



# Heritage

Area Agency on Aging



ANNUAL  
REPORT  
FY 2021

# The Director's Diary

It is inspiring to look back on the history of Heritage Area Agency on Aging and its service to Older Iowans and adults with disabilities. With tens of thousands of individuals supported through a variety of services, we are thankful for the many volunteers and community members who walked along side us for the past 50 years. I am humbled to be a part of this organization.

Although we have accomplished much, there is tremendous work ahead. In the past year, we navigated a pandemic and once in a lifetime derecho storm with agility and creativity, providing services in new ways, only to realize that more change lies ahead. As we return to a new normal interacting with our community and providing services to our most vulnerable community members, we have come to realize that change will continue. Uncertainty remains a part of our post-COVID life and continues to affect the consumers of our services. We know we need to be nimble and strategic.

Our nutrition and wellness services experienced record participation during the pandemic and pivoted quickly to shelf stable meals in the aftermath of the derecho. Curbside meal delivery worked early in the pandemic, but became too difficult during cold Iowa winters. We learned a new way of providing meals through vouchers to our local Hy-Vee cafés, allowing consumers to have additional choice and flexibility in meal time and type of entrée; and the Encore Express program was born. This innovative way of providing meals allowed yet another way to ensure older Iowans had access to delicious, nutritious meals. Moreover, during in the aftermath of the derecho, shelf stable meals provided needed nutrition in the absence of working electricity and were delivered by caring staff within hours of the destruction. New ways of serving people where they are with the delivery system they need will continue to bloom and grow. Even as restaurants and events open to the public and larger groups begin to

congregate, we know that our nutrition program has to continue to expand and serve in a variety of ways.

Creativity certainly influenced other programs as well. The Elder Rights Specialists used virtual and phone connections to support consumers when home visits were not comfortable. Our Information and Assistance Program proudly served over 1500 consumers looking for not only the essential services we have always provided, but also assistance with understanding and navigating access to COVID 19 vaccines. In addition, Heritage Staff and volunteers provided wellness checks to over 3,000 Older Iowans in the aftermath of the derecho, managing not one but two disasters, while still serving our community. These are just a few of the ways we have learned to act, react, and provide care in unique and unanticipated circumstances.

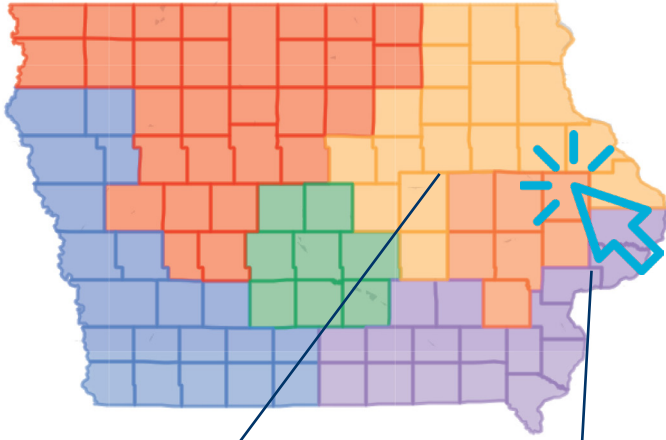
I am proud to stand with the Heritage staff and all our sub-contractors, knowing we are ready for the next chapter. While we hope the road ahead is not as challenging, I have confidence that, as you “always look for the helpers”, you will see Heritage.



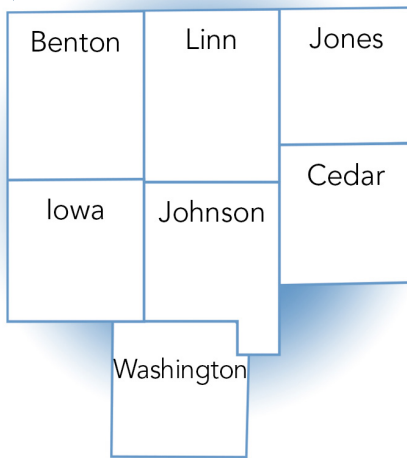
Barbara Werning  
Executive Director  
Heritage Area Agency on Aging

# Who We Are

map: Iowa Dept. on Aging



Established under the Older Americans Act, there are more than 600 Area Agencies on Aging nationwide. Iowa is divided into six regions, each with its own AAA.



Heritage serves Public Service Area 4, a seven-county region in east-central Iowa.

The region is one of Iowa's smallest by size, but is the second-largest by population.

## The Heritage Mission

Heritage Area Agency on Aging provides leadership, advocacy and innovative services that improve the quality of life for older Iowans, individuals with disabilities and family caregivers.

## The Heritage Vision

Heritage Area Agency on Aging's service region is where optimal aging happens.

Like putting together the pieces of a puzzle, Heritage Area Agency on Aging brings together several programs and services to help each consumer complete their unique plan for independence and improved quality of life.

Heritage cares for the *whole person* by meeting all their needs through the direct and funded services.



### *Mission Moment*

*"Thank you so much for all your efforts on my behalf. It is amazing how it all came together at the exact moment in time! I owe you all my life, as I believe that I would have died in that place with the filth and the falls..."*  
- Elder Rights consumer whose home was damaged in the derecho



# Program Highlights



A safe and trusted resource for consistent, quality service, several providers in the **Regional Nutrition Program** saw record numbers of participation during the pandemic. Many rural providers also offered assistance preparing meals for consumers in the Cedar Rapids area in the wake of the derecho.

Partnerships to provide virtual programming were strengthened during the ongoing pandemic, and a few in person classes were hosted outdoors with plenty of room to spread out. Heritage's **Health & Wellness** Coordinator attracted great crowds in Washington, distributing Farmers' Market Checks and leading Tai Chi in the park.



A **Case Management** consumer with asthma and sleep apnea needed a new CPAP machine and supplies, but couldn't get one through insurance. With Heritage's person-centered funding, they were approved for the new machine and supplies to get treatment that helped avoid hospitalization. This was just 1 of 49 such requests approved during the year.



The **Elder Rights Program** stood strong for more than 75 consumers in need of Intervention services, like the woman whose social security check was stolen. Rent and utility assistance, groceries and a referral to Heritage's pet food program helped her and her emotional support dog keep living at home while the case was resolved.



## CAREGIVER WELLNESS SERIES

With in-person events out of the picture, the Caregiver Wellness Day Planning Committee jumped into action. Ten speakers were lined up to create a five-part Caregiver Wellness Series, available live on Zoom and Facebook.

For the agency's first-ever venture into virtual events, the series average nearly 180 viewers per episode.

Four hundred family caregivers found local resources and services with help from the **Caregiver Support Program**. Nearly half stuck around for longer-term help in the form of Options Counseling and Case Management. These services double the impact on consumers, empowering the caregivers and their loved ones at the same time.



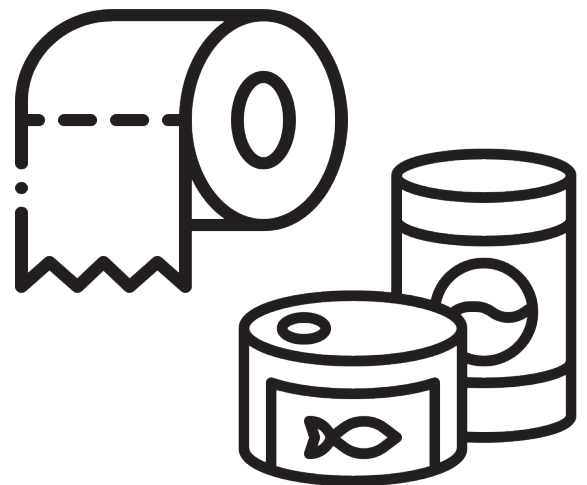




Of the 28 new Job Candidates in the **Older Worker Employment Program**, 16 received jobs by year's end. Another 11 are still actively pursuing their dream by taking Continuing Education courses and enrolling in training programs. Creative solutions are a hallmark of the OWEPP program, like helping an immigrant tradesman who suffered a hand injury start a new career as a translator.



Unprecedented challenges led to unprecedented successes for the **Information, Referral & Assistance** team. From securing household essentials to finding COVID-19 vaccines when they were in short supply – on top of normal requests like home-delivered meals or in-home care – more than 1,500 consumers got the help they needed when searching for resources.





# “Look for the Helpers”

August 10, 2020, is one of those days we'll never forget. A beautiful summer morning gave way to dark lunchtime clouds from the west. Whispers of a strong storm crossing the state proved to be screaming winds that tore through the heart of the Heritage region. More trees than not were destroyed and tens-of-thousands of home – including those of Heritage staff – suffered damage.

But like the start of the pandemic and during two catastrophic floods in the dozen years before, our team did what it knows best: rolled up the sleeves and got to work.



The Encore Café team works around fallen trees to set up a food distribution during the week after the derecho.



Volunteers from across the state pitched in to help older lowans, performing safety checks and delivering bottled water and shelf-stable food.

Starting less than 24 hours later and over the subsequent month, staff packed up more than 20,000 grab-and-go meals for seniors. A literal ton of shelf-stable foods went to homes in need. More than 3,000 seniors received wellness checks from volunteers.

Partnerships forged via LAP-AID and at Neighborhood Resource Centers ensured every member of every household was cared for, no matter their age or need.

Deep in the weeds of disaster recovery, there were still silver linings to be found. It's like the famous advice Fred Rogers shared from his mom: “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.”

We're proud to be part of this community of helpers, and we know with this spirit we can stand tall in the face of any storm.

# Our Staff



Barbara Werning  
Executive Director



Kellie Elliott-Kapparos  
Integrated Services  
Director



Jill Sindt  
Community Advancement  
Director



Jennifer Knudtson  
Fiscal Director



Eugenia Kendall  
Quality & Outcomes  
Senior Manager



Becky Briggs  
Encore Café  
Coordinator



Bryan Bruner  
Health & Wellness  
Coordinator



Sjonna Brunt  
Operations Coordinator



Mike Chapman  
Project Specialist



Maria Donohoe  
Family Caregiver  
Coordinator



Drew Floyd  
Elder Rights  
Specialist



Tim Getty  
Regional Nutrition  
Coordinator



Angie Guss  
Elder Rights Specialist



Kimi Hambright  
Options Counselor



Laura Kriegermeier  
Elder Rights Coordinator



Ann Neville  
Case Manager



Harrison March  
Community Engagement  
Coordinator



Jennifer Sloan  
Finance Coordinator



Paul Swanson  
Older Worker  
Employment Specialist



Jennifer Walker  
Information, Referral &  
Assistance Specialist

Not Pictured: Madalyn Klobassa, Information Specialist/Options Counselor;  
Janice Coleman, Data Project Specialist



# Our Board

Heritage's Board of Directors has been key in ushering in the agency's new era as an independent non-profit organization. The group includes Supervisors from all seven Heritage counties and several longtime supporters of our mission and consumer base.

**Sr. Susan O'Connor, Chair**  
VP of Mission Integration,  
Mercy Medical Center

**Ro Foege, Vice-Chair**  
Former Director,  
Iowa Dept. on Aging

**Scott Olson, Secretary**  
District 4,  
Cedar Rapids City Council

**Steve Ovel, Treasurer**  
Board of Trustees,  
Kirkwood Community College

**Steve Agne**  
Board of Supervisors,  
Cedar County

**Mike Barnhart**  
CEO,  
Horizons

**Gary Bierschenk**  
Board of Supervisors,  
Benton County

**Michelle Buhman**  
Program Specialist,  
Iowa City Senior Center

**Toni Claussen**  
Sales Manager,  
Meth-Wick Community

**Pat Heiden**  
Board of Supervisors,  
Johnson County

**Stephanie Humphries**  
Representative,  
Heritage Advisory Council

**Sarah Martinez**  
Executive Director,  
Access2Independence

**Matt Piersall**  
Attorney,  
Piersall Law Firm, P.C.

**Vicki Pope**  
Board of Supervisors,  
Iowa County

**Rose Rennekamp**  
Board of Trustees,  
Kirkwood Community College

**Ned Rohwedder**  
Board of Supervisors,  
Jones County

**Stacey Walker**  
Board of Supervisors,  
Linn County

**Dustie Winkie**  
Wallace Winkie Foundation

**Richard Young**  
Board of Supervisors,  
Washington County

# Advisory Council

Area Agencies on Aging across the country utilize the expertise and advice of volunteers on their Advisory Councils. Heritage's Advisory Council is made up of representatives elected by their county's Task Force on Aging, as well as a local elected official.

The group meets with management regularly and has five key focuses: Advocacy, Planning, Communications, Resource Development, Education

**Stephanie Humphries, Chair**  
Linn County

**Lindsay Glynn, Vice-Chair**  
Johnson County

**Joyce Brunssen**  
Benton County

**Marcia Taylor**  
Benton County

**Shirley Geadelmann**  
Cedar County

**Shari Slaton**  
Cedar County

**Lynne Cannon**  
Johnson County

**Ed Dunbar**  
Johnson County

**Angi Roemerman**  
Johnson County

**Tamra Albright-Johnson**  
Jones County

**Dora Lorenc**  
Linn County

**Sofia Mehaffey**  
Linn County

**Nancylee Siebenmann**  
Linn County

**Barb Young**  
Linn County

**Elizabeth Koehn**  
Washington County

**Rep. Art Staed**  
Elected Official

## *Mission Moment*

*"Laura, thank you so much. You have been a pleasure to work with.  
Your clients are very blessed to have you.  
You have a kind heart, a very caring soul.  
You made [consumer name] feel so special... God bless you, Laura."  
- Family of an Elder Rights consumer*



# The Fast Five

Heritage's impact is best seen in a diner's smile after a nice meal, or a caregiver's sigh of relief knowing their parents will be well-cared-for. But big numbers are fun, too!

Check out five big ways we made our mission happen last year:

**100+**

food distributions held by Encore Café

**154**

consultations with Elder Rights consumers

**4,819**

unique consumers

## *Mission Moment*

*"It was like seeing a new person. He smiled more, and he said he felt like a different person in his new clothes."*

*— Drew, Elder Rights Coordinator,*

*on helping a consumer find dignity (and new clothes) after overcoming addiction*

**312,993**

meals served to seniors

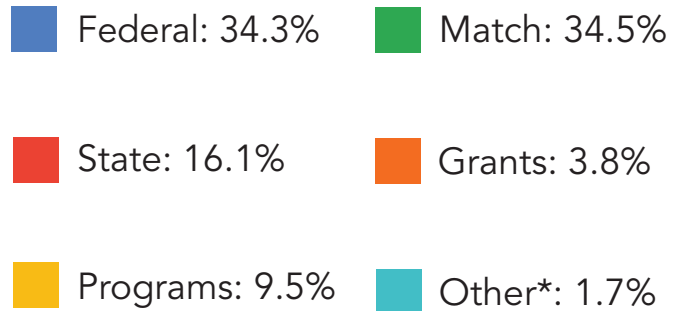
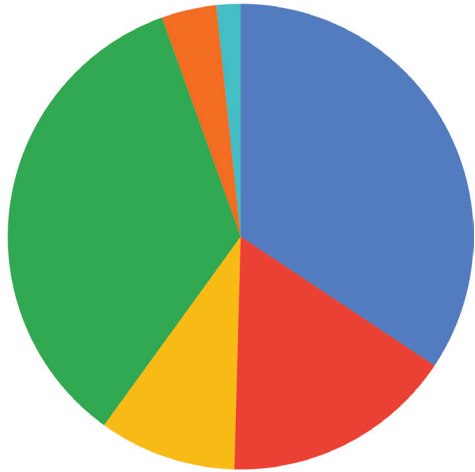
**\$3.97M**

in funding provided to community-based services

# Fiscal Overview

A financial snapshot of the agency (percentages rounded to nearest tenth)

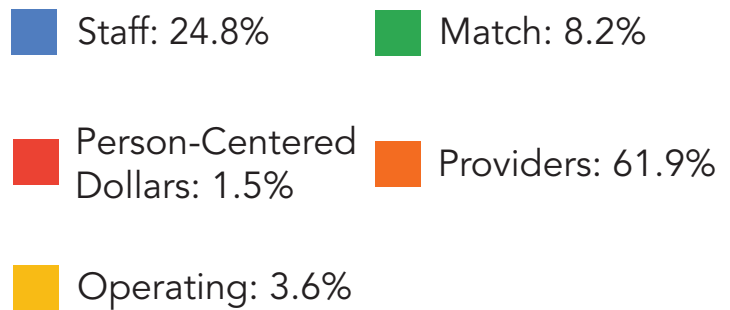
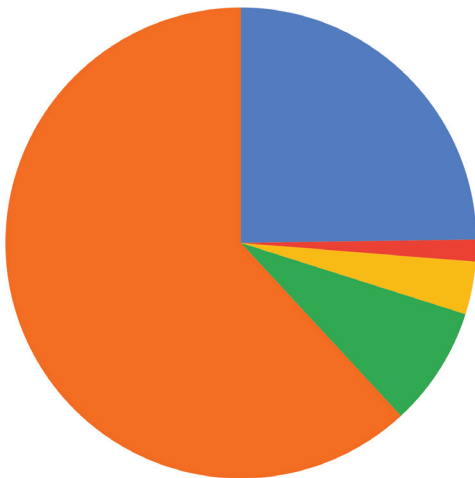
## Revenues by Funding Source



Total Revenues: \$6.50 million

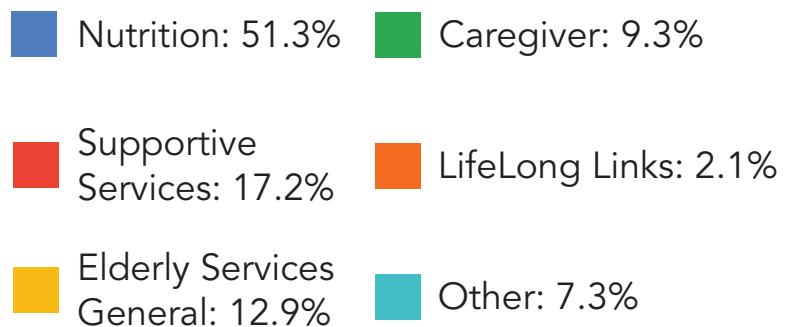
\*Other combines Contributions, In-Kind Donations, Investments, and Endowments

## Expenses



Total Expenses: \$6.42 million

## Expenses by Program (regardless of funding source)



# Join Us

It's a fact: America is getting older. The U.S. Census Bureau projects the number of older adults to nearly double by 2060 – that's 95 million older Americans!

As Baby Boomers reach their golden years, the number of seniors here in Iowa and nationwide is causing a new kind of boom: the need for services that empower them to age with dignity and independence.

Join Heritage AAA in creating more Mission Moments



## Follow

our Facebook page to stay updated and spread the word

## Volunteer

to serve our consumers and see your impact first-hand

## Donate

to fund the Heritage mission and empower our consumers



## Participate

in a Heritage program or class

1-800-332-5934 • [www.HeritageAAA.org](http://www.HeritageAAA.org) 



Area Agency on Aging

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