



# 2020

Annual Report

*"There is no power  
for change greater than a  
community discovering what  
it cares about."  
– Margaret J. Wheatley*





# H O P E R E S P E C T D R E A M C H A N G E

District 7 Human Resources Development Council is proud to be one of 10 Montana Community Action Agencies (CAA's). Since 1964, when the "Equal Opportunity Act created the Community Action Network, agencies across America have assisted tens of millions of individuals and families break the cycle of poverty and achieve economic independence. Through this network of over 1,000 local CAA's, covering 99% of US counties, the partnership improves the quality of life and revitalizes communities across America. Each Community Action Agency is charged with the task of addressing the issues of poverty and its impact on local communities as it uses local resources and solutions to break the cycle.

Community Action embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes South Central Montana a better place to live. The Board of Trustees for each CAA and HRDC is structured to include representatives from Business, Local Government, and the Low-income community. This tripartite board structure ensures representation for all community stakeholders.

The members of the 2020 Board of Trustees are listed below.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Vera Jane He Does It**  
**Leon Pattyn**  
**Troy Boucher**  
**Sidney Fitzpatrick**  
**Mary Cameron**  
**Tyrel Hamilton**  
**James (JV) Moody**  
**James (Jim) Thompson**  
**Lara Strickland**  
**Joe Aguilar**  
**Felicia Burg**  
**Michael Kenney**  
**Tamara Good**  
**Mark Vinger**

Chair, Big Horn County  
Vice-Chair, Yellowstone County  
Sec/Treasurer, Boucher & Associates  
Big Horn County Commissioner  
Carbon County Commissioner  
Stillwater County Commissioner  
Sweet Grass County Commissioner  
Yellowstone County Commissioner  
Stillwater County Board Member  
Yellowstone County Board Member  
Yellowstone County Board Member  
Yellowstone County Board Member  
RiverStone Health  
Montana-Dakota Utilities





## HRDC's VISION

is "To implement programs that increase access to opportunity for all people regardless of race, creed, sexual orientation, religion, culture, or political beliefs and to assist them to achieve self-reliance and economic independence."

Working with community partners, the agency's

## MISSION

is "To empower people in need through mobilizing and developing community resources by creating opportunities for success in Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, and Yellowstone counties."

## The agency's CORE VALUES

are focused on the elimination of barriers that impede economic self-reliance. HRDC is committed to mitigate prejudice and the long standing economic and environmental barriers that inhibit the growth and prosperity of the people in our communities.

**Empowerment:** HRDC believes all people deserve access to opportunity. The agency is committed to helping all people reach their full potential.

**Respect:** HRDC believes in maintaining the dignity of all human beings and seeks to treat all with kindness, dignity, and respect.

**Partnerships and Collaboration:** HRDC believes that by working together through partnerships and collaboration, the agency can accomplish its mission, vision, and goals of the organization as it improves communities.

**Accountability & Transparency:** HRDC believes in full accountability to the community and its funding partners by providing efficient and effective services with complete transparency.

**Innovation:** HRDC believes that innovation and creativity are vital to community building. It will continue to find solutions to unmet community needs, create new opportunities, and eliminate barriers of inequality.

**Professional Development:** HRDC believes in ongoing and continuous personal and professional growth for its Board, Staff, and Volunteers. The agency supports an environment that promotes individual advancement and achievement. It is committed to providing opportunities for its board, staff, volunteers, and clients to succeed.

**Fiduciary Responsibility:** HRDC embraces its fiduciary stewardship through efficient organizational operations and the effective delivery of essential services by continuously evaluating impact and outcomes.





In 2020,  
HRDC  
provided  
services to  
**17,567**  
people.

A total of  
**20,334**  
applications to  
agency programs  
were approved.

Through these combined efforts, HRDC has provided assistance to **7,041** Households and made **2,654** referrals to its Community Partners providing specialized services within our community.

**473**

individuals were  
sheltered in temporary  
housing and  
Emergency Shelters

Certified Volunteers  
prepared tax returns for  
**558** taxpayers at no cost,  
saving them **\$132,750**  
in tax preparation fees and  
generating **\$962,196** in  
refunds and tax credits.  
Together these figures totaled  
**\$1,094,946** that went  
directly back into the  
community.

**316** individuals received food  
assistance through the FDPIR, Food  
Distribution Program on Indian  
Reservations, on and around the  
Crow Reservation and city of Hardin.  
In 2020, HRDC supported local  
food banks, helping them provide  
**6,682** boxes of food.

**8,051**

individuals  
received energy  
assistance.



# Child Care

## Early Childhood Provider Services

HRDC provides oversight for all early childhood provider training in the region's **14**-county and **2** Tribal Nations service area. HRDC's certified trainers provide instruction, consultation, and classroom education throughout the year to prepare child care providers with the essentials needed to deliver safe, affordable, and well managed services. In 2020, **210** individual training courses were offered, with **1,357** child care providers attending. **1,098** training hours were logged through courses ranging from two to sixty hours.



## Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

HRDC administers the CACFP program for Montana's Department of Health and Human Resources. The program reduces the cost of childcare while ensuring children receive healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. In 2020, **44** childcare programs were reimbursed **\$272,126** for nutritious meals and snacks served to **666** children enrolled in the program. The purpose of CACFP is to improve infant-child health and development through balanced nutrition.



## Child Care Assistance

In 2020, **Best Beginnings Childcare Scholarship Program** provided **\$8,099,425** in subsidized scholarships to low income children at "qualifying care providers." In 2020, **2,728** families received **Best Beginnings Scholarships**. There were **3,629** children participating in the Scholarship Program.





## CARES Funds Grants

HRDC administered the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act issuing **\$2,373,300** in scholarships to **594** families, serving **1510** children. Funds were to be used for tutoring, education supplies, in-home care, and related necessities.

## Alternative Education

The HRDC, Alternative Education Center works closely with Billings Office of Public Education and the Lincoln Center. It provides one-on-one self-paced tutoring under the supervision of a certified educator. The center targets low-income individuals, 16 and older in pursuit of a high school diploma or completion of their HiSET. Participants can find personalized training for all course work, college prep ACT - SAT testing, and remedial reading and math. Tutoring for the written Driver's License exam is also available. In 2020, **51** individuals utilized the center. **2** individuals completed their HiSET, **1** completed a Bachelor's Degree, **8** participated in college prep activities, **12** improved basic education skills, and **28** received assistance with Driver's License exams.





# Employment and Training



HRDC provides multiple employment and training programs for low-income people through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), Pathways, and Work Experience Programs (WEX). HRDC also provides Youth Employment Opportunities, described later in the Youth Programs section.

## *Work Experience Program (WEX)*

The Work Experience Program, WEX, provides E&T participants with worksite opportunities for mentoring, on-the-job training, and work experience. Individuals enrolled in WEX continue to receive TANF and SNAP benefits while in the program. In 2020, **51** individuals obtained on-the-job training. **19** were participants in youth programs.



## *Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)*

The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) assists service area residents to regain stability following a housing crisis, or homelessness. The program provides emergency shelter to eligible individuals through rapid re-housing and intensive case management. The program goal focuses on homeless prevention. In 2020, ESG provided **\$152,862** to **359** households, paying **68** Security Deposits, **130** months of rent, and **72** months of Rental Arrears. It made **18** permanent housing placements, and completed **23** landlord/tenant mediations.



## *General Relief*

General Relief (GR) is a Yellowstone County Program that provides rental assistance to individuals without dependents waiting for SSI, Social Security Insurance or SSDI, Social Security Disability Insurance approval. In 2020, GR provided **142** households with **\$116,658** in General Assistance.





## Pathways

Pathways is a group of interconnected programs designed to support low-income families eligible for, or who are receiving TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Through a process of intensive case management, goal setting, and supportive services, participants choose their pathway to self-sufficiency. In 2020, **390** people received transportation assistance, collected **656** utility payments, received **1,510** referrals to community programs and were provided **3,947** hours of case management.

## SNAP Employment and Training

SNAP E&T participants find opportunities for work experience, education, and job retention activities. While in the program they receive supportive services including housing, transportation, payment of educational fees, and job related supplies.

In 2020, **14** individuals secured employment, **4** youth and **10** adults received **\$5,188** in transportation assistance.



## Continuum of Care, Rapid Rehousing

In 2020, Continuum of Care, Rapid Rehousing Program provided **29** months of rent and **14** security deposits for **152** Residents.

## Yellowstone County Burial

In 2020, **36** low-income families in Yellowstone County received **\$54,597** in burial assistance for loved ones.



## Emergency Services





HRDC administers three energy assistance programs: Weatherization, Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), and Energy Share. Each of these programs is vital to Montana and helps disadvantaged individuals and families maintain permanent housing. For the elderly and disabled; it provides independence, for the working poor; self-reliance and well-being for their families, and for others with limited resources; it provides help paying an energy bill. In 2020, **8,051** individuals received assistance through public and private funds supporting these programs.

## *Weatherization*

The Weatherization Program provides energy conservation services to low income families by reducing energy costs for low-income households by increasing the energy efficiency of their homes. Following an energy audit, a professional installation crew installs energy saving materials and items to improve health and energy efficiency of the home. These services are provided at no cost to the participant. Once enrolled, individuals are automatically placed on a priority list based upon energy usage. Weatherization Assistance Program then helps households to reduce energy costs. In 2020, HRDC installation crews weatherized **122** homes, replaced **6** furnaces, repaired **10**, and completed **286** other repairs.



## *Low-Income Energy Assistance (LIEAP)*

LIEAP provided low-income households, both homeowners and renters, with access to residential energy needed to heat and power their homes. In 2020, **3,622** households received a total of **\$2,998,372** in assistance that included **\$2,326,537** in utility pay and **\$671,835** in energy pay.

## *Energy Share*

Energy Share is a year-round emergency assistance loan program for eligible low-income individuals facing an energy emergency. The program is available only when all other resources have been exhausted. Energy Share of Montana works in partnership with HRDC. In 2020, **\$389,044** in assistance was provided to **810** households.



## *Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)*

HRDC administers the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, FDPIR, in Hardin, Montana. The program services the Crow Reservation and surrounding area, providing a variety of healthy and nutritious foods from the Government Commodity Program. In 2020, **316** individuals received commodity foods through FDPIR on an ongoing basis.

## *Food Bank Support*

HRDC works to support local food banks. In 2020, the agency helped food banks provide **6,682** boxes of food.



## *Wheels for Work*

Through a Partnership with United Way of Yellowstone County, HRDC assists low-income individuals needing transportation to maintain employment and manage daily life. Households receive gas vouchers, bus passes, and vehicle repairs. In 2020, HRDC assisted **153** low income households, providing **57** gas cards, **62** bus passes, and **34** auto repairs.



# Housing



HRDC strives to move people out of poverty. A first step is to stabilize individuals and families by providing temporary and transitional housing. The ultimate goal is to move people into permanent housing. HRDC administers a myriad of Housing Programs designed to move participants toward economic independence.

## *Harmony House*

Harmony House is a residential maternity group home that provides a supportive and nurturing transitional living program for homeless, pregnant, and parenting mothers ages 16-22 and their children. Residents participate in life skills, parenting classes, peer support groups, budgeting, financial literacy, education, employment and diverse recreational activities. They receive supportive wrap around services when they exit the program. The agency also offers an off-campus “Transition in Place” program utilizing the same curriculum for single dads and couples, ages 16-21 who are homeless, pregnant, or parenting. Up to 6 months of rental assistance is available for qualifying families. In 2020, Harmony House provided residence for **8** Homeless young mothers and their children. “Transition in Place” assisted **6** youth obtain employment and paid **16** months in off campus rental assistance.

## *The Home Center*

The HRDC Home Center is a resource for the entire community, providing information, content, and instruction on a wide variety of housing and financial education topics. In 2020, **337** individuals participated in First Time Homebuyer Counseling. **51** individuals attended First Time Homebuyer classes, and **22** completed budgeting and credit modules. The Home Center is a collaborative effort among local agencies, organizations, and businesses. It is located on the agency’s campus in Billings, Montana.





## *Housing Choice Voucher*

HRDC administers the Rural Section 8 program in the five county service region. The program assists individuals and families secure affordable, safe, and sanitary housing by paying a portion of their rent in an approved housing unit. Rent payments are made directly to the property owner or landlord. All housing units must meet eligibility requirements and be pre-approved. In 2020, **155** households received **\$756,680** in assistance that covered **380** months of rent, **111** utility payments, **146** housing inspections, and **7** security deposits.

## Money Management



### *Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)*

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) is a unique Home Center service that targets low and moderate-income people to provide them with no-cost tax preparation. Both state and federal taxes are prepared utilizing IRS trained and certified community volunteers. Families with an adjusted gross income of less than **\$56,000** qualify for the service. Those with incomes of less than **\$66,000** can file their own e-taxes with the assistance of a trained and certified tax preparation specialist, using the HRDC computer lab. In 2020, **23** VITA volunteers assisted **558** taxpayers generating **\$962,196** in refunds and tax credits. In addition, the program saved taxpayers **\$132,750** in tax preparation fees.

Together these figures totaled **\$1,094,946** that went directly back into the community.





# Youth Programs

## Youth Employment

HRDC administers Youth Employment Programs providing year-round training and work opportunities to prepare youth, ages 16-24 for the workforce. The program teaches soft skills, including, resume building, interviewing for a job, workplace etiquette, and behavior, while providing employment experience. The ultimate goal of the Program is to prepare young people for long-term economic independence. In 2020, **36** youth participated in employment programs. **15** received paid work experience through Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA).





# Bundled Services



## *Youth Homeless Demonstration Project (YHDP)*

YHDP is a Flexible Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) program providing low barrier flexible housing with rental assistance, intensive case management, and bundled support services for homeless youth and young adults, ages 18-24. The program works with the Continuum of Care and its community partners to offer multiple services to participants starting with housing first. The project pays all rental application fees, deposits, and rental payments for a minimum of 6 months while participants work to continue their education, establish a job track, and address individual issues that resulted in homelessness. The ultimate goal of the program is to provide youth with permanent housing as they work toward self-sufficiency. The demonstration project began in late 2020. In that short time, **4** participants were placed in permanent housing, receiving **10** months of rent, **4** security deposits, and **3** transportation assistance vouchers.

## *Family Forward Program*

“Family Forward” is HRDC’s bundled services program. It is built on a family model that promotes effective family engagement, long term case management, and family goal setting. Goals are jointly formulated and prioritized by the participants and their case manager. As goals are achieved, new ones are established. The program works off of the belief that families and individuals are most likely to succeed when multiple barriers are addressed concurrently. In 2020, **30** households were enrolled in the program.





# Friends of HRDC

## *Donors and Volunteers*

HRDC recognizes the long list of individuals, organizations, and businesses who have assisted the agency in building better communities and moving people out of poverty. These generous donors have given their time, money, and in-kind contributions helping HRDC assist low-income people. In 2020, **92** volunteers provided **1,821** hours of service at a value of **\$52,200**.







## Client Services

HRDC contracts with different state of MT departments to determine eligibility, process client benefits, and provide administrative and program support. Client benefits are distributed directly by the state. The value of these services is not recorded in HRDC's financial statement. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, HRDC provided administrative and program support to the state of Montana for the following direct services. The information that follows is provided by the state.

<b>Child Day Care Assistance</b>	<b>\$8,109,377</b>
<b>Low-income Energy Assistance</b>	<b>\$2,744,979</b>
<b>Section 8 Housing (estimate)</b>	<b>\$872,446</b>
<b>Pathways Client Direct Assistance</b>	<b>\$86,877</b>
<b>Total Financial Assistance</b>	<b>\$11,813,679</b>
<b>Crow Reservation Food Distribution</b>	<b>\$169,024</b>
<b>Total financial and commodity services</b>	<b>\$11,982,703</b>

*This total was paid in subsidies that went directly back into our communities.*





# Financials



## Revenues

Program Grants	\$7,555,900
Fees for Service	\$294,424
Contributions	\$57,667
Interest	\$10,812
Miscellaneous	\$33,767
Rental Income	\$25,203
In-Kind Contributions	\$21,469
Net Assets released	\$67,296
Total Revenue	\$8,066,538





## Program Expenses

Community Development	\$311,461
Emergency Food & Housing	\$1,383,235
Energy Programs	\$2,380,041
Employment Assistance	\$1,796,906
Family Development	\$1,421,924
Fundraising	\$114
General and Administrative	\$779,201
Total Expenses	<hr/> \$8,072,882







**Energy Assistance, Harmony House,  
Alternative Ed. & Youth  
3116 1st Avenue North  
Billings, MT 59101  
office 406.247.4778 | fax 406.247.4791**

**HRDC's Home Center  
3124 1st Avenue North  
Billings, MT 59101  
office 406.206.2717 | fax 406.206.2716**

**HRDC Satellite Office (Hardin)  
501 North Center, Hardin, MT 59034  
office 406.665.3500 | fax 406.665.1395**

**Food Distribution Program on Indian  
Reservations  
409 N. Crook, Hardin, MT 59034  
office 406.665.2523 | fax 406.665.1026**

**For assistance with all other programs  
email [info@hrdc7.org](mailto:info@hrdc7.org) or  
call the main office at 406-247-4732 or  
1-800-433-1411.**

**Find us online at [www.hrdc7.org](http://www.hrdc7.org),  
Facebook [@hrdc7](https://www.facebook.com/hrdc7), and Twitter.**

"Dear HRDC,  
Thank you so much for helping getting me  
into a place. Without your help I'd still be in  
shelters, crisis centers, and wherever else.  
I'm no longer worried like I was before I got  
approved for a place to stay. I have less  
stress, I can lock my door, and take baths in  
my own bathroom safe from people that  
wanted to hurt me. No more drama, cold  
weather, and no need to find a warmer place  
to stay. I really appreciate you all. May all  
of you get blessed.  
Sincerely - Ann"

"HRDC staff,  
Just a sincere note of thanks to all who help  
out during tax season. A thankless job that is  
not always appreciated as it should be. May  
God bless you all abundantly for your good  
deeds and patience with so many clients this  
busy season. I truly appreciate all your  
efforts and help.  
Sincerely - Vicki"

Front and Back Cover Photo Courtesy of PGW, Stillwater County

This project is funded in part under a contract with the Montana Department of Health and Human Services. The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department.