Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
The community leader, helping people to help themselves.
ABOUT SARATOGA COUNTY
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL, INC.

Saratoga County EOC is a non-profit organization committed to being a leader in advocating for opportunities and developing solutions to promote healthy, thriving families and caring community partners. Saratoga County EOC was established in 1965 by a coalition of local non-profit leaders, community members and business owners, to become the federally designated Community Action Agency under the Economic Opportunity Act passed by Congress in 1964. Saratoga County EOC is part of a nation-wide network of more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies working at the local level to alleviate the impact of poverty in communities and help individuals, children and families of low income to become self-sufficient and improve the quality of their lives.

EOC is governed by a dedicated board of directors comprising of local business, government and community representatives. As a Community Action Agency for more than 50 years, EOC has established and incorporated many programs to benefit low income families in Saratoga County, such as the Community Lunch Program (Soup Kitchen), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Head Start, Early Head Start, Weatherization, Latino Community Advocacy Program (LCAP), Crisis Intervention and Family Development, a Food Pantry, Mobile Food Pantry and holiday programs.

MISSION AND VISION

EOC is the designated anti-poverty agency for Saratoga County, dedicated to providing and promoting opportunities for individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency. We are a community leader helping people to help themselves.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (EOC) has devoted over 50 years to reducing poverty and helping to create a better quality of life for those struggling in our community. Our professional and caring staff are committed to making an impact in the lives of others, but this is not something we accomplish alone. It is our dedicated Board of Directors, our generous stakeholders and our unselfish volunteers who provide the guidance and support necessary to positively impact the lives of those we serve in Saratoga County. We thank you for being a vital member of EOC.

Despite fears of funding cuts to Federal programming, as well as cuts to the services provided to low income families such as Medicaid and Food Stamps, we hold out hope for the future. In 2017 we welcomed new supporters and cherished our long time partners. Now, we look to 2018 to grow and offer an even greater support to those in Saratoga County who depend on a “hand up” from their neighbors.

Many families depend on the services EOC provides. I urge you to get involved. Become a part of our continuing efforts to combat poverty in Saratoga County.

Sincerely,

Jo Anne Hume
Executive Director
BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MANAGEMENT TEAM

2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeffrey Methven – President
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MANAGEMENT STAFF

Jo Anne Hume, Executive Director
Krystle Nowhitney Hernandez, Deputy Director
Bernie Jones, Head Start Director
Cathy Valenty, WIC Director
Jeff Champagne, Energy Services Director

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

ABOUT OUR FUNDING SOURCES

Our grant funding is restricted to the designated participants, income requirements and programming for each grant source. Our Head Start, WIC and Weatherization Programs represent the largest share of our grant revenue.

WHY DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING ARE VITAL

Our food programs, crisis intervention, advocacy services and immigrant programming are only partially grant funded and respond to critical community needs. Donations and fundraising dollars allow us to provide for those that are in temporary crisis or in need but fall outside of the eligibility requirements for our grant funded programs.

*See pages 8-9 to learn more about how fundraising and donation dollars make a difference.
HEAD START

Head Start helps young children from low-income families prepare to succeed in school. Head Start and Early Head Start programs promote children’s development through services that support early learning, health, and family well-being.

Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded early education programs for qualifying low-income families. SCEOC serves families residing within Saratoga County, offering 15 preschool daycare licensed classrooms and 1 toddler classroom across 8 school districts located within Saratoga County.

SCEOC Head Start also offers home-based programming spanning the county for pregnant women and children birth to 5 years of age.

In addition to education services, Head Start also provides support for parents and families through disability services, medical, health and developmental services, nutrition services, and other supplemental support services.

In the 2016-2017 Program Year, Head Start:

Served 491 Families and 544 Children
82% of families have incomes below the poverty line including 36 homeless children.

Head Start provides family support in addition to educational programming. In 2017:

90% of children enrolled in continuous accessible healthcare and 93% of children became up to date on immunizations, 94% of families received support to meet a family need or goal.

Comprehensive educational programming and support ensures a strong foundation:

19% of children began receiving early intervention or pre-school special education services as a result of early screening and identification.

100% of Head Start graduates enter Kindergarten Ready to Learn and with Individual Education Plans in place if needed.
Head Start staff are dedicated professionals supporting the growth and development of our young learners.

108 employees in 2017

100% of Head Start Teachers are NYS Certified or hold a bachelor’s or advanced degree.

“Working with the Head Start program is meaningful and fulfilling because we work with the whole family. We are helping to give children a strong educational foundation for their future, support parent involvement in their child’s education and also help families to set and achieve their goals. We also help struggling families to meet their basic needs. Head Start is more than a early childhood program, it is a whole family approach and I can’t think of a better way to have an impact in our community than help a child and their family succeed from an early age.”

- Kathryn Kaehler, Head Start Assistant Director

Head Start Parents Say:

“Knowing there is always someone to call if I have questions or concerns about anything is both comforting and helpful.”

“I chose Head Start because I wanted my child to have the best developmental start possible and have social experiences.”

“I am a pregnant mom and am learning a lot about my child before my child is even born! The knowledge I am gaining...Partners for Healthy Babies is teaching me things I didn’t know.”

“The best thing so far about Head Start is it prepares the kids for kindergarten. It helps with social skills.”
WIC

WIC provides income eligible Women, Infants and Children with nutritious foods to supplement their diets, as well as, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to other health and social services.

WIC is a federally funded supplemental nutrition program for qualifying low-income families. SCEOC WIC serves Saratoga County families through 7 WIC Clinics throughout the county.

WIC provides services to pregnant women and children through age 5, supporting nutrition and health during a critical period of development for infants and children, as well as helping families establish a healthy foundation for the future.

WIC staff provide a supportive and welcoming environment for parents to learn, ask questions, and find helpful resources to be successful and confident caregivers.

In 2017 WIC provided nutrition education and supplemental nutrition checks to:

1664 participants each month including on average
382 pregnant women
436 infants and 850 children.

WIC check redemption supports the local economy. The value of WIC checks redeemed in 2017 was:

$1,242,672 spent at local grocery stores and farmers markets.

“When I walked into WIC 5 years ago I had recently found myself alone and pregnant with my second child... I was overwhelmed and ashamed... I was so relieved and thankful when I was treated with respect and kindness at the Saratoga County WIC office. Things didn’t seem quite as scary knowing there were women who understand my challenges and didn’t judge me because of them. You gave me the gift of dignity...”
One of the most important relationships is between mothers and their newborn babies, especially during the first weeks and months of life. Breastfeeding is correlated with positive health benefits for mothers and babies, as well as, positive social-emotional outcomes from mother-child bonding.

WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors support moms through education and assistance by introducing breastfeeding skills to pregnant moms and supporting them after their child is born. In 2017:

73.6% of WIC mothers and newborns initiated breastfeeding, above the regional average and getting closer to the Healthy People 2020 goal of 81.9%.

WIC employed 3 Breastfeeding Peer Counselors and Provided Breastfeeding support to over 100 expecting and nursing moms each month.

The SCEOC WIC team is committed to professional and exceptional service, serving as a leader in New York State.

In 2017, the SCEOC WIC Program was selected as one of 12 Local Agency WIC Programs for the 2017 WIC Managers Learning Community – ‘Finding the Balance Between Caseload and Retention’

NYS Department of Health Management Evaluation for 2017 – “Saratoga County EOC – WIC was found to exceed expectations”

WIC Director, Cathy Valenty was selected for a “WIC Expert Panel”, a team gathered to work on the development of ‘NYS WIC Director Core Competencies’.

Parents love WIC! Here are some things they shared in 2017:

“Love WIC”

“Very nice and friendly place to be, always helpful no matter what, always have answers for me. Am grateful for WIC!!”

“Been with WIC for 14 years. Always helpful! More like family rather than a county program.”

“Has always been a pleasure!!”

“Keep up the great work!”

“Great program”

“Wonderful program, very helpful!”

“I always feel welcome when I am here. Your staff does an amazing job!”

“We love our WIC office! Thanks for all you do!”
EOC’s Food Programs address hunger and food insecurity by providing access to free nutritious foods and helping them meet their basic needs.

EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY
MOBILE FOOD PANTRY
RURAL FOOD DELIVERY
COMMUNITY LUNCH PROGRAM (SOUP KITCHEN)
SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM

EOC’s food programs are supported by a variety of funding sources, however, depend significantly on donations from the local community, businesses, and fundraising.

The Food Programs focus on providing access to free nutritious meals and groceries for low-income families throughout Saratoga County.

In addition, program staff and volunteers offer additional support and assistance, recognizing that families in need of food, can also benefit from additional supports to meet their household needs and goals.

In 2017, the Emergency Food Pantry served:

3,053 individuals and 1,054 households and
6,668 3-day supplies of food

In 2017 EOC launched a new initiative, the Mobile Food Pantry, which traveled to sites throughout the county, particularly those with limited access to grocery stores in communities where residents face transportation barriers.

In 2017, the Mobile Food Pantry served:

367 individuals and 147 households at
8 sites in Saratoga County

Corinth, Milton, Galway, Waterford, Stillwater, Schuylerville, Mechanicville/Malta, and Saratoga Springs.

Rural Food Delivery is a partnership with the Presbyterian New England Congregational Church in which volunteers deliver groceries to the homebound. In 2017 RFD served:

110 homebound individuals and 54 households

Delivered 2,872 3-day supplies of groceries

In 2017, the Community Lunch Program (Soup Kitchen):

Served 22,188 meals, 7 days a week

the Summer Lunch Program provided:

2,635 lunches to low-income children.
Advocacy services rely on federal, state and local grants, as well as donations and fundraising from the community. The federal Community Services Block Grant, which is administered through the NYS Department of State’s Division of Community Services serves as a foundation which is used to leverage additional funding and in-kind resources to provide extensive services throughout the county.

Staff work with individuals and families, helping them navigate difficult circumstances, identify needs, resources and setting and working toward goals.
ENERGY SERVICES

The Weatherization Assistance Program offers income and/or categorically eligible customers in Saratoga and Schenectady counties energy conservation measures. These measures help a house become a safe, healthy and energy efficient home.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is a federally funded program which enables low-income families to reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient.

WAP uses the most advanced technologies and diagnostic procedures to help families live in healthier, safer and more energy efficient homes.

WAP staff also serve as a point of contact for low-income families that may be in need of other supports and services.

In the 2016-2017 Program Year, the Weatherization Assistance Program:

Weatherized: 141 dwellings

Owner units: 64
Renter units: 77

HEAP Recipients: 32.62%
Elderly: 62.41%
Disabled: 27.66%
Children: 27%

Total people served: 259

Crew members are trained in the use of specialized equipment to perform home energy audits.

The blower door test (left) measures airtightness of buildings.

Energy Audit Assessments Include:
- Blower door
- Thermal imaging
- Combustion appliance testing of:
  - furnace, boiler, hot water heater
- Duct leakage
- Ventilation testing

**SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE SERVED BY WAP**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of people in various age groups and income levels served by WAP.]

Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
The average cost to make needed energy efficiency upgrades to a home in 2017 was $6,065.

Typical home repair measures include:
- Air sealing penetrations
- Cellulose insulation
- Duct sealing
- Weather stripping
- 2 part foam in sill plates of the home
- Energy star thermostats
- Installing LED bulbs

In 2017 WAP employed 11 specialized crew members and program staff.

WAP Energy and Quality Control Auditors are certified by the Building Performance Institute.

DID YOU KNOW...
A typical single family home can save an average of $283 annually in energy costs with energy efficiency upgrades.

Over time these become significant savings for the low-income families we serve.

“Home ownership is a big part of the American dream. A door, four walls, and a roof may satisfy the definition of a “house,” but the concept of a “home” promises much more. It’s a vision of a safe, healthy, energy-efficient space to live and raise a family.”

Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council’s Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) has been hard at work helping many households to realize that dream. Since 1994 SCEOC WAP has weatherized more than 3,800 homes and 6,300 units.

This is an Equal Opportunity Program. Federal law prohibits discrimination. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W—Whitten Building, 1st and Independence Ave SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.