

ANNUAL REPORT- JULY 1, 2018 – JUNE 30, 2019



**Formerly, Emergency Aid Association
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Janet Frechette, M.S.W., Executive Director
www.suffieldcommunityaid.org**

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Our Mission:

Suffield Community Aid (SCA) - *your local safety net*. Formerly Emergency Aid Association, SCA provides supportive health and social services that positively affect the well-being of Suffield residents during periods of need.

Brief Background:

SCA is a private, non-profit 501(c)3 social service agency. Incorporated in 1903, SCA recently celebrated 115 years of service to the Suffield Community! SCA helps those in our community struggling with health and financial hardships. SCA strives to enhance the full potential of all residents, and thereby, improve the overall quality of life in our community.

Our Focus:

Serving as a safety net for residents experiencing financial and other challenges, residents reach out to SCA when they don't know where else to turn. They may have lost a job, suffered a health crisis, required help caring for an aging parent or experienced financial hardship. *SCA is here to offer the resources and support that community members require to move forward in their lives.*

Through social work consultations, we help residents achieve self-sufficiency, preserve economic well-being and adjust to difficult circumstances and events in their lives. By combining our ability to offer immediate relief programs with other government and private resources, we are able to maximize eligibilities and alleviate hardships to promote better overall individual and family functioning. Specific services provided to qualified Suffield residents include the following: medical and financial assistance for defined needs, benefit & credit counseling, food bank assistance, bereavement, Parkinson's and dementia support, senior & disabled outreach, Meals on Wheels, Holiday Basket Programs, energy assistance, camp subsidies, rental rebates and information & referral on a myriad of other supportive programs and services.

SCA/Town Relationship:

A memorandum of understanding was initially signed on October 1, 2003 transferring the administration and delivery of certain Town social services to SCA. The current contract extends this partnership through June 30, 2022.

Social Work Staff:

Janet Frechette, MSW, hired in 1999, serves as SCA's first Executive Director. Janet guides all aspects of the organization with a focus on mission and goal achievement. Janet is accountable for strategic program planning & analysis, financial management, insurance compliance, marketing & fundraising and policy creation in association with the Directors of the Board.

Beth Sheridan, BSW, hired in 2007, serves as SCA's Social Service Coordinator. Beth's primary functions include administering the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program, the Operation Fuel Program and the Rental Rebate Program. In addition to these duties, Beth provides social service consults, responds to requests for food & fuel, assists with applications for financial and medical aid and connects residents to resources. Beth participates as a member of Suffield's Local Substance Abuse Prevention Council.

Patricia Beeman, MSW, hired in 2004, provides outreach social services to elder residents and their caregivers. Pat conducts assessments focused on client goals and the barriers they face. Pat assists with issues related to aging, disability rights, substance abuse, mental health, housing and financial assistance in order to educate residents regarding resources. Pat serves as Suffield's Municipal Agent for the Elderly as required by the CT Statute and as a member of the CLASS (CT Local Administrators of Social Services).

Josephine Dzioba, hired in 2015, provides administrative support to the director and staff in the coordination and delivery of SCA programs and services.

Highlights of FY 2019:

Listed below are some of the health and social service programs provided by SCA to Suffield residents during fiscal year 2018-2019:

- ◆ **Social Service Consultations**- Staff responded to over 2,340 requests for information and provided comprehensive case assessment and networking to

401 Suffield households, comprised of 696 residents, using Charity Tracker case management software.

- ◆ **Fiore Food Pantry**- The Food Pantry was accessed 434 times by 135 different Suffield families comprised of 339 persons, of whom 114 were children and 50 were over the age of 65. The value of this assistance is estimated at \$45,440. The Suffield Housing Authority maintains a small food pantry, supplied by SCA donations, for tenants in need. A successful fundraiser, "Designer Purse Bingo," added \$2,953 to our food pantry account!
- ◆ **Fuel Assistance**- Twenty-six thousand, four-hundred forty dollars (\$26,440) in critical fuel aid was distributed to 77 Suffield families from various government sponsored, SCA-administered funds as well as our private fuel account (\$9,674 was expended from SCA Private Fuel donations.) An additional 193 energy applications were submitted to the State of CT on behalf of our residents, resulting in \$129,356 in fuel aid to 175 eligible households.
- ◆ **Medical Subsidy**- SCA subsidized essential medical services totaling \$13,353 for the benefit of residents directly, or through a third party contract.
- ◆ **Quality of Life Fund**- This program served 58 Suffield residents at a cost of \$7,328. Social workers make referrals for items and/or services that would enhance a resident's quality of life, but would otherwise be financially prohibitive.
- ◆ **Meals-On-Wheels**- SCA coordinated volunteers who distributed 6,869 meals to a total of 45 homebound seniors - an average of 26 meal deliveries per day
- ◆ **Forward Focus, a partnering program to help launch Suffield teens and young adults**- This program addresses financial and other challenges that impede the attainment of life goals for identified Suffield youth and young adults. Eleven (11) young adults were assisted at a cost of \$4,373. Assistance with driver's education, medical costs and school related expenses were some of the need-based requests that were funded.
- ◆ **Medical Equipment Loans**- Three hundred sixty-three (363) donated durable medical items were loaned to residents and/or their family members.
- ◆ **Camperships**- Thirty-two (32) camp subsidies were given to 23 children living in low-income homes at a cost of \$5,801.
- ◆ **Salvation Army**- Serving as a local conduit for Salvation Army funds, SCA increased the financial resources available to Suffield residents by recruiting Salvation Army bell ringers this past winter. Kettle donations generated a record amount - \$3,700! These funds provided heat, partial rents, prescription assistance and supported costs associated with SCA's annual "Return to School Backpack Program."
- ◆ **Memory Café**- SCA created this bi-monthly program for persons with early to moderate cognitive loss and their caregivers. Home Helpers of North Central CT offered the complimentary services of a home health aide for the first six months.
- ◆ **Holiday Basket Program**- SCA coordinated the distribution of 207 donated holiday and other seasonal baskets to low-income households.
- ◆ **Blood Pressure Screenings**- Twenty-three (23) SCA-sponsored clinics were offered providing 424 free screenings at the Suffield Senior Center.

- ◆ **CHOICES Counseling**- Trained volunteers provided assistance to dozens of residents and others looking to explore their Medicare options.
- ◆ **Parkinson's Peer Support**- SCA coordinated a monthly peer support group for sharing ideas and resources in the management and treatment of Parkinson's disorder.
- ◆ **Beat PD Today**- SCA, in conjunction with the Suffield Senior Center, subsidized participation costs for residents with movement disorders. This program improves the quality of life of people with Parkinson's through exercises that are functional to everyday living.
- ◆ **School Supplies Collection**- SCA distributed 109 filled backpacks to financially qualified school-age children. Gift cards, for the purchase of shoes, were obtained with funds raised through our local Salvation Army Kettle Drive and through the generous support of Sacred Heart Church and individual donors.
- ◆ **Meal Subsidies**- One thousand, one hundred twenty (1,120) meal subsidies were distributed, at a cost of \$3,920, making it possible for low-income seniors and disabled persons to participate in the lunch program at the Suffield Senior Center two days a week.
- ◆ **Renter's Rebate**- By June 30th, staff had processed 41 applications and submitted a claim to the Office of Policy and Management for \$20,470 to be shared by Suffield elderly and disabled qualified renters.
- ◆ **Amiel Zak P.I.L.O.T. Center**- The Amiel Zak P.I.L.O.T. Center (Promoting Independent Learning of Online Technology) provided a private office space, dedicated for the use of SCA clients, to navigate their own online eligibilities. Clients without computer access and those lacking strong computer skills have benefitted.
- ◆ **Senior Safety Collaborative**- SCA joined together with other Town stakeholders to offer a series of presentations regarding safeguarding yourself from Identity Thefts and Scams.
- ◆ **Stuff-A-Humvee**- Partnering with the Suffield Police Department, Highland Park Market and Tami Zawistowski, Republican State Representative, SCA received donations to support both the food pantry and the backpack programs.
- ◆ **Dementia Support Group**- In conjunction with Home Helpers of North Central CT and the Alzheimer's Association, this new group meets once per month at the Suffield Senior Center.
- ◆ **Community Awareness & Engagement Initiatives**- Staff represented SCA at the Town of Suffield's Benefit & Wellness Fair, Second Baptist Church's Mission Fair, for attendees of the Aging Mastery Program at the Suffield Senior Center and at the Chris Herren substance abuse program at SHS.
- ◆ **Children's Vision & Hearing Screenings**- SCA staff and volunteers partnered with our local Suffield Lions Club to conduct 73 digital vision screenings. Audiology screenings were also performed for 66 preschoolers at Bright Horizons, Conway's Kiddie Kollege and Cooperative Preschool.
- ◆ **Veterans' Assistance**- The Suffield Knights of Columbus & Landry Sic VFW Post 9544 provided funding to meet the needs of Suffield Veterans experiencing financial and medical hardships. Fourteen veterans were served at a cost of \$1,916.

- ◆ **Your Money, Your Goals: Developing Your Financial Empowerment**- A trained SCA volunteer assisted in building financial security by helping clients set financial goals, pay their bills, manage debt and save for emergencies.
- ◆ **Medical Transportation**- SCA volunteers provided non-emergency medical transportation for older and disabled residents when other options were not available.
- ◆ **Bereavement Support Group**- In conjunction with Masonicare, SCA hosted two 8-week grief support groups at our facility free of charge.
- ◆ **Friendly Visitor & Friendly Shopper**- Volunteers served as visitors, callers and/or shoppers to isolated residents for purposes of providing social engagement and nutritional well-being.
- ◆ **Chair Exercise Program**- SCA sponsored this on-going program at the Suffield Senior Center in an effort to help participants reduce the risk of falls. Program attendees are asked to bring a non-perishable food item for SCA's Food Pantry in lieu of payment.
- ◆ **Resident At-Risk List**- SCA partnered with the Town's Emergency Preparedness team to identify vulnerable residents when events warrant proactive contact.
- ◆ **After-Hour SPD Support Plan & Town Emergency Responder Assistance**- SCA developed a support plan to ensure resident safety and wellbeing if a fuel, food or housing crisis should occur during non-SCA work hours. SCA also partners with the Town's Emergency Responders to assist residents experiencing serious health & housing challenges.
- ◆ **SCA Vegetable Garden**- Volunteers planted and tended a garden allowing SCA to offer fresh vegetables to those utilizing the Food Pantry.
- ◆ **James Coggins, Jr. Community Service Award**- The 2019 recipient of this annual \$1,000 award was Justin Seger.
- ◆ **Jane Purtill Fuller Memorial Scholarship**- Awarded annually to graduating high-school students pursuing a nursing or social services degree, the 2019 recipients were Jacquelyn Cunningham and Tori Grano.
- ◆ **Pet Food Support**- The fundraising efforts of local residents made it possible for SCA's Food Pantry to offer cat and dog food.
- ◆ **Volunteer Recognition**- One hundred thirteen (113) SCA volunteers were honored at an appreciation event held at Suffield Tavern in May.

Suffield Community Aid, your local safety net, has been supporting the social service needs of our residents for more than a century! All these years later, we remain resolute in our commitment to delivering the highest caliber of timely social service support to improve the quality of life for those who seek our help. To this end, we are eternally grateful to the Suffield community for the financial and tangible gifts that sustain our programs and enable us to continue to respond. One of our most valued assets is the time and dedication we receive from our cherished SCA volunteers. Together, they donate hundreds of hours each year for the benefit of our residents challenged by economic, social, physical and/or emotional hardships.

Respectfully submitted,
 Janet Frechette, M.S.W.
 Executive Director