



Community Action Partnership of North Dakota

Community Services Block Grant

Success Stories 2025

Helping People, Changing Lives



Region 2 – Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, Mountrail, Pierce, Renville, Ward Counties

Region 2 - Keeping Vulnerable Households Financially Stable Through the Representative Payee Program in Region 2

In Region 2, there are very few options for individuals who require a representative payee in order to access and manage their income. For people with disabilities, mental health conditions, or other vulnerabilities, having a payee is not optional, it is the only way they can receive and use their own money to pay for basic necessities like rent, food, and utilities.

CAP Minot is one of only two agencies in the entire region that provides these essential services. Through its Representative Payee Program, CAP Minot helps approximately 50 households manage their finances safely and responsibly by handling bill payment, budgeting, and money management. These services ensure that rent is paid on time, utilities stay on, and clients do not lose housing because of financial instability.

The program is sustained through a combination of client payee fees and CSBG funding, which helps keep it affordable and accessible for people who would otherwise have no support. Without this program, many of these households would lose access to their income altogether leaving them unable to pay rent, buy food, or meet basic needs.

This is more than a financial service, it is a homelessness prevention and stability tool. By keeping money managed and bills paid, the Representative Payee Program provides structure, dignity, and security for some of the region's most vulnerable residents.

Region 2 - Rachel's Story: Restoring Joy During a Difficult Season in Minot

Rachel is a single parent in Minot who found herself in a tough financial situation after having to take time off work for a medical emergency. With her income disrupted, she was struggling to cover basic expenses and had no way to afford birthday and holiday gifts for her two children. The stress of the season weighed heavily on her, especially knowing that one of her children has a birthday close to Christmas.

Through CAP Minot's Christmas Program, Rachel was able to select gifts for both the holidays and her daughter's upcoming fourth birthday. Staff went a step further by allowing her to pick out a few extra birthday items so her child could still feel special during a challenging time. When the emergency pantry happened to have cake mix and frosting available, staff made sure Rachel could take those home as well, giving her the chance to celebrate her child's birthday in a meaningful way.

Rachel was deeply moved by the care and attention she received. She shared how much it meant that staff remembered small details about her children's likes and interests, and she expressed her gratitude with hugs and happy tears. Compared to the year before, when her living situation was much more unstable due to her medical issues, this support made the holidays feel hopeful again. Because of Community Action, Rachel was able to bring joy, dignity, and a sense of normalcy back into her home when her family needed it most.

Region 3 – Benson, Cavalier, Eddy, Ramsey, Rolette, and Towner Counties

Region 3 - Preventing Eviction and Restoring Stability for a Rural Couple in Rolla

Vicki and her husband were facing an eviction notice after a sudden decrease in benefits left them unable to cover their full rent for the month. Afraid of losing their housing and unsure how to approach their landlord, Vicki contacted Community Action for help.

Community Action stepped in immediately with rental assistance to cover the gap. Beyond providing financial support, the Case Manager also reached out directly to the landlord on Vicki's behalf. Once the landlord understood the situation and learned that Community Action was involved, she became more willing to work with the couple and agreed to halt the eviction process.

With assistance in place, Vicki was able to pay the remaining portion of her rent and remain safely housed. She expressed deep appreciation for the support she received, noting how relieved she felt to avoid displacement and the stress that an eviction would have caused.

Region 5 – Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Trail Counties

Region 5 - Maria’s Journey to Stability Through Career Coaching and CNA Training in Fargo

Maria came to Community Action looking for a way to build a better life for herself and her children. Through the Career Coach Program, she received a scholarship for CNA training, completed her certification, and quickly secured employment at a local skilled nursing facility.

Transportation challenges threatened her new job, but her Career Coach advocated on her behalf and connected her to a partner agency that provided a donated vehicle. This allowed Maria to get to work reliably, ensured her children had safe transportation to school, and increased the family’s overall stability.

Today, Maria is employed, mobile, and moving confidently toward long-term self-sufficiency. She shares that the program didn’t just help her get a job; it empowered her to rebuild her life and become a strong role model for her children.

Region 5 - Elena Builds a Strong Future Through Career Coaching and CNA Training

Elena came to Community Action through Head Start and enrolled in the Career Coach Program to pursue CNA training. With a scholarship, she completed her coursework, passed her exams on the first attempt, and secured stable employment caring for vulnerable community members.

When transportation and household needs became barriers, her Career Coach connected her to partners who provided essential furniture, helped move items into her home, and secured a donated vehicle. This support allowed Elena to return to work after maternity leave and ensure her children continued attending Head Start.

Now confidently employed, Elena is planning to continue her education and work toward becoming a nurse, building a strong, stable future for her family.

Region 5 - David’s First Home in 11 Years

David, a service-connected Veteran, had not lived in stable housing for more than 11 years. When he came to Community Action, he had been in a shelter for 13 months and was living in constant fight-or-flight due to severe PTSD. Even indoors, he never felt safe.

Through the Emergency Solutions Rapid Rehousing Program, David secured housing within five weeks. With ongoing case management, trauma-informed support, and assistance from a representative payee to help manage his finances, he finally began to feel grounded and stable.

This month, David will sign a one-year lease, a major milestone for someone who spent over a decade without a home. This is more than housing; it is a story of resilience, trust, and a Veteran beginning to truly live again.

Region 5 - Rose Finds Stability and Community After a Year of Loss

When Rose came to Community Action in Fargo, she was facing a series of overwhelming challenges. Her income was no longer enough to cover her basic expenses, she was experiencing food insecurity, and she was still reeling from a recent home fire that forced her to move. On top of that, she had endured the loss of several loved ones and was struggling emotionally as she tried to rebuild her life.

Community Action enrolled Rose in the CSFP food program, providing bi-monthly food boxes that eased her immediate food insecurity. She was also referred to FMRRV, where she was able to obtain furniture and essential household items for her new home. Additional referrals to LSND, First Link, St. Francis Thrift Store, and the Salvation Army gave her access to further supports that helped lighten some of her financial and emotional burdens.

With her basic needs more secure, Rose began to regain stability. She no longer worried about having enough food, and her home started to feel like a place of comfort again. As she rebuilt, she also rediscovered her sense of connection and community. Staff noticed that at each food distribution, Rose greeted others with a smile and made new friends easily. Despite all she has endured, she now shares that she is “making every day a positive one.”

Region 5: How the Olson Family Found Stability Through Quality Childcare and Support

When the Olson family came to Community Action in Fargo, both parents were full-time nursing students trying to balance coursework, clinicals, finances, and parenting. Their young daughter had been in an unsafe childcare setting and urgently needed a safe, nurturing, and affordable environment. Enrolling her full-time at SENDCAA Child Care provided the stability their family desperately needed.

When their daughter first arrived, she was quiet, withdrawn, and behind on key developmental milestones. SENDCAA teachers quickly created daily lessons tailored to her needs, grounded in literacy, math, science, and social-emotional learning. With consistent care, new materials to explore, and positive relationships with both peers and staff, her confidence began to grow. Today, she is thriving and developmentally ready to enter Kindergarten next fall.

But the impact extended far beyond the classroom. Recognizing the family's financial strain, SENDCAA Child Care staff helped the Olsons enroll in Medicaid and Child Care Assistance, reducing their daily expenses. When both parents graduated from nursing school, they encountered another barrier: the high fees for their nursing board exams. Through SENDCAA's Employment Services program, they were connected with a Career Coach who ensured both exam fees were covered.

With this support, both parents passed their exams and secured nursing positions, transforming their family's financial future.

This story illustrates SENDCAA's commitment to building trust through daily communication, meeting each family where they are, and responding proactively to challenges. By nurturing children and uplifting families in tandem, SENDCAA Child Care creates lasting, life-changing outcomes for families like the Olsons.

Region 5: Derrick Builds a New Career and a Stable Future

When Derrick first connected with Community Action in Fargo, he was a single father determined to build a more secure future for himself and his daughter. He reached out because he wanted to earn his forklift certification, a step he believed could open doors to better employment.

Through the Career Coach Program, Derrick received support to complete his forklift training, create a strong resume, and navigate employment barriers. With guidance and encouragement, he secured a job at a local hospital, working in the laboratory department as a medical laboratory assistant. He quickly discovered that he loved the work.

Derrick didn't stop there. While building stability through employment, he also explored SSDI, secured legal representation, and strengthened the skills he needed for long-term success. His Career Coach connected him to community resources, made referrals, and provided professional recommendations that helped Derrick develop meaningful relationships both personally and professionally.

Employment has been transformative for Derrick. It has allowed him to provide for his daughter, create a budget, manage expenses, and move toward lasting self-sufficiency. With renewed confidence, he has also taken on a part-time position with a local bus service to begin working toward his CDL, continuing to expand his career opportunities.

Region 5 - Monica Rediscovered Confidence and Purpose Through CNA Training

Monica is a resilient single parent supporting a multigenerational household of seven, including herself and her disabled aunt. Despite years of caretaking and financial strain, she remained determined to create a more stable future for her family. When she connected with Community Action's Career Coach Program, she shared her dream of becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), a pathway that would allow her to provide for her children while continuing to care for her aunt.

With the support of a training scholarship and ongoing coaching, Monica enrolled in the self-paced CNA program at NDSCS. She excelled in her coursework and passed both portions of her licensing exam on the first attempt. Soon after, she secured stable employment with a local company providing care and assistance to aging adults, work that matches both her skill and her heart.

The impact of this success extended beyond employment. Monica became eligible for health coverage for the first time, received additional support through the Food Commodity Program for her aunt, and even became a Shriver Fellow, using her lived experience to advocate for future families navigating SENDCAA services. She now plans to continue her education and pursue a nursing degree.

Most importantly, Monica regained something she felt she had lost: her confidence.

Her words capture the heart of her journey:

Writing a success story for myself as a mother of five is hard for me... I feel like a failure all around at times. But I can speak on how the SENDCAA CNA Program gave me my confidence back. For so long, I have been my aunt's and family's caretaker, and everything is always on my back.

When I lost my job a few years ago, I found the CNA Program. It helped me get out of the house, learn with peers, and feel less alone. The CNA Program changed my life because I was able to get my license, and when my aunt had a fall at home, I could request she be put at my facility so I could still care for her myself. If I would not have had my license, who knows what type of care she would have received in a random place without family.

SENDCAA opened the door for me to attend Shriver meetings, too. It helps me feel like I am trying to make a difference and not just sitting in my home work bubble. Even though I don't always feel successful, the CNA Program at least gave me a little of my groove back.

Region 6 – Barnes, Dickey, Foster, Griggs, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Stutsman, and Wells Counties

Region 6 – Region 6 (Jamestown): CSBG in Action in 2025

In 2025, Region 6 Community Action in Jamestown used Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds to provide critical stability for individuals and families facing economic hardship across the region. These resources were directed toward meeting both immediate needs and longer-term stability, ensuring households could weather crises without falling deeper into poverty.

Through CSBG-supported programs, 2,055 food baskets were distributed to families experiencing food insecurity, helping ensure children, seniors, and working households had reliable access to nutritious meals. In addition, 153 households received assistance through Energy Share, preventing utility shutoffs and helping families keep their homes heated and livable during North Dakota's cold months.

CSBG case managers also worked intensively with 70 households, providing individualized support such as budget counseling, emergency motel stays, and transportation assistance. These services helped families navigate financial challenges, maintain housing, and stay connected to employment, medical care, and school.

Children and youth were also a major focus. Through CSBG, 96 students received school supplies so they could start the year prepared and confident, and 99 students received food bags through the school system to help ensure they had enough to eat outside of school hours. For those facing the harsh winter without proper clothing, seven individuals received winter coats and cold-weather gear, protecting their health and safety.

Together, these investments show how CSBG works on the front lines, meeting basic needs, preventing crises, and strengthening families. In Jamestown and the surrounding communities, CSBG didn't just provide assistance in 2025, it created stability, opportunity, and a pathway forward for hundreds of households.

Region 7 – Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Sheridan, and Sioux Counties

Region 7 – The Thompson Family: From Crisis to Homeownership

The Thompson family in Burleigh County came to Community Action during a period of serious instability. They were referred by a Public Health Nurse Case Manager after struggling to keep up with rent, utilities, and basic needs while caring for their disabled son. The family was living in a condo that lacked adequate windows, making temperature control difficult and unsafe, including for their medically fragile child.

Through a combination of HOPWA, Ryan White, Weatherization, and CSBG-supported services, Community Action helped stabilize the family on multiple fronts. Rental and utility assistance kept them housed while the mother went through the process of being approved by the state as her son’s caregiver. Food pantry and bread shelf support helped ensure the family could meet daily needs during this stressful period. Weatherization staff provided air-conditioning units to address the lack of windows, including a portable unit placed in the far end of the condo so the baby and their disabled son could remain safe and comfortable during hot months.

Staff also worked closely with the family to navigate a fragile landlord-tenant relationship, ensuring the housing situation remained stable while the family focused on caregiving and recovery. Once their immediate crisis was resolved, the mother was able to return to work as a CNA, and the family slowly began rebuilding financially.

Today, the Thompson family is a two-income household and proud homeowners. What began as a housing and health crisis became a turning point thanks to coordinated Community Action programs that provided just enough support at the right time to allow this family not only to survive, but to achieve lasting stability and independence.

Region 7 - Laura’s Story: Safety, Stability, and a Fresh Start

Laura is a single parent in Burleigh County who came to Community Action through a referral from a Public Health Nurse Case Manager while she was pregnant and facing housing instability. With no safe place of her own, she needed immediate support to secure housing for herself and her unborn child. Through HOPWA, Ryan White, and CSBG-

supported services at CAP Bismarck, Laura was able to obtain stable housing and move into an apartment where she and her son could begin building a secure future.

For a time, Laura's husband joined the household and the family's income improved. However, the situation later became unsafe, and Laura once again needed help to protect herself and her son. CAP Bismarck stepped in to assist her in safely leaving a domestic violence situation and securing new housing so she and her child could remain safe and stable.

Throughout both housing crises, Community Action provided comprehensive support. Laura received rental and utility assistance, food pantry and bread shelf support, items from the donation center, security deposit assistance, lease education, help navigating SNAP benefits, and even support through a sponsor family during the 2024 holiday season. These layered supports ensured that Laura and her son had not just a place to live, but the essentials they needed to truly recover and move forward.

Today, Laura and her son are thriving in their apartment. Her son receives Bismarck Early Childhood Education services and is now talking, and Laura continues to work hard to provide for her family. With the stability Community Action helped create, she has been able to make their home a warm, safe, and nurturing space, a powerful example of how housing, safety, and supportive services together change lives.

Region 8 – Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Slope, and Stark Counties

Region 8 - Keeping the Lights On Through Partnership and Energy Assistance in Belfield

Lexy, a single parent living on disability and raising two children under the age of 11 in Belfield, reached out to Community Action after receiving a past-due electric notice and facing an imminent disconnection. Lexy was unfamiliar with the seasonal limitations of LIHEAP and did not realize that the program does not provide assistance during the summer months.

Community Action staff quickly assessed the situation and submitted an Energy Share application on Lexy's behalf, securing \$510.90 toward her past-due electric bill. Once the application was submitted, staff coordinated directly with the utility provider to notify them of the pending assistance, which resulted in the cancellation of the scheduled disconnection, ensuring the household remained safe and had uninterrupted electricity.

To fully resolve the balance, Community Action partnered with St. Vincent de Paul, who assisted with paying the remaining amount owed. This collaborative approach ensured Lexy's account was brought current and prevented a crisis that could have significantly impacted her family's stability.

Through timely intervention, clear communication, and strong inter-agency partnership, Lexy was able to remain housed with utilities intact, reducing stress for her and her children and reinforcing the importance of coordinated community support for families facing unexpected financial hardship.
