2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Will County Center for Community Concerns

community Action

Providing Hope through Self-Sufficiency

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2024, we do so with immense gratitude and a deep sense of purpose. This year has been one of both meaningful progress and heartfelt transition for Will County Center for Community Concerns.

Throughout the past year, our team has continued to work tirelessly to empower individuals and families in our community, providing critical services in housing, energy assistance, weatherization, and more. Thanks to your support, we've expanded our reach, deepened our impact, and remained a steadfast resource for those facing economic hardship.

This year also marks a significant moment in our organization's history. After nearly three decades of dedicated service, our Executive Director, Kris White, retired at the end of 2024. Kris's leadership has been the cornerstone of WCCCC's growth and resilience. Under her guidance, the organization evolved from a small initiative into a vital regional force for change, touching thousands of lives each year.

Kris's unwavering commitment to compassion, service, and community has left an indelible mark on all of us. Her legacy is not only in the programs she built or the partnerships she fostered, but in the hope she inspired in every person who walked through our doors.

As I step into the role of Executive Director, I do so with humility and a deep respect for the foundation Kris has laid. I am honored to carry forward her vision and to work alongside our dedicated staff, board, and community partners to build an even stronger future for Will County.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to innovation, collaboration, and advocacy. We will continue to listen to our community, adapt to emerging needs, and ensure that every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your belief in our mission fuels everything we do.

With gratitude and hope,

Michelle Allen

Michelle Allen, Executive Director

FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Community Members,

It is my privilege to present the 2024 Annual Report on behalf of the Board of Directors.

This year, the Will County Center for Community Concerns continued to advance its mission by delivering vital services that promote housing stability, economic security, and self-sufficiency. Through the dedication of our staff and the support of our partners, we have strengthened our impact across the county.

We remain committed to fostering opportunity and equity for all residents. Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,

Linda Pote
2024 Chair, Board of Directors

2024 Board of Directors

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Linda Pote

Who are we...

WE ARE WCCCC

Who are we? WCCCC is the Community Action Agency in Will County. WCCCC succeeds because of the efforts of the staff, board, donors, community partners, and volunteers. Together, we are WCCCC, and together, we positively impact the residents of Will County.

Our staff has over 25 years of experience in housing counseling and foreclosure prevention. We are a HUD-approved housing counseling agency. The agency continues to provide services to keep the heat on in the winter, help weatherize homes, reduce utility bills, prevent homelessness through rental and mortgage assistance, offer financial literacy and homebuyer education classes, provide down payment asssitance to help individuals become homeowners, free tax preparation for low-to-moderate income individuals, and so much more.

Hearing the clients' stories inspire us to continue providing services to our Will County Residents.

2024 Donors

Lockport Township
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Village of Wilmington
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Wermer, Rogers, Doran & Ruzon, LLC.
Will County Facilities
Will County Siding & Windows
Workforce Services of Will Co.

We sincerely thank all of our generous donors for their support. If we have inadvertently omitted your name from this year's donor list, we offer of heartfelt apologies. Please contact Paula at 815-722-0722 so we can ensure your contribution is properly recognized in our 2025 report.

WCCCC's Team has...

- ✓ 3 HUD Certified Housing Counselors
- ✓ 4 QCI Certified Weatherization Assessors
- ✓ 4 Housing Advocates
- ✓ 9 Community Service / Intake Representatives
- ✓ 2 ROMA Implementers
- ✓ 4 Program Assistants

OUR WCCCC LEADERSHIP

Michelle Allen, *Executive Director*
Kris White, *Executive Director, Retired 12/31/24*
Tamra Bienemann, *Associate Director*
Kelli Bonk, *Fiscal/Administrative Director*
Belithia Johnson, *Compliance/Community Services Director*

CSBG OFFERINGS

- ★ Back to School Supplies
- ★ Case Management
- ★ Clothes 4 Work Closet
- ★ Financial Literacy Class
- ★ Mortgage Assistance
- ★ Nutrition Programs
- ★ Referrals
- ★ Rental Assistance
- ★ Scholarships
- ★ VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)
- ★ Water Assistance

CSBG
Community Services Block Grant

The Community Services Block Grant (CSGB) provides funding to reduce poverty and empowers low-to-moderate income families to attain stability. In 2024, WCCCC awarded scholarships to 7 individuals to pursue higher education.

WCCC staff provided 2,862 CSGB services, including rental and mortgage assistance, free tax preparation, resume writing, case management, and employment services.

Helping You Help Others
VITA
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

In 2024, the VITA program volunteers prepared over 450 tax returns across our three sites, including Joliet Township Government and Joliet Junior College.

HOMELESS SERVICES

In 2024, through the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program, WCCCC provided rental assistance to 27 households experiencing homelessness.

The TBRA program provides up to 24 months of rental assistance. During this time, the individuals meet with their case manager monthly to discuss their goals and budgeting in order to become self-sufficient.

Through donations from our community partners, WCCCC can provide program participants with personal hygiene items, diapers, and a welcome basket.

WEATHERIZATION

IHWAP funding allows our Weatherization assessors to Complete Energy Audits on income-eligible homes. During these audits, the assessors look for ways to reduce energy costs and keep the household healthy and safe.

Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program IHWAP

WCCCC receives grant funds from Illinois Housing Development Authority for Home Repair and Accessibility Projects. These services are to provide repairs to homes through a forgivable loan. Repairs could include: grab bars in showers, low threshold showers, ramps, and chairlifts to name a few.

LIHEAP

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is designed to help eligible households pay for winter energy services, including gas, electric, and furnace repair assistance.

LIHEAP Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

The LIHEAP Program paid $5,975,161 to help 8,938 households with their gas and electric bills. The percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) program paid $544,093 to help 433 households with their gas and electric bills.

DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (DPA)

WCCCC and Will County HOME partnered to offer up to $25,000 in Down Payment Assistance to eligible home-buyers. The DPA Program is a zero interest, forgivable loan secured by a second mortgage, note and recapture agreement.

EMERGENCY FOOD & SHELTER PROGRAM

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and distributed through local United Way offices. WCCCC received funds and has used the funds to help people with utility expenses.

United Way Community Partner

HOUSING SERVICES

Will County Center for Community Concerns is a HUD-approved housing counseling agency. Our HUD-certified housing counselors provide one-on-one housing counseling, pre- and post-purchase counseling, work in the foreclosure courts, and have helped clients apply for mortgage assistance through IHDA.

WCCCC administers the Will County Down Payment Assistance Program (DPA). In 2024, 37 households received $262,133 in grants to help them become home owners.

177 people participated in Financial Literacy & Homebuyer Education Classes. WCCCC housing counselors participate weekly in Will, LaSalle, Kankakee, and Grundy County foreclosure courts.

Jonathan's Story: Jonathan came to WCCCC seeking emergency assistance with his father. At the time, Jonathan and his father were living in their vehicle. Both Jonathan and his father endured life-altering medical trauma. For Jonathan, his medical diagnosis led to both his legs being amputated. WCCCC placed him and his father in the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program, where he found a safe and secure home that was wheelchair accessible. He also received LIHEAP assistance. WCCCC assisted Jonathan in obtaining SSI benefits. Jonathan completed his goal of earning his GED and is currently enrolled at Joliet Junior College. Jonathan is driven by his desire to become self-sufficient and help others overcome obstacles.

"I don't know where my father and I would be without Will County Center for Community Concerns. I now have goals and ambitions I never had before receiving help from WCCCC. Whatever happens after the programs ends, I know I am the best person I can be. This program saved us, and we are grateful to be given the opportunity."

Scan to watch Jonathan's story (starts at 6:02)

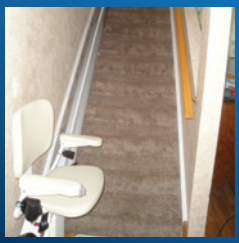
HOLIDAY FOOD BASKETS

In 2024, 130 families received food for the holidays, toys, coats, hats, and gloves for all the children.

HOME ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

WCCCC's Home Accessibility Program provides home repairs or modifications that allow seniors and people with disabilities to live independently in their own homes in the community, preventing premature or unnecessary institutionalization. Projects completed through this program include:

- **Installing ramps into homes.**
- **Widening doorways to accommodate wheelchairs and other assistive devices.**
- **Replacing doorknobs with openers that operate by lever.**
- **Repairing and/or installing hand and stair railings.**
- **Lowering shelving/storage.**
- **Installing sensor-controlled lights.**
- **Installing accessible showers, grab-bars, bath benches, transfer benches, raised toilet seats, and other equipment in bathrooms.**
- **Lowering sinks and counter-tops in bathrooms and kitchens.**
- **Installing wheelchair accessible vanities.**



SHARE THE LOVE EVENT

The “Share the Love” children’s coat giveaway in February was a great success! In partnership with Operation Warm and Hawk Subaru, over 200 children received new coats.

VET RECOGNITION

WCCCC would like to recognize Eddie West, Owner of Veterans Energy Team, and Tim Ryan, VP of Sales, for their excellent work and generous donation to our organization. Geno, Gerald, and Oddie have installed new lighting incredibly well.

KRIS WHITE RETIREMENT

After over 30 years of working in Community Action, Kris White retired. She was honored by the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies (IACAA) at their annual conference and inducted into the IACAA Hall of Fame. Kris was also recognized by the Will County Continuum of Care Annual Meeting for her years of service.

2024 SERVICES PROVIDED

PROGRAM	SERVICES PROVIDED
Back-to-School	60
Case Management	109
Clothes for Work	43
Down Payment Assistance (DPA)	37
Rental Assistance	117
Emergency Food & Shelter Program	168
Employment Support	69
Energy Saving Kits	997
Financial Literacy	64
HRAP	8
Hotels	25
Nicor Aide Program	171
Homeless Case Management-Instake/CES	180
Homeless Services Program-CoC	84
Housing Counseling	174
Information / Referral	1,117
LIHEAP	8,938
Water Assistance	10
Mortgage Assistance	8
Nutrition Program	865
Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP)	433
REH-Unrestricted Home Repair	2
Scholarship Program	7
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	790
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)	457
Weatherization	181
Resource Innovation (Weatherization)	118
TOTAL	**14,932**

2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

UNRESTRICTED REVENUES

Federal Grant Revenue	$12,066,277
State Grant Revenue	$3,618,141
Other Grant Revenue	$51,840
Interest and Dividend Income	$50,622
Donations	$65,411
Other Income	$9,128
	$15,861,419

EXPENSES

Program Services	$14,769,817
Management and General	$981,841
	$15,751,658

Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	$109,791
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	$2,069,179
Net Assets - End of Year	$2,178,940

HEALTHY HOMES, HEALTHY FAMILIES

In 2024, over 700 people and 40 vendors came to receive resources that are available to our community. 150 families received fresh produce and groceries.

THANK YOU

FOR HELPING US TO HELP OTHERS

For 37 years, Will County Center for Community Concerns has been helping residents of Will County. We could not provide these services without our partnership in the community and state.

Thank you to our Staff, Board of Directors, Community Partners, and Donors. You are helping WCCCC impact the residents of Will County.

If you would like to make a donation you can do so by going to our website www.wcccc.net or by mailing a check to 2455 Glenwood Avenue, Joliet IL. 60435.

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community Action

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2455 Glenwood Avenue
Joliet, IL 60435
815-722-0722 • www.wcccc.net

Office Hours

Monday / Tuesday / Thursday / Friday: 8:00am - 4:00pm
Wednesday: 8:00am - 7:30pm

Mission

The mission of Will County Center for Community Concerns is to assist and enable low- to moderate-income individuals to obtain the opportunities needed to prepare themselves for self-sufficiency.

Will County Center for Community Concerns is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization as determined by the IRS.
Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.