Our Promise

2017 has been a year of transition and growth for KOOTASCA Community Action. Following 5 years of sharing an Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer with our partners at the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA), the Board of Directors has made the decision to bring those positions back into the agency.

The leadership staff and Board of KOOTASCA Community Action are truly appreciative of the support and guidance provided by AEOA these last 5 years and look forward to our many continued partnerships in the years to come.

I am truly honored to serve as the new Executive Director of KOOTASCA Community Action and am committed to working with our talented staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors to create a great future for all residents of Itasca and Koochiching Counties. Together we are “Renewing our Promise” to the individuals and communities we serve.

At KOOTASCA, when families work through our programs, they develop confidence, manage crises and setbacks, build resources and social connections, and learn to recognize their own unique strengths. We believe that our participants commit to playing the leading role in their journey out of poverty; our role is to empower them.

Maureen Rosato
Executive Director, KOOTASCA Community Action

The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.
Celebrating Success

Terry is a helper. He knows what it’s like to be down and out—struggle with homelessness and poverty.

Terry grew up in a middle class family. He spent his childhood camping, fishing, and helping his parents with numerous family-owned properties and a resort in northern Minnesota. Terry spent four years in the Air Force, traveling across the country and abroad, before returning home to enroll at Itasca Community College.

Returning from military life, new challenges and the college work load became overwhelming. Ongoing anxiety created barriers to Terry’s health and well-being, and a long period of instability began. Terry eventually found himself in a homeless shelter. With support from KOOTASCA and many community resources, Terry obtained an apartment and began the process of rebuilding his life.

Of all the challenges and setbacks Terry has faced, he describes his biggest challenge as staying motivated. It’s easy to get stuck in a rut, isolated, without hope. On his journey, Terry has found connection, support, and hope for the future at Circles of Support.

Today, Terry is a proud homeowner, someone who gives back, a member of Circles of Support, and KOOTASCA’s 2017 Circles of Support Journey Award Recipient. Terry is known for helping people with transportation, food, furniture, clothing, and shelter. He has taken in other homeless people and even saved some from suicide.

Terry remains a regular feature at the Circle and notes, “It always seems to lead me in the right direction.”

“I believe people come in to my life for a reason, so I try to do what I can. I’ve been there. I just hope in return that people will pay it forward and help someone else.” – Terry Allford

Who we Serve

KOOTASCA serves individuals, families, and communities.

By working to address the multiple causes and conditions of poverty we work to improve our community for the more than 23,000 low-income residents in Itasca and Koochiching Counties.

In 2017, we served more than 7,500 individuals.

Building our Community

In 2017:

- 48,622 hours of service were donated by 676 community members fighting poverty in their communities.
- 1,016 individuals obtained health insurance and more affordable access to health care.
- 16,089 referrals were made to community resources.
- 238 families in crisis obtained safe and affordable housing through emergency support and assistance.
- 6,978 clients obtained energy and utility assistance.
- 70 homes were rehabilitated for (and by) local families.
- 27 families purchased their own home in the community.
- 228 children and their families were prepared to succeed in school with high quality early childhood education.

Our Programs and Services

Big View | Circles of Support | Community Engagement | Crisis Nursery
Crisis Rent Assistance | Early Head Start | Energy Assistance Program
Empowerment Class | Fairview Horizon Apartments | Head Start
Frostbite Finds Thrift Store | Home Repair and Rehabilitation
Homebuyer Education | MURL | MNsure Navigation | PCs for People
Teenage Parent Program | Transitional Housing | Weatherization