



Helping people, Changing lives

2020

# Year In Review...

## *What a Year!*

When I accepted the position as chair of the Board of Directors for Allegany County's HRDC, I could never imagine our agency would be facing a pandemic in a few short months. However, this global event shined a spotlight on what we do locally for the community and the importance of our services. HRDC continued to operate when the county, state, country and most of the world shut down. During this time, I witnessed true dedication and tenacity from our HRDC staff members. They quickly collaborated with partnering agencies to reimagine our services in a safe and compliant way. Although gatherings in the Senior and Head Start centers were closed for safety reasons, the staff dreamed up new ways to continue to serve our populations. These included distant learning for the young people and daily food deliveries and wellness checks for our older clients. PPE, social distancing and other safety protocols were enacted to keep everyone safe. The Board of Directors and I stood back in amazement as every HRDC staff member rose to the occasion and continued services in a creative, safe and seamless manner. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank the HRDC and our partners for serving our community during this challenging time. You are truly an inspiration.

Nicholas Hadley, Chair, HRDC Board of Directors



## *"The New Normal"*

I recently had someone ask me, "When did HRDC re-open during this pandemic?" The truth is – we never shut down. From the very beginning of this pandemic and with the warranted changes to our service delivery, we prided ourselves on the quick response and immediate decision making to ensure as minimal disruption to services as possible. The dedicated staff of Allegany County HRDC continues to provide much-needed essential services to the residents of Allegany County through our numerous programs providing housing and community resources, child and family services, as well as services provided to the aged and disabled. As the Community Action Agency and Lead Agency on Aging and Disabilities serving Allegany County, HRDC provides programs and support to the most vulnerable populations. Many of these services are emergency in nature, requiring us to be open and available when others are not. Of course, we have made adjustments for safety reasons and have restricted large gatherings in accordance with the COVID-19 Regulations set forth by Governor Larry Hogan. Sadly a number of much anticipated events were either modified to a virtual platform or altogether canceled, such as our Spring Fling, Fall Festival, School Readiness Fair, Senior Prom and even our Annual Meeting, to name a few. However, HRDC's daily services could not be postponed or canceled, as our community members rely on these to survive and thrive. The pandemic was a quick reminder of how important HRDC services are for many – whether it be a hot meal, social interaction, health screenings, transportation, education, housing, utility assistance, or any of our other offerings – services were provided daily. Our staff, either remotely or safely within our offices, continued to answer questions of our clients, address their needs/concerns and/or provide an appropriate warm handoff to any one of our many partners to ensure services were received. As we adjust to the new rules, new regulations and new mandates, and keep everything running as smoothly as possible during this pandemic and our "new normal," we continue to be overwhelmed by the dedication of our staff and our partners. Thank you for all that you do to continue serving the residents of Allegany County. We cannot wait until we can see your smiling faces, face-to-face, again.

Wendolyn McKenzie, Executive Director, HRDC



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# Making a Difference in 2020

**Getting a Head Start:** 327 children and 318 families received quality Head Start services to prepare children for entering Kindergarten. 327 children also received immunizations and medical/dental care. 75 children and 63 families were served in the Early Head Start program. In addition to educational and family services, 75 children received immunizations and medical/dental care.

**Giving Shelter:** 18 homeless families benefitted from transitional shelter. 7 families were moved into unsubsidized, affordable housing. 111 homeless families were provided Rapid Re-Housing Assistance so they could become housed. 124 families were able to remain in their homes with Homeless Prevention and Stabilization Assistance. 1,186 beds were provided to homeless families seeking temporary transitional shelter. 617 households received City & County Housing Vouchers through Section 8, Family Unification, Mod/Rehab and Non-Elderly Disabled Rental Assistance programs totaling \$3.2 million, making housing affordable.

**Keeping Their Homes:** 1,295 were assisted with families with emergency payments to avoid eviction or utility termination. 25 individuals were able to maintain quality housing through Affordable Housing and Scattered Site Projects. 6 homeowners were assisted with saving their homes through services provided by Foreclosure Counseling and 14 individuals received Pre-Purchase Counseling to better prepare them for buying a home with 2 purchasing a home within a month after completing the course.

**A Warm Community:** 3,761 families received assistance with heating their homes and maintaining electric service by supplying \$3.67 million in direct energy assistance. 32 families were helped with improvements to their homes to reduce heating/electric costs through the Weatherization Program.

**Financial Help:** 1,100 families received tax preparation assistance, which resulted in \$2.36 million in Federal and State refunds returned to our local area. 956 elementary and middle school students received Financial Education with a focus on Financial Literacy and Capability building confidence and developing the habits needed to support Financial Wellbeing. 40 individuals completed Financial Education Classes receiving strategies to save more and spend less.

**Living Independent:** 954 older individuals maintained their independent living status through the Senior Programs. 151 individuals were provided social and medical services through Adult Medical Care Services to avoid premature institutional placement, allowing them to remain in their homes and communities.

**Senior Success:** 264 seniors were helped with Medicare and other insurance agencies enrollment. 7,479 weekly nutritious meals were provided to senior citizens at our area Senior Centers and through home delivery. 93,255 meals were provided either directly or subsidized to Allegany County seniors. RSVP Program placed nearly 200 seniors in volunteer service opportunities throughout our local area.

**Food Security:** 11,031 meals were provided to children through the after-school and summer programs. 357 families received emergency or supplemental food.

**Keeping Mobile:** 15,931 transports were made to and from medical and human services appointments through the Mobility Management Program.

