

# CAPSTONE

COMMUNITY ACTION



ANNUAL REPORT **2022**

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**“Somewhere along the way we must learn that there is nothing greater than to do something for others.”**

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

The passing of a year can be both a time of reflection of what has been, and a time of hope for what can be. At Capstone, we hope this time can also be a poignant reminder of the power of change and the promise of new beginnings. While the immense economic and health challenges that many Vermonters have been facing persist, our Capstone dedication persists as well.

The past year has included many stories of resilience in the face of adversity. The affordable housing crisis came to Capstone’s doorstep every day. Lack of housing deeply affected a broad swath of Vermonters in ways we had never seen before. An elderly woman who was evicted when her building was sold, with no family and literally no place to go. The young man sleeping in his car who accepted a gas card to stay warm though the night. Capstone staff went day after day to the motels, developing housing plans, service supports and financial goals with guests, only to play the endless waiting game for the apartments that never materialized. The dedication I see of our staff only strengthens our resolve to advocate and be the voice of the Vermonters we serve.

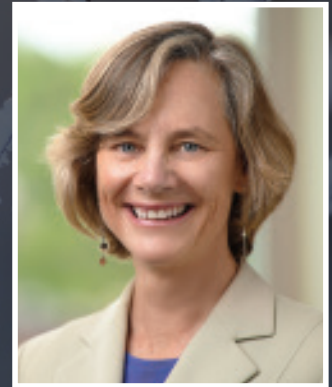
Dedication to education was the hallmark of our year at Brook Street High School. Despite the daily challenges of single parenting, barriers of transportation, past lives of trauma, mental health or substance abuse, we watched with joy as our remarkable young students achieved their high school diplomas. Encircled by their “village” of

teachers and peers, they persisted to accomplish what may have previously felt impossible.

Lastly, the dedication of our donors continues to turn what previously felt unattainable into realities. Direct support to our students means a set of winter tires to get safely to school or a laptop to achieve college dreams. Donated funds for food and fuel crisis kept fixed income seniors warm, children fed and families stable during such unsettling economic times.

Each and every one of you is a vital contributor to the health of our community: our staff, participants, donors, board members, and community partners. I am continually inspired by the impactful work we do and am motivated to keep moving forward.

At Capstone, we provide a lifeline for many who are struggling, and we help forge a path towards a brighter future for our community. Let’s continue to shine our light of hope, together.



A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Sue". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sue Minter  
Executive Director



## BY THE NUMBERS

# Capstone's work helping Vermonters

Our work has a direct and vital impact in Central Vermont in numerous ways:

**10,950**

Individual Vermonters were served

**6,414**

Central Vermont households were served

**287**

Children birth-to-five received critical early childhood development and education

**1,982**

Central Vermonters were provided meals from our Food Shelf

**\$2,428,442**

In tax refunds to individuals in 1,311 households were prepared by more than 30 volunteers

**1,438**

Individuals and families stayed warm with emergency heating services

**568**

Homes weatherized

**224**

Entrepreneurs launched or expanded their business, creating full time jobs

**285**

Individuals received Financial Coaching Services to help them on their path to financial stability

**4,037**

Visits to the Capstone Barre Food Shelf

**1,088**

Children received daily nutritious meals from 120 child care providers through the Child Care Food Program



## TRANSPORTATION

# Programs that help Vermonters move forward

**MileageSmart** continues to flourish as a statewide program by assisting **495 Vermonters who are now driving a pre-owned gas hybrid or electric vehicle purchased from a local car dealer.**

This year, Capstone extended its focus on transportation access and equity by establishing **Community Rides Vermont (CRVT)**, a non profit organization which will run a new transportation service. CRVT will offer affordable, zero emission on-demand rides and pre-scheduled rides with an electric car fleet throughout Washington County. This unique new service will focus on rides for community members who lack access to basic services.

For low-income Vermonters, the lack of reliable transportation creates significant barriers to employment and economic security. Thanks to Senator Peter Welch, this transportation project received seed funds of \$750,000. Stay tuned for a 2023 launch date of this exciting new mobility option for rural Vermonters.

## Food access for all Vermonters

**Vermont Everyone Eats (VEE)** marked its third year with the ShiftMeals and Capstone partnership in the Central Vermont food HUB. This program provides nutritious meals to those impacted by the pandemic, and stabilizes income sources for Vermont restaurants, farmers and producers serving:

- **86,106 meals in Washington County**
- **28,605 meals in Lamoille County**
- **15,640 meals in Orange County**
- **1,050 meals in Granville and Hancock**

Our Lamoille County partners filled Capstone’s freezer in our Morrisville office, having a profound impact for participants. *“These meals have literally been a lifesaver for people,”* reducing the burden of financial strains and offering healthy food. VEE meals also reach our unhoused community members when Capstone housing counselors conduct outreach and hotel visits. *“When we can offer someone a warm meal on the spot or send them home with a box for their family, it provides hope when there is little,”* shared Housing Counselor Katrina James.

Although the VEE program will soon come to an end on March 31, 2023 (as federal funding ends), Capstone Community Action remains deeply committed to our community and collaborations to ensure food access for all.

Capstone’s **Community Kitchen Academy** continues to impact our community in multiple ways. This workforce development program trained **21 graduates** in the culinary arts, and transitioned students from economic insecurity into stable employment. CKA also provided nutritious meals to our customers at Capstone’s Food Shelf in Barre and to the Orange County Parent Child Center. Capstone’s innovative online ordering system instituted in 2022 along with a new option for home delivery provides food access to those lacking transportation or the inability to leave home.





## BROOK STREET HIGH SCHOOL

# Helping teens and babies thrive

Located at the historic Brook Street School in Barre, [Brook Street High School](#) is a State of Vermont approved education provider serving pregnant and parenting high school students.

This Capstone program was founded in 2003 as the Family Literacy Center to help lift pregnant and parenting young women out of poverty with a high school diploma. Known for a holistic approach, this one of a kind program currently serves **11 enrolled students and their families.**



## GREEN SAVING SMART

# Save money. Reduce energy. Live better.

Since its inception in March 2022, [this statewide initiative](#) offers free financial and energy coaching while prioritizing BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and New American communities. The program has already worked with **34 low to moderate income individuals and families to manage finances and connect with programs and resources to reduce energy use.**

GSS also formed a partnership with [Vermont Green Football Club](#) to grow awareness of energy equity by addressing energy burdens, and communities most harmed by climate change. It's a uniquely aligned collaboration we look forward to strengthening in 2023.

## EMERGENCY FUNDS

# Ensuring that Vermonters in crisis make ends meet

Nate\* suddenly lost his wife, and the mother of his three young children. Grieving and suddenly a single father without options for child care, Nate was forced to leave his job to care for his children coping with the loss of their mother. Money began to run out and he had no idea how to cover all the bills piling up. Thankfully, Nate connected with staff at Capstone's Lamoille County office who helped him access heating assistance funded by donations to Capstone. Grateful for Capstone's support, he shared with staff that he never would have reached out if not for his children. Nate and his family are one story of Vermonters in crisis struggling to make ends meet.

*\*Name has been changed to protect the privacy of our participant.*

## 3E THERMAL PROGRAM

# Keeping out the cold with energy efficiency

Energy, economy, and environment are the premise of Capstone's **3E Thermal program** to address climate change and increase energy efficiency across Vermont. 3E Thermal works hand in hand with building owners and design teams to determine the most energy efficient solutions.

In August 2022, 3E Thermal worked with the [Good Samaritan Haven Welcome Center](#), an 18-room, 35-bed emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness in central Vermont. 3E Thermal consulted from early on, working closely with Efficiency Vermont and Green Mountain Power, to bring expertise on energy efficiency to this major retrofit and new construction project.

Randy Drury, 3E Thermal Program Director, explained, "We focused primarily on the exterior, or thermal shell, and mechanicals of the building, removing old heating equipment and using strategic electric heat." The former motel had existing fossil fuel components removed, cold climate heat pumps installed for each room, and heat pump water heaters installed. The house on the property had a cold climate heat pump with a propane backup, full LED lighting package, and exterior upgrades.

There is pride in every project becoming more sustainable so that clients have a comfortable, safe environment to enjoy. With the high demand for housing, this transformation is an incredible example of what is possible with future minded partnerships and secure funding.

According to Rick DeAngelis, Good Samaritan Haven Co-Executive Director, "The Welcome Center provides unhoused persons with decent and safe emergency shelter while they work on re-entering central Vermont's extremely tight housing market. Thanks to Capstone and other partners our buildings are energy efficient so that they are warm in the cold weather and cool in hot weather. We are grateful for the support!"



## OUTREACH

# A new and improved website!

In 2022, we launched our new website! Our site is a resource for everyone; a place to learn more, stay engaged, and promote Capstone stories, events and workshops.

The new website features: translation services to offer accessibility to non-English readers; online applications for a Participant Intake Form; refreshed information format, ensuring ease of discovery; improved events and workshops feature; space to grow our video and audio educational offerings; new photos by [StoryWorkz Photography](#); and a new platform created on MODX by [Eternity Marketing](#). We hope you will take the time to check out our site by visiting [www.capstonevt.org](http://www.capstonevt.org).

## HOUSING

# Solving homelessness one person at a time

Housing Program Manager Ramsey Papp witnesses the challenges of the affordable housing crisis every day. In 2022, Capstone’s housing team worked with **434 individuals and families who were homeless or on the verge of homelessness**. People often think that housing can be found quickly. Instead, it is a lengthy process. Housing history, landlord references, income, disability services, credit building and other factors are all a part of the team’s work. Most frustrating is, despite all the hard work, there are no options.

Homelessness is also unpredictable. One example, says Papp, is someone who is “80 years old, has lived in the same home for 20 years, and the building is being sold.

Now waiting lists are long. Shelter space is tight, and it is very hard to find a motel room. If there’s no family, where does this person go?”

For Papp, this work is tied to the Capstone belief that “Everyone has a right to safe and secure housing. This is what we do every day. In the end, we’re all part of solving the problem in our community.”



## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES Fiscal years ending September 30, 2022 and 2021

REVENUE	2022	2021
Grants and Contracts	\$ 18,579,094	\$ 15,897,133
Donations	942,630	1,226,198
Fees, rents and other	1,011,768	1,697,330
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>20,533,492</b>	<b>18,820,661</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>PROGRAM SERVICES:</b>		
Housing	171,186	195,133
Head Start and Related	6,042,931	5,394,488
Family and Community Support Services	2,270,181	1,901,624
Community Economic Development	1,871,732	1,744,514
Weatherization	5,583,405	5,217,363
Workforce Development	204,096	170,479
Climate and Transportation	1,235,029	685,044
Community Services	437,816	369,964
Plant Fund	(72,795)	(108,805)
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>17,743,581</b>	<b>15,569,804</b>
<b>SUPPORT SERVICES:</b>		
Fundraising	54,471	64,212
General and Administrative	2,263,477	2,101,966
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>20,061,529</b>	<b>17,735,982</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 471,963*</b>	<b>\$ 1,084,679*</b>

A complete set of our audited financial statements is available at our office:

20 Gable Place  
Barre, Vermont



\* Surplus reflects extraordinary circumstances of COVID rescue funding, including PPE federal loan forgiveness, one time donations such as Bernie’s Mitten Match and one time federal supplemental grants.





20 Gable Place, Barre, Vermont 05641

802.479.1053 / 800.639.1053

[capstonevt.org](http://capstonevt.org)



NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
BURLINGTON, VT  
Permit No. 165



## Thank You to Our Donors!

Capstone's success and vision of a community free from poverty is only made possible through philanthropy. To request a list of our generous donors, please contact Morgan at [mbrown@capstonevt.org](mailto:mbrown@capstonevt.org).

## 2021-2022 Capstone Board of Directors

Steven Pappas – <i>Chair</i>	Scott McDonald
Rubin Bennett – <i>Past Chair</i>	Barbara Miller
Jon Valsangiacomo – <i>Vice Chair</i>	Janet Murray
Hope Crifo – <i>Treasurer</i>	Jessica Paynter
Abby White – <i>Secretary</i>	Karen Lowry Reed
Gina Akley	Donna Sherlaw
Nick Kramer	John (Jack) Tighe
Monica McDonald	

**Capstone is uniquely governed by a tripartite board of directors from three community sectors: public, private, and participant.**

*Capstone Community Action is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



## OUR VITAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES

### Making ends meet

Food and Nutrition Programs

Home Heating and Utility Assistance

Housing Counseling and Transitional Services

Homelessness Prevention

### Building stronger families

Head Start & Early Head Start

Child Care Food Program

Family Literacy Center

Physical, Oral, and Emotional Wellness

### Creating warm and healthy homes

Weatherization and Energy Efficiency Services

Energy Efficiency Education

### Opening doors to economic opportunity

Community Kitchen Academy

Micro Business Development

Savings & Credit Programs

Tax Preparation Program

Workforce Development

Transportation