

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



A YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY AND RENEWAL


LifeWorks
COMMUNITY ACTION



A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR

In the last year, LifeWorks has been re-emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic. As we changed the way we delivered services to meet neighbors where they were in these last years, we discovered that we were filling gaps that continue to exist even now that conditions have shifted again. Our focus in 2022 has been making adjustments to sustain these changes.

After 50 years in the community, we are particularly intent on rebuilding and strengthening our programs. With a number of new directors onboard, and an army of volunteers, we're collaborating in ways we'd never imagined to build an effective, modern, community-leading organization. And that's important.

We have often coordinated services from multiple organizations to support our most vulnerable neighbors. Yet we haven't always been visible or been able to share our unique perspective. That's changing now. You can expect LifeWorks to amplify voices from the community and to draw attention to the local impact of universal issues faced by low-income people. For example, the Farm Bill has SNAP and public health provisions included, and it's critical legislation for our community. We all need to understand how that bill affects our neighbors. LifeWorks can bring those points to light.

Along with our exceptional board of directors, we're committed to taking part in policy-making decisions. We're also dedicated to creating systems that reduce the challenges our vulnerable neighbors face in achieving their goals.

Thank you for your support,

Krystle Nowhitney Hernandez
Executive Director

A Whole-Family Approach to *Service*

Our Family Services program has focused largely on Mobility Mentoring services, which serve as a bridge to self-sufficiency for our clients. This coached program helps clients evaluate where they are in five core areas of life and see the relationships between those conditions. By helping clients step back from the stress of income insufficiency to focus on their own growth, we're beginning to see them improve health, find housing, go back to school, get jobs, and more.



AFFORDABLE WARMTH

For our Energy Services team, the future is bright. The federal infrastructure bill increases weatherization funding, while the state includes new funds in carbon-reduction and environmental sustainability initiatives.

At LifeWorks, this doesn't just increase the service we can offer. It also allows us to create jobs, with training that can lead our community members to specialized careers and self-sufficiency. It's an opportunity to help people from nontraditional backgrounds enter a growing field.

BY THE NUMBERS

36

CLIENTS took part in all or part of the Mobility Mentoring program

600

needs addressed

175

PEOPLE RECEIVED SUPPORT AND REFERRALS

11+

CLIENTS referred for housing support maintained housing for at least 90 days

32

housing referrals

95

goals set in all parts of the Mobility Mentoring bridge

30

INDIVIDUALS received gift or gas cards to meet immediate needs

A Healthy Start for Our Youngest Neighbors

The pandemic strained our early education program, which provides a valuable boost for kids during the critical development period between ages 0 and 5. Our new management team is leading the rebuilding effort, increasing both staff and enrollment numbers to bring renewed energy and excitement to the program.

Working closely with counterparts in WIC, the team is focused on strengthening the support system around whole families with children enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start.

BY THE NUMBERS

199
FAMILIES,
CHILDREN and
expectant mothers
enrolled in early
education programs

115
HEAD START
program families
earned income
below federal
poverty guidelines

44
families
in the
program
received public
assistance

73
UNHOUSED
CHILDREN
were enrolled
in Head Start
programs



FILLING A GAP IN NECESSARY NUTRITION

The WIC service team gained a new view of our clients' challenges during the pandemic. That's why we're working toward a centralized intake process that allows expectant mothers, infants and children under age 5, and their families who qualify for nutrition support to take advantage of WIC along with our other programs.

Building connections with new moms in person and remotely is also reinforcing our understanding of the importance of both professional and peer support in an understanding, nonjudgmental setting. As a result, we are training new staff and volunteers in our peer counseling program to meet those needs.



BY THE NUMBERS

1,551
INDIVIDUAL
CHILDREN AND
ADULTS SERVED
MONTHLY

\$98,000
IN BENEFITS,
on average,
redeemed monthly

78%
of WIC
enrolled
infants
were
breastfed

\$63 PER CLIENT, on average,
redeemed monthly, including \$24 per
child over age 1 and \$45 for a prenatal,
postpartum or breastfeeding woman

Delivering Groceries *with Dignity*

For our Food Services team, the pandemic required a complete change in our delivery model. Our online ordering system, curbside pickups and rural delivery service, as well as our traditional efforts at The Pantry and The Kitchen, are helping to meet a need that continues to increase as a crisis in inflation follows the COVID crisis.

Demand for services from The Pantry has grown three-fold since 2019. As a result, we are thinking about how we fit into the overall food system in Saratoga County, and how we provide what's needed, where it's needed, when it's needed.



BY THE NUMBERS

57,564
MEALS
DELIVERED
through The Pantry

4,797
individuals
served

20,990
HOT MEALS
SERVED
at The Kitchen

177
volunteers
served alongside
7 staff members

WARMLY WELCOMING

Our Newest Residents

In the last few years, LifeWorks has served a steady flow of immigrants—many of them refugees. Whether Central Americans fleeing violence, Ukrainians fleeing war, or indigenous asylum seekers from the troubled Mexican region of Oaxaca. The demand is driving our efforts to do more.

One LifeWorks staff member achieved Department of Justice accreditation to provide legal services, such as processing citizenship and asylum applications, and immigration relief screenings. She can now represent our clients in U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services settings. We've also hosted monthly meetings of immigrant service providers, along with workshops to help our own clients avoid being taken advantage of in the immigration process.

Once again, we sponsored *Estamos Aquí*, a black-and-white photography project addressing social and cultural isolation among Spanish speakers living and working on the Saratoga Race Course backstretch. The project continues to foster creativity and self-expression, and to introduce the broader Saratoga community to the experiences of these unique local residents.



BY THE NUMBERS

133 LOW-INCOME IMMIGRANTS
RECEIVED TAX PREPARATION
ASSISTANCE—critical, since immigration officials
weigh tax-filing as an indication of moral character

250 immigrants, working
primarily in the agricultural
and service industries,
gained help with access to healthcare and social
benefits, children's education and legal support

300+ SARATOGA RACE COURSE
BACKSTRETCH WORKERS received help with
language learning, and food, identity verification,
financial and legal tasks

BECOME A PARTNER FOR *Empowerment*

We're creating a community of neighbors helping neighbors.

LifeWorks provides safety-net services to address immediate hardship—and we accompany our neighbors as they achieve their goals to improve long-term well-being and economic stability.

Our critical, grassroots assistance largely relies on the generosity of friends like you.

By coming together, each offering what we can, we'll build a strong foundation for the future.



JOIN US!

Make a contribution at lifeworksaction.org/donate.

#BeCommunityAction

LifeWorks
COMMUNITY ACTION

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