teacher of the Year Award. The ABE Teacher of the Year Award is presented to a teacher in Adult Education to recognize outstanding performance as a teacher. Terri's co-worker, Jill, nominated her, stating, "Terri makes a difference every day. She has a wealth of knowledge that she shares not only with her students, but also with her peers. She empowers her students, trains her staff, and she shares her knowledge freely. She takes the lead in learning new initiatives and goals for ABE and makes sure everyone around her knows how to implement them and have

success...She attends graduation ceremonies as she follows her students from the classroom into their careers. Her students are lucky to have such a positive advocate in Terri. She is very invested in their success, and will do whatever she can to help with all the hurdles along the way."

In accepting the award Terri shared, "I am very lucky to get paid to do a job that I love...My adventures in Adult Education began in Eveleth, Minnesota, in 1999, in a class that met one day a week. I was immediately hooked...Our jobs are not always easy, but we are killing it! I have had the pleasure of working with some amazing people within my program and across the state of Minnesota. I am so proud of the work we do and that is once again why I am so humbled to have been selected."

### Steve O'Neil Outstanding Organizer Award

Beth Peterson, AEOA Director of Planning, received the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless Steve O'Neil Outstanding Organizer Award. Given in honor of the late St. Louis County Commissioner, Steve O'Neil, the award recognizes the efforts of an outstanding individual who exemplifies Steve's passion and drive for organizing social and policy change.



Beth's nominators said of her, "She has an intense passion for justice and a keen understanding of poverty. She is always looking for ways to improve AEOA's services to better meet the needs of the community...Beth never hesitates to assist a client in need. AEOA staff have seen her offering a ride, purchasing a lunch, and offering assistance to those needing access to our local shelter. If you worked with Beth for one day, you would see how she balances everything she does with such competence and grace. Her work, both paid and volunteer, has revolved around creating solutions to help advocate for systems change.... She is very passionate and invested in helping people experiencing homelessness or poverty, is an invaluable asset to AEOA and local communities, and truly makes a difference in the lives of others every day."

Accepting the award, Beth shared her personal history of poverty and stated, "I now...advocate for policies that make the road a little easier for the next person coming behind me trying to reach prosperity. And I commend each and every one of you here today for working so tirelessly to raise the voice for those trying to move from poverty to prosperity in America. Only through working together can we move the needle for those in need. To quote the great Senator Paul Wellstone, 'Stand Up, Keep Fighting.', because now more than ever our voices need heard."

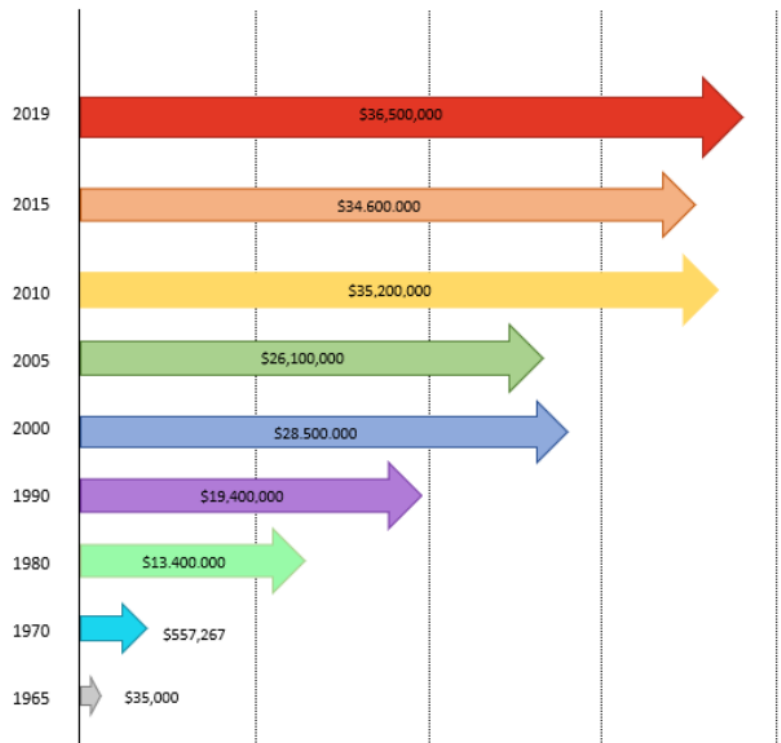


# Financial Summary

## Unaudited Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2019

Current Year Balance	
-	
<b>Assets</b>	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	9,018,452
Grant Receivables	4,217,423
Other Receivables	1,740,934
Inventory	303,620
Prepaid Expenses	357,698
Other Current Assets	119,504
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>15,757,631</b>
Property and Equipment	
Property and Equipment, Net	14,957,644
<b>Total Property and Equipment</b>	<b>14,957,644</b>
Non Current Assets	
Loan Receivable	5,959,031
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>5,959,031</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>36,674,306</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	666,137
Accrued Paid Leave	1,409,894
Unearned Revenue	742,300
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>2,818,331</b>
Long Term Liabilities	
Deferred Revenue - loans	12,068,342
Long Term Debt	3,587,921
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>15,656,263</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>18,474,594</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	
Unrestricted - undesignated	1,925,787
Unrestricted-designated for programs	12,570,124
Current year change in net assets	3,703,802
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>18,199,713</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>36,674,306</b>

## AEOA Levels of Funding



## AEOA Unaudited Annual Expenditures by Program July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019



- Central (1.10%)
- Employment & Training (11.92%)
- Head Start (13.01%)
- Housing (25.26%)
- Senior Services (10.25%)
- Transit (38.45%)

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**If a free society cannot help the  
many who are poor, it cannot  
save the few who are rich.**

John F. Kennedy

702 Third Avenue South  
Virginia, MN 55792  
[www.aeoa.org](http://www.aeoa.org)  
800-662-5711  
[facebook.com/aeoaofficial/](https://facebook.com/aeoaofficial/)

