I have served on the Lifeline Board of Directors since 2012, and am currently the Board President. I am also an Asst. Program Administrator at the Lake County Department of Job and Family Services in the Public Assistance Division.

Serving the low income population of Lake County for the past 12 years has given me perspective on the needs of our community and I have continually been learning how to fight poverty in our community. Lifeline assists thousands of residents with health, housing, energy, and consumer education programs. I’ve seen how it fills in the gaps in services that are not provided by other agencies in Lake County.

Just in 2016, Lifeline launched three new programs: our Bike Safety Program, which is an alternative transportation program to provide additional transportation options to low-income people; our Comprehensive Case Management Employment Program, which, in partnership with our local Job & Family Services, is a program designed to help transitional age youth secure employment and remove barriers to self-sufficiency; and our Re-Entry Program, which helps ex-offenders transition successfully back into our community upon exit from a correctional facility. These all meet gaps in services that were identified in Lifeline’s 2015 Community Needs Assessment and targeted in our 2016-18 Strategic Plan.

In 2017, we are working on developing a new asset building program for our clients, as well as working on a new 2017 Community Needs Assessment.

As 2018 approaches, we will use the information from that assessment to strategically develop new programs to help our clients reach their potential to be productive, caring, and responsible citizens.

Lifeline assisted over 2,700 households, including 7,000 individuals, in 2016, and the 2-1-1 Lake County staff answered nearly 35,000 incoming calls requesting information and referral services in 2016, making Lifeline an essential part of our community.

We are proud of the impact we’ve made in Lake County, and look forward to continuing to being an innovative leader in programs that better Lake County.

On the fund development front, we also had a successful year. Our 2016-2017 Annual Campaign was our best campaign ever—over one hundred donors strong!

A giant thank you to those who contributed.

Our 9th Annual Dancing Under the Stars saw record-breaking attendance and was also hugely successful.

As we roll into our 2017-18 Annual Campaign, we hope you will join us in our efforts of fighting poverty in Lake County.

~ Anne Curwen, Lifeline Board President
Lifeline’s Homeless Crisis Response Program Allows Local Resident to Thrive

by: Angela Wrana
Program Coordinator

Kenna was referred to Lifeline for the Homeless Crisis Response Rapid Rehousing Program (HCRP) by a local domestic violence shelter.

The HCRP program provides emergency housing assistance to homeless individuals and families in Lake County and Lifeline serves as our county’s grantee.

Eligible customers must have a referral from Project Hope, Forbes House, or be working with an agency who works with those living on the streets or in hotels. HCRP provides rental assistance as well as assistance with security deposit, first/last month’s rent, and utility deposit and/or arrears.

The circumstances that had led to Kenna’s homelessness are unimaginable. Kenna had been struggling to leave an unhealthy marriage for 23 years. She was not only physically and verbally abused, but was conditioned by her ex-husband on everything from how to dress to what to eat.

She fled to Lake County seeking support and services to help her get back on her feet.

She began working diligently with her advocate at the shelter to get linked with needed services and was quickly referred to Lifeline for housing assistance. Once her referral had been received, Kenna met with Lifeline Program Coordinator Angela Wrana to complete the intake process for HCRP.

She was immediately enrolled in the program and was able to quickly obtain housing. At age 46, this would be the first time that Kenna would live on her own.

HCRP provided Kenna with six months of rental assistance. This allowed her the opportunity that she needed to get settled in her new home and to take care of other needed expenses so that she could be self-sufficient once the assistance has ended.

The HCRP program not only assisted her financially with her rent and utilities, but she also met with Angela for case management services to provide additional support. This support included budgeting, goal planning and discussing any issues or concerns that she was experiencing.

Now Kenna is not only living in a healthy and safe environment, but she has gained the skills and knowledge of resources to be able to support herself and live independently.
Kenna is thrilled to be able to decorate her new home the way she wants it or watch the programs on television that she enjoys - little things that most people take for granted every day. Kenna describes the feeling of living on her own as a miracle.

“This has shown me that I can stand on my own two feet and that I deserve to be happy. I have my individuality back and I don’t have to live in fear anymore,” said Kenna.

Moving forward, Kenna plans to maintain her independence and continue bettering herself. She is actively involved in mental health services such as therapy, case management and support groups. Most recently, she became involved with an art therapy group and has learned that she has a passion and talent for art that she never knew existed.

She admits that some days are very difficult for her living on her own, but has learned to surround herself with a healthy support system and healthy activities. She has even expressed an interest in returning to school to pursue a degree in the medical field.

“Prior to coming to Lifeline, I had worked with Kenna before at a residential facility,” said Wrana.

“I have truly seen her come a long way and I am proud of her. The fact that she overcame her struggles and is now living independently for the first time in her life is a huge inspiration to others who are living in similar situations. With programs like HCRP, there is hope for people to create new beginnings.”

Kenna has advice to give other individuals who are in a domestic violence situation.

“Get out. Abusers will never change, you can’t save them or change them,” said Kenna. “Seek the shelters and the assistance that is available. Fight fear and believe in yourself.”

She also shares her favorite quote for inspiration, “I won’t just survive, you will see me thrive” from the song Rise by Katy Perry.

Call 2-1-1 Your Lifeline for Health and Human Services

2-1-1 is a free hotline that connects people to social, health, and government services. If you need confidential help with housing, food, utility assistance, transportation, or employment, you can call 24 hours a day and talk to a real person. 2-1-1 has information on over 2,000 agencies and trained staff to help you find the services you need.

2-1-1 is a service of Lifeline, Inc.

What types of issues can we help you with?

Basic Human Needs
Food banks
Shelter
Clothing
Financial aid
Utility assistance
Physical and Mental Health
Healthcare
Medicaid
Medicare
Prenatal care
Children’s health insurance
Crisis intervention

Support Groups
Counseling
Drug and alcohol treatment
Intervention/rehabilitation
Older Adults
Adult day care
Meals on Wheels
Respite care
Home health care
Transportation
Nutrition
Senior centers

‘Give Help, Get Help’ – For volunteer opportunities and where to make donations see the other side.
Dancing Under the Stars, adapted from the popular television show, returned on Friday, Aug. 4 at LaMalfa Party Center to an audience of nearly 500—our largest crowd ever in our nine-year history! This year featured 11 area community and corporate leaders paired with local dance instructors to entertain attendees and raise over $50,000 for Lifeline, Inc. and the Family Planning Association of Northeast Ohio.

Dr. Jessie Baginski, President & CEO of Leadership Lake County, served as honorary chair for the evening, kicking off the evening with inspiring remarks.

Then the competition began. Those competing for the Judges’ Choice and Peoples’ Choice awards included: Maurice Coffee, an assistant pastor at Union Community Church and employee at Progressive Insurance; Bryan Geller, chef and co-owner of the Beach Club Grill in Concord Twp.; Jen Hess, a master colorist and stylist at Jenniffer & Co.; Rachel Johnson of Progressive Insurance; Emily Kerwood, a Realtor with Keller Williams; Rochelle Kovach, a chemist at the Lubrizol Corporation; Pam Martin, a professor at Lake Erie College; Jason Moon, a CPA with Skoda Minotti; Nicole Parker, assistant to the President at Lakeland Community College; Chris Price, an HR Consultant and community volunteer; Bob Searles, Mentor Fire Chief; Mike Swanson of LegalShield.

Helping to prepare the celebrity dancers were professional dancers: Kellie Love and Dave Lyle from the Fred Astaire Studio in Willoughby; Hannah Elizabeth Green of Rabbit Run Community Arts; EthanKonig and Shannon Taylor of the Fred Astaire Studio in Chagrin Fall; Tani Maitra of Serendipity Dance; and private dance instructors Trisha Pekarcik, Maggie Runyon, Howard Washington and Bobby Ford.

Bill Squire, of the WMMS Alan Cox Morning Show, served as our masters of ceremonies, while Lake County Judge Eugene Lucci and previous Celebrities Libby Hill and Kerri Beverage served as judges. Hill previously danced in 2010 and was the Peoples’ Choice Award winner at our 2014 All-Star Event and Beverage was our 2016 Judges’ Choice Award winner.

The dancers competed to win a Peoples’ Choice award by garnering “votes” in the form of contributions from supporters. These “votes” were given directly to dancers prior to the event, submitted through the web, and placed in voting boxes the night of the event. The Consolidated Investment Corporation Peoples’ Choice Award was presented to Jen Hess for raising $7,144. A new award, the Painesville Furniture & Carpet Star of the Night Award, was also presented to Hess and her partner, Bobby Ford, for receiving the loudest crowd reaction.

The Lighthouse Advisors Judges’ Choice award was given to celebrity, Nicole Parker for her bolero to “Man in the Mirror” by Michael Jackson. For the first time in Dancing Under the Stars history, Parker engaged the audience and her performance featured a flash mob of local community members. Parker was paired with pro Ethan Konig from Fred Astaire Chagrin Falls.

“Participating in Dancing Under the Stars provided a great opportunity to see our community unite for a common goal to help our neighbors. I enjoyed getting to know more of our community members, the opportunity to step outside of my comfort zone, challenge myself in a new way, and most importantly,
the opportunity to support the individuals and families who could not attend the event. The ones that are struggling to keep their gas turned on, the ones that are staying up all night trying to figure out a place to lay their head at night, the ones that have been abused and literally have no idea where to turn. These are the people we danced for and these are the people who deserve a little help,” said Parker.

“Thank you to the Family Planning Association of Northeast Ohio, Inc. and Lifeline, Inc. for serving our community and helping so many in need. The Dancing Under the Stars fundraiser will ultimately help more people secure safe housing, provide medical screenings to low-income men and women, assist those who are pursuing an education or job training, and support in those in need in so many ways and I’m happy to support that.”

Celebrity Mike Swanson agreed that it was an amazing experience.

“Being a part of this year’s Dancing Under the Stars event was totally amazing. I loved every second of the experience and grew immeasurably as a person. Kellie Love and the Fred Astaire of Willoughby staff are some of the best people that I’ve ever met and I can’t thank them enough for pouring into me,” said Swanson. “I enjoyed the experience so much that my wife and I have continued to take lessons and plan on performing choreographed routines together as a couple. I am totally hooked on dance now!!”

The 2017 Dancing Under the Stars event was chaired by long-time supporter, Vanessa Tey losue, President of Burges & Burges Strategists.

“Chairing this year’s event was rewarding, exciting and at points overwhelming. Meeting such an exceptional group of volunteers that go out of their comfort zone to raise funds and perform in front of people is truly inspiring. I’m so proud that for the first year ever, every dancer raised their $2000 minimum and we had the largest crowd yet,” said Tey losue.

We’re fortunate to have such committed pro dancers involved with our event each year. Pro Maggie Runyon has danced each year since 2012.

“I love Dancing Under the Stars! It’s such a great event for two wonderful organizations,” said Runyon. “It’s also a great chance to get people out of their comfort zones and onto the dance floor. I just love, love, love this event and I’m already looking forward to next year!”

Tey losue led the event to its biggest year yet, with the highest attendance and profit, and is excited to see where it goes next year for its 10th anniversary year.

“Watching the whole community come together to support Lifeline and Family Planning is one of the reasons I’m proud to be part of Lake County. We all worked extremely hard to find corporate sponsors, sell ads, secure media and encourage each other to raise money,” said Tey losue.

Additional sponsors for this year's event included Klammer Law Office and the Painesville City Improvement Corporation.

We hope everyone will join us next year for the 10th Annual Dancing Under the Stars, to be held Friday, August 3, 2018 at LaMalfa Party Center and chaired by Dione DeMitro of Lakeland Community College.

Photos courtesy of:
Mark Gifford,
Gazette Newspapers
Lifeline Honors Individuals and Local Organizations with Awards at 2017 Annual Dinner

Lifeline was pleased to present its 2017 award winners and to recognize agency volunteers and community partners for their commitment to Lake County’s low-income citizens. The awards were presented at Lifeline’s Annual Dinner held on May 17 at Grand River Cellars in Madison.

“We gave out four different awards to numerous recipients this year,” said Carrie Dotson, Executive Director of Lifeline. “We are so excited to be able to recognize those who partner with and support Lifeline and its programs, and our community.”

The 13th Annual Mildred P. Wilson Award was presented to Frank Vaccariello, who has demonstrated outstanding service and dedication to Lifeline. The Mildred P. Wilson Award is named for the late Mildred Wilson, a dedicated Lifeline employee for many years.

Mildred’s commitment and service to both Lifeline and Lake County’s low-income community were remarkable. This award was established in 2004 to honor an individual who goes above and beyond the call of duty in working to benefit Lifeline and the consumers we serve.

Previous recipients have included William Margalis, past Lifeline Board member; Barb Crabtree, fiscal consultant; Janet Gockel, Lifeline volunteer; Rita C. McMahon, past Lifeline Board member; Donna Zabarsky, past Lifeline Board member and community partner; Bob Zaluski, past Lifeline Board member; Mark Alderman, Ohio Development Services Agency Field Representative; Gwen Corban, former Lifeline Executive Director; Cate Hearn, former Lifeline staff member; Jeremy & Vanessa Iosue, past Lifeline Board member and volunteers; Elaine Waytes, Lifeline volunteer; and Joe Hughes & Ali Adinaro, Lifeline volunteers/celebrity dancers.

Frank has given his time to the VITA program selflessly since the inception of the program in 2010. This year was his seventh year with Lifeline and he commits with enthusiasm to the program in this seventh year as he did in the first.

Frank also single-handedly expands the service that we offer to the Lake County community by completing the local tax returns for our VITA clients. This is a unique offering within this type of program.

The primary benefit that Frank provides aligns with our program mission statement in that our clients are being empowered and achieving self-sufficiency in their fiscal responsibility. However, there is a secondary benefit that elevates Lake County overall. When residents are actively and responsibly participating in the appropriate collection of local taxes, the local governments can better achieve their own fiscal responsibilities goals.

“Frank also takes the time to make sure that our clients understand what and why they are filing. As an example, this year we completed returns for a repeat client and Frank personally delivered their completed local tax return to their home and sat with the client and explained the taxes to them. He also advocated with collection authority on their behalf by informing the agency that the sole income for these clients was social security disability and that they should not be filing local returns as the agency was indicating.

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Without Frank’s commitment to the local returns Lifeline’s clients would either not file these returns or have the collecting authority complete the forms for them. If our clients don’t file the outcome could result in owed back taxes, fines and penalties and if our clients have the collection authority complete the returns they don’t have the opportunity or assurance that someone advocated on their behalf.

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Frank is also very easy going and patient in his nature and interactions with the clients and the Lifeline staff. He has been known to sit and wait for a client for a few hours on clinic days without any complaint. He is always friendly and cordial with staff when he is in the offices.”
The Outstanding Community Spirit Award was given to two groups for their commitment to Lifeline, Inc.’s mission and the clients that we serve, as well as their support of the community.

The awards were given jointly to local communications consultant Robin Baum and to LBL Printing, as well as to the Painesville Walgreens Pharmacy. The Community Spirit Award is bestowed upon a local business or organization who displays outstanding dedication and service to improving the quality of life for Lake County’s low-income families.

Lifeline prefers to work with local businesses whenever possible to accomplish work projects successfully. Printing needs are just one of the basic business functions that could include envelopes, letterhead, posters, and other items of a variety of complexity and importance.

Most recently, Lifeline had the opportunity to work with Robin and again with Brian Gidley and his team at LBL Printing on a large project that changed the face of Lifeline. The agency was awarded a grant by the Lake Geauga Fund of the Cleveland Foundation to rebrand the agency and design a new logo that would reflect the ever evolving expansion of Lifeline.

Robin donated her time to act as a consultant and facilitator throughout the process, first gathering valuable opinions and data through the Board focus group and later to work through selection of the updated logo and look. We are incredibly grateful for Robin’s expertise and for the donation of her valuable time.

LBL Printing was selected to design a logo that was fresh and would represent the work of the agency. LBL worked closely with a Robin, Lifeline’s Executive Director and Board of Directors to choose a new logo. LBL staff has been open to input as the logo morphed into its current look. The positive support and flexibility of Brian and his team at LBL made the process much easier and we’re proud of the new logo that shares Lifeline’s goal of empowering clients to achieve self-sufficiency.

The second recipient was Painesville’s Walgreens Pharmacy. Throughout Walgreens history they have demonstrated that they are truly a community pharmacy. Their founder, Charles R. Walgreen, believed that a business should provide excellent customer service, the best quality products, and help the community in any way possible. Those values still hold true today as Walgreens continues to develop programs that benefit communities all over the world.

For several years the Walgreens in Painesville has worked closely with Lifeline to provide medication access to those whom otherwise would not be able to afford their prescriptions.

“The staff at Walgreens has always conducted themselves in a friendly manner and recognizes the connection between a strong community and good business,” said Maribel Young, Lifeline Program Coordinator.

Members of the Walgreens Pharmacy team accept the Outstanding Community Spirit Award

“it is very heartening to know that a business in Lake County is so driven to lend a hand and help people in need.”

The Outstanding Community Partnership Award was presented jointly to Laketran and the City of Painesville’s Parks & Recreation Department for their collaboration on Lifeline’s alternative transportation Bike Program.

The Outstanding Community Partnership Award recognizes a program or collaboration that shows both innovation and results in helping low-income families achieve self-sufficiency.

In 2016, Lifeline hosted its first program designed to expand alternative transportation options for community members. The Bike Program’s first year was a success and helped 20 people learn about safe bike travel in Lake County.

Participants also received a bike, helmet and lock after successful completion of the program. Laketran and the City of Painesville Parks & Recreation Department partnered with Lifeline to create a comprehensive, yet simple, forum where eligible low income residents could combine classroom and hands-on application of skills.

The Painesville City Parks & Recreation Department’s David Whittaker instructed students on

Consultant Robin Baum and Brian Gidley of LBL Printing accept the Outstanding Community Spirit Award

Continued on Page 8
Continued from Page 7

bike safety and the basic mechanics of bike riding.

David brought a bike to each class and demonstrated skills such as adjusting the seat and handlebars, checking tire pressure and the importance of using a helmet and lock. David shared situations he had been in as a biker to explore different circumstance our participants might encounter.

In conjunction with the classroom education, Pat Pryatel from Laketan, brought a bus to Lifeline and assisted participants with learning to place their bike on and off the bus safely.

Often times, community members use Laketran as well as their bikes to get to necessary appointments, work or personal errands. The ability to use both the bus and their bike opens up more options for them to travel independently. Pat emphasized safety with participants because many of the Laketran routes operate on busy roads.

The feedback on the Bike Program from both participants and case managers was overwhelmingly positive.

Lifeline will continue to operate programs such as the Bike Program that meet gaps in service, but also promote collaboration among community partners.

The Outstanding Achievement Award was given to Lifeline program participant, Tiara Kaseda, to recognize her significant progress in achieving self-sufficiency.

Tiara enrolled in Lifeline's Supportive Housing Program in March of 2016 and completed the program in February 2017. At the age of 24 years old, Tiara is a full time nursing student at the Willoughby School of Practical Nursing and is a single mom to her three year old daughter.

During her time in the program, Tiara has made outstanding strides in accomplishing the goals that she has set for herself. This includes seeking and obtaining part time employment through Lake Health, in addition to a part time position as a Home Health Care Aide.

Tiara’s work performance and knowledge that she has gained through her schooling, has led to a full time nursing position at Lake Health upon her graduation.

Tiara has also accomplished several personal goals for her family. A few of these include learning and utilizing budgeting skills to better manage her family’s finances; linkage with community resources; and researching childcare facilities to enroll her daughter to provide her with additional socialization and educational opportunities.

“I feel that Tiara is a great example to other single parents who are struggling to balance time and finances while putting themselves through school,” said her Lifeline case manager Angela Wrana.

“With determination and a positive attitude, it is possible to accomplish educational and career goals to better yourself and provide for your family.”

This year Lifeline’s Annual Dinner and Awards Presentation were held in conjunction with National Community Action Awareness Month and featured remarks by both Lifeline Board President, Anne Curwen and by Dotson.

The Lifeline Board and staff were honored to be joined by Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies Executive Director, Phil Cole.

Dotson says that because Lifeline, Inc. is such a locally-focused organization, they work to recognize those who have made an impact locally with these awards.

“As a Community Action Agency, we are obviously a very community-based organization. Last year we served close to 7,000 households from nearly every community in Lake County with our community services programs and answered nearly 35,000 calls for information and referrals through 2-1-1,” said Dotson.

“We’ve strived to continue that effort by recognizing local individuals, organizations and program participants who have been successful in the past year.”
Lifeline was really pleased to be able to expand the VITA clinics this year to a second location, offering clinics weekly at the Perry Community Center, as well as at Lifeline’s Painesville office.

Lifeline VITA Site Coordinator, Tiffany Menosky agreed that the volunteers really provided great service to the clients who participated.

“Our volunteers are the lifeblood of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program and we would not be able to provide this service to our clients without them,” said Menosky.

“Over the course of the last eight tax seasons, the VITA Program has really made a difference for Lake County residents. Since 2010, our volunteers have prepared tax filings for 958 Lake County residents and generated $1,169,911 in returns for them. They have kept every penny and paid no fees.

Volunteers have donated 2,425 hours to train and prepare tax filings for our clients.

“IT’s pretty amazing when you see those kinds of numbers—over 2,400 volunteer hours given by community members who want to help others and over a million dollars generated by a volunteer driven program,” said Dotson. “This is a really rewarding program to operate for our residents.”

Lifeline, Inc. will again host VITA tax clinics beginning in January 2018. While specific clinic details will not be available until December 2017, Lifeline is already recruiting volunteers to become trained to generate $1,169,911 in returns for them. They have kept every penny and paid no fees.

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assist low to moderate income households with tax preparation next winter and spring. In partnership with the IRS office in Cleveland, Lifeline staff and its volunteers will undergo varying levels of training, provided free of charge by the IRS.

You can make a real difference in the lives of working families by helping them claim every tax benefit to which they are entitled. Tax payers who take advantage of this free tax assistance can save on tax preparation fees and receive fast refunds.

Anyone can volunteer. No tax accounting experience is necessary, only a desire to help others in need.

Volunteers participate in a several training levels. Once certified, volunteers will be scheduled to assist with tax preparation January through April. Lifeline, Inc. will use computers to prepare and transmit tax returns.

Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Menosky at (440) 354-2148 or vita@lclifeline.org

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Lake County Senior Services Levy Facts - Issue 4

**Fact #1**
Nearly 25% of Lake County’s population is 60 years and older. By 2030, this group’s population share will increase to 33.9%, outnumbering youth 20 years and older.

**Fact #2**
As the population ages, disability, chronic disease, elder abuse and neglect, affordable housing and inadequate nutrition will continue to present challenges. All these issues place pressure on organizations intended to meet the needs of older adults.

**Fact #3**
Federal funding for senior services has not kept up with demographic change or economic factors. Today, the federal government invests only $29.75 for every senior. The reach of this funding will continue to erode as the population ages.

**Fact #4**
Counties that have a senior levy have a greater ability to provide local dollars for senior services. Levy funding is crucial to maintain and enhance systems and organizations that support a senior’s ability to safely age at home with dignity.

**Fact #5**
Issue 4 renews the existing 0.5 mills and adds 0.3 mills to make up for declining federal funding and increasing need for services. It adds 87 cents per month per $100,000 home valuation.

**Fact #6**
Lake County senior levy funding currently supports vital programs including: home delivered and congregate meals, homemaker services, case management services, home maintenance and modification projects, health & wellness activities at the local senior centers, and more.

**Fact #7**
An increase in levy funds would help to support the projected increase in older adults for current services but would also allow for additional senior services to be added, such as adult guardianship services and expanded protective services for older adults.

**Fact #8**
A decrease in funding would mean a significant loss of senior services in Lake County.

For more information on the senior services levy, contact Alyea Barajas at (440) 350-2748 or alyea.barajas@lakecountyohio.gov.
Thank you, Lifeline Annual Campaign Donors!
The Lifeline Board and staff extend their deepest thanks to those
who made our 2016-17 annual campaign a success!

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Barbara J. Britt
Cathy Bush *
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Society tells us that there are three recurring characteristics that identify a person as self-sufficient. They are: obtaining higher education, becoming a homeowner, and earning income from your passion. If you are in the population identified as low-income, how do you achieve these cornerstones of self-sufficiency?

A new program is in development that will help low-income residents in Lake County achieve these cornerstones.

On September 20, 2017 Lifeline received official notification from the Ohio Community Development Corporation that we’ve officially met the criteria to be a subsite for the administration of the Individual Development Account (IDA) program.

IDAs are a method for low-income residents to achieve self-sufficiency through the purchasing a home for the first time, earning a post-secondary education/trade credential, or opening a micro business. Having the ability to obtain one (or more) of these assets is a ticket to self-sufficiency and independence.

Eligible individuals with earned income at or below 125% of the poverty level can deposit a portion of their earnings into an IDA savings account.

When they attain their goal, the savings will be matched, through funds raised in the community and a federal AFI grant, for down payment on a home, tuition

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assistance or startup funds for a micro-business.

Savings are matched at 8:1; so, for every $1 saved, the participant will receive at least $8. Participants will have to be willing to adhere to a savings plan, living within a budget and taking the necessary steps to improving their credit score.

Participants will also be required to attend financial literacy training. There will be a 10-hour requirement in basic financial responsibilities and additional training that will be asset specific.

“IDAs require a huge personal commitment but are worth the sacrifice, and, the investment is worth every penny,” said Tiffany Menosky, Lifeline Program Coordinator.

Lifeline is hoping to launch the program this fall and is now looking for financial partners for the savings accounts and industry partners for the asset specific training.

Over $12,000 in local matching funds have been raised thanks in part to the generous fundraising efforts of Father Chris Zerucha from St. Mary’s Church in Painesville and Bob Cahen from the Lakeland Foundation. For every dollar that is raised locally, the Ohio CDC will also contribute a dollar of federal Assets for Independence grant funds.

“We’ve wanted to launch this program for several years because we know what a long-term, life-changing impact these assets can have on a low-income family,” said Carrie Dotson, Lifeline Executive Director.

“We’re so pleased to partner with the Ohio CDC and we’re so grateful to Father Chris and Bob for coordinating the local fundraising efforts to get this program off and running. We also really appreciate our initial donors—without them, we wouldn’t be ready to launch.”

Anyone interested in contributing to the local fundraising effort specifically for the IDA Program can send a donation to Lifeline, Inc. at 54 S. State Street, Suite 309 in Painesville. Please clearly designate that it is for the IDA Program.
Lifeline finishes busy Summer Crisis Season, while preparing for the 2017-18 Winter Crisis Season

Lifeline’s Home Energy Assistance Program staff has been very busy throughout the 2016-17 program year. The staff saw high numbers of applicants for both the 2016-2017 Winter Crisis Program and the 2017 Summer Crisis Program.

“It’s amazing to me just how many households in Lake County use the HEAP programs to maintain their utility service, and ultimately their self-sufficiency,” said Carrie Dotson, Executive Director at Lifeline, Inc.

“Utility costs are high and rate increases sometimes unexpected, so we have a lot of our local residents who are relying on both the emergency assistance and payment plans to help them maintain service.”

During Lifeline’s 2016-2017 Winter Crisis Program, November 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017, the agency collected 1,060 applications for emergency assistance. Of those 1,060 applications, 914 were approved. The program allocated nearly $220,000 during the winter season for emergency assistance.

“We saw so many new people during the 2016-2017 Heap Winter Crisis Program who had not heard about our program until they read about it in the newspaper or saw the inserts with their utility bills,” said Marina Rivera, Energy Programs Coordinator at Lifeline.

Lifeline’s 2017 Summer Crisis Program also saw high numbers. During the brief, two month season, over 350 applications were accepted and over 315 were approved for either emergency assistance or financial assistance in paying for an air conditioner. Those served during the 2017 Summer Crisis Program included households that either had a senior citizen or someone with a documented health condition in the household. In the months of July and August 2017, over $55,000 was allocated in emergency assistance, in addition to 50 air conditioners distributed. Through a partnership with the Lake County Council on Aging, Lifeline staff were able to visit nearly every senior center in Lake County to meet with senior citizens and do intake at the centers.

“We were thrilled to be able to partner so well with the Lake County Council on Aging and the Lake County senior centers to help a lot of our senior citizens stay cool during the summer and to help save them a visit to our office,” said Dotson.

“This program really isn’t just about providing comfort—it’s about keeping people healthy. One of the requirements to qualify for the SCP is that applicants must either have a senior citizen in the home or have a physician documented health condition. These are people who clearly need their utilities on and to keep cool during the hottest months of the year.”

The HEAP Staff at Lifeline are gearing up for the 2017-18 Emergency HEAP WCP. It will begin on November 1st and applications will be processed by the Lifeline Energy Assistance office.

“The staff and I are looking forward to the HEAP Winter Crisis Program. We know we’ll be busy and help a lot of residents who need it,” said Rivera.

The WCP program can provide a one-time payment per heating season (November 1 through March 31) for gas or electric utilities, or toward the delivery of wood, propane, fuel oil or kerosene to households when: a customer’s gas or electric service has been disconnected; a customer has received a final disconnect notice; or the customer has less than a 10 day supply of bulk fuel.

In order to help those who already have a critical energy situation, Lifeline’s HEAP program will be offering special walk-in days at the start of the program.

From Wednesday, Nov. 1 to Friday, Nov. 3, walk-in sessions will be held beginning at 7:30 a.m. The office will be closed on Friday, Nov. 10 in observance of Veteran’s Day.

A special walk in day will be held on Saturday, November 4 beginning at 8:30 a.m. Lifeline’s Energy...
HEAP Winter Crisis Program 2017-18
Important Information

WCP begins November 1, 2017 and ends March 31, 2018

To qualify for assistance, customers must have a disconnection notice on their main heating source. For assistance with fuel oil, they must have less than ten days supply in their fuel tank. Applicants must also meet federal income guidelines to qualify for assistance.

November 1-November 3 will be walk-in hours only--no appointments will be scheduled.

The office will be closed on Friday, November 10 for Veteran’s Day, as well as on November 23 & 24 for Thanksgiving.

Throughout the remainder of the season, walk-in hours will begin Monday, Wednesday & Friday mornings at 7:30 a.m. on a first-come/first-served basis.

Appointments can be scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays by calling our automated appointment hotline at 1-866-223-1471.

Customers should bring the following information at the time of their appointment: photo ID, Birth certificates, Social Security cards for everyone in the household, all income verification for the last 90 days (including child support and utility reimbursements), gas and electric bills and if renting, landlord name/address/phone number.

Please contact the HEAP Office with any questions.
We can be reached at 440-350-9160
Consultant Robin Baum generously donated her time to facilitate the re-branding process with Lifeline’s Board, leading them through a session to brainstorm what words, images and colors they associated with Lifeline and our mission.

That feedback was provided to the selected designers, LBL Printing in Painesville.

The end result is a new look that will set Lifeline apart and take the agency into the future.

“The Board was enthusiastic about updating Lifeline’s brand,” said Lifeline Board President, Anne Curwen.

“We worked with a consultant and a company who made the process engaging and enjoyable and we are very pleased that our modernized logo represents Lifeline in a new and exciting way.”