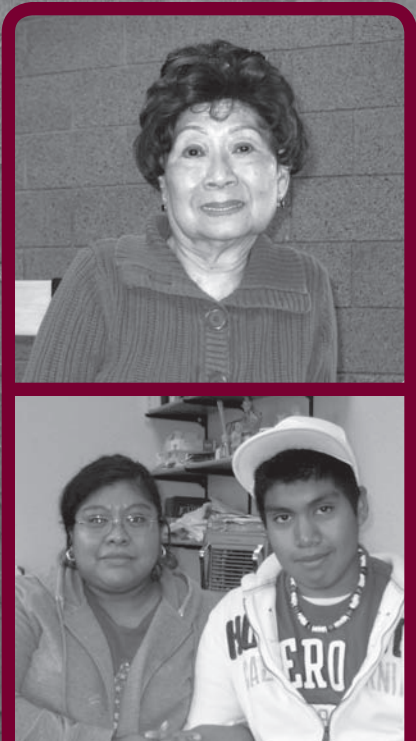
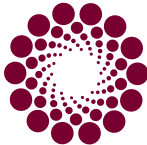


40 Years of Neighbors Helping Neighbors in the Northfield Area



# ANNUAL REPORT

2009



Community Action Center  
OF NORTHFIELD

## About the Community Action Center of Northfield

The Community Action Center of Northfield is a non-profit organization providing a multitude of services to our neighbors in need. The Community Action Center makes a difference in the lives of families and individuals by helping to meet basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, as well as providing crisis support, transportation, youth services and other programs designed to facilitate neighbors helping neighbors.

Providing a safety net to more than 900 households in the Northfield area, the Community Action Center relies on the support of over 1,700 volunteers dedicating approximately 25,000 hours each year to help accomplish our mission. In addition, the Center has received full endorsement from United Way – receiving tremendous financial support from the agency and from direct gifts by generous people and companies who recognize the need to help those who can benefit most from our support.

As a leader among nonprofit organizations in our community, the Community Action Center continues to help local people “give voice to their hearts” through action and philanthropy. The Center is focused on helping neighbors help neighbors to strengthen our community and ensure that the people with whom we live and work are supported in a manner that helps them succeed in their lives.

Through its work with low-income people in the Northfield area, the Community Action Center makes a difference in the lives of our neighbors. The Community Action Center is all of us working together to ensure a better tomorrow. The mission of the organization is to promote a healthy, caring and just community for all people through resources, advocacy and volunteer effort. We invite you to join in our cause today.

**1,750** volunteers contributed nearly **25,000** hours of service.

**3,600+**  
people served in the last year.



More than  
**377,000**  
pounds of food  
helped to nourish  
our community.

**34** families, including  
18 children, found  
safety through  
our emergency  
shelter program.

The Clothes  
Closet  
helped outfit

**346**  
families with  
appropriate  
attire, free  
of charge.





## A Letter from the Director

Dear Northfield Neighbor:

We find ourselves in an extraordinary position today. Most organizations entering their 40th year of service would celebrate their longevity, their accomplishments and their hopes for the future. At the Community Action Center of Northfield, we certainly should do that and we will, but at the same time it seems a bit odd. After all, there is so much more to do.

In spite of living in a land of abundance, some of our neighbors are hurting. Yes, right here in Northfield, Minnesota – community of cows, colleges and contentment – not all are content. There are those living among us who haven't a roof over their heads. There are those uncertain about the source of their next meal. There are friends of ours who cannot provide their children with the most basic opportunities that the rest of us take for granted. It is because of these neighbors that the Community Action Center of Northfield exists. It is because of the Community Action Center of Northfield that our neighbors are afforded the opportunity to succeed.

In this economy, you might find yourself asking, "What does it take for success?" It takes an engaged and caring community. It takes a committed staff. It takes active and supportive clients. It takes a neighborhood of compassionate people. It takes a breadth of thoughtful programs.

With programs such as the Food Shelf and Thursday's Table, people are hurting a little less. This past year, nearly 950 families benefited from the Community Action Center's Food Shelf. At the same time, Thursday's Table, a largely volunteer-run community dinner every Thursday throughout the year, served an average of 150 people each week. This translates to more than 7,500 meals in the last year.

With Christmas Sharing and scholarship programs, our neighborhood kids are given equal opportunity. In 2008–09, 342 families participated in Christmas Sharing and 224 children received need-based scholarships to participate in everything from youth soccer and baseball to summer camp programs.

The Community Action Center's Clothes Closet served people throughout the community with an average savings to a family's clothing budget of 75 percent. In addition, 346 families received free clothing from the Community Action Center because of extreme circumstances. Our housing initiatives provided assistance to 117 families, support in the form of eviction prevention and utility shutoff prevention, and a vast array of other housing programs to make certain that families are not relegated to a park, a car or somewhere equally as difficult when it comes to battling the elements for survival.

Imagine trying to not only survive, but to actually succeed, under such trying circumstances. The people we work with are truly an inspiration. Those people include our neighbors in transition, our neighbors who volunteer and our neighbors who give so generously not only of their time, but also of their financial resources. We are, indeed, neighbors helping neighbors. On behalf of the Community Action Center Board of Directors and staff, I thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

Sincerely,

Jim Blaha  
*Executive Director*

## On the Cover

Dave and Rosie are relatively new to Northfield but wasted no time getting involved in various volunteer endeavors, including serving as foster grandparents to children at Northfield Montessori. With a significant portion of their income devoted to treating Rosie's severe asthma, the Community Action Center has been instrumental in offering them a quality of life that they wouldn't otherwise be able to afford. Rosie says, "The Community Action Center is much needed and used." Dave adds, "They help a lot of people who wouldn't otherwise get the things they need."

Kim has been a client of the Community Action Center for six years. Having moved here from Vietnam, she happily calls Northfield her home and is grateful for the food assistance she receives. "Everybody is so good to me," Kim says.

Kevin and his mom, Rocio, rely on the Community Action Center's Nurturing the Next Generation program to give Kevin the things he needs to succeed inside and outside the classroom. Read more on page 4.



## Giving Hope to People in Crisis

Mike is confident that his life is changing – and for once, it's changing for the better. After making a choice to address his alcohol addiction head-on, he's not once looked back and, in part, has the Community Action Center of Northfield to thank for supporting him in his new life.



Today, Mike is holding down a steady job, renting a home and surrounding himself with positive influences. Even more, he's dreaming of the time when he can bring his family back together

and he is taking positive steps toward making that dream a reality.

"The Community Action Center has never once made me feel like I don't belong," says Mike. "They've never once pushed me away and have helped me with just about everything."

Through Operation Backpack, Christmas Sharing, the Food Shelf and housing assistance, Mike has found himself on solid ground. He's now in the position of not only looking to survive, but realizing the many opportunities available to help him and his family succeed. "Things are finally back on track and my life is so much better now. I'm grateful for all that the Community Action Center has done," Mike says.

## Nurturing the Next Generation

Kevin and his parents, Rocio and Rafael, have nothing but good things to say about the Community Action Center. Having moved to Northfield to pursue better employment opportunities, they were doing quite well. Unfortunately, the life they had worked hard to build was quickly replaced when both Rocio and Rafael found themselves out of work.

Despite tough times, Rocio and Rafael wanted to provide the best life they could for Kevin and his siblings, so they turned to the Community Action Center. Through the Scholarship Program, Kevin attended leadership training at Camp Pepin. Operation Backpack ensured he had much-needed school supplies. He is now on his way to achieving his dream – attending college. What word best describes the Community Action Center? Kevin says, "Helpful. They give us so many opportunities. If they can't help, they'll find someone who can."

# Feeding the Hungry

Jane is an organizer, a recycler, a craftsperson and a genuinely happy woman.

She is also a big fan of the Community Action Center, and with good reason. She has seen the organization from both sides, earlier as a volunteer and now as a client.

As a Northfield resident in the 1970s and 80s, Jane helped out at the Community Action Center. "I would make deliveries, give people rides or just be a friend," she recalls.

Her life's path took her to Pennsylvania for a time and then a cabin up north before she moved back to Northfield in

1997 to be closer to her children. Multiple health issues left her in need of assistance, and NAPS (Nutritional Assistance Program for Seniors) provided some calcium-rich food items that enhanced her diet. She now receives monthly deliveries from the Food Shelf.

Helping others is in Jane's nature, and she enjoys connecting people. "If I hear of someone who needs something or has something they want to get rid of, I pick up the phone and call the Community Action Center or the Clothes Closet or someone I know who can make things happen."

"I was brought up to believe that you won't always have everything

you want, but you will have what you need." Perhaps that is why discarding useful items is not in Jane's nature. She takes what others don't need, and creates charming and decorative crafts. Then she gladly gives them to someone who might find enjoyment in her work.

"When I returned to Northfield, I was glad to see that the Community Action Center was still growing. It plays a vital role in helping people stay in their homes or apartments," she says. "When the whole community is involved in helping people, you have a happy community."



## Our Core Programs



### Feeding the Hungry

The life-sustaining food programs of the Community Action Center provide for those who are hungry through a community-supported Food Shelf and Thursday's Table – a free weekly meal for those who are in transition.



### Clothing Those in Need

Clothing is essential; whether interviewing for a new job or walking to the grocery store, appropriate clothing makes all the difference. We work with our neighbors in the Northfield area to gather quality, gently used clothing for distribution to people who need it.



### Creating Homes

The Community Action Center recognizes that everyone needs a place to feel safe. Through a continuum of programs, people in the Northfield area are offered emergency and transitional housing as well as permanent supportive housing.



### Giving Hope to People in Crisis

One of the best things we can do for people in transition is give them hope. We are uniquely positioned to offer Northfield neighbors hope for a better future by offering small loans, short-term counseling, and referrals to other sources of aid.



### Nurturing the Next Generation

Youth are the future of our community. Through Christmas Sharing, Operation Backpack and scholarship programs, the Community Action Center provides children with what they need to excel inside and outside the classroom.



### Transportation Solutions

We know that the ability to move from one point to another is important to anybody's success. The Community Action Center offers the C.A.A.R. (Community Action Auto Recycling) program, gas vouchers and bus tokens to help those in transition.



### Establishing Roots

Recognizing that it is oftentimes difficult to find firm footing in a new community, the Community Action Center offers new residents access to cultural training, jobs-training programs and a one-stop-shop for information about educational opportunities.

# Financial Results

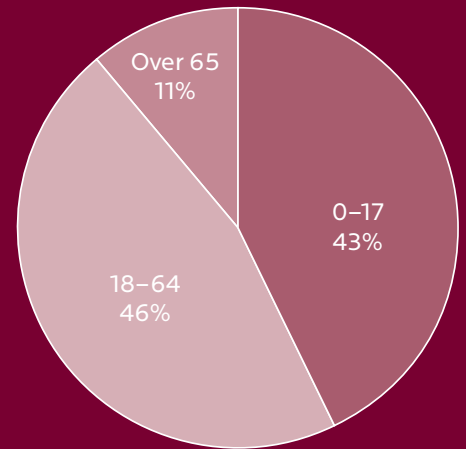
## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES (FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30)

	2009	2008
<b>UNRESTRICTED REVENUES</b>		
Contributions and Legacy Gifts	\$462,089	\$378,324
Grants		
United Way	130,000	135,500
Government	140,284	187,934
Other	51,079	39,040
Other Revenue	143,153	187,354
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>926,605</b>	<b>928,152</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program Expenses	816,599	852,832
Management and General	55,608	48,277
Fundraising	30,174	28,110
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>902,381</b>	<b>929,219</b>
Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	24,224	(1,067)
Unrestricted Net Assets at Beginning of Year	1,412,692	1,413,759
Unrestricted Net Assets at End of Year	1,436,916	1,412,692

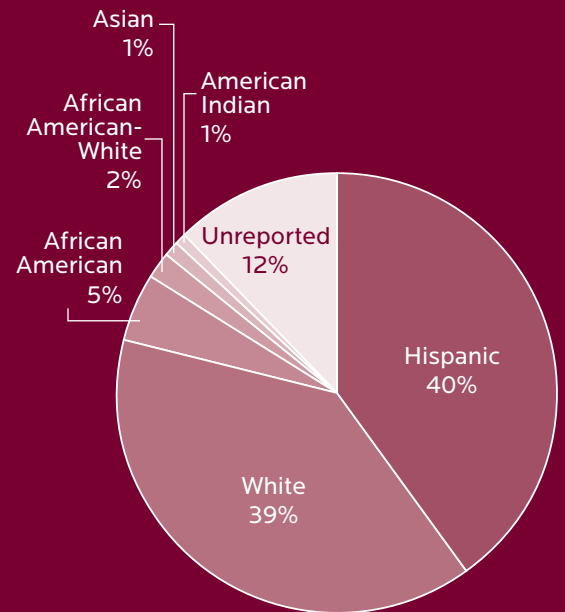
## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (AS OF JUNE 30)

	2009	2008
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash and Investments	\$1,165,686	\$1,030,974
Accounts Receivable	38,427	27,253
Grants Receivable	217,257	288,912
Other Current Assets	22,182	18,860
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>1,443,552</b>	<b>1,365,999</b>
Property and Equipment (Net)	761,583	802,308
Non-Current Assets		
Funds Held by Others	32,843	32,501
Cash Designated for Endowments	145,537	145,537
Grants Receivable	20,000	27,989
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>198,380</b>	<b>206,027</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>2,403,515</b>	<b>2,374,334</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Liabilities	72,052	73,001
Net Assets		
Operating	219,529	178,943
Fixed Assets	761,583	802,308
Board Designated	455,805	431,441
Temporarily Restricted	894,546	888,641
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>2,331,463</b>	<b>2,301,333</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$2,403,515</b>	<b>\$2,374,334</b>

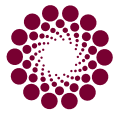
## Client Demographics



AGE OF FOOD SHELF RECIPIENTS



ETHNICITY OF ALL CLIENTS



Community Action Center  
OF NORTHFIELD

## About the Community Action Center Graphic Identity

The Community Action Center of Northfield is about neighbors helping neighbors. In recognition of 40 years of service to the Northfield area, the organization embarked upon an effort to develop a new graphic identity that reflects the agency's current mission and direction. The new identity is designed to build upon the existing identity with a fresher, up-to-date look underlying the same basic tenets of neighbors helping neighbors – people supporting one another.

The organization's new logo reflects the energy created when neighbors come together to help one another. The logo symbolizes a circle of friends uniting to uplift and launch one another to ever-higher heights. Arising out of a common center, the people of the Northfield area consistently pool their resources to assist those in transition. The logo says "energy, excellence and emergence."

The circle is representative of wholeness, strength and togetherness. The motion within that circle – as well as the maroon color – provides a continuity and vital extension of the previous graphic identity which utilized arrows extending outward from a shared center. This graphic identity builds upon the existing identity of the Community Action Center and enhances its opportunities for heightened recognition and visibility long into the future.

## Contact Us

Community Action Center of Northfield  
1651 Jefferson Parkway, Suite HS-200  
Northfield, MN 55057

507.664.3550

[www.communityactioncenter.org](http://www.communityactioncenter.org)

## Northfield Needs You

Throughout the past 40 years, the Community Action Center of Northfield has built its programs to serve the needs of our neighbors. Those needs are greater today than ever before. The requests for our services far outstrip our financial ability to provide for them. For example, we currently have a waiting list of clients who would benefit from safe, used vehicles.

All funds and in-kind gifts donated to the Community Action Center are welcomed and appreciated. Like any nonprofit organization, however, undesignated donations provide us with the greatest flexibility to meet the changing needs of our clients.

We sincerely appreciate your support – as volunteers, as donors and as community partners. Together, we can make Northfield an even stronger and more vibrant community.

## Board of Directors

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Perry Mason  
VICE PRESIDENT

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Ray Cox

Joseph Crippen

Rebecca Judge

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OF NORTHFIELD

1651 Jefferson Parkway, Suite HS-200  
Northfield, MN 55057

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55057



Community Partner



*Last year nearly 500 Northfield area students received backpacks and school supplies through Operation Backpack, a program offered through a partnership with Campaign for Children.*

How wonderful it  
is that nobody  
need wait a **single  
moment** before  
starting to **improve**  
the world.

– Anne Frank