



REGION 8

CAPND 2026 CONFERENCE

July 28-30, 2026



WELCOME LETTERS

Welcome to the 2026 Region 8 and North Dakota Community Action Conference!

On behalf of Region 8, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Fargo for this year's conference. We are excited to gather with colleagues, partners, and advocates from across our region for a few days of learning, collaboration, and fellowship.

Community Action has always been about people coming together to create opportunities and move individuals and families out of poverty. As we face new challenges and opportunities in our communities, this work is more important than ever. This conference provides a valuable opportunity to share ideas, strengthen partnerships, and renew our commitment to the mission we all serve.

Last year, we proudly celebrated 60 years of Community Action. That milestone honored the vision, dedication, and impact of those who came before us. As we look ahead, we are equally excited about the next 60 years and the innovations, leadership, and community-driven solutions that will shape our future.

Thank you for being here and for the work you do every day to strengthen lives, families, and communities. I hope you leave inspired, energized, and connected.

Welcome to Fargo, and enjoy the conference!

Susan Carr
President, Region 8 Community Action Partnership



Hello Friends!

After reading Susan's welcome, I thought I'd add a few thoughts of my own.

While I may not know much about grant funding, strategic planning, or Community Action history, I do know a thing or two about loyalty, teamwork, and showing up for those who need us. From what I've observed, those are some of the same qualities that make Community Action so special.

This year's theme, Stronger Together: Helping People, Changing Lives Across Region 8, reminds us that none of us does this work alone. Every day, Community Action professionals across Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming work together to create opportunities, solve problems, and help families build brighter futures.

As you spend the next few days learning, sharing ideas, and connecting with colleagues from across the region, I hope you'll take time to celebrate the incredible impact you make. The work isn't always easy, but it matters and so do the people doing it.

Thank you for all you do to help people and change lives. I hope you leave Fargo with new ideas, new friendships, and renewed energy for the important work ahead.

Welcome to the conference, and remember: we're always stronger together.

Helping People, Changing Lives and Wagging Tails,
Blue
CAPND Chief PAWS-itivity Officer



CONFERENCE AGENDA

The agenda below reflects the spirit of this year's conference theme, Stronger Together: Helping People and Changing Lives Across Region 8. Over the course of two and a half days, Community Action professionals from all six Region 8 states (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming) will come together to learn, collaborate, and share ideas that strengthen our work and our communities.

With more than 40 breakout sessions, the conference offers learning opportunities across a broad range of Community Action priorities, including Community Services Block Grant

(CSBG), Weatherization, homelessness, fiscal management, leadership, governance, data, and program innovation. We are also honored to welcome our national partners, who will provide valuable federal updates, emerging best practices, and perspectives from across the Community Action Network.

We encourage you to review the agenda and personalize your conference experience by selecting the sessions that best align with your interests, responsibilities, and professional goals. We look forward to learning with you as we continue helping people and changing lives across Region 8!

Day 1: Tuesday, July 28

10:00am-1:00pm	Conference Opening, Keynote, & Lunch
1:30-3:00pm	Breakout Sessions
3:00-3:30pm	Refreshment Break
3:30-5:00pm	Breakout Sessions
5:00-6:00pm	CAPND Meeting with CAMP, <i>Harvest Hall, Executive Room</i>
6:00-7:30pm	Welcome & Networking Reception

Day 2: Wednesday, July 29

7:30am-8:30am	Breakfast
8:30-10:00am	Breakout Sessions
10:00-10:30am	Refreshment Break
10:30am-12:00pm	Breakout Sessions
12:00-1:30pm	Lunch, Awards, and Staff Recognitions
1:30-3:00pm	Breakout Sessions
3:00-3:30pm	Refreshment Break
3:30-5:00pm	Breakout Sessions
6:00-9:00pm	Fargo-Moorhead Redhawks Baseball Game

Day 3: Thursday, July 30

7:30am-8:30am	Breakfast
8:30-10:00am	Breakout Sessions
10:00-10:30am	Refreshment Break
10:30am-12:00pm	Breakout Sessions
12:00pm	END OF CONFERENCE
12:30pm-3:30pm	Region 8 Association Board of Directors Annual Meeting <i>Great Hall, Lunch provided for Board Members</i>

CODE OF CONDUCT

The core values of Community Action are equity and respect. Staff members and event participants are expected to foster an inclusive, cooperative environment where all are welcomed, open dialogue is encouraged, and all perspectives are appreciated. Every staff member and event participant is expected to act in a professional, responsible, respectful manner while engaged in events and activities. Unprofessional behavior including disparaging comments and unwelcome conduct related to sex, race, color, gender, age, disability, orientation, or religion will not be tolerated.

If any staff member and event participant engages in unprofessional behavior, CAPND reserves the right to take action it deems appropriate up to and including expulsion from current and/or future CAPND activities. Please speak with a member of CAPND staff if you have any Code of Conduct or conference concerns.

SCAN TO VIEW SPEAKER BIOS



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COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP NORTH DAKOTA BOARD MEMBERS

Holly Vane | Community Action Partnership of North Dakota

Brandon Kjelden | SouthEastern ND Community Action Agency – Fargo

Kristina Brownell | Community Action Program Region 4 and 6 – Jamestown

Rachel Haskins | Community Action Program Minot Region – Minot

Andrea Werner | Community Action Program Region 7 – Bismarck

Andrea Olson | Community Action Partnership of North Dakota

Lora Papachek | SouthEastern North Dakota Community Action Agency – Fargo

Erv Bren | Community Action Partnership Region 1 and 8 – Dickinson/Williston



Community Action's Emerging Leaders

This grassroots cohort was started by a group of young professionals who wanted to create a community where peers could meet collaborate. They host monthly sessions that include specific trainings and opportunities to virtually meet.

Are you 39 or under and looking
for a way to get connected to
other young professionals in the
Community Action Network?



TUESDAY JULY 28, 2026

CONFERENCE OPENING & KEYNOTE | 10:00 AM-1:00 PM

Conference Opening & Keynote

Great Hall

All Attendees

Community Action professionals and partners from across South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming will come together to officially open the Region 8/CAPND Conference. The session will begin with welcoming remarks from Andrea Olson, Executive Director of Community Action Partnership of North Dakota, and Fargo Mayor Josh Boschee, followed by keynote speaker Doug Peters presenting From Carrying the Weight to Leading the Way. This inspiring and thought-provoking keynote will explore leadership, resilience, teamwork, and the important work of Community Action.

***Breakout session is approved for 1.5 CEUs.**

Federal & National Partner Updates

Great Hall

Denise Harlow, National Community Action Partnership

Cheryl Williams, NASCS, Savanna Arral, CAPLAW

Verna Best & Mitch Navetta, Office of Community Services

All Attendees

Hear directly from Community Action's national partners as representatives from the National Community Action Partnership, NASCSP, and CAPLAW provide timely updates impacting agencies across the country. This session will highlight federal and national trends, policy developments, emerging opportunities, compliance considerations, and resources designed to strengthen Community Action work at the local level. Attendees will gain insight into the broader landscape shaping programs and services while connecting national priorities to day-to-day operations within Community Action Agencies.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 1:30-3:00 PM

Stronger Together: Leadership Perspectives Panel

Great Hall

Fred Richmond, CAMP, Denise Harlow, National CAP, Cheryl Williams, NASCSP, Susan Carr, CSNOW

Stefanie Jones, Utah CAP, Becky Saad, DOLA, Kristina Brownell, Region 8 Representative, NCAP Board of Directors

Erv Bren, CAP of Dickinson/Williston, Marcia Erickson, GROW SD

Suggested for All Attendees

Join Community Action leaders from across Region 8 and the Nation for a panel discussion focused on the challenges, opportunities, and emerging trends shaping Community Action work today. Panelists will share perspectives on leadership, innovation, workforce realities, partnerships, service delivery, and the evolving needs of the communities we serve. Through guided discussion and shared experiences, attendees will gain insight into how agencies across Region 8 are adapting, collaborating, and working together to strengthen Community Action for the future.

General Hazards in Weatherization

Harvest Hall, Conference Room

Dave Gutterud, UND Environmental Training Institute

Suggested for Weatherization Workers, Energy Auditors, Crew Leads

Covers the chemical and biological hazards weatherization workers are most likely to encounter in North Dakota residential work: asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, mold, and biological hazards including hantavirus and bat guano.

Participants leave knowing what to look for, what the rules require, when to stop work, and what documentation is needed.

Strategies for Communicating WX in an Understandable Way

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Jake Nuckolls, Building Performance Center

Suggested for Weatherization Attendees

The weatherization world is rife with insider speak, oddly specific language, and more acronyms than ASHRAE needs to complete a proper MVL. How do we as crews, inspectors, auditors, intake, admin and other staff communicate these complex concepts and ideas in a way that brings the homeowner into the process instead of alienating them or making their eyes glaze over? During this session, we'll look at a few ways to communicate large ideas simply as well as working together to create some new ways to address this age old issue.

REFRESHMENT BREAK | 3:00-3:30 PM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 3:30-5:00 PM

Complying with the HR and Financial Directives of the CSBG Organizational Standards

Harvest Hall, Directors Room

Savanna Arral, CAPLAW

Suggested for Executive Directors, Agency Leadership, Board Members, HR, Financial Directors and Staff

This workshop will address the legal issues that CAAs face under the human resources and financial operations and oversight directives of the CSBG Organizational Standards (Categories 7 and 8). We will discuss how CAAs can proactively implement procedures and ensure appropriate recordkeeping to be able to document compliance with these standards, as well as how these procedures may fit within a CAA's existing policies. This session will also cover working with attorneys and the CAA's governing body to ensure that each participant in the process is familiar with its roles and responsibilities in meeting the standards.

Data in Practice: Roles, Routines and Culture*

Great Hall

Maribeth Schneber-Rhemrev, CCAP, PMP, NCRT, National Community Action Partnership

Suggested for Executive Directors, Program Coordinators, Board Members, Agency Management, Data Practitioners.

Strong data capacity depends on more than technology—it requires accurate, complete, and well-integrated information that staff and leadership trust and use. This session explores how roles, routines, and leadership practices influence data quality and application, helping participants identify gaps, clarify responsibilities, and strengthen a culture where information reliably informs decisions and improves outcomes.

Innovative Ways States are Supporting Rural Agencies

Embassy A & B

Hugh Poole and Lauren Johnson, NASCSP, Karen Quackenbush, Utah State Office, Lindsay Whittin, Tennessee State Office

Suggested for All Attendees

What happens when states take a closer look at the everyday challenges of managing CSBG—especially for rural agencies and communities—and uncover practical solutions worth sharing? Over the past several years, NASCSP's State Management Work Group 2.0 (SMWG 2.0) has explored that question, identifying promising state practices in three high-impact areas: Streamlined Administrative Procedures, Standardized Tools and Templates, and Specialized Rural Strategies. Join them for a lively panel discussion to hear about what they learned and what fresh ideas you can take back to your own network

ROMA in Practice (Not Just Theory)

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

Fred Richmond, Center for Applied Management

Suggested for Case Managers, HR, Executive Directors, Board Members

Community Action Agencies are guided by ROMA principles and practices that support the delivery of services and strategies with the expectation of having a positive impact on the client, agency and community. This workshop will provide a guide and checklist for self-assessment to answer several fundamental questions: how well do we deliver services, and do we produce results?

Identifying Appliances isn't the End of the World

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Jake Nuckolls, Building Performance Center

Suggested for Weatherization Attendees

Combustion safety got you down? NFPA 54 makes as much sense as running ASHRAE calculations by hand? Having a hard time figuring out whether it's a category 4 forced draft furnace or a category 3 natural draft boiler? This session will break down a variety of appliances, key components, and the differing ways to identify each.

Electrical Hazards in Weatherization

Harvest Hall, Conference Room

Dave Gutterud, UND Environmental Training Institute

Suggested for Weatherization Attendees

Addresses the electrical hazards present on nearly every weatherization job, from residential service panels to extension cords and portable tools. Grounded in OSHA construction standards (29 CFR 1926.404) and practical field scenarios.

Participants leave able to conduct a basic electrical risk assessment, identify the most common hazardous conditions in older ND housing, and apply correct work practices around panels, cords, and live equipment.

CAPND MEETING WITH CAMP **5:00-6:00 PM**

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

CAPND Executive Directors and CAPND Data Committee Members are asked to join this important discussion with CAMP.

WELCOME & NETWORKING RECEPTION | 6:00 PM-7:30 PM

All Attendees Welcome!

Stronger Together Begins with Building Connections

All conference attendees, sponsors and vendors are welcome to join us in Sterling Crowne and Royale Room from 6:00-7:30 for a relaxed evening of networking and conversation with colleagues from across Region 8.

Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be provided, and there is no cost to attend. Simply stop by, enjoy great company, and help us kick off a conference dedicated to helping people and changing lives.

We look forward to spending the evening with you!

Join and Donate to NCAF Today!

National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) is a membership organization established in Washington, DC that advocates the federal government on behalf of the Community Action Network.

BECOME A MEMBER

All supporters and partners of Community Action are welcome to become NCAF members. There is no cost to becoming a member of NCAF.



DONATE TO NCAF

NCAF relies on donations from supporters of Community Action to operate. Contributions support NCAF day-to-day operations.



www.ncaf.org

WEDNESDAY JULY 29, 2026

BREAKFAST SERVED | 7:30-8:30 AM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 8:30-10:00 AM

Data Walk: Exploring Region 8's Data

Great Hall

Maribeth Schneber-Rhemrev, CCAP, NCRT, National Community Action Partnership

Suggested for Executive Directors, Program Coordinators, Board Members, Agency Management, Data Practitioners

Step into your data and see the story it tells through a hands-on data walk. Participants will move among interactive stations using Region 8's real data to uncover patterns, raise questions, and explore meaning in collaboration with peers. Along the way, you'll not only experience this engaging approach firsthand but also gain insight into how to design and host your own data walk back at your organization. This session turns analysis into an active, shared experience and offers fresh perspectives on the trends, successes, and challenges revealed by the data.

Social Return on Investment for Community Action*

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

Fred Richmond, Center for Applied Management

Suggested for Executive Directors, Board Members, Program Coordinators, HR, Administrative Staff

All too often, the role and contribution of social service agencies to the greater good of the individual and community is not understood. SROI measures change in ways relevant to the people or organizations that experience or contribute to it, assigning monetary values to represent social, environmental, and economic outcomes. We are data collectors and can account for the delivery and impact of our services. Can we use this same data to tell a different story, that funding Community Action is not only for a good cause but is a good investment as well?

Mental Health Foundations in Action*

Embassy A & B

Dr. Shellie Beeker, North Dakota State University

Suggested for Frontline staff, Case Managers, Executive Directors, HR

This program will give you awareness, information, and education on ways mental health concerns can present. In addition, we will discuss and explore when to refer to professional care, practical application and demonstration for supporting individuals who may be struggling with mental health concerns. Finally, the session will highlight the importance of engaging with our own mental and emotional well-being as supporters for others in need.

Root Causes, Real Lives: Understanding Social Determinants of Health in Community Action*

Harvest Hall, Directors Room

Dr. Jeremy Holloway, North Dakota Department of Commerce

Suggested for Case Managers, HR, Program Directors, Board Members, Executive Directors

Social Determinants of Health are the conditions in which people are born, live, learn, work, worship, and age. These conditions shape health, stability, opportunity, and well-being long before someone walks through the door for services.

This 90-minute breakout session will introduce Social Determinants of Health through a Community Action lens, connecting the framework to poverty, family stability, housing, transportation, food security, employment, education, safety, access to care, and community conditions. Participants will explore how SDOH can help agencies better understand client needs, strengthen referrals and linkages, support case management, inform needs assessments, and tell a more complete story about the work Community Action Agencies are already doing.

The session will be practical and discussion-based, with a focus on how staff, leaders, and partners can use SDOH concepts in everyday program planning, client support, data collection, and community collaboration.

Building Science Basics

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Jake Nuckolls, Building Performance Center

Suggested for Weatherization Attendees

Weatherization work is built around a proper understanding of building science, specifically energy movement. Knowing which way moisture will travel or why a drop soffit in a kitchen can cause heat flow issues is vital to the detective work of energy auditing. This session will introduce weatherization and building science principles including principles of heat, moisture, and air movement and how this affects the structure of the homes we work on.

Weatherization Injury Prevention

Harvest Hall, Conference Room

Dave Gutterud, UND Environmental Training Institute

Suggested for Weatherization Attendees

Covers the primary physical injury risks in weatherization work: falls, confined space entry, respiratory hazards, and heat-related illness. Organized around OSHA's Fatal Four, with content tied directly to weatherization job conditions rather than general construction.

Fall content covers the hierarchy of fall hazard controls, personal fall arrest system components and inspection, suspension trauma and the rescue requirement that most workers don't know about, and ladder safety. Confined space content addresses how to recognize when a crawl space or attic becomes a permit-required space and what to do when a worker experiences symptoms inside. Respiratory protection covers respirator selection, the difference between a dust mask and a NIOSH-approved N-95, and medical and fit testing requirements under 29 CFR 1910.134. Heat stress content distinguishes heat exhaustion from heat stroke and covers prevention strategies for attic and summer work.

The session will be practical and discussion-based, with a focus on how staff, leaders, and partners can use SDOH concepts in everyday program planning, client support, data collection, and community collaboration.

REFRESHMENT BREAK | 10:00-10:30 AM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 10:30-12:00 PM

Supervisor Basics Including Delegating, Managing Peers, and Accountability

Great Hall

Susan Williams, The Village Family Service Center

Suggested for Executive, Leadership and Management staff, HR, Board Members

This session will provide a practical refresher and skill-building opportunity for supervisors. Topics will include the responsibilities of a supervisor, qualities of effective supervision, the importance of building trust between supervisors and staff, and three selected focus areas: delegation, managing peers, and accountability.

Mental Health Foundations in Action (REPEAT SESSION)*

Embassy A & B

Dr. Shellie Beeker, North Dakota State University

Suggested for Frontline staff, Case Managers, Executive Directors, HR

This program will give you awareness, information, and education on ways mental health concerns can present. In addition, we will discuss and explore when to refer to professional care, practical application and demonstration for supporting individuals who may be struggling with mental health concerns. Finally, the session will highlight the importance of engaging with our own mental and emotional well-being as supporters for others in need.

Becoming a Data-Driven Community Action Agency*

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

Fred Richmond, Center for Applied Management

Suggested for All Attendees

Data-drivenness is about building tools, abilities, and, most crucially, a culture that acts on data.....Carl Anderson". CAAs are competent data collectors usually in compliance with third party reporting requirements. How do we turn this data into information that can be applied to the management of the agency? In this workshop we will introduce an 11 step program for establishing processes that support service delivery, accountability and measuring success.

Trust but Verify: The Board and Managements' Roles in Internal Controls and Financial Transparency

Harvest Hall, Directors Room

Ashley Engel and Jeremy Ulmer, Brady Martz

Suggested for Executive Directors, Fiscal Directors, Board Members, HR

Strong financial oversight is a shared responsibility between nonprofit management, governing boards, and external auditors. This session will explore the distinct roles each plays in maintaining sound internal controls, financial transparency, and organizational accountability. Presenters will discuss the audit process, including the responsibilities of management and auditors, and share practical internal control strategies that can be implemented by organizations of all sizes. Attendees will learn how to identify potential red flags in financial reports, understand key indicators of organizational financial health, and gain insight into the concept of going concern. The session will also provide an overview of the Form 990, including what board members should know, how it tells the story of an organization, and opportunities to strengthen that narrative. Finally, participants will receive guidance on responding to single audit findings and using them as opportunities for continuous improvement. and how this affects the structure of the homes we work on.

Introduction to Healthy Housing and the Keep-It Principles

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Jake Nuckolls, Building Performance Center

Suggested for All Weatherization Attendees

Home assessments often focus on energy savings, but increasingly we are asked to pay attention to the health of the home and the occupants. This session will begin preparing home energy professionals to assess and characterize home based environmental health and safety hazards by integrating observations with diagnostics. All based on the nationally recognized "keep-it" principles.

Radon Awareness in Weatherization

Harvest Hall, Conference Room

Dave Gutterud, UND Environmental Training Institute

Suggested for All Weatherization Attendees

Provides weatherization workers with a working understanding of radon: what it is, how it enters buildings, why it matters in North Dakota, and what WAP rules allow them to do about it.

North Dakota is entirely within EPA Radon Zone 1 — the highest-risk designation — and radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers nationally. Because weatherization tightens the building envelope, it can increase indoor radon concentrations if entry points are not addressed. The session explains why, what precautionary measures are allowable under DOE WPN 17-7 (vapor barrier installation, sealing foundation penetrations, covering sump pits), and what is not allowable (mitigation systems, testing as a WAP activity). Client education and informed consent requirements specific to North Dakota are covered in detail, including the requirement for a signed consent form on every ND WAP job regardless of whether testing has been conducted.

Participants leave understanding the ND-specific radon risk, what they can and cannot do under WAP, and how to have an informed conversation with clients about mitigation options.

LUNCH WITH FRIENDS OF COMMUNITY ACTION AWARDS & RECOGNITION **10:30 AM-12:00 PM**

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 1:30-3:00 PM

Personal Wellness and Self Care: Time Mastery*

Great Hall

Susan Williams, The Village Family Service Center

Suggested for Executive, Leadership and Management staff, HR, Board Members

Supporting healthy lifestyles and encouraging employees to be proactive in caring for themselves contributes to a healthier, more productive workplace. When your “to-do” list is longer than your available time, how do you manage the challenge?

This session will address common time management myths, explore strategies to help participants better manage their schedules, and provide practical tips for overcoming procrastination.

Affordable Housing Trends in North Dakota

Embassy A & B

Jennifer Henderson, North Dakota Housing Finance Agency

Suggested for North Dakota Attendees

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency (NDHFA) will present findings and data trends from its statewide housing studies and research initiatives focused on housing affordability, availability, population trends, and projected housing needs across North Dakota. This session will explore current market conditions, barriers impacting homeowners and renters, regional housing challenges, and emerging trends affecting communities throughout the state. Attendees will gain valuable insight into housing data, planning tools, and statewide trends that can help inform local decision-making, community development efforts, and future housing strategies.

The Accountable Case Manager*

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

Fred Richmond, Center for Applied Management

Suggested for Case Managers and Direct Service Workers

This workshop for case managers and direct service workers identifies the basic skills and practices necessary to be successful in their job. It explores the economics of insufficiency and scarcity, its impact on clients and organizations, the importance of front line staff, and offers a replicable model for client/case management that can demonstrate outcomes and organizational effectiveness.

Fiscal Budgeting and Reporting in the MIP Fund Accounting Software

Harvest Hall, Directors Room

Jennifer Mueller, Southeastern North Dakota Community Action

Suggested for Fiscal staff who utilize the MIP software

MIP offers powerful budgeting and reporting tools that can streamline financial management and reduce reliance on spreadsheets. In this session, Jennifer Mueller will share practical strategies for maximizing the MIP Budget Module based on nearly a decade of experience using the software for forecasting, budgeting, and financial reporting at both CAPND and SENDCAA. Participants will explore ways to make MIP work harder for them, learn how to improve efficiency through built-in budgeting features, and identify tasks currently being performed in Excel that could be automated or simplified within MIP. Whether you are new to the Budget Module or looking to get more out of your existing system, this session will provide practical tips to enhance your financial management processes.

The Adventure of Weatherizing Mobile Homes

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Jake Nuckolls, Building Performance Center

Suggested for All Weatherization Attendees

It's an understatement to say that mobile homes are not like stick built homes. They are full of unique constructions, layouts, and materials. Weatherizing mobile homes requires additional information and awareness. This session will cover basics and provide a foundation of information to understand how to weatherize a mobile home.

Statewide Needs Assessment and Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ): Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities in North Dakota

Harvest Hall, Conference Room

Dr. Yao Yu, North Dakota State University

Suggested for All Weatherization Attendees

This session presents findings from statewide needs assessments conducted in 2020, 2023, and 2026 in North Dakota, with a focus on trends and priorities related to Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ). Because people spend approximately 90% of their time indoors, IEQ plays a major role in occupant health, comfort, well-being, and productivity. IEQ includes indoor air quality (IAQ), lighting, acoustics, and thermal comfort, with IAQ being especially important due to its direct impact on health. Poor IAQ has been linked to respiratory illnesses, allergies, asthma, carbon monoxide exposure, and Sick Building Syndrome (SBS), and may also negatively affect cognitive performance and learning outcomes.

The session will introduce key IEQ and IAQ concepts and relevant standards and guidance (e.g., ASHRAE Standards 62.2 and 55, and EPA guidance), followed by a summary of statewide survey findings highlighting regional differences and how IEQ concerns have evolved over time. The presentation will also discuss practical approaches for improving IEQ while maintaining energy efficiency through HVAC optimization, building energy modeling, and data-driven operational strategies. The goal of this session is to provide practical and actionable insights that support healthier, safer, and more sustainable indoor environments across North Dakota communities.

REFRESHMENT BREAK | 3:00-3:30 PM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 3:30-5:00 PM

Transparent Communication*

Great Hall

Susan Williams, The Village Family Service Center

Suggested for Executive, Leadership and Management staff

Transparent communication is essential to building trust, strengthening workplace relationships, and creating a more engaged and positive work environment. When employees understand expectations, decisions, and organizational direction, they are better equipped to contribute with confidence and clarity.

This session will help participants understand what transparent communication is, why it matters in the workplace, and how leaders and teams can create a more open, honest, and transparent working environment.

HUD's Strategic Objectives and Actions by HUD Priority

Embassy A & B

Dedra Carey, HUD

Suggested for Executive, Leadership and Management Staff, Board Members

This session will provide attendees with an overview of HUD's FY2026 strategic objectives and how they align with current Administration priorities, including reducing barriers to affordable housing, reducing homelessness, protecting taxpayer funds, and streamlining business processes. Participants will also receive updates from the HUD Region 8 Program Office, hear about federal partnerships and initiatives, and learn more about HUD's customer resource management approach and available technical assistance supports. This presentation will offer valuable insight into federal priorities, collaborative efforts, and resources available to support housing and community development work across the region.

From ROMA Reporting to Modern Storytelling*

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

Fred Richmond, Center for Applied Management

Suggested for Executive, HR, Fiscal Directors, Case Managers and Direct Service Workers, Board Members

Community Action has always had powerful stories to tell. Through the ROMA framework, agencies have spent decades collecting data, measuring outcomes, and demonstrating accountability. This session explores how to build on that foundation by using business intelligence, data visualization, artificial intelligence, and modern communication strategies to transform data into meaningful stories. We'll look beyond traditional annual and compliance reports to create dashboards, infographics, presentations, social media, websites, videos, and outreach campaigns that support your mission and vision. Whether you're using Excel and ChatGPT or platforms like Power BI, Tableau, or Domo, you'll learn practical ways to make your data more accessible, strengthen relationships with funders and community partners, expand public awareness, and turn information into action that drives lasting community impact.

Doing More With What You Already Have

Harvest Hall, Conference Room

Mac Berns, Absolute Studios

Suggested for Executive Directors, Management Staff, Board Members, Frontline Staff, Data Practitioners.

How Small Teams Can Turn Existing Stories, Reports, and Program Successes Into Year-Round Communications.

Early Retirement Conversations: Build Employee Confidence with a Retirement Readiness Check-in

Harvest Hall, Directors Room

Jerry Bruzek and Nick Fletcher, Mutual of America

Suggested for Board Members, Executive Directors, Fiscal Directors, and HR

Planning for retirement involves more than simply choosing a retirement date. This session explores key considerations for employees planning for retirement, including Social Security timing, healthcare and Medicare, income planning, retirement savings strategies and the financial impact of retiring earlier than expected. Attendees will walk away with practical tools and insights to help evaluate overall financial readiness and build confidence in their retirement planning journey.

Weatherization Field Resources: The House Depressurization Chart

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Jake Nuckolls, Building Performance Center

Suggested for All Weatherization Attendees

There are many tools that exist thanks to the work of giants in the industry. A variety of field tools that can be used to determine airflow, depressurization, CFM, intermittent airflow. This session focuses on how to properly use the depressurization chart, but also others that are extremely helpful in day to day diagnosis.

FARGO-MOORHEAD REDHAWKS BASEBALL GAME 6:00 PM-9:00 PM

Join us at Newman Outdoor Field!

The Region 8 Community Action Association welcomes you to join us for an evening at the FM Redhawks baseball game as we celebrate Community Action together!

The Surfside Patio has been reserved exclusively for conference attendees.

Your complimentary ticket includes access to the exclusive deck and a two-hour all-you-can-eat buffet!



Gates open at 6:00 pm
Game begins at 7:02 pm

*Stadium has a clear bag policy



THURSDAY JULY 30, 2026

BREAKFAST SERVED | 7:30-8:30 AM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 8:30-10:00 AM

Conversations on Access to Lethal Means*

Great Hall

Sarah Kemp-Tabbut, University of North Dakota

Suggested for All Attendees

Many people do not access behavioral or physical health care despite having thoughts of or being at risk of suicide. Yet many of them signal to others – directly or indirectly – that they are struggling. This workshop is designed to provide friends, family and others with information on how recognize and respond to suicide risk with an additional focus on reducing access to lethal means – especially firearms. Participants learn how to talk with someone who might be having these thoughts in a collaborative, non-judgmental and supportive manner. CALM Conversations is divided into four sections. In Section 1, participants learn basic facts and misconceptions about suicide, common risk factors and warning signs, and the importance of means safety in keeping at-risk individuals safe. In Section 2, participants learn to ask about mood and suicide, with opportunities to practice asking questions in their own words. Section 3 focuses on connecting at-risk individuals to both formal and informal sources of support. Section 4 focuses on discussing means safety and making the environment safer for the at-risk individual until their mood state improves. CALM Conversations is intended for a general audience and requires no prior training in mental health or suicide prevention. The workshop is 90 minutes in length.

Motivational Interviewing*

Embassy A & B

Sara Wiederholt, Veterans Administration Medical Center

Suggested for Frontline Staff, Case Managers, HR

This interactive training offers an introduction to the foundational principles of Motivational Interviewing (MI), a client-centered communication style designed to strengthen an individual's own motivation and commitment to change. The training also includes practical tips for integrating MI techniques into daily work with clients, even in brief interactions. This session will equip participants with tools to better support behavior change in a respectful and effective manner by meeting them where they are at in their current stage of change and helping to elicit motivation to change.

National Alliance for Mental Health Smarts for Advocacy*

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

Madison Hanson, National Alliance for Mental Health Smarts for Advocacy

Suggested for Frontline Staff, Case Managers, Management, Executive Directors, Board Members

NAMI Smarts for Advocacy is an interactive advocacy training that teaches individuals and families affected by mental health conditions how to effectively share their stories, engage with policymakers, and advocate for policies that improve mental health care and support services. Participants will gain practical tools and skills to become confident, informed advocates for change.

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Explain key components of the policymaking process.
- Develop and deliver an effective personal advocacy story.
- Communicate persuasively with policymakers and stakeholders.
- Identify advocacy opportunities related to mental health issues.
- Take concrete actions to advance mental health policy and systems change.

Uniform Guidance - Part One of Two

Harvest Hall, Directors Room

Kevin Myren, CPA

Suggested for Management, Executive Directors, Board Members, Fiscal Directors, HR, Administrative Staff, Program Directors

Two (2) break-out sessions focusing on recent changes and key components of the OMB Uniform Guidance.

Weatherization Crew Peer Exchange and Learning

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Norris Elshaug, Dakota Prairie Community Action

Suggested for Weatherization Crew Members Only

This roundtable is a focused opportunity for crew members to discuss what they need to be successful in their roles. It's a chance to share positive strategies, solutions, and techniques that help improve efficiency and job satisfaction. We'll explore the importance of understanding program goals, meeting performance targets, and why it's crucial to complete jobs on time.

We'll engage in open dialogue to help crew members understand the bigger picture, from meeting averages to having a personal stake in the success of each project. This is a solutions-oriented discussion aimed at enhancing teamwork and ensuring we're all aligned in achieving our goals.

Weatherization Foremen Peer Exchange and Learning

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Matt Igard, Community Action Partnership Regions 1 and 8

Suggested for Weatherization Foreman Only

This roundtable provides Weatherization foremen with an opportunity to connect with peers from across the region to discuss leadership in the field, crew management strategies, production expectations, communication, and day-to-day jobsite realities. Foremen play a critical role in balancing quality work, safety, efficiency, and team morale while helping crews stay on track and meet program goals. This session is designed to encourage open discussion around practical solutions, successful leadership approaches, and techniques that help crews operate effectively in the field. Participants will have the opportunity to share challenges, discuss what is working well in their agencies, and learn from one another in a collaborative, solutions-oriented environment focused on strengthening Weatherization teams across the network.

REFRESHMENT BREAK | 10:00-10:30 AM

BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 10:30 AM-12:00 PM

Conversations on Access to Lethal Means (REPEAT SESSION)*

Great Hall

Sarah Kemp-Tabbut, University of North Dakota

Suggested for All Attendees

Many people do not access behavioral or physical health care despite having thoughts of or being at risk of suicide. Yet many of them signal to others – directly or indirectly – that they are struggling. This workshop is designed to provide friends, family and others with information on how recognize and respond to suicide risk with an additional focus on reducing access to lethal means – especially firearms. Participants learn how to talk with someone who might be having these thoughts in a collaborative, non-judgmental and supportive manner. CALM Conversations is divided into four sections. In Section 1, participants learn basic facts and misconceptions about suicide, common risk factors and warning signs, and the importance of means safety in keeping at-risk individuals safe. In Section 2, participants learn to ask about mood and suicide, with opportunities to practice asking questions in their own words. Section 3 focuses on connecting at-risk individuals to both formal and informal sources of support. Section 4 focuses on discussing means safety and making the environment safer for the at-risk individual until their mood state improves. CALM Conversations is intended for a general audience and requires no prior training in mental health or suicide prevention. The workshop is 90 minutes in length.

Uniform Guidance - Part Two of Two

Harvest Hall, Directors Room

Kevin Myren, CPA

Suggested for Management, Executive Directors, Board Members, Fiscal Directors, HR, Administrative Staff, Program Directors

Two (2) break-out sessions focusing on recent changes and key components of the OMB Uniform Guidance.

CSBG and Community Linkages

Embassy A & B

Susan Carr, NCRT, CSNOW Executive Director

Suggested for Executive Directors, Board Members, Program Directors and Administrators, HR

Linkages are a cornerstone of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) framework, helping Community Action Agencies build meaningful partnerships that strengthen services, expand resources, and improve outcomes for individuals and families. This session will explore what linkages are, how they can be both formal and informal, and why they are essential to effective community action planning.

Participants will learn how strong linkages can inform annual community needs assessments and Community Action Plans while demonstrating impact to boards, funders, and policymakers. Through real-world examples, attendees will discover practical strategies for developing partnerships with traditional and nontraditional stakeholders, including schools, healthcare providers, employers, housing organizations, faith communities, and local businesses. The session will also challenge participants to think beyond conventional partnerships and identify innovative opportunities to create new connections that benefit agencies, communities, and the people they serve.

Whether you are looking to strengthen existing relationships or build new ones, this session will provide actionable ideas to help your agency leverage linkages as a powerful tool for community change.

The SWS, what is it? What's in it?

Harvest Hall, Conference Room

Alyssa Kroshus-Helling, North Dakota Department of Commerce

Suggested for North Dakota Weatherization Attendees

In this session, we'll explore the Standard Work Specification- Aligned Field Guide . We will review how it can help guide the Weatherization work we do to ensure quality and effectiveness. By the end of this session, you'll have a clear understanding of contents within the SWS, and how it plays a pivotal role in achieving our mission in serving low-income families through Weatherization.

Weatherization Estimator Peer Exchange and Learning

Harvest Hall, Board Room

Jerry CAP, Community Action Partnership Region 6

Suggested for Weatherization Estimators Only

This roundtable is a valuable opportunity for estimator staff to connect, share experiences, and discuss best practices for foundational work, basements, and other key weatherization techniques. We'll explore methods for tackling common challenges and look at creative solutions to deal with rising material costs. This session is designed for peer-to-peer learning and collaboration; a chance to support each other in finding practical solutions. Come prepared to share what's working in your region, learn from others, and leave with fresh ideas to enhance your estimating process moving forward.

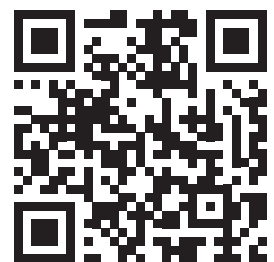
END OF CONFERENCE | 12:00 PM

REGION 8 ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNUAL MEETING 12:30-3:30 PM

Harvest Hall, Executive Room

Lunch provided for Board members

**TELL US
HOW WE DID**



2026 FRIENDS OF COMMUNITY ACTION AWARDS

The Friends of Community Action Award recognizes individuals and organizations whose leadership, partnership, advocacy, and service have made a lasting impact on Community Action and the people we serve.

Every two years, Community Action Partnership of North Dakota (CAPND) invites nominations from across our statewide network to recognize those who have gone above and beyond in advancing our mission of helping people and changing lives. This year's recipients represent the very best of Community Action; leaders who have strengthened our network through collaboration, innovation, advocacy, and an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of low-income individuals and families.

CAPND is proud to recognize the following recipients of the 2026 Friends of Community Action Award:

SHARRON BRADY



Sharron has exemplified the very best of Community Action board leadership through her years of dedicated service as Board Chair for Region 6 with the recent addition of Region 4. She understands that strong governance is essential to a successful Community Action Agency and has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the mission, values, and responsibilities of board service.

A champion for engaged and informed leadership, Sharron has continually encouraged board development and active participation while providing exceptional guidance and support to Executive Director Kristina Brownell and the Region 6 team. Her thoughtful leadership has helped foster a strong organizational culture built on accountability, collaboration, and service.

Sharron's leadership was especially instrumental during the expansion of Region 6's service area to include Region 4 following the closure of Red River Valley Community Action. During this unprecedented transition, she provided steady leadership and unwavering support, helping guide the agency through the significant responsibility of expanding operations while ensuring that Community Action services continued uninterrupted for thousands of low-income households across the region.

Volunteer board members are the foundation of Community Action governance, and leaders like Sharron demonstrate the profound impact dedicated volunteers can have on the strength and success of our network. Her commitment, leadership, and service have made a lasting difference for Community Action and for the communities we serve.



CITY OF GRAND FORKS

When the unfortunate closure of Red River Valley Community Action created uncertainty for individuals and families across Region 4, the City of Grand Forks immediately stepped forward as a trusted and steadfast partner. At a time when continuity of services was critical, City staff helped field calls from residents seeking assistance, ensuring that people in need had someone to turn to while new systems were being established.

Throughout the transition, the City worked alongside CAPND every step of the way, providing guidance, collaboration, and unwavering support as we developed a new model for delivering Community Action services throughout Region 4. Their partnership helped ensure that our mission continued uninterrupted and that individuals and families across the region could continue receiving the services they depend upon.

The City further demonstrated its commitment by awarding Community Services Grant funding to CAPND's Region 6 Community Action Agency, providing critical support to help establish and sustain operations during the transition. This investment reflected not only confidence in Community Action, but a shared commitment to strengthening the well-being of the Grand Forks community and the broader Region 4 service area.

The City of Grand Forks exemplifies what it means to be a true Community Action partner. Its leadership, compassion, and willingness to work together during a pivotal moment have left a lasting impact on our network and, most importantly, on the thousands of individuals and families who continue to receive services because of that partnership.

CHRIS DEERY



Chris has been an outstanding advocate not only for North Dakota's Veterans, but also for Community Action and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). Throughout his partnership with CAPND, Chris has consistently championed the importance of investing in programs that help individuals and families achieve stability and self-sufficiency.

At the state level, Chris played an instrumental role in advocating for additional resources to support Veterans experiencing homelessness. His efforts helped secure an additional \$250,000 in funding, expanding critical services for Veterans across North Dakota and strengthening our statewide Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program.

Chris has also been a steadfast advocate for Community Action at the federal level. He has intentionally kept CAPND and our SSVF program at the forefront of conversations with North Dakota's congressional delegation, helping policymakers better understand the impact Community Action has on Veterans, families, and communities throughout our state. His advocacy has strengthened awareness of both CSBG and the vital role Community Action agencies play in serving those most in need.

Through Chris's leadership and collaboration, Veterans served through CAPND's SSVF program can now access additional housing supports, including assistance with housing costs related to emotional support animals, removing barriers that help Veterans achieve and maintain stable housing.

Chris's unwavering dedication, thoughtful leadership, and genuine partnership have made a lasting difference for Veterans and for Community Action across North Dakota. We are deeply grateful for his continued support.

DAVE GUTTERUD



For many years, Dave has been a trusted partner to CAPND and North Dakota's Weatherization network, helping ensure that Weatherization professionals across the state receive high-quality, relevant, and engaging training. His dedication to developing the knowledge and skills of our crews has strengthened the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of Weatherization services delivered to thousands of households.

Dave is widely respected for his depth of technical expertise and his ability to translate complex building science concepts into practical, real-world applications. Whether training new staff or seasoned professionals, he creates learning experiences that are informative, interactive, and immediately applicable in the field. His sessions consistently receive some of the highest participant evaluations, making him a favorite among Weatherization professionals throughout North Dakota.

Beyond the classroom, Dave's impact can be seen in the confidence and competence of the crews who perform this important work every day. By investing in workforce development and

continuous learning, he has helped strengthen North Dakota's Weatherization network, improve the quality of services provided to households, and support safer, healthier, and more energy-efficient homes.

Dave's longstanding partnership, commitment to excellence, and dedication to advancing the Weatherization profession have made a lasting impact on Community Action.

JENNIFER HENDERSON



Jennifer has been an extraordinary partner to Community Action for many years, providing exceptional leadership in housing and homelessness programs that improve the lives of North Dakotans. Affectionately known throughout our network as "HUD Jen," Jennifer has earned the admiration of Community Action professionals across the state for her extensive knowledge of HUD regulations, guidance, and housing programs. She is a trusted resource whose expertise, responsiveness, and collaborative spirit have strengthened our agencies and the services they provide.

As Community Housing and Grants Management Director, Jennifer has played a pivotal role in advancing housing initiatives that help individuals and families experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. Most recently, her leadership of the North Dakota Homeless Grant has strengthened statewide partnerships while helping Community Action agencies deliver critical housing assistance to some of North Dakota's most vulnerable residents.

Jennifer is also a passionate advocate for affordable housing and has worked tirelessly to streamline policies and processes that better support both service providers and the households they serve.

Her thoughtful leadership, willingness to collaborate, and commitment to continuous improvement have made her an invaluable partner to Community Action and a respected leader in housing across North Dakota.

Jennifer's unwavering dedication to expanding housing opportunities and strengthening systems of care reflects the very spirit of Community Action. Her partnership has made a meaningful difference in communities across our state.

YEARS OF SERVICE

Join us in recognizing individuals who have dedicated many years of service to the Community Action Network. We thank them for their lasting commitment to helping people, strengthening communities, and advancing the mission of Community Action!

20+ Years

Doug Bakke
Jeri Barnett
Kristina Brownell
Loretta Buck
Adrian Gaytan
Bonnie Greuel
Tammy Hoggarth

Matthew Igard
Brian Jensen
Brandon Kjelden
Laura Komrosky
Kim Lutz
Debra Mauch
Ida Meier

John Meyer
Lora Papachek
Jim Pavlicek
Amy Rogelstad
Pamela Roof
Tosha Rudnick
Kelly Schlenker

Cindy Stickel
Bill Swartwout
Kathryn Vosburg
Andrea Werner
Carrie Whitehall

30+ Years

Roxanne Breen
Cathy Bullis
Alice Carr
Emily Fisher
Beth Fylling

Gemma Haberstroh
Julie Johnson
Stacy Jorgenson
Jerry Kapp
Terry Magnuson

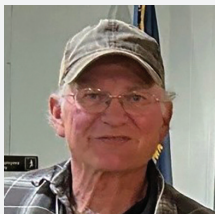
40+ Years

Norris Elshaug
Lloyd Winterberg

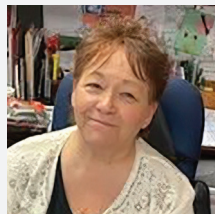
RETIREMENTS

Karen Busse, SELF-RELIANCE COORDINATOR
Carol Carlson, FAMILY PARTNERSHIP CASE MANAGER

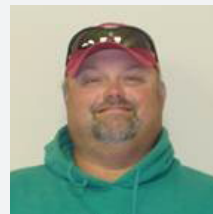
Denise Steinbach,
CLIENT SERVICES DIRECTOR/DATA SPECIALIST



Ken Berg
WEATHERIZATION



Cindy Clark
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



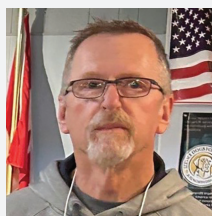
Bill Dunn
WEATHERIZATION



Rory Hoffmann
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR



Deeann Long
CLIENT SERVICES DIRECTOR



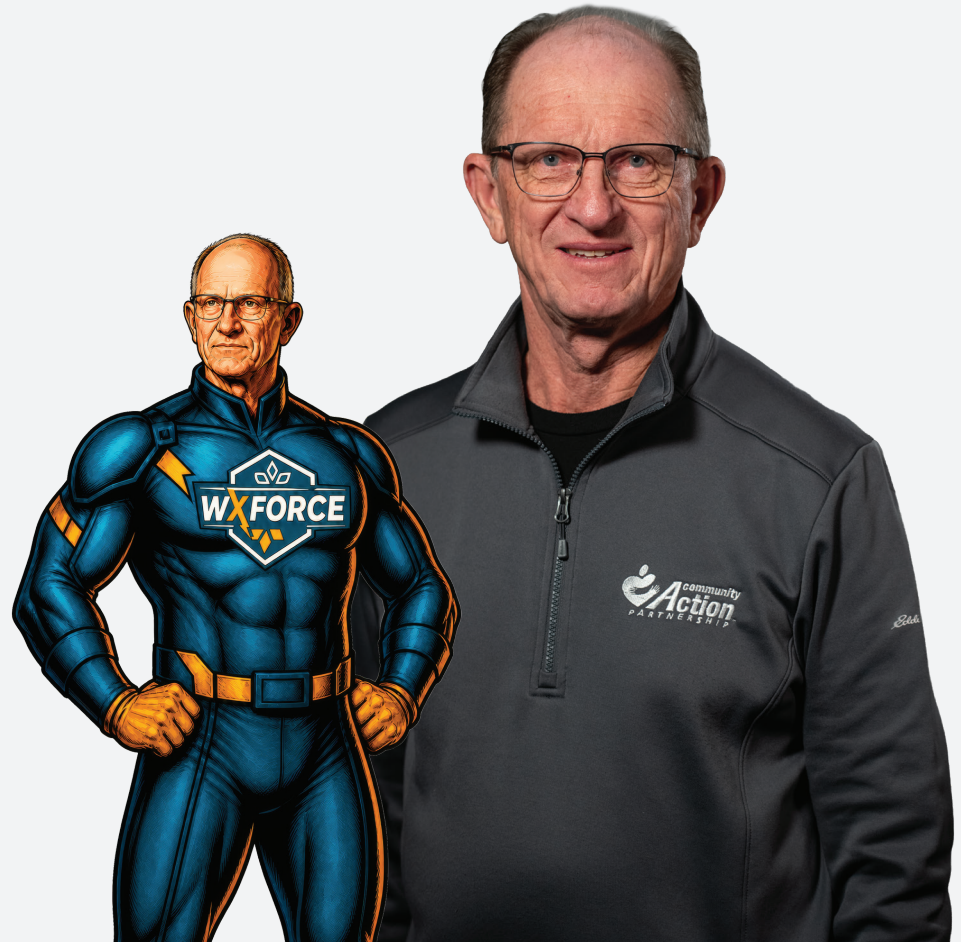
Kevin Munson
WEATHERIZATION



Willy Soderholm
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Celebrating 50 Years of Helping People and Changing Lives: Erv Bren!

We proudly recognize Erv Bren for an extraordinary 50 years of service to Community Action. His dedication and leadership have strengthened the Region 8 Association and the Community Action Partnership of North Dakota while helping people and changing lives throughout our communities. We thank Erv for his remarkable commitment and lasting contributions to our Network!



THANK YOU FOR HELPING US WELCOME REGION 8 TO FARGO!



Andrea Olson, Executive Director CAPND

As the Executive Director for the State Association, Andrea works on a number of initiatives and programs including training and technical assistance for North Dakota's Community Action Agencies. She has worked in the non-profit sector for 17 years and has been with the CAPND since 2008. Andrea has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from North Dakota State University and a Master's Degree in Public, Human Service, and Health Administration from Minnesota State University Moorhead. Andrea is a Certified Community Action Professional and National Certified ROMA Trainer and ROMA Implementer. She also serves as the Lead for the Regional Performance Innovative Consortium for Federal Region 8; a successful collaboration between the Community Action State Associations and State Community Services Block Grant Offices who serve all 75 Community Action Agencies and CSBG-eligible entities in the states of: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

Andrea lives in West Fargo with her husband, daughters and rescue pups (Archie and Holden) who are reminded on daily basis that they are devastatingly handsome! She has a strong affinity for people who use their turn signals in parking lots, is an ardent supporter of daily chips and salsa consumption, a die hard Conan O'Brien fan, and feels strongly that the world is a better place when we all learn to love, respect and enjoy each other.



Josh Boschee, Fargo Mayor

Josh Boschee was elected Mayor of Fargo in June of 2026. Prior to the 2026 election, he represented Fargo in the North Dakota House of Representatives from 2013 to 2024, serving three sessions as House minority leader and was elected to the North Dakota Senate in 2024.

In the Senate he served on the Education Committee, Workforce Development Committee, Employee Benefits Committee, Budget Section and Legislative Management.



Mac Berns, CEO Absolute Studios

Mac is a highly-experienced marketer who has worked with more than 2,500 national, regional and local clients. This has allowed him to hone his unique brand of marketing, combining his background in business

development with his passion for a well-executed marketing campaign. Mac's education includes a bachelor's degree in advertising and public relations from MSU Moorhead and a master's degree in management from the University of Mary.



Doug Peters, Executive Pastor Prairie Heights

Doug is a leadership expert with over 25 years of experience building teams and growing leaders. Before joining Prairie Heights in 2021, Peters spent 14 years as Athletic Director at Minnesota State University Moorhead, guiding Dragon Athletics through significant growth in student success, scholarship funding, revenue, facilities and community engagement. His leadership extends throughout the Fargo-Moorhead region, where he currently serves as Chair of the Visit Fargo-Moorhead Board of Directors. With extensive experience in organizational leadership, strategic development and community service, Peters is committed to building strong teams and creating a positive, lasting impact in the lives of others.

WXFORCE IN ACTION

WXFORCE.COM



STRONGER TOGETHER:
HELPING PEOPLE, CHANGING
LIVES ACROSS REGION 8