



COMM
UNITY
ACTION
MARIN



CHANGE HAPPENS TOGETHER

IMPACT REPORT 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

SERVE THE MISSION.

LIVE THE PROMISE. BE WITH PEOPLE.



AS COMMUNITY ACTION MARIN HEADS PROUDLY TOWARD ALMOST 60 YEARS of helping people and changing lives, I'm aware that this moment holds precious value for our understanding of poverty in Marin County. Despite the daily challenges people face, this is equally an opportunity to feed hope among us.

Community Action Marin's team of more than 235 staff, along with hundreds of

volunteers and community members, nurtures hope each day. The work we do is hard, but nevertheless, dedicated people are making connections, having an impact, and continuing to build momentum toward an equitable Marin. Sometimes what we do is simply show up to meet a neighbor just where they are.

From a place of recognizing our shared humanity, dignity can be restored. Programs and services become more than urgent lifelines because people are taking the time to listen, offer respectful support, and stay in trusted relationship for the long haul. This is how we get results and shape a community and a sustainable tomorrow. This is how we end poverty.

The data shows that we are gaining ground. The stories

people share say that we are making a meaningful difference. As you'll read in this 2024 Impact Report, "Change Happens Together," we are working not only to get vital services to people in need of help, but also to move the needle for systems-level change in service to better outcomes for all. This is anti-poverty movement building in action.

Together, our voices are being heard and more of us are taking steps to address the causes and consequences of poverty. Together, we are creating a community where everyone has a seat at the table, and we can be proud. **LET'S DIG IN.**

Chandra Alexandre, CCAP
Chief Executive Officer



RECIPIENT OF THE HEART OF MARIN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP
Center for Volunteer & Nonprofit Leadership

11,655

education, housing, financial, and workforce development
SERVICES PROVIDED TO CHILDREN, INDIVIDUALS, AND FAMILIES IN OUR PROGRAMS

876

individuals representing
2,703 HOUSEHOLDS SERVED



\$44.4k

in cash assistance **PROVIDED TO 69 HOUSEHOLDS** for emergency assistance including motel stays, medical equipment, and more

\$573.2k

provided in LIHEAP Energy Assistance to **159 HOUSEHOLDS**

451 age 50+ or

disabled individuals who **RECEIVED HELP APPLYING FOR PUBLIC BENEFITS** through our new Benefits Enrollment Center

\$757.6k

IN RENTAL OR MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE provided using Season of Sharing grants

180 EMERGENCY FOOD BOXES provided

SAFETY NET

WITH 24% OF THOSE IN MARIN PAYING MORE THAN 50% OF THEIR INCOME ON RENT, BASIC LIVING EXPENSES—HOUSING, HEALTHCARE, FOOD, AND TRANSPORTATION—HAVE BECOME UNAFFORDABLE AND FINANCIAL STRAIN HAS BECOME A REALITY FOR MANY.

> Providing Access to Public Benefits. Designated by the National Council on Aging, the Benefits Enrollment Center (BEC) launched at Community Action Marin in January 2024 to help older adults (age 50+) and those of any age with disabilities to learn about public benefits programs such as LIHEAP energy assistance, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal. People are screened for eligibility and receive application assistance.

Last winter, Martin, a spirited individual in his 70s, faced a daunting challenge: securing LIHEAP energy assistance after a previous year's program funding was depleted. With renewed hope, he approached BEC staff at the start of the year. Together, staff navigated the application process anew, and this time received a \$482 allocation for him. This achievement was more than financial relief. It was a beacon of hope during the cold months.

"THANK YOU SO SO MUCH. I RECEIVED HELP WITH MY VERY HIGH PGE BILL ...

PAID IN TOTAL. THANK YOU FOR BEING THE FIRST OF MY ANGELS ON THAT DAY. I certainly needed a few. You do great work, I for one am grateful."

PHOENIZ C., PROGRAM PARTICIPANT



Mayor of Novato, Mark Milberg, on a ride along with the CARE Team

400 individuals assisted in a **HOUSING-FIRST APPROACH** to eradicating homelessness

94 precariously housed or unhoused transitional age youth **ASSISTED WITH SUPPORT SERVICES** like transportation, rent payments, motel stays, camping gear, and kindness

\$3.1M of the total funding dispersed over the 17-month ERAP program, was distributed this past year, **HELPING 469 HOUSEHOLDS**

50 individuals **REFERRED TO SHARED HOUSING** options

HOUSING JUSTICE

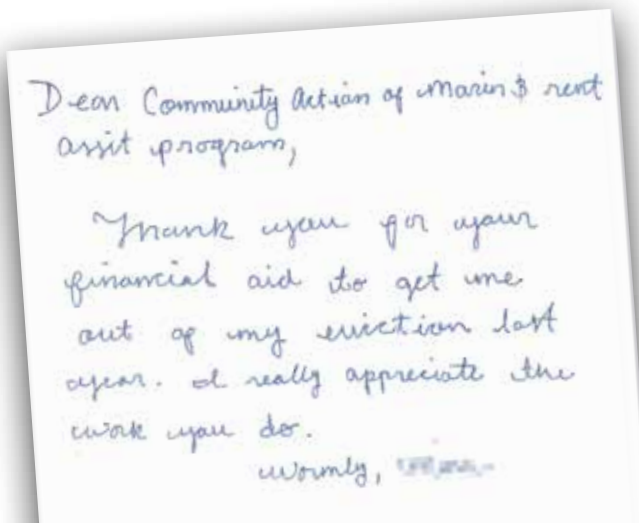
✘ HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT. IN OUR OWN BACKYARDS, OLDER ADULTS WHO MAKE UP JUST UNDER A QUARTER OF OUR POPULATION AND WHO HAVE SPENT DECADES CONTRIBUTING TO OUR COMMUNITY ARE BEING DISPLACED DUE TO A LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS.

Many can't afford to stay in their own homes given the reality of their fixed incomes. Their children and grandchildren are also being priced out of the Marin housing market. This is leading to family separations and forcing those born and raised here to leave.

Our Marin workforce is also facing day-to-day challenges with the

inability to afford housing in our county forcing them to commute for work, with the number of commuters rising. Long commutes and housing instability have led to increased stress, poorer health outcomes, reduced opportunities for social mobility, and increased traffic and pollution.

➤ Providing a Critical Lifeline. Community Action Marin stepped in as a critical service delivery partner with the County of Marin to administer the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) from November 2022 through March 2024. This temporary program provided relief to thousands of renters and landlords in Marin facing economic hardship.



With community need far surpassing Marin's allotment of funds, our team mobilized over a dozen service providers to advocate successfully for an additional \$1.3M. This brought effective rental and utility assistance to over \$7.5M.

Approximately 80% of the assistance went to arrears payments, helping Marin households catch up on past-due rent and utilities and helping individuals and families experiencing economic hardship from facing eviction, displacement, and homelessness.

A STUDENT AND SINGLE MOTHER WITH TWO CHILDREN, HANNAH WAS STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET.

She experienced an extended hospital stay that caused her to drop classes and incur an outstanding payment for her financial aid. Given the added financial burden, she fell behind on rent and received an eviction notice. The Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) provided rental assistance that helped her get back on her feet.

➤ Offering Vital Support

& Assistance. The 2024 Point in Time count estimated the number of unhoused people in Marin County decreased 2.8% since the previous count in 2022. Across Marin however, it is also estimated that 64 families and 111 unaccompanied youth are experiencing homelessness now.

Aside from providing outreach throughout the county, Community Action Marin CARE Team staff have visited local encampments like Binford Road in Novato and Mahon Creek Path in San Rafael weekly to offer residents assistance, a warm, encouraging presence, and support with referrals, paperwork, and basic supplies.

DISRUPTING THE STATUS QUO

BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Our affordable housing education campaign reached over 170,000 people via video, email, blog, and social media. The campaign's success, and our work via the Housing For All Marin coalition, is generating support for Proposition 5, an important next step toward the successful passage of affordable housing funding in the future.

PARTNERING FOR ANTI-DISPLACEMENT & TENANT PROTECTIONS

Aligned with county partners, Community Action Marin joined local efforts to prevent housing displacement and supported the enactment of local tenant protections policies within the cities of San Rafael, Fairfax, San Anselmo, and Larkspur. The goal was to keep the county's workforce and community housed, including rent stabilization, just cause eviction, and relocation assistance.

ADVANCING JUSTICE FROM POLICY TO PROGRAM

Regular engagement with local officials is part of our advocacy grounded in community. Through a visit to our Manzanita Center, Marin County Supervisor Stephanie Moulton-Peters spoke with children, teachers, and staff to explore the needs of families across our community and how our partnership can advance justice from policy to program.

MARIN'S RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN (REAP)

Marin County will spend \$1.7 million over the next four years to advance racial equity via economic opportunity, mental health, and housing. Community Action Marin is part of the REAP Implementation Team, dedicating time to key initiatives like establishing a countywide support program for microbusiness owners of color, providing scholarships for students of color pursuing therapy licenses, and increasing tenant protections.

INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS & EDUCATION

Early childhood teachers are among the most underpaid professionals across the country due to a history of racism and sexism around the work of caregiving. A team of our staff and Parent Leadership Council members met with Assembly Member Damon Connolly and staff from the office of State Senator Mike McGuire at the 2024 Head Start California Advocacy Day to talk about the true cost of childcare and pay equity. Nine of our Parent Leadership Council members also participated in a National Head Start letter campaign this past April. The letters called for increased federal funding to support early childhood education to ensure a foundation for a lifetime of learning and growth in school and beyond.



"FREE AND AFFORDABLE

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

TRULY SUPPORT THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY.

Parents can go to school or work without worry, and children are put on a path to a lifelong love of learning. I'm proud to know that Community Action Marin is breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty and improving outcomes for individuals, families, and our entire Marin community."



STEPHANIE MOULTON-PETERS,
MARIN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



100% of parents surveyed in February 2024 were either **SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED** with early education services

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

LEARNING BEGINS AT BIRTH AND THE EARLY YEARS PRESENT AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND WELL-BEING.

High-quality early care and education fosters children's healthy development, supporting them to learn and grow, to pursue their dreams, and to thrive.

At Community Action Marin, parents and caregivers say that enrollment in childcare services directly helps them to meet their basic needs, reduces stress, provides time for them to pursue education or job training, and helps them care for their families.

This past year 443 children were provided early education and comprehensive services, representing 387 total families. With the agency's Whole Family

3,759 health services provided including development delay screenings, mental health assessments, dental exams, and well visits with **100% OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN** receiving hearing and vision screenings

88% of preschoolers improved in language and literacy and **85% IMPROVED** in social and emotional development

Approach, 91% of these families also received at least one referral to other Community Action Marin programs, with most receiving multiple referrals.



Engaging Fathers: Noche con Padres. Twenty fathers met monthly this past year to discuss strategies for

furthering children's growth and development, as well as other topics including language, literacy, wellness, and play with children. These efforts resulted in an increase in engagement of 33% (as measured by our Family Outcomes fall and spring surveys of fathers/male caregivers) and a 23% increase in knowledge and use of learning activities to help their child develop and grow. In total, there were 792 attendees representing both mothers, fathers, and guardians at Monthly Family Engagement Events.

"EACH CLASSROOM

IS FOCUSED ON SCHOOL READINESS WITH 17-20 CHILDREN ENROLLED AND ENGAGED IN LEARNING THROUGH PLAY.

The classrooms, funded by county, state, and federal sources, will provide a comprehensive, whole-family approach to Marin County's youngest children and their families.

SHANA HEWITT, VP, EARLY EDUCATION



> Creating More Community Connections. The opening of the San Rafael Early Learning Center (formerly the Short School) ensures bright futures for children. The use of the location is the result of a powerful partnership between Community Action Marin, providing four high-quality preschool classrooms, and San Rafael City Schools, delivering Transitional Kindergarten and Early Intervention programs. Together, the shared focus on both educational and social service outcomes for children and families is strengthening well-being in our community.

> Investing in Hiring Quality Teaching Staff. This past year, 78% of our agency's frontline and associate staff received an extraordinary one-time stipend. For Children and Family Services staff, this added to an already

competitive pay scale, ranging from \$22/hour-\$44/hour based on education permits and credentials of those being hired. Our pay increases and a fall signing bonus served to attract more applicants to our open teaching positions, further demonstrated the value of the work of teaching and

educational professionals, and resulted in a 77% increase in the number hired over the prior year.

The agency's investment in staff, compensation and benefits, professional development, and provision of career pathways has also led to a greater retention rate and job satisfaction.

THROUGH THE PARENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (PLC), parent and guardian volunteers help agency leadership to make decisions about the program's budget, needed resources, priorities, and upcoming offerings. This involvement provides them with a voice and facilitates better outcomes for individuals, families, and our Marin community.



TOP LEFT, Head Start Parent & Family Engagement Conference
TOP RIGHT, California Head Start Advocacy Day
LEFT, Appetite for Change class
BELOW, PARC Emergency Preparedness class





543 SPARKPOINT

PARTICIPANTS, 281 of which received low-touch services and 263 were long-term clients

70% OF FINANCIAL

COACHING PARTICIPANTS improved their savings, credit, or debt by 30% or more, with 72% feeling more confident in themselves after participating in the program

\$383.6k

refunded for the 261 FEDERAL TAX RETURNS processed in our VITA program during the 2024 tax season, with an average refund of \$1,479 each

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

IN MARIN COUNTY, EVEN IN FAMILIES WITH ONE OR MORE WORKING ADULTS, HOUSEHOLDS DO NOT EARN ENOUGH TO MAKE ENDS MEET. WE PROMOTE PROSPERITY AND HOPE THROUGH A POWERFUL SET OF FINANCIAL WELL-BEING, WORKFORCE, AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

Our programs give those of any age the help, tools, guidance, and training they need to rise beyond subsistence—living and thrive.

➤ **Putting Money Back in People's Pocket.** This past year we saw a 63% increase in the number of those who took advantage of our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) and an 89% increase in the amount of dollars refunded in federal taxes.

➤ **Helping People Improve Their Finances.** Our 2024 Community Courage Award winner, Bless Krieger is a prime example of a Financial Coaching program participant who was able to improve his financial and ultimately housing situation through our program. When Bless came to us, he was homeless and didn't have a penny to spare. Our Success

Coach helped Bless with a step-by-step plan. He was also connected to resources. This helped Bless feel confident to move forward. Bless now has a savings account and credit score of 817.



"COMMUNITY ACTION MARIN IS SO WELCOMING, NON-JUDGMENTAL AND PATIENT. THEY TREAT ME LIKE A HUMAN BEING. THEY KNOW HOW TO WORK WITH PEOPLE LIKE ME WHO MAY BE DEPRESSED OR OVERWHELMED. They just slowly move forward with you at your level and pace. That gave me trust from day one. They helped me figure out what my financial goals should be, like paying off my bills first. When I accomplish each goal, I get this natural high. There's nothing like it. It feels great. I now call myself a multi miracle-anaire"

BLESS KRIEGER, 2024 COMMUNITY COURAGE AWARD RECIPIENT

PROVIDING PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT

➤ **A Road to Self-Sufficiency.**

Thanks to a grant from the California Workforce Development Board, 31 people accessed new employment opportunities in high-demand industries. In addition to job training and employment placement, participants engaged in monthly peer learning sessions, received a monthly stipend, had access to financial and career coaching, and received support with developing and accomplishing their personal goals.

- **85% of the program's English language learners** took an English language proficiency assessment and 79% enrolled in English language classes to foster their success and integration into the community.

- **83% actively engaged with career coaches** to create written employment and training plans to support their personal and professional development and career readiness.

- **84% indicated a 50% or greater improvement** in their confidence level in the labor market after completing their training.

- **83% reported they had personal checking and savings accounts** at the end of the program, an essential for individuals to manage their finances, save, and build a foundation for long-term financial security.

- **74% transitioned to sustainable employment**, suggesting that their skills and training helped them secure more stable and long-term job opportunities.

Other program participants went on to post secondary education, enrolled in a state approved apprenticeship, or experienced a promotion at their current employment.

➤ **Early Care & Education Pathways to Success.**

The inaugural 18-month Apprenticeship helped 17 participants jump-start their career in early childhood education. With all completing this unique working and learning experience. They also earned 12 Early Childhood Education units through College of Marin, completed 2,000 hours of paid work experience, and received holistic support to ensure their success. These apprentices are now working on obtaining their permits to become Associate Teachers at Community Action Marin or other local early childhood education centers.

➤ **Peer Support Specialist**

Training. Community Action Marin successfully launched a bilingual Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist (PSS) Training Program in November 2023 and secured approval from the California Mental Health Services Authority. Nine people completed the program, and among them, three showed remarkable commitment by completing 80 hours of training, earning their certificates of completion, and registering for the state exam.

“I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE, ANYONE CAN OVERCOME THEIR STRUGGLES AND LEAD A FULFILLING LIFE.

As a certified Peer Support Specialist, I hope to be able to contribute as a volunteer or in an internship program where I can acquire more experience and skills to better serve the community. Together, we can achieve recovery and bring hope to those who are struggling.”

PSS TRAINING PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

DID YOU KNOW?



MARIN HAS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF POVERTY (14.4%) and childhood poverty (17%) in the Bay Area according to 2023 data from the Public Policy Institute of California.



APPROXIMATELY 33% OF MARIN COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS EARN LESS THAN \$100,000/YEAR, with 25% of households earning less than \$75,000/year.



INCOME INEQUALITY IN MARIN IS AMONG THE HIGHEST IN THE NATION, and Marin also is among the least equitable across all indicators of well-being in California when disaggregating data by race.



According to MIT's Living Wage Calculation, **A SINGLE PARENT WITH TWO CHILDREN WOULD NEED TO EARN \$80/HR. TO MEET BASIC NEEDS**, and a two-parent family with both parents working would each need to earn \$43/hr in Marin.



OF THE MORE THAN 200 FAMILIES PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY ACTION MARIN'S 2024 PARENT SURVEY, 100% OF FAMILIES DO NOT EARN ENOUGH TO MEET THE BASIC NEEDS OF LIVING IN MARIN.



FOOD JUSTICE

✚ GROWING, COOKING, AND EATING MEALS TOGETHER IS PART OF WHAT UNITES US AS PEOPLE ACROSS GENERATIONS AND COMMUNITY.

Hunger and limited access to healthy food are realities for people of low income in Marin, despite the county’s general affluence. In fact, 70% of families in our programs have reported food insecurity.

➤ Providing Healthy Meals & Connection. Children in our programs receive meals that meet or exceed nutritional

guidelines as established by the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Adults aged 60+ are provided nutritious meals at community centers from Southern Marin to Novato. Meals are funded through the federal Older Americans Act and distributed through a contract with County of Marin Aging and Adult Services. Older adults and people with disabilities are also provided nutrient-dense meals at Vivalon Cafe, located at Vivalon’s healthy aging campus which opened in January 2024. Food at the cafe is prepared by chefs in our kitchen and brought to the Cafe’s warming kitchens where it is served by volunteers.

➤ Modeling a Resource for Healthy Food. Our 15,000 square foot production farms provide a replicable and scalable model for creating a sustainable community resource for good, healthy food.

TOP CROPS PRODUCED
35 lbs OF BOK CHOI
24 lbs OF CABBAGE
24 lbs OF CARROTS
17 lbs OF CILANTRO
37 lbs OF CUCUMBERS
30 lbs OF GREEN BEANS
25 lbs OF LEMONS
395 lbs OF LETTUCE
60 lbs OF ONIONS
17 lbs OF SNAP PEAS
17 lbs OF SWEET PEAS
10 lbs OF SWISS CHARD
57 lbs OF TOMATOES
261 lbs OF ZUCCHINI

“THE COMMUNITY HAS CERTAINLY RESPONDED POSITIVELY

TO OUR OFFERING AT THE NEW VIVALON CAFE. OUR MEMBERS AND GUESTS SHARED THAT THEY ARE DELIGHTED TO FIND A PLACE WHERE THEY CAN ENJOY HEALTHY QUALITY MEALS AND SOCIALIZE WITH OTHERS.

They also enjoy our monthly special luncheon and nutrition classes, all of which are held in a great atmosphere and make them feel at home.”

BAPTISTE PIERRU, NUTRITION PROGRAMS MANAGER, VIVALON



29.2k MEALS PROVIDED to older adults

162.4k meals and snacks provided to children, an 8% INCREASE over the prior year

61% of families said that having their child enrolled in our early education program made it EASIER FOR THEM TO MEET BASIC NEEDS, including food

1,065 lbs of fruit and vegetables GROWN AND HARVESTED



COMMUNITY ACTION CHANGES PEOPLE'S LIVES,

EMBODIES THE SPIRIT OF HOPE, IMPROVES COMMUNITIES, AND MAKES AMERICA A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

COMMUNITY ACTION PROMISE



➤ Building Community and Food Sovereignty.

This past spring we piloted Appetite for Change in partnership with the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center at our Old Gallinas Production Farm in San Rafael. The project, funded with support from Marin Community Foundation, created a replicable model of food sovereignty and community building through bilingual inter-generational agriculture learning and development.

People learned about planting, growing, and preserving food. The effort helped promote healthy eating and served as a place for connection, education, and leadership.

• **26 adult caregivers and their children** participated in the program, held entirely in Spanish. Participants included families from Community Action Marin, their neighbors, and their extended family.

• **Over the six-week program, participants** received compost bins, tools, and information to utilize within their personal or community garden spaces.

• **In total, the program improved 384 square yards of soil** and yielded a harvest of 200 pounds of produce from plantings of 70 different crops.

“THE APPETITE FOR CHANGE PROGRAM WAS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY, NOT JUST FOR ME BUT FOR ANYONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT GARDENING, RE-USING SEEDS, OR PRESERVING FOOD. I loved learning about canning and how to store fruits and vegetables and make them last. And about freeze drying. It's amazing once fruits or vegetables are preserved to see that they can still taste fresh.”

ROXANA ECHEVERRIA, CANAL PARENT LEADERSHIP REPRESENTATIVE

OUR MISSION

WE MAKE IT POSSIBLE

FOR PEOPLE IN MARIN TO ACHIEVE WELL-BEING BY PROVIDING THE VITAL SERVICES THEY NEED. TOGETHER, WE BREAK DOWN THE BARRIERS THAT GET IN THE WAY OF FAIR AND LASTING CHANGE IN SERVICE TO **BETTER OUTCOMES FOR ALL.**



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**DONATE AND HELP BUILD
A MORE EQUITABLE MARIN!**

