

ANNUAL REPORT- JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022



Formerly, Emergency Aid Association
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Our Mission:

Suffield Community Aid (SCA) - *your local safety net*. 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 is there for Suffield residents to make the tough times easier. Since our beginning, we have strived to enhance the full potential of all residents, and thereby, improve the overall quality of life in our community. Since 2003, the Town of Suffield has contracted with SCA to administer social services for its citizens. The current contract extends this partnership through June 30, 2027.

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. Whether you've lost a job, suffered a health crisis, required help caring for an aging parent, or experienced some type of financial hardship, *SCA is here to offer the resources and support that community members require to move forward in their lives.*

Through individualized consultations, the SCA team helps 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.

Highlights of FY/2022:

Listed below are some of the supportive health and social service programs provided by SCA for residents during fiscal year 2021-2022. SCA resumed in-person services by meeting with residents at SCA, in the community, and by conducting home visits.

- ◆ **Meals-On-Wheels-** SCA coordinates volunteers who distributed 7,032 government subsidized meals to 56 medically frail, homebound seniors last year.
- ◆ **CHOICES Counseling-** A trained SCA volunteer, Sheri Burger, provided in-person appointments and assistance to 139 residents looking to explore their Medicare options.
- ◆ **Fuel Assistance-** Twenty-three thousand, six-hundred and seventy-four dollars (\$23,674) in critical fuel aid was distributed to 55 Suffield families from various SCA-administered funds. (\$8,459 was expended from SCA Private Fuel donations.) An additional 243 energy applications were submitted to the State of CT on behalf of our residents, resulting in \$266,895 in fuel aid for 230 approved households.
- ◆ **Meghan Voisine Fund-** The Meghan Voisine Fund was created in honor of Meghan Voisine to support youth-based programming and initiatives. “Kindness Grants” were distributed to selected applicants to fund their community-based projects. A total of \$2,000 was awarded to 6 applicants.
- ◆ **Renter’s Rebate-** Between July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, staff processed 99 applications and submitted a claim to the Office of Policy and Management for \$45,913 to be dispersed to Suffield elderly and disabled qualified renters.
- ◆ **Social Service Consultations-** Staff responded to over 2,400 requests for information and provided comprehensive case assessment and networking to 413 Suffield households, comprised of 714 residents.
- ◆ **Medical & Health Promotion Subsidies-** SCA subsidized medical services and related programming in the amount of \$15,563 to enrich the lives of 65 residents with health challenges. In partnership with Masonicare, SCA sponsored bi-weekly blood pressure screening clinics, which was accessed 208 times by Suffield residents.
- ◆ **Medical Equipment Loans-** Three hundred and thirty two (332) donated durable medical items were loaned to residents and/or their family members.
- ◆ **Preschool Vision Screenings-** In partnership with the Suffield Lions Club, SCA volunteers completed 310 screenings at Spaulding Elementary School and 75 screenings across 3 in-town pre-schools.
- ◆ **SCA Vegetable Garden-** The SCA Garden underwent a major transformation, thanks to Eagle Scout Troop 260, Ray Perleoni, and an incredible group of volunteers. The garden was relocated, raised beds were built, a new irrigation system was installed, and our dedicated volunteers completed the planting and care of the new and improved garden.
- ◆ **Salvation Army-** The Salvation Army Kettle Drive raised \$2,438, thanks to the time and efforts of community members, the SHS Swim team and the Suffield Rotary. These funds provide for basic needs & costs associated with SCA’s annual “Return to School Backpack” Program.
- ◆ **Quality of Life Fund-** Social services workers make referrals for items, programs and/or services that would enhance a resident’s quality of life but would otherwise be financially prohibitive. 25 residents were served at a cost of \$4,902. Additionally, SCA funded a 6-week “Low Mobility” Exercise Series that served 11 residents.

- *Housing Expenses:* SCA serves as the hub for FEMA distributed “Emergency Food and Shelter” funds as well as Salvation Army funding. In FY22, 8 households were assisted using these funds, totaling \$5,276 in assistance.
- ◆ **Meal Subsidies-** SCA offered lunch subsidies for qualified seniors to enjoy lunch at the Senior Center twice per week. A total of 23 residents enjoyed 872 lunches at a total cost of \$3,459.
- ◆ **Transportation, Mental Health, & Adult Day Care Subsidies-** SCA established subsidies to help qualified residents get to where they want to go, (when the Suffield Mini-Bus is not available), obtain the clinical help they require, and explore the benefits of adult day care, by instituting programs to offset prohibitive costs. A total of 35 transportation subsidies, 2 mental health subsidies, and 3 Adult Day Care subsidies were provided to low-income residents, totaling \$6,318.
 - ◆ **Kathy Ostrowski Memorial Nursing Scholarship-**In honor of SCA’s beloved former Board member, Kathy Ostrowski, a scholarship was created in her name and awarded to a prospective nursing student, Sadie Stauffer, in 2022.
 - ◆ **Fiore Food Pantry-** SCA Food Pantry was accessed 340 times by 122 different Suffield families comprised of 281 persons, of whom 103 were children and 47 were over the age of 65. The value of the food and gift card assistance is estimated at \$55,700.
 - ◆ **“Grab-and-Go” Mini Food Pantry-** Just outside the SCA door, this self-serve resource is available to any resident needing urgent food assistance at any time of day. It is estimated that there were 364 visits last year.
 - ◆ **Forward Focus-** Forward Focus is 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. Eight residents were assisted at a cost of \$5,488.
 - ◆ **“Return to School” Backpack Distribution-** SCA distributed 74 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.
 - ◆ **After-Hour SPD Support Plan & Town Emergency Responder Assistance-** SCA solidified a support plan to ensure resident safety and wellbeing should a fuel, food or housing crisis occur during non-SCA work hours. SCA also partners with the Town’s Emergency Responders to assist residents experiencing serious health & housing challenges.
 - ◆ **Bereavement Support Group-** SCA contracted with Masonicare to host and facilitate two grief group offerings to support Suffield and surrounding towns’ residents.
 - ◆ **Camperships/Child Care Subsidies-** Thirteen subsidies were provided to children living in low-income homes, to attend camp or help subsidize childcare expenses, at a cost of \$3,568.
 - ◆ **COVID-19/Crisis Relief Fund-** This special fund was created in March 2020, thanks to donations received from the larger community. The fund targets assistance to residents who do not qualify for other needs-based or COVID relief programs. Funds are also utilized to help residents in crisis who qualify. Ten households were assisted at a cost of \$7,131.
 - ◆ **Digital Mobile Mammography-** SCA organized a mobile mammography event at the Suffield Senior Center that served 16 Suffield residents.
 - ◆ **Holiday Basket Program-** SCA coordinated the distribution of 181 donated holiday and other seasonal baskets to low-income households.
 - ◆ **James Coggins, Jr. Community Service Award-** The 2022 recipient of this annual \$1,000 award was Grace Karam.
 - ◆ **Jane Purtil Fuller Memorial Scholarship-** Awarded annually to graduating high-school students pursuing a nursing or social services degree, the 2022 recipients were Megan Cashman and Kara Francis.

- ◆ **Parkinson's Peer Support**- SCA facilitated an in-person support group for caregivers and individuals with Parkinsons at the Suffield Senior Center. The group met monthly from September through June and welcomed several guest presenters for information-sharing purposes. On average, 10 group members regularly attended each meeting.
- ◆ **Pet Food Support**- Fundraising efforts and frequent donations help make it possible for SCA's Food Pantry to continue offering pet food.
- ◆ **Resident At-Risk List**- SCA partners with the Town's Emergency Preparedness team to identify vulnerable residents. This list continues to be an instrumental tool across several town emergency response departments.
- ◆ **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. Three veterans were served at a cost of \$325.

This year allowed for some semblance of normalcy as Suffield Community Aid resumed several pre-pandemic programs to allow for more in-person supports and services to best serve our residents. As evidenced by the data above, we saw a significant increase in our Meals-on-Wheels program thus our volunteers continued to play a critically important role to ensure that our recipients were met with a smile and hot meal each day. We see our mission in action everyday thanks to the dedication and commitment of our altruistic volunteers, team, Board of Directors, and donors. We're so grateful for the outpouring of kindness, generosity, and support of our mission by the Suffield community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle Annibalini, LCSW
Executive Director