

The Advocate - Winter 2021 - 2022

Envision a world where everyone has enough to thrive and the opportunities they need to achieve that goal. We do, and we need your help to build it.

SEVCA's pandemic response has provided our communities with ongoing access to programs and services that support our neighbors, especially in their time of greatest need. In Windham and Windsor counties during the past year, we provided **over 41,200 services to almost 6,100 individuals in 3,300 households.**

Our success in achieving that mission depends in great part on the willingness of compassionate and generous folks like you to be our partners on it. A donation to SEVCA helps ensure that our work to maximize the likelihood that everyone has enough to thrive can remain strong, nimble, and sustainable...now and into the future.

Will you contribute to the effort to fully fund SEVCA's programs so that in Vermont, Everyone Thrives as well?

Read our full Annual Appeal letter [HERE](#).

Gratefully,



Steve Geller
Executive Director

Consider a Gift to SEVCA's Annual Appeal 2021 - 2022
Click [HERE](#) to Donate



SEVCA Weatherization Crew Tech examines a heating system; and a restaurant worker in the “Community Hub” led by Hub partner Wilmington Works prepares meals for distribution in the SEVCA-managed Vermont Everyone Eats program.

Applications Now Being Accepted for E.M.B.R.A.C.E. Business Grants



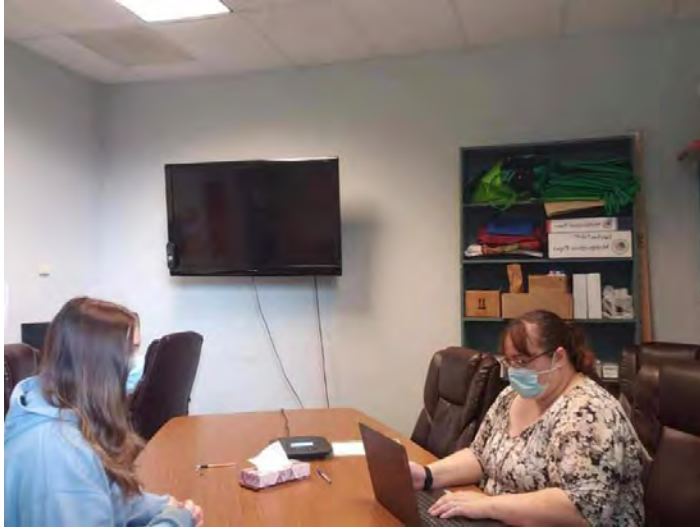
Polli Moryl, Owner of Moryl Meetings & E.M.B.R.A.C.E. Grant Recipient

SEVCA’s Micro Business Development Program (MBDP) announces that applications are now being accepted online for the third round of Economic Micro Business Recovery Assistance for the COVID-19 Epidemic (E.M.B.R.A.C.E.) from businesses open before 12/31/20 that have not previously received the grant. Five thousand dollar grants are available for Vermont-based businesses affected by COVID-19 with five employees or fewer, including sole proprietors, and from low to moderate income households. Businesses that opened after 1/1/21 or that are planned to launch by 11/1/22 may apply beginning on 1/18/22 and must have met for a minimum of one hour with a MBDP Counselor. Businesses open before 12/31/21 that have received an E.M.B.R.A.C.E. grant before may apply beginning on 3/1/22.

For full rules, eligibility criteria, and to apply, visit [here](#). Please contact Glen Ohlund, Economic Development Director: gohlund@sevca.org, with questions or for assistance applying.

Need Assistance with Heat and Utilities This Winter? SEVCA Might Be Able to Help!

Remember:
Check your heating fuel tank regularly, and give us a call if you are below a quarter tank and concerned about purchasing more fuel!



Family Services Outreach Worker, Amy Downing, assists a client

SEVCA offers a variety of services and supports for eligible Windham and Windsor County residents concerned about affording their heat and utilities this winter.

Do you need some help heating your home? The first step for receiving seasonal fuel assistance is to fill out an application, available [here](#). Need some additional assistance to stretch your budget? Those eligible for seasonal fuel assistance may also be eligible for 3SquaresVT, which can help you put healthy food on the table. Give us a call and we can provide more information about the programs, answer your questions, and help you apply.

Are you behind on your electric bill and concerned about disconnection? Do you pay for water or wastewater services, and are you looking for help? Are you struggling to meet other utility needs? We may be able to help. For heat, utility, and other assistance, give us a call at 800-464-9951 (and listen to the auto-prompt for your local family services office - Brattleboro, Springfield, Westminster, or White River Junction).

VERAP Help Still Available - Including for Mobile Home Owners and Renters

The Vermont Emergency Rental Assistance Program (VERAP) continues to offer assistance to eligible households that are dealing with financial challenges related to COVID-19, including mobile home owners and renters. VERAP can help pay rent, past-due rent, utilities, past-due utilities, and other expenses related to housing.

More information is available [here](#). Please give us a call with any questions, or for assistance applying: 800-464-9951 (and listen to the auto-prompt for your local family services office - Brattleboro, Springfield, Westminster, or White River Junction).

Our Head Start Program Passes Federal Review With Flying Colors!



A Head Start student learning while having a bit of fun!

SEVCA's Windsor County Head Start program recently received exceptional results from its Focus Area 1 (FA1) federal review. This review process, conducted by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the Office of Head Start (OHS), assesses both program performance and compliance with school readiness requirements. After a comprehensive assessment, which included on-site monitoring, the reviewers found SEVCA's Head Start program to be in full compliance, with no deficiencies. The report highlighted some of the program's many successes, including: a partnership with a homeless shelter to respond to the community's homelessness crisis; a pen pal system with local kindergartners to innovatively aid children in their transition to elementary school; a thoughtful approach to improving children's health outcomes, particularly as they relate to COVID-19; and connecting families with various food resources and programs to support their well-being.

We congratulate our Head Start Director, Lori Canfield, our Head Start Managers, and all of our Head Start teachers and staff on this outstanding achievement - and we thank them for their unwavering commitment to children and families!

SEVCA's Windsor County Head Start program, available at no-cost to eligible families, continues to enroll children ages 3 - 5 on an ongoing basis. For more information or to complete an application for enrollment, please call 800-464-9951, dial 9 for staff directory, and enter the name of the Family Partner in the area closest to the town you live in: Katie Murphy (Chester), Lindsay DeCell (Springfield), or Jen Tucker (Windsor/White River Junction).

Plenty of "Good Buys" for the Holidays



SEVCA's 'Good Buy' Thrift Stores are Stocked for the Holidays!

VISIT US IN BELLOWS FALLS, HARTFORD, OR SPRINGFIELD

Looking for decorations to add a bit of holiday cheer to your home this season? In search of the perfect holiday gift for someone special? Our 'Good Buy' thrift stores are fully stocked and ready for the holidays! Visit one of our locations today to see the bargain treasures we have in store. Be sure to mention this ad and receive 10% off of your purchase.

Hours & Locations:

Bellows Falls, VT
45 Rockingham Street/Canal House
Monday - Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Springfield, VT
23 Main Street
Monday - Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Hartford, VT
676 Hartford Avenue
Monday - Friday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Thank You to All Who Ensure - Everyone Eats!

SEVCA thanks the many stakeholders that make VT Everyone Eats (VEE) possible, including: our VEE staff; regional community hubs, their distribution partners and volunteers; task force members; local restaurants; local farmers and food producers; eaters; the Federal Emergency Management Agency; Vermont's Agency of Human Services; Vermont's Agency of Commerce and Community Development; Vermont's Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets; Governor Scott's Office; the Vermont Legislature; and Guidehouse Consulting. Together we have distributed 1.92 million meals to Vermonters in need totaling \$19.2 million in revenue paid to 260 VT restaurants, and \$1.6 million spent on ingredients from 300+ VT farms and food producers (as of November 2021).

Meals are available at least through December 31st. For more info, please visit [here](#). To join the conversation: [#vteveryoneeats](#)

FREE Energy Saving Kit



For a limited time only, Efficiency Vermont is offering Vermonters a free energy saving kit that can help you start saving money on energy bills while reducing your home's carbon footprint. The kit includes general purpose LEDs and water-saving devices, valued at \$34.15. For more information and to get yours, visit [here](#).

No-Cost Weatherization Services Available - Whether You Own or Rent

SEVCA's Weatherization program serves Windham and Windsor County households by providing state-of-the-art energy audits, insulation and sealing, heating system improvements, and other energy-saving measures, all at no cost to residents who meet the income guidelines.

You can receive weatherization services if you are an owner or a renter (with the landlord's participation). To learn more or apply, please visit [here](#) or contact our client representative, Tawny Staskunas: 800-464-9951 and dial 1 for Weatherization.



Weatherization Crew Tech, Matt Shea, seals up a client's attic

3SquaresVT Helps Vermonters Put Healthy Food on the Table - and Helps Our Community Grow Stronger!



3SquaresVT provides a monthly benefit for food purchases through a debit card that can be used at most supermarkets, grocery stores, and over 40

farmers markets throughout the state. Many more Vermonters qualify but have not yet applied. You might be eligible for benefits and not even know it! A household of four earning up to \$4,086 a month may be eligible for 3SquaresVT, and income limits are higher for households that include someone aged 60+, someone with a disability, and/or children that also get the VT Earned Income Tax Credit.

Every time you buy groceries with 3SquaresVT, you not only put nourishing food on your plate, but that money also goes to support the businesses and local retailers that sell food and local farmers who produce it. When more eligible Vermont residents use 3SquaresVT, our community grows stronger and healthier.

If you could use some extra money for food, please reach out to our Family Services department by calling 800-464-9951 and following the auto-prompt for your local office, or fill out [this form](#) and a staff member will reach out to you.

Our Matched Savings Program Has Openings For Savers

Are you working toward a savings goal, and in need of some assistance to get there? SEVCA has limited openings available in our Vermont Matched Savings Program! For more information, please visit [here](#) or contact Sue Dillon: sdillon@sevca.org.

Surveys, Surveys, Surveys!

Congratulations to the winners of our recent Customer Satisfaction and Community Assessment Survey raffles! The Customer Satisfaction Survey winners received cash cards collectively valued at \$400 and the Community Assessment Survey winners received cash cards collectively valued at \$600. Many thanks to all who shared their feedback with us!

Have you recently applied for/received a SEVCA service, or applied for/used a SEVCA program? We'd love to hear your feedback so that we can understand our impact, and learn how to best serve the community. **Would you please help us out by taking [this quick five minute survey](#)?** Plus, if you complete the survey, you could win one of three raffled cash cards for \$50 (winners will be drawn every three months) or one of four end-of-year raffled cash cards for \$100 (winners will be drawn in October, 2022)!

Board of Directors News

Ellen Taetzsch has resigned her position on the Board. Please join us in wishing her well on her future endeavors.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of SEVCA's Board of Directors should reach out to Tammie Putnam, Executive Assistant: tputnam@sevca.org.

New Hires

We are excited to welcome the following new staff members to the SEVCA team:

- Beth Lutz - Head Start, Teacher Assistant, White River Junction
- Elena Luring - Family Services, Resource Recovery Navigator, Brattleboro & Westminster

Looking to Serve Your Community? Join Us!

We have multiple career and volunteer opportunities available:

- Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
- Financial and Energy Coach
- Resource Recovery Navigator, Springfield
- Head Start Teacher Associate, 2 available positions, Windsor/Chester
- Head Start Teacher Assistant, Windsor
- Good Buy Thrift Store Sales Clerk, 3 available positions, Hartford
- Good Buy Thrift Store Truck Assistant
- Emergency Home Repair Coordinator
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), multiple volunteer positions
- Family Services Filing Assistance, volunteer position

For more information and to apply, please visit [here](#).

Visit our Website



Southeastern Vermont Community Action | 91 Buck Drive, Westminster, VT 05301

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