October 2024

LCSC Communicator

Regional News, Views, and Information

LAKES COUNTRY Service Cooperative
Together we achieve

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We are here for people who feel they do not have a voice.

Lakeland Mental Health Center's (LMHC) Chief Executive Officer, Donna Baker, began her career at LMHC in 1988. Baker's journey began in the Moorhead office, where LMHC had recently secured a grant to address mental health issues among people experiencing homelessness. At a time when homeless shelters closed their doors during the day, Baker, alongside a colleague, ventured into the community to reach those in need. Their goal was to provide outreach and essential services to an often overlooked segment of society. They started a drop-in center that operated for a little over a year.

Another grant opportunity was available to provide support services for individuals residing in public housing, aimed at helping them maintain housing successfully. Baker also worked with area landlords to troubleshoot challenges and areas of need, ultimately helping individuals succeed with stable housing.

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Source: Donna Baker, Lakeland Mental Health Chief Executive Officer
Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC's Communications Coordinator



Lakeland Mental Health
Chief Executive Officer

DONNA BAKER

”I am grateful there are organizations like ours for people who feel they do not have a voice.”

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Operating in our region since 1949, LMHC now has locations in Alexandria, Detroit Lakes, Fergus Falls, Glenwood, and Moorhead, and satellite offices in Parkers Prairie and Perham. Their staff includes between 180 and 200 employees and several contract staff.

When asked what drew her to work in mental health, Baker said that she initially thought she would do pre-law while pursuing her bachelor's degree at Minnesota State University of Moorhead (MSUM). She completed several classes in this area but felt drawn to sociology and psychology classes. Baker also shared that she had a great advisor who asked her to think about social work, so she redirected her degree into social work and criminal justice, satisfying her need for criminal justice knowledge.

Baker began working with the Day Treatment Program for Adults, an intensive group program to support individuals with chronic conditions. In 1998, Baker transitioned into the role of Adult Services Supervisor, marking a decade of direct service provision to individuals. Subsequently, she moved into a management position where she oversaw care management, ensuring quality and compliance of care while continuing to be in a supervisory capacity.

In addition, Baker pursued her Master's degree in Business Management at the University of Mary. Reflecting on her experiences at Lakeland, she expressed gratitude for the opportunities that aligned with her career path. Baker moved into the role of Regional Operating Officer for the Moorhead and Detroit Lakes offices and then became the CEO of LMHC in 2017.

Baker shared that one of the most impactful moments at LMHC was working with a client and how she made a difference. This client was part of the Day Treatment Program for Adults with intensive chronic mental health conditions. The client had severe psychotic episodes with frightening delusions and voices that were very negative. His religious faith was very important to him, and she taught him to realize that when he heard the voices, there were steps he could take to know it was not real. Years later, after successful treatment, Baker would see him out in public, and he would acknowledge her with a wave and a smile and let her know he was doing well.

When Baker became the Regional Operating Officer and part of the Senior Leadership team, she was the only team member with direct service experience. She felt the need to be the voice for direct services and knew that bringing practical insights to the conversation on implementing initiatives was important.

> **"When you have had your boots on the ground, it gives you the perspective of how a program might look good on paper, but not how it will look when it comes to implementation."**

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Recently, LMHC doubled its space at its Moorhead site, and construction will be completed at the end of October with no disruption of services. With the growth of community-based services, LMHC has created a new space for school-based mental health staff. The whole School-Based Mental Health team has met this summer and discussed plans for the upcoming school year. This room also allows staff to bring students in for programming.

The space has also allowed partnerships with Transitional Supported Employment (Tran$EM), as they have clients in common. LMHC provides referrals to them, and they help to place them in a market position. They also rent space from LMHC in the expanded facility to better provide services. Tran$EM's referrals have increased significantly, creating more placements in the job market for their clients.

LMHC also offers Telemedicine and had prescribers through telehealth before the COVID pandemic. During the pandemic, they had to pivot quickly to provide their clients with telehealth. In no time, everyone was trained and able to provide services remotely, and fortunately, there was minimal disruption to their clients. It also opened doors for them to consider how they use technology. Currently, around 20-25% of clients use the Telehealth option. Recently, LMHC completed a satisfaction survey, and overwhelmingly, the clients shared that they prefer in-person therapy.

LMHC has hired two Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, allowing the Detroit Lakes site to offer in-person services. This has benefited clients, as it can be critical for successful treatment when they feel a connection with their provider. Baker shared that younger clients may not even think twice about telehealth and have the attitude of "Why wouldn't you use telehealth?" Baker shared that with telehealth, you really need to engage with the client, and prescribers are mindful of ensuring they have the quality equipment and imagery they need to detect any medication side effects.

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LMHC offers over 30 services and programs to assist clients in moving toward a more holistic approach. Starting with their Community-Based program, clients will undergo an assessment using the Social Determinants of Health to guide the intake process. The focus for primary care, mental health care, and substance use disorder care is to keep it person-centered and address all their needs. "You are not going to be able to follow through with your therapy services if you don't have gas money or if you don't have a place to stay," said Baker. When decisions are made with the client, they are no longer based on a siloed approach. Everyone considers all the pieces and works together to achieve the best outcome for the client. Philosophy in treatment plans has also shifted to include the client's feedback on what they want to achieve. This can vary from the goals set by the service provider.

LMHC is part of an integrated health partnership through the Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs. Through this partnership, payers will make decisions based on outcomes. LMHC receives data from the Department of Human Services (DHS) that indicates clients' other services. It shows clients' diagnoses and provides information on whether they have been hospitalized or visited the emergency department. This helps LMHC determine how they can work with a client. Through this partnership, they are also building a statewide resource database called Find Help. This database will provide an online program where resources can easily be found to assist their clients. For example, if a client shares that they are at risk of being evicted, the provider can access the database to find local resources to help stabilize their housing situation.

An ongoing worry for Baker is their reimbursement rates and the actual cost of providing services. Sixty to 65% of their services are Medicaid eligible for reimbursement. Because of reimbursements, there has become a more significant gap between what they can pay professional staff and how they can sustain their services. They must be able to increase salaries to remain competitive with mental health providers in the surrounding communities who are building up their capacities.



Baker shared that LMHC's leadership is its strength. She is incredibly grateful for its strong Senior Leadership team. “They are such a well-functioning team.” LMHC also has a solid 13-member board of directors that includes a county commissioner and lay member from each of the six counties it serves. Additionally, one of the county human services directors from the six-county region serves on the board.

When asked how the community can support LMHC, Baker said, “I think we are still one of the best-kept secrets, and people don’t know much about us and what we do. We have opportunities to get the word out that, hey, we are here, and this is what we do. I am grateful there are organizations like ours for people who feel they do not have a voice,” said Baker.

Do you want to learn more about LMHC’s programs? You can visit their website at lmhc.org or call their office at 218 736-6987.

From the

Executive Director

"We Advocate for Strong Communities through Service and Leadership."



Jeremy Kovash
Executive Director

Enjoy this edition of "The Communicator." We love being your service cooperative and hope we can grow the services that may be beneficial to you, our members.

Soon, our leadership team will be reading "The Anxious Generation" by Jonathan Haidt. "The Anxious Generation" provides a lens through which we can examine the challenges faced by today's youth and young adults. We see this as valuable learning for our future and the future of the communities we serve.

The book discusses how constant connectivity can create feelings of anxiety. There's a strong emphasis on mental health advocacy in the text. We envision collaboration with local mental health organizations to provide resources, training, and support systems for educators and students, creating a more supportive environment. Building strong community connections can alleviate feelings of isolation.

We hope to facilitate community-building activities, encouraging collaboration among schools, cities, and other local organizations to foster support networks.

The book underscores the importance of youth voice in addressing anxiety. LCSC is working with a non-profit organization, World Savvy, and hopes to implement programs that encourage student leadership and participation in decision-making processes, giving young people a sense of agency.

By aligning the insights from "The Anxious Generation" with LCSC's mission, we hope that we can serve you and the next generation workforce. We hope to foster our region's learning and how we might be best prepared for our future together.

We wish you the best with your fall season and November elections and hope to see you soon.



Classroom TO COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

JANE EASTES
Deputy Executive Director

On November 13, Lakes Country Service Cooperative and our community partners, Horizon Public Health and West Central Initiative are excited to host a Changemaker Hub for K-12 schools and community members in our region.

A Changemaker Hub is a day-long learning experience that brings High School youth together with their educators and community members to think deeply about the role of education today and in the future. It is designed and run by World Savvy, a national K-12 Education nonprofit headquartered in Minneapolis. World Savvy works with districts across the nation in its mission to assist in building "future ready" learning environments to prepare youth with the knowledge and skills for success in the workplace and active engagement in the community.

Why Host a Changemaker Hub?
We've watched districts struggle to keep students in attendance and struggle to attract and retain teachers in the profession. We all know that these two issues are complex and national in scope. We strongly feel that the strongest solutions will come from listening to and working with our local and regional communities.

This is a rare opportunity to facilitate meaningful dialogue, to listen to youth, and to gather ideas to contribute to a strong future for our schools.

We have watched World Savvy, a national K-12 education nonprofit headquartered in Minneapolis, create and hone a day-long experience focused on listening and engaging with youth and adults specifically on what an education system that supports everyone looks like. They are getting great reviews from schools around the country.

We are grateful that World Savvy is making a substantial investment in our community. There is no registration fee for this event. World Savvy is providing professional facilitation, a comfortable location at the Bigwood Center in Fergus Falls, and lunch.

We are hoping that each district will bring a team of high school youth, educators and community members.

If you are interested in participating, please reach out to Staci Allmaras (sallmaras@lcsc.org), Jane Eastes (jeastes@lcsc.org), or Josh Nelson (jnelson@lcsc.org).



LCSC September Nonprofit and Government Agencies

Networking Luncheon

Source: Sue Gens, Minnesota State Arts Board Executive Director, and legacymn.gov
Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC's Communications Coordinator

3/8

of one percent of state sales tax

Minnesota Arts Board Executive Director Sue Gens spoke at the LCSC September Nonprofit and Government Agencies Networking Luncheon.

Sue provided an overview of the Minnesota Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment, who it serves, and its impact on Minnesotans. The Minnesota Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment is a significant initiative that voters approved in November 2008.

This amendment aimed to enhance the quality of life in Minnesota by providing funding for four key areas: outdoor heritage, clean water, parks and trails, and arts and cultural heritage.





THE FUNDING GENERATED BY THIS AMENDMENT IS SET TO CONTINUE UNTIL 2034.

The Four Funds and What They Receive:

- outdoor heritage (**33%**)
- clean water (**33%**)
- parks and trails (**14.25%**)
- arts and cultural heritage (**19.75%**)

What are the next steps?

- Another ballot question in 2028 or 2032
- Legislative approval
- A statewide campaign
- Voters will decide

The Legacy Amendment has greatly influenced Minnesota's environment and overall quality of life. Many individuals feel that it is essential to sustain these programs beyond 2034. Nevertheless, the final decision regarding the extension of the amendment will rest with the state legislature.

Do you want to learn more about Minnesota programs supported by this funding and the positive outcomes these programs have had for our friends and neighbors?
Visit their website at www.legacy.mn.gov.

Sue Gens, executive director
sue.gens@arts.state.mn.us

Save Time

+ CONNECT WITH YOUR PROVIDER ONLINE

for Minnesota Healthcare Consortium Members



With a virtual care visit, you:

- Avoid a trip to the doctor's office and get care from the comfort of your home, work, or wherever you are
- Initiate the visit at your convenience- no appointment needed
- Get care when you need it- visits are often available after clinic hours, sometimes even 24/7
- May save money- a virtual care visit can cost less than a regular visit to the doctor's office, depending on your plan.

Amwell (Amwell.com/cm)
Virtuwell (Virtuwell.com)

Virtual care, also known as online care and e-visit, is a convenient way to get care for many common conditions. Connect with a provider from your computer or mobile device to get a diagnosis, treatment plan, and prescription if needed.

Virtual care may be a time-saving option for common conditions like:

- Allergies
- Bladder infections
- Bronchitis
- Colds and coughs
- Ear pain
- Flu
- High blood pressure
- Migraines
- Pink eye
- Rashes
- Sinus infections

Lakes Country Service Cooperative — Together we achieve
Minnesota Healthcare Consortium
Medica



NORTH COUNTRY FOOD BANK

MOBILE FOOD DROP



Employees from Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership came together on-site to assist with the setup and distribution of food alongside North Country Food Bank.

September 10, 2024

The mobile food drop provided free donated produce and food products to those in need in the city of Breckenridge, Minnesota.

Families served: 133

Pounds of food distributed: 19,268

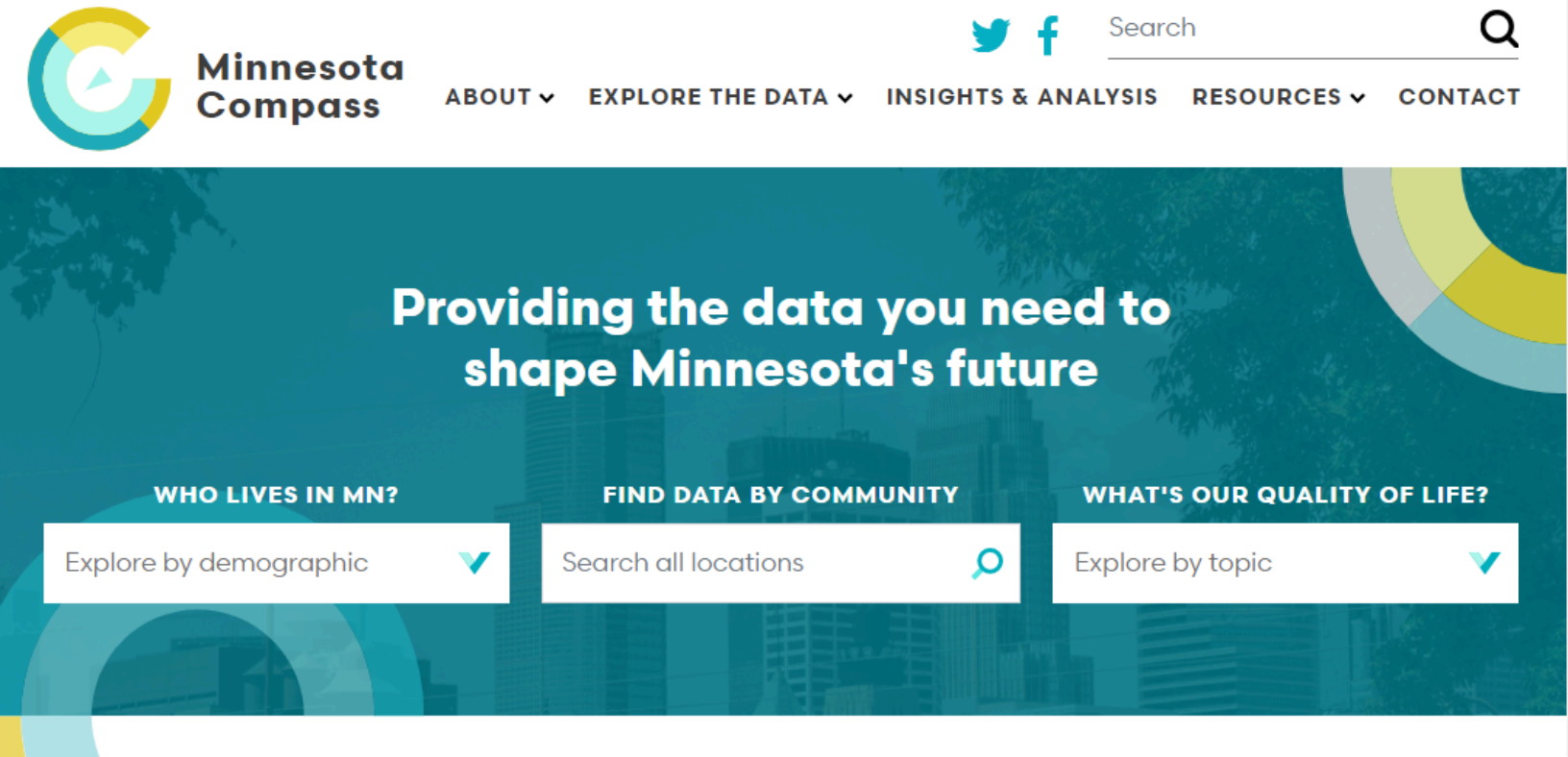
Equivalent to **16,056** meals

Source: Susie Boelter, North Country Food Bank Executive Director
Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC Communications Coordinator

North Country Food Bank, located in East Grand Forks, Minnesota is the largest hunger-relief organization in northwest and west central Minnesota. Each year they distribute over 6 million pounds of food, or enough food for 5.2 million meals.



Visit their website at **northcountryfoodbank.org** to learn more about how to volunteer and donate.



Minnesota Compass

Do you want to learn more about the people and places that make up Minnesota? Do you want to access reliable and easy-to-use data on topics that affect your quality of life? Do you want to find resources and tools to help you make informed decisions and take action in your community? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then mncompass.org is the website for you!

Mncompass.org is a project of Minnesota Compass, a social indicators initiative that tracks and analyzes trends in areas such as education, economy, health, housing, public safety, and more. Mncompass.org provides data and information for the state as a whole, as well as for regions, counties, cities, and neighborhoods. You can also find data by race and ethnicity, by immigrant group, and by cultural community.

Mncompass.org is more than just a data source. It is also a platform for sharing stories, insights, and best practices from people and organizations working to improve our communities. You can explore data stories, data insights, featured data, and other resources that highlight the issues and opportunities facing Minnesota. You can also create your own custom data profiles using our "Build Your Own" mapping tool.

Mncompass.org is a trusted and valuable resource for policymakers, business and community leaders, nonprofit organizations, media outlets, educators, researchers, and anyone who lives and works in Minnesota. By providing a common foundation of data and information, mncompass.org helps us shape our future together. Visit mncompass.org today and discover how data can make a difference!

Minnesota Compass
A Project of Wilder Research

TREMCO
Roofing & Building Maintenance

COOPERATIVE Purchasing CONNECTION

DO YOU HAVE CONCERNS WITH YOUR FACILITY INSURANCE PREMIUMS?

TREMCO can help!



Tremco can assist and interface with your insurance provider if they've raised concerns about the roof or facade of your building.

The goal of Tremco's assistance is to ensure the common sense implementation of a plan that minimizes increases to your insurance premiums.

Tremco's noticed a concerning trend within the insurance industry, specifically relating to roofing coverage for government facilities. Insurance providers have begun implementing substantial changes; such as premium increases, heightened deductibles, and, in some instances, discontinuation of coverage altogether. These adjustments are largely attributed to the influx of costly roof-related claims they've encountered over the past few years.

The Tremco team is working with numerous public sector entities and interfacing with their insurance provider to assist in this process and would like to offer support to you as well.

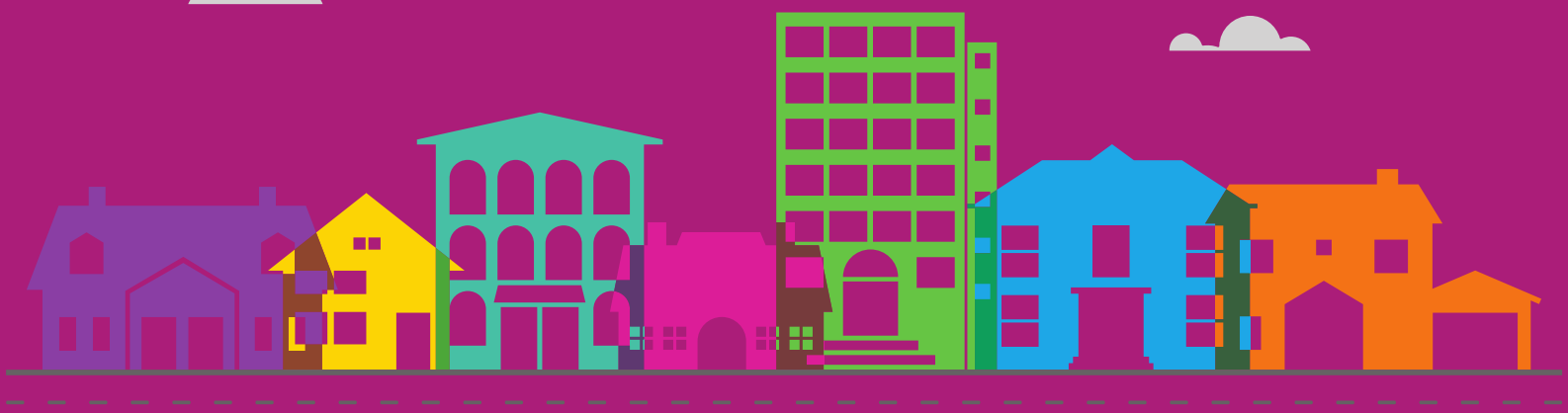
The team is equipped to conduct thorough roof assessments, compile detailed reports, and develop comprehensive long-range plans tailored to your specific needs and budgetary considerations.

The best starting point is to have an introductory call to discuss options that may minimize the changes in coverage and provide accurate information to your insurance provider.

Since this is a bit of newfound territory for all involved, a little guidance can sometimes go a long way.

Contact Ryan Palmer, Senior Field Advisor
Tremco Roofing
507-402-6783
rpalmer@tremcoinc.com

Is your town interested in having a welcoming, vibrant, and busy Main Street?



ARTISTS ON MAIN ST.

Source: Ashley Quam, West Central Initiative Marketing & Communications Specialist

Do you want to involve artists in your Main Street goals, but aren't sure where to start?

LAKE REGION ARTS COUNCIL AND WEST CENTRAL INITIATIVE ARE NOW SEEKING APPLICATIONS FROM TOWNS OF 5,000 OR FEWER IN WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA.

Deadline to Apply: Wednesday, October 30, 2024

The Lake Region Arts Council (LRAC) and West Central Initiative (WCI) are offering an exciting opportunity for small towns in our region who are interested in building their capacity and experience in collaborating with their creative community. We're seeking two west central Minnesota communities of 5,000 people or fewer to participate in the Artists on Main Street program from January 2025 through December 2025.

About Artists on Main Street

Artists on Main Street is a community and economic development program led by Springboard for the Arts and Rethos: Places Reimagined that has been implemented in 14 communities across Minnesota and 5 in North Dakota since 2018. The program's purpose is to support rural community development at the intersection of arts and culture, downtown revitalization, and historic preservation.

APPLY NOW



Source: Ashley Quam, Marketing & Communications Specialist, West Central Initiative

Our lifestyles, ways of gathering, and communities are changing, and leaders in Alexandria, Minnesota, are working hard to keep up.

On the second Tuesday of every month, the Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Alexandria Area Economic Development Commission host events to help residents who work or attend college in town integrate into the community. This is done through intentional planning and hosting community gatherings where all members of the community are genuinely welcomed.

Read the full blog post here: https://wcif.org/blog/live-wide-open/hello-neighbor/



City LEADERS Networking Luncheon



City leaders of Lakes Country Service Cooperative's nine-county service region are cordially invited to the City Leaders networking luncheon at the City of Dilworth office on Friday, November 15, 2024, from 11:30 to 1:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Ben Schierer – Director of Civic Partnerships, West Central Initiative

As director of Civic Partnerships, Schierer works closely with representatives from all levels of government, communities, universities, tribal nations, nonprofits, and schools to foster meaningful and lasting partnerships between the public sector and public leadership. Schierer is deeply committed to monitoring legislation that impacts the region and advocating for the region's interests at the legislature and in front of other public bodies.

You can attend in person or virtually. We look forward to seeing you in Dilworth!



Visit our website at LCSC.org and click "LCSC Event Calendar" for a listing of all of our scheduled events.



Fargo Vet Center

Launches Mobile Services in Otter Tail County

Source/Author: Shannon Terry, Otter Tail County Public Information Officer

Otter Tail County welcomes Mobile Vet Center services to the county starting September 17 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) at 1821 North Park Street in Fergus Falls.

The Mobile Vet Center will provide the same comprehensive services available at the Fargo and Grand Forks locations, now making them accessible to veterans in rural areas who face challenges with transportation.

The primary purpose of Mobile Vet Centers is to ensure that veterans, service members, and their families have access to necessary services, especially those living in remote communities. With a mobile van, the Fargo Vet Center will be able to serve 67 counties across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, significantly extending its reach and impact.

"We are looking forward to bringing the Mobile Vet Center services directly to those who need them," said Otter Tail County Veterans Service Officer Robb Emerson. "The Mobile Vet Center is a valuable resource for veterans in our rural areas, and we are excited to welcome these additional services to Otter Tail County."

Schedule and Services

The Mobile Vet Center will visit Otter Tail County every third Tuesday of the month from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Service locations within the county will vary, so veterans are encouraged to subscribe to Otter Tail County's Notification Center for emails with the latest updates on Mobile Vet Center locations at ottertailcounty.gov/notification-center/ and check 'Veteran Services News.'

The Mobile Vet Center offers a wide range of services, including:

- Individual and group counseling for veterans, service members, and their families
- Family counseling for military-related issues
- Bereavement counseling for families who have experienced an active-duty death
- Military sexual trauma counseling and referral
- Outreach and education, including PDHRA and community events
- Substance abuse assessment and referral
- Employment assessment and referral
- VBA benefits explanation and referral
- Screening and referral for medical issues, including TBI and depression

Contact Information
Veterans who feel they may need services or wish to see if they qualify are encouraged to contact the Fargo Vet Center at 701-237-0942, the Fergus Falls Veterans Service office at 218-998-8605, or the New York Mills office at 218-385-5540.



Join us for the LCSC Members Nonprofit Leaders' Networking Luncheon on Friday, December 13, 2024, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Lakes Country Service Cooperative. You can choose to attend either virtually or in person.

We are pleased to announce that Jenna Ray, Deputy Executive Director of GiveMN, will be joining us to share the results of the 2024 Give to the Max campaign, offer insights on valuable resources to enhance your campaign, and connect with the nonprofit leaders in our area.

This is a fantastic opportunity to enjoy a light lunch, courtesy of LCSC, while connecting with fellow leaders in our nonprofit community.

Are you getting ready for GIVE TO THE MAX DAY on November 21?

RIGHT NOW - Give to the Max 2024 information and resources are live for nonprofits and schools!

Minnesota's annual giving holiday, Give to the Max Day (GTMD), returns for a 16th year this fall! Early giving begins November 1, and runs through GTMD on Thursday, November 21.

GiveMN has released its full set of resources for nonprofits and schools wanting to take part in the 2024 edition of Minnesota's most generous day! To learn more about GTMD, download workbooks, graphics, video trainings, and get registered today visit the GTMD24 resources hub.

give TO THE MAX Nov. 21, 2024



From left: Jim Fish, Kurt Mortenson, Paul Ness, David Meyer, Kevin Campbell, Judith Moeller, Andy Siira, Reed Reinbold, Jon Karger, Jeremy Kovash, Suzanne Wing, Marc Hasbargen, Dan Posthumus, and Phil Jensen

2024 LCSC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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