In The Know, UDMO: March 2024

Executive Director 2

Employees of the Month! 3 & 4

CACFP 5

LIHEAP 5

Compliance/Reporting 6

1stFive 7

KIDS 8

1st/Five 9

Housing 10

Early Childhood 11

Weatherization 11

HR 12

FaDSS/Outreach 13-15







Audrey Sikora- Spencer Head Start Teacher and Ryan Sikora

Lucy Marie Sikora 2/12/24 7 lbs 8 oz 19 inches



Megan Noyes- Sheldon

Head Start Teacher and Dylan Noyes Hunter James Noyes Born January 25, 2024 7 lb 2 oz 20 inches

Team of Hardin County Prevent Child Abuse Coalition members helping with the Hardin County "Tall Cop Says Stop" event for educators and community partners/community members presentation.

Upper Des Moines Opportunity 1st Five (front row-far left (Karhyn Alcantara, 1st Five DSS Family Worker & Meredith Mickelson, 1st Five Site Coordinator)





Monthly Happenings:

- Data Systems numerous meetings continue as the state is developing a new Liheap data system that will eventually incorporate CSGB and possibly Weatherization. Concurrently, all Community Action Agencies are exploring options to replace our agency data system. Much time has been put into this effort. Currently, data points are being identified for security purposes. UDMO is identifying data needs and will be working with company as discussed during Finance and Board meetings last month.
- DHHS Realignment ECI and impending changes have been our focus
- Advocacy in Des Moines focused on housing issues such as eviction expungement and early childhood issues such as AEA and Statewide Voluntary Preschool
- **Head Start Sarina Smith** has joined our team as the new Early Childhood Programs Director. She has been actively onboarding including attending Head Start meetings and touring centers.
- KIDS exploring options for expansion into BV, Calhoun, Crawford and Sac Counties.
- Outreach focus continues on fundraising efforts.
- Housing attended national training to secure required certification for housing inspections.
- Leadership Trainings continue.
 - Data Practices & Systems Fundamentals Training was on how agencies can support successful governance, including setting up successful data management policies, gathering user feedback, and deploying a data governance group within the agency to ensure the systems and processes reflect the needs of staff and leadership.
 - Administrative Leadership Training met with the team again for a full day of leadership training on sensitivity at work.

Save the Dates:

- Finance Committee on March 19 @ 1pm.
 - o **Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) amended HOME contract** by allowing NSPIRE to be utilized for
- inspections.

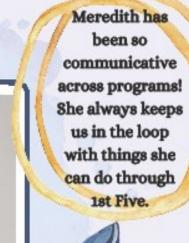
- **DOE-BIL-22-16 #3** amended training section of contract.
- **DOE-BIL-23-16 #4** amended training section of contract.
- **HEAP-24-16 #1** amended equipment/training section of contract.
- LIHEAP-23-16 #9 amended contract by moving funds a total of \$20,609.09 from regular assistance and program support into ECIP and Admin.
- **LIHEAP-23-16 #12** amended contract by moving a total of \$1,576.73 from ECIP to regular assistance and program support.
- o RRH-ERA2-14 #2 amended contract award amount from \$893,418 to \$1,048,418.
- **CSBG-24-16 #3** grant notice the remainder of the second quarter through March 31, 2024 has been released in the amount of \$216,929.
- **CSBG-24-16 #4** amended contract to reflect \$2,666 taking rent reimbursement applications and supplying the state such data.
- Emmetsburg Outreach insurance claim
- UDMO apartments in Spencer update
- UDMO Board of Directors on March 26 @ 5pm.
 - Application for new board member to fill vacancy has been received!
 - Introduction to Sarina Smith, Early Childhood Programs Director
 - Head Start new 5-year grant activities certification of Health & Safety Screening and Governance & Leadership Capacity Screening
 - o PBIS Program-Wide activity update
 - Weatherization Home Inspection Report from state visit.
- UDMO Annual Dinner @ Shores in Emmetsburg on May 28 @ 5 pm.





I have always felt comfortable communicating with Meredith, she has such great attention to her work and willing to do anything she possibly can to work with others and families. Meredith
makes
connections
with people
throughout the
agency to best
serve families.

THE MONTH





Meredith is very friendly and easy to work with and she is exceptional with families. She wants to help and make things as seamless and easy for everyone to reach as many people as she can. Meredith Michelson
1ST FIVE COORDINATOR
(SOUTHERN COUNTIES)

Meredith represents UDMO
so well with her kindness
and passion for her work.
She is always on the go
doing her own duties as
well as volunteering her
time to help other
programs with events and
things they have going on.



Monthly Board Report:

Counties Served: Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, and Sioux.

CACFP had 39 providers submit claims for February.

I am very excited to report that I have added 2 additional providers in the last month. One was previously on CACFP and the other is new to CACFP. Hopefully we can keep that trend going. Meanwhile recruitment efforts will continue. I will have my State Audit coming in March. Currently there are zero licensed daycare providers in both O'Brien and Pocahontas counties.

CACFP In-home Providers served the following meals in February:

	February 2024	February 2023
Breakfast:	4,924	4,806
Lunches:	4,968	5,023
Snacks:	6,026	6,048
Suppers:	_ 129	162
Total Meals Served:	16,047	16,039

Providers Served: 39 43





- Liheap (Low Income Household Energy Assistance Program) is from November 1 April 30.
- Anyone that applies for Liheap and are eligible, cannot be disconnected from their electric or natural gas from Nov. 1 April 1. This is known as the Moratorium on winter disconnections.
- LÎHEAP APPLICATIONS: For February, Outreach took and processed 292 Liheap applications and of that number 260 were approved. 22 denied and 10 on pending.
- Received 10 Online Liheap Applications.
- YTD TOTALS: From 10-01-2023 to 02-29-2024: Total applications 4,829. Total approved 4,591.
- Last year at this time: Total applications 5,018. Total approved 4,794.
- CRISIS: For February, 18 households received ECIP-Crisis funds in the amount of \$17,296.18. We are now working on contract called LIHEAP-23IIJA. At this time, we are not assisting with crisis for Service Continuity, due to they are protected from being disconnected from the Moratorium.

Shakira Meyer – Director of Program Development, Compliance & Reporting

Community Action, 60 Years Strong: Inspiring Hope and Advancing Opportunity



On January 8, 1964, in President Lyndon B. Johnson's State of the Union Address, he declared War on Poverty. Then on August 20, 1964, The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-452) created Community Action Agencies to coordinate local antipoverty efforts and funds programs such as Head Start, Job Corps, Community Health Centers, Upward Bound, the Work Experience Program, Neighborhood Youth Corps, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Legal Services, and federal work study programs.

- UDMO is 1 of 16 Community Action Agencies in lowa
- UDMO is 1 of over 1,000 Community Action Agencies
 Nationwide

Did you know Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. was a part of a national initiative? Throughout 2024, UDMO, along with Community Action Agencies across the country, will be commemorating the work we've done over the past 60 years to assist millions of people challenged by low-incomes and poverty.

Want to learn more? The Iowa Community Action Association is offering the Orientation to Community Action Webinar on March 28, 2024, from 9-10:30. Registration is available at:

https://iowacommunityaction.org/upcoming-training-events/

UDMO Funding Requests Update:

Recent Foundation/Organizational/Trust Grants Submitted & Status: March 2024	County	Program	Submitted/ Pending	Awarded	Denied
Clay County Community Foundation	CL	Outreach – Food Pantry			Х
Iowa Health & Human Services	BV, CL, DI, EM, OB, OS, PA, PO	9 Individual Grants - 1 per Site – Health & Safety and Minor Repairs as allowable		Х	
Sheldon United Fund	ОВ	Outreach – Client Services	Х		
City of Storm Lake	BV	Outreach – Client Services	Х		
City of Spencer	CL	Outreach – Client Services	Х		
Dickinson County Good Neighbor Fund	DI	Outreach – Client Services	Х		
Fort Dodge Community Foundation	WE	Outreach – Food Pantry	Х		
Wright County Community Foundation	WR	Outreach – Client Services	Х		

Program Grants Submitted and Status as of March 11, 2024	County	Program	Submitted/ Pending	Awarded	Denied
Head Start	BV, CL, DI,	Head Start/Early Head	Х		
	EM, OB, OS,	Start			
	PA, PO				1

UDMO is dedicated to helping build stronger communities by addressing the effects of poverty on individuals and families.



Jessie Hansen-1st Five Project Director/KIDS Program Director





CSA4 - FEBRUARY 2024 Monthly UDMO Board Report

Respectfully submitted by: Meredith Mickelson, 1st Five Site Coordinator Counties Served: Calhoun, Hamilton, Hardin, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster & Wright Counties

Ist Five Services: Partnership between Primary Care Providers and Community partners to support child development for children birth up to their 5th birthday.

FY24 – 1st Five new incoming referrals listed below by county of referring clinic for current FY24

Referring County Provider/Clinic		st Financial States	ve						e rrals fo Site Co			
FY24 (July1,2023-June 30,2024)	JU- LY 2023	AUG 2023	SEP T 2023	OCT 2023	NOV 2023	DEC 2023	JAN 2024	FEB 2024	MAR 2024	AP R 202 4	MA Y 2024	JUNE 2024
CALHOUN	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0				
HAMILTON	3	8	6	1	4	1	2	2				
HARDIN	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	1				
HUMBOLDT	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0				
POCAHONTAS	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3				
WEBSTER	2	11	9	4	0	6	1	6				
WRIGHT	1	1	5	3	2	1	3	2				
New monthly incom- ing referrals	11	22	20	9	6	13	6	14				
TOTAL CSA4 FY24 referrals (July 1, 2023-current)	11	33	53	62	68	81	87	101				
# of Different Primary Care Providers who referred current month	9 primary care provid- ers	13 primary care provid- ers	16 primary care provid- ers	9 primary care providers	5 primary care providers	12 primary care provid- ers	6 primary care providers	13 primary care providers				

Focus Area 1: Meeting with Primary Care Physicians/Clinics

- 1st Five has created a 2023 Gold/Platinum Referring Provider Recognition Certificates for each provider who referred into 1st Five between Jan 1, 2023-Dec 31, 2023.
 - Gold Provider Recognition Certificate: Referring provider successfully referred and partnered with Upper Des Moines 1st Five.
 - o *Platinum Provider Recognition Certificate*: Referring provider successfully documented a completed developmental screening along with referral and partnership with Upper Des Moines 1st Five.
- *In February 2024:* This month celebrated 3 first-time referring primary care providers and 1 new referring clinic (Laurens Pocahontas County) referred into UDMO CSA#4 and believes that the January Medical Peer Champion Presentation with Dr Andrea McLoughlin, MD helped to promote this increase.
- 1st Five encourages accredited developmental screenings at well-child visits and if a delay or concern is identified a simple referral to UDMO 1st Five to help connect family with local resources.
- Focus Area 2: Meeting with Community Partners
 - Meredith continues to share information about 1st Five by attending community partner meetings in person or virtually. Information gathered at these community partner meetings/events is shared with 1st Five Developmental Support Specialists and/or other community partners. 1st Five promotional items, screening, EPSDT guidance are all available and distributed at these meetings/events.
- 1st Five Site Coordinator continues to reach out to be active with county community events and partnership meetings
- Planning the Hardin County Tall Cop Says Stop, presentation event and then attending the event on 3/4/24.



1st Five Continued:

Focus Area 3: Referrals/Communication with Families:

- Upper Des Moines Opportunity 1st Five continues to help support referred children and their families with services.
- Documentation into Iowa Connected Iowa HHS data entry system encouraged same day, but completion within 10 calendar days.

On-Going Efforts/Upcoming Changes:

- Meredith & Jessie are excited to announce we have hired a new internal Upper Des Moines Opportunity 1st Five Developmental Support Specialist Family Worker, Karhyn Alcantara. She started in 1st Five on February 27, 2024. Karhyn previously worked with Upper Des Moines Opportunity in the Fort Dodge-Webster County Outreach Program. She is jumping right in and learning about 1st Five and completing trainings. We are thrilled to have her supporting families and becoming a part of our 1st Five team.
- Meredith continues with staff supervisions written summaries, required Iowa HHS training and verification before subcontract payments are processed through UDMO. Both subcontracted agencies are complying.

KIDS Program: Services: 0-5 family support services in Clay, Dickinson, O'Brien, Emmet, Palo Alto, Kossuth

- Request for Approval: I have included for your consideration in the Board Packet, a request for approval to apply for Early Childhood Iowa funding for Buena Vista, Crawford and Sac. Please take time to consider this request.
- Referrals/Recruitment/Marketing: Referrals have slowed as of late, but we are working on a number of ways to recruit families including attending WIC, community events occurring in the next two months, and community partner and family surveys. I have also received approval to purchase promotional items to help recruit families as well. we are in preparation for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April and looking at marketing and promotional events. We also will be reaching out to Board of Supervisors and County Representatives to sign a proclamation again this year. Wear Blue Day is tentatively planned for April 5th and we would love to have you send us pictures in support of Child Abuse Prevention Month. I also have the Annual Report from Prevent Child Abuse Iowa that recognizes which counties participated and even featured a Prevent Child Abuse Booth in Palo Alto County!
- <u>Professional Development:</u> Perinatal Specialist Badge Program: to increase our knowledge and abilities surrounding prenatal care. This course will take approximately a year to complete and staff have the option of becoming professional doulas at the end of their training. Some of you may be aware that there continues to be a reduction in the hospitals delivering babies, resulting in **Maternity Care Deserts** in Northwest Iowa. For this reason, we believe this training will be important to provide quality services to families.

ACCESS TO MATERNITY CARE IN IOWA

Access to care during pregnancy and around the time of birth is not consistently available across the country. Hospital closures and a shortage of providers are driving changes in maternity care access, especially within rural areas and among Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). The level of maternity care access within each county is classified across lowa by the availability of birthing facilities, maternity care providers, and the percent of uninsured women (see table). The map shows that in lowa, 33.3 percent of counties are defined as maternity care deserts compared to 32.6 percent of counties in the U.S. overall.

FINDINGS

- In lowa, there was a 6.7% decrease in the number of birthing hospitals between 2020 and 2019.
- In lowa, there were 4,176 babies born in maternity care deserts, 11.3% of all births.
- 22.3% of babies were born to women who live in rural counties, while 9.0% of maternity care providers practice in rural counties in lowa.

Maternity care desert	Low	Moderate access	Fu

DEFINITIONS OF MATERNITY CARE DESERT AND LEVEL OF MATERNITY CARE ACCESS

Definitions	Maternity care deserts	Low access	Moderate access	Full access*
Hospitals and birth centers offering obstetric care	zero	<2	<2	≥2
Obstetric providers (obstetrician, family physician', CNM/CM per 10,000 births)	zero	<60	<60	≥60
Proportion of women 18-64 without health insurance	any	≥10%	<10%	any

Sources: U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Area Health Resources Files, 2022; American Board of Family Medicine, 2017-2020; National Center for Health Statistics, 2021 final natality data.

Note: CNM/CM = certified nurse midwives/certified midwives.

*A county is full access if it meets one or more of the criteria.

'Includes family physicians who provide obstetric care.

WHERE YOU LIVE MATTERS: MATERNITY CARE DESERTS AND THE CRISIS OF ACCESS AND EQUITY
March of Dimes recommends state policy actions that address access to care; see: https://marchofdimes.org/mcdr-ia

For details on data sources and calculations, see Technical Notes: https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/maternitycaretechnotes

© 2023 March of Dimes

1st FIVE ~ CSA-1

'Blooming' with activity in 2024

Mission

1st Five promotes the use of universal screening tools
(ASQ-3, SWYC, etc.)
during well-checks at AAP
recommended ages, to ensure developmental delays are identified, referrals to 1st Five are generated, and intervention services are initiated to ensure healthy development of children birth to 5 years of age.

~ 1st Five CSA-1~

~ 4 New clinic introductions to 1st Five

(All CSA-1 qualifying clinics have now been introduced to 1st Five)

~ 4 Ages and Stages Questionnaire Trainings with 17 clinic staff

(2 more trainings scheduled)

~ 3 Community Partner Presentations explaining the 1st Five initiative

Through February 2024

- **4** New Referrals with a 75% use of the ASO-3
- **5** Closed Cases with a satisfaction survey rating of excellent

11 Total open cases

2 new referring providers17 total Primary CareReferring Providers

"When a flower doesn't bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower." Alexander Den Heijer

Teresa K. Ball, MA ~1st Five Site Coordinator, CSA-1 ~ Office/Cell: (712) 298-6751 Fax: (712) 377-6165



69 Households (172 Individuals) were assisted.

ESG: 18 Households and 57 Individuals	ERA: Homeless Prevention: 35 Households and 83 Individuals Rapid Rehousing: 16 Households and 32 Individuals
	Rupia Renousing. To Households und 52 marriadus

Rural Unsheltered Funding is now available.

Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) for Homeless Prevention has been spent down.

Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) additional funds were requested.

TBRA Funding will be available soon.

An additional Housing Case Manager has been hired to work out of the Storm Lake Outreach Office.

Meetings and Trainings:

Iowa Balance of State CoC Board Meeting

Coordinated Entry Committee Monthly Meeting

IA Bos CoC Membership Task Group

Fort Dodge PCC Meeting

DEI Training with IA BoS CoC Presented by IMAN Consulting, Dr. LaDrina Wilson

BRIC Meeting in Calhoun County

Spark Point Leadership Training with Sara Ennis

ESG Homeless Prevention & Rapid Rehousing Call

TA Visit with Rachel Falahpour with IA Bos CoC

Housing Coalition Meeting United Way Fort Dodge Foundation

NSPIRE-V Inspection Training

Statewide Crisis Line Update: Clients in need of rental assistance should call the **Statewide Crisis Line** at 1-833-739-0065 to complete the intake process. Call backs are being made within 24-48 hours.

Effective January 1, 2024 the Statewide Crisis Line will no longer offer 24/7 live operator service. Normal business hours will be 7am-8pm. Clients calling outside of these hours will still be able to leave a message and will be triaged the next business day.

0-5 Early Childhood Programs—

Enrollment:

■ Fully enrolled in Early Head Start with 183 children and Head Start with 289 children.

Disabilities:

■ Early Head Start students served on IFSP's: 19

■ Head Start students served on IFSP's: 25

■ Total served: 44 Target: 47

TEACH - CDA, 2 year or 4-year Degree:

• CDA certification completion: 9

• Associates degree in progress: 1

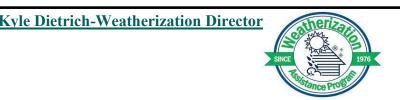
• Bachelor degree in progress: 1



Teachers – 5 and Home Base Teachers – 2

What's Happening:

- Sarina Smith started as the Early Childhood Programs Director on March 5.
- Head Start leadership staff have been diligently working on balancing workloads through job responsibilities. Drafts
 of new job descriptions will come to Policy Council and the UDMO Board in April for approval.
- Recruitment efforts continue for the 2024-2025 school year. Acceptance is planned for April.
- Planning for Head Start's annual Self-Assessment will be carried out over the next few months. Policy Council and
- Board volunteers will be contacted to arrange dates/times that accommodate their schedules in April.
- Planning for staff professional development events this summer and next school is occurring by Head Start leadership team.



"Weatherization Report for February 2024"

Number of Families Served in February 2024: 10

Number of Families Served in FY 2024: 20

Goal for 2023: 110 Homes

The Weatherization Department for the month of February was another great month of completing 10 homes again staying on track with our 110 homes year end goal. We will be starting our new web based NEAT Audit on April 1st This is something that we have been waiting on for many years and we can't wait to see if this will make things better for our program and the clients that we serve. We as an agency have completed our training on this and are waiting to start this new program. Hopefully moving forward this will be more efficient and more helpful on assisting our clients with there energy needs in their home, and assisting with the work that will be completed for these clients. Hopefully moving forward there are some extra programs with in this new system that will help with work orders, etc. I am hoping we will be able to utilize these to help speed up the process and make paperwork more accurate for the state. April 1st 2024 will be the start of our new Program Year for Weatherization, and I will release all our budget contracts on where we are sitting with for Funding on DOE, DOE-BIL, HEAP, and our 3 utility vendors Black Hills Energy, Alliant Energy, and Mid-American Energy.

Until then we will continue to push hard and create results and effectively assist our clients with their energy needs on their homes in our 17-county area that we serve.





Please continue to review your paystubs every pay day. If you are not satisfied with the State & Federal taxes coming out of your check, submit a new W4 form AFTER consulting with your tax professional!

Congratulations to our February Employees of the Month, <u>Head Start: Linda Madsen (Jefferson Head Start) & Non-Head Start: Meredith Mickelson (Remote).</u> All nomination forms are due to HR by the 15th of each month.

Employee Appreciation Day was March 1st. In an effort to show our appreciation for all the hard work our employees put in, 1 hour of leave was added to their Personal or Annual Leave balance. It was very well received and many staff responded with thanks!

Wellness Challenge: Time to Move!

■ Challenge: April 1, 2024 – May 12, 2024

■ Registration: March 25, 2024 – April 5, 2024

■ Friendly Competition Challenge: 1st, 2nd & 3rd place prizes

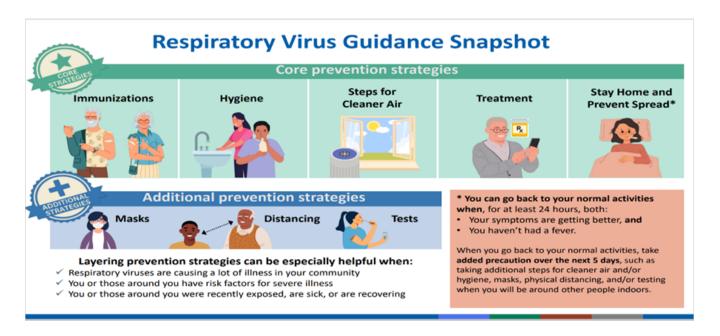
Work Comp Incident Report Recap:

In order to keeps our rates from rising, our goal is to provide a safe working environment to keep these incident reports to a minimum and avoid preventable work comp claims.

■ January 2024: 3 incident reports

■ February 2024: 1 incident report

■ YTD Total: 4





FaDSS:

Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Hamilton, Humboldt, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Webster and Wright

Februyar 2024

Number of Families Served: for February 2024 77 families

Year to Date Families Served: July 1, 2022 to February 29, 2024: 99 families

Success Story:

Kristal is a single mother of 1 son. She started FaDSS on FIP and unemployed. She now has a full-time job at Rail Crew Services as a driver for the engineers and conductors of Chicago Northwestern Railroad. Kristal has been sober for almost 2 years after she had a heart attack, kidneys almost shut down, and had drop foot. After that she broke her ankle. She is now doing well physically but cannot stand for long periods of time due to the ankle injury. Kristal has been seeing a MH therapist and doing great. She recently broke up with her long-time boyfriend because he could not remain sober. Kristal stated if she drinks again it may kill her and she could not risk that with the boyfriend drinking around her. She has made amends with her 3 older daughters and building relationships with them. She plans once Mauricio graduates in 2 years that she is going to move closer to her daughters in Nebraska.

Outreach:

Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Hamilton, Humboldt, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Webster and Wright

February was a big month for fundraising for Clay County. They hosted a DJ Bingo on February 29th and raised about \$4200 for Outreach!

Outreach continues to be in the planning phase of fundraising for all of our counties!

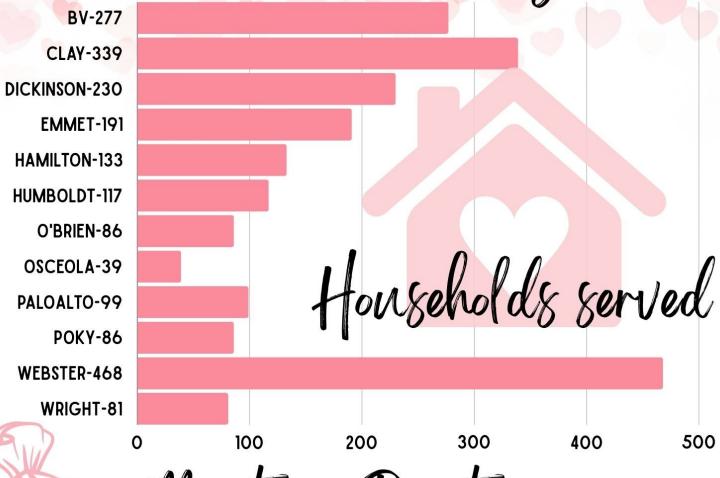
We would like to welcome 2 new staff: <u>Emily Hayes</u>-Pocahontas County Outreach Specialist and <u>Deanna Hudson</u>-Webster County Outreach Specialist

Outreach currently has 1 open positions: Humboldt

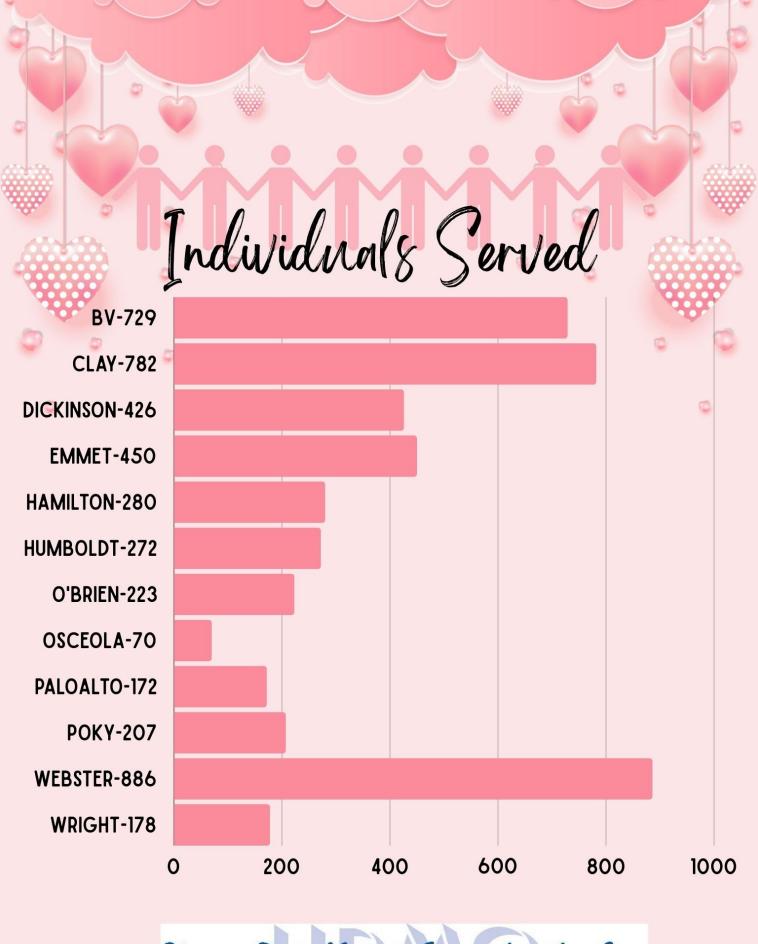




Outreach - February 2024 BV-277



Mone or Donations
BV- \$0 O'BRIEN- \$3,444.00
CLAY- \$4,298.00 OSCEOLA- \$20.00
DICKINSON- \$800.00 PALOALTO- \$272.00
EMMET- \$669.00 POKY- \$270.00
HAMILTON- \$555.00 WEBSTER- \$850.00
HUMBOLDT- \$75.00 WRIGHT- \$785.50



Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.