Will County Center for Community Concerns

Providing Hope through Self-Sufficiency

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends, Supporters, Partners, and Community Members,

As I reflect on the work accomplished throughout 2025, I am filled with gratitude for the dedication, resilience, and compassion that continue to define our community. Every day, we see neighbors helping neighbors, organizations working together to address local needs, and families taking important steps toward greater stability and self-sufficiency. It is an honor for Will County Center for Community Concerns to be part of this collective effort and to serve alongside so many individuals and partners committed to making a positive difference in the lives of others.

Throughout 2025, Will County Center for Community Concerns remained focused on our mission of providing services that promote self-sufficiency, stability, and hope. While many residents continued to face financial hardships brought on by rising living costs, our programs offered critical support when it was needed most.

Our Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program continued to help individuals and families overcome barriers to economic stability through supportive services, case management, and resources that address both immediate needs and long-term goals.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) remained a critical resource for Will County households, helping seniors, families, individuals with disabilities, and working residents maintain essential utility services during a time of rising energy costs.

Through our Weatherization Assistance Program, residents benefited from safer, healthier, and more energy-efficient homes, resulting in lower utility costs and lasting improvements to household stability.

The success of these programs is strengthened by the collaboration of our partners. We are grateful for the support and commitment of every partner who helps make this work possible.

I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our Board of Directors and dedicated staff. Their compassion, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to service make our mission possible every day. They consistently go above and beyond to ensure that every person who walks through our doors is treated with dignity, respect, and care.

As we look toward 2026, we remain inspired by the resilience of the people we serve and motivated by the opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we will continue to expand access to resources, strengthen partnerships, and create pathways to stability and success for individuals and families throughout Will County.

Thank you for your continued trust, support, and partnership. The successes of 2025 belong to all of us, and I look forward to what we can accomplish together in the year ahead.

Michelle Allen

Michelle Allen, Executive Director

From the Board Chair

Dear Community Members,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my honor to present the 2025 Annual Report for the Will County Center for Community Concerns.

Over the past year, we have remained committed to a client first approach by delivering compassionate and responsive services that support housing stability, finanical empowerment, and long term self sufficiency for individuals and families across Will County. Through the dedication of our staff and the support of our community partners, we continuted working to meet critical needs while creating pathways toward greater opportunity and stability.

We are grateful for the continued trust and support of our community, partners, volunteers, and stakeholders. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Sincerely,

Sheldon L. Watts

2025 Chairman, Board of Directors

2025 Board of Directors

Sheldon Watts, *Board Chair* | **Mary Ann Murphy,** *Vice-Chair*

Mario Carlasare, *Secretary* | **Frank Costa,** *Treasurer*

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Joliet Township Government

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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.

2025 Donors

Mr. Steven Randich
Mr. Thomas Sorbero
Mr. William Fern Sr.
Ms. Christine Ward
Ms. Jacie Haas
Ms. Jeanie Young
Ms. Kathleen Loomis
Ms. Mary Ann Murphy
Ms. Missy Martin
Ms. Roxanne Slocum
Ms. Sara Harter
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Old Fashioned Pancake House Inc.
Old National Bank Corporation
Old Plank Trail Bank
Peotone Township
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Reed-Custer School District 255
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Three Rivers Association of Realtors
Town Center Bank, Kim Morgan
United Way of Will County
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Village of Bolingbrook
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Village of University Park
Wermer, Rogers, Doran & Ruzon LLC.
West Suburban Auto Plaza Honda of Joliet
Will County Executive's Office, Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant
Will County Land Use
Will County Siding & Windows
Workforce Services of Will County

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 our heartfelt apologies. Please contact Paula at **815-722-0722** so we can ensure your contribution is properly recognized in our 2026 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

2025 Leadership Team

Michelle Allen, *Executive Director*
Kelli Bonk, *Fiscal/Administrative Director*
Belithia Johnson, *Compliance/Community Services Director*
Kevin Thomas, *Program 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
- ★ Fresh Food Baskets

Through Community Services Block Grant (CSGB) funding, WCCCC works to reduce poverty by helping low- and moderate-income families achieve greater economic stability and self-sufficiency. In 2025, the agency awarded scholarships to 12 individuals, enabling them to pursue higher education and strengthen their future career prospects.

Through CSBG funding, WCCCC staff provided 2,679 services in 2025, helping individuals and families address immediate needs and build long-term stability. Assistance included rental and mortgage support, access to fresh food, free tax preparation, résumé writing, case management, and employment services.

In 2025, WCCCC's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program provided free tax preparation services at four locations throughout the community. Program volunteers completed more than 649 tax returns, serving residents thorugh sites that included Joliet Township, Joliet Junior College, and the University of St. Francis.

TENANT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE (TBRA) PROGRAM

In 2025, through the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program, WCCCC provided rental assistance to 41 households experiencing homelessness, helping individuals and families secure and maintain safe, stable housing. The TBRA Program provides eligible households with up to 24 months of rental assistance while offering comprehensive case management services designed to promote long-term housing stability and self-sufficiency.

Participants meet monthly with their case manager to develop and work toward individualized goals, strengthen budgeting and financial management skills, and connect with community resources that support employment, education, and overall well-being. By addressing both immediate housing needs and the underlying barriers to stability, the program empowers households to build a stronger foundation for the future.

Through the generosity of our community partners and donors, WCCCC also provides program participants with essential items such as personal hygiene products, diapers, welcome baskets, coats, shoes, and vital food items to help families transition into stable housing with dignity. Together, these services reflect WCCCC's mission of helping individuals and families move beyond crisis toward lasting self-sufficiency.

Weatherization

Illinois Home Weatherization helps eligible households improve the energy efficiency, safety, and comfort of their homes by reducing energy waste and lowering utilty costs. Through the Weatherization Assistance Program, trained professionals assess each home to identify opportunities for improvement and install cost-effective energy-saving measures at no cost to qualifying participants.

The program primarily serves low-income households, including older adults, individuals, with disabilities, and families with children. By making homes more energy efficient, Illinois Home Weatherization helps reduce monthly energy bills, increases year-round comfort, improves indoor air quality, and supports healthier, safer living environments while conserving energy resources.

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGEY ASSISTANCE (LIHEAP) PROGRAM

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides vital support to eligible households by helping offset the cost of winter energy services, including natural gas, electricity, furnace repair and furnace replacement.

During the year, LIHEAP provided **$174,358** to **32 households** for furnace repairs and replacements in addition to the **$5,252,802** in assistance to **8,692 households**, helping families maintain safe and reliable utility service. In addition, the **Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP)** program distributed **$264,344** in energy assistance, benefiting **325 households** with their gas and electric expenses.

Together, these programs helped ensure that vulnerable households had access to essential energy services while reducing the financial burden of utility costs.

DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (DPA)

In 2025, WCCCC continues its partnership with Will County HOME to help make homeownership more attainable for income-eligible households. Through the Down Payment Assistance (DPA) Program, eligible homebuyers may receive up to $25,000 in financial assistance to help cover down payment and eligible closing costs.

The assistance is provided as a zero-interest, forgivable loan, secured by a second mortgage and recapture agreement. By reducing the upfront costs of purchasing a home, the program helps first-time homebuyers overcome one of the greatest barriers to homeownership while promoting long-term financial stability and wealth building.

In addition to financial assistance, participants receive HUD-certified homebuyer education and housing counseling to ensure they are prepared for the responsibilities of sustainable homeownership. Through education, counseling, and financial support, WCCCC is helping more Will County residents achieve the dream of owning a home.

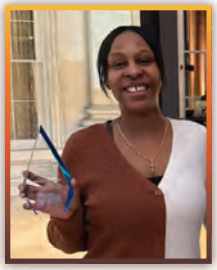
Housing Services

Will County Center for Community Concerns is a HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency dedicated to helping individuals and families achieve and maintain stable housing. Our HUD-certified housing counselors provide personalized, one-on-one counseling on homeownership, foreclosure prevention, budgeting, credit improvement, and other housing-related issues.

Education remains a cornerstone of our housing services. **During 2025, 162 individuals participated in WCCCC's Financial Literacy and Homebuyer Education classes, gaining the knowledge and skills needed to make informed financial decisions and become successfull homeowners.**

In addition to counseling and education, WCCCC housing counselors played a vital role in foreclosure prevention by participating weekly in foreclosure court proceedings in Will, LaSalle, Kankakee, and Grundy Counties. Through these efforts, counselors provided guidance, resources, and support to homeowners facing foreclosure, helping many explore alternatives and work toward preserving homeownership.

MICHELLE'S STORY



When Michelle first contacted Will County Center for Community Concerns, she was experiencing unsheltered homelessness after a fire displaced her from her home. With no income and growing concerns for her personal safety, she was in urgent need of stable housing and support.

Through the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program, Michelle was quickly connected to safe, stable housing, giving her the foundation she needed to begin rebuilding her life.

Determined to create a better future, Michelle enrolled in business classes and participated in a local entrepreneurship program through Workforce Development Services. Her goal is to launch her own catering business, combining her passion for cooking with her desire for financial independence.

Michelle has also become an advocate for others facing housing insecurity. As a peer support advocate, she has used her own experiences to encourage and empower others while actively participating in efforts to advance housing rights. She even traveled to lobby members of the Senate, lending her voice to policies that support safe, affordable housing for individuals and families in need.

Michelle's story demonstrates how stable housing, combined with determination and the right resources, can create opportunities for lasting change. Today, she is not only building a brighter future for herself but also helping pave the way for others to do the same.

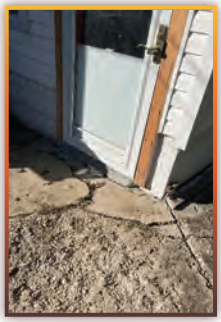
Holiday Food Baskets

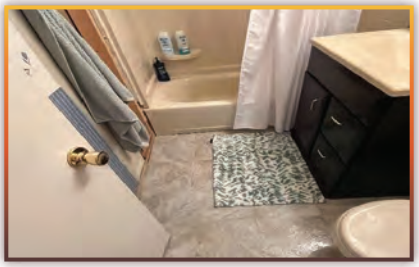
Home Accessibility Program

WCCCC's receives grant funds from the Illinois Housing Development Authority for home repairs and accessibility projects. This program is designed to assist low-income homeowners receive health and safety repairs modifications that allow seniors and people with disabilities live more independently.

Projects completed through this program include:

- **Installation of wheelchair ramps or stair lifts.**
- **Widening doorways to accommodate wheelchairs or other assistive devices.**
- **Repairing and/or installation of hand and stair railings.**
- **Accessible bathroom modifications.**
- **Interior home repairs.**
- **Exterior home repairs.**
- **Roof repairs.**





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.

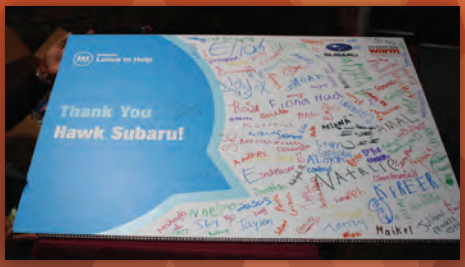
United Way
Community Partner

Share the Love Event

In partnership with

HAWK JOLIET SUBARU

OPERATION warm more than a coat



2025 Services Provided

PROGRAM	SERVICES PROVIDED
Back-to-School	28
Case Management	133
Clothes for Work	136
Down Payment Assistance (DPA) Payments & Counseling	66
Rental Assistance	211
Employment Support	12
Energy Saving Kits	597
Financial Literacy	65
HRAP	12
Resource Innovation (Weatherization)	120
Nicor Aide Program	104
Housing Counseling	102
Information / Referral	667
LIHEAP	8,692
Water Assistance	47
Mortgage Assistance	15
Nutrition Program	1,179
Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP)	325
REH-Unrestricted Home Repair	7
Scholarship Program	12
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Case Management	41
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)	251
Weatherization	209
TOTAL	**13,031**

2025 Financial Summary

UNRESTRICTED REVENUES

Federal Grant Revenue	$8,070,110
State Grant Revenue	$3,454,205
Other Grant Revenue	$1,197,337
Interest and Dividend Income	$41,777
Donations and Miscellaneous	$64,631
	$12,828,060

EXPENSES

Program Services	$11,666,701
Management and General	$867,574
	$12,534,275

Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	$293,785
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	$2,178,940
Net Assets - End of Year	$2,472,725

Healthy Homes, Healthy Families

THANK YOU

FOR HELPING US TO HELP OTHERS

For 39 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.

Will County Center for Community Concerns

community Action

Providing Hope through Self-Sufficiency

Will County Center for Community Concerns

Providing Hope through Self-Sufficiency

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 empower 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.