



Our Mission

Overcoming Poverty by
Helping People, Improving Lives, and
Strengthening Communities.

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New Homebuyer Program Coming to Fairbury

Blue Valley Community Action Partnership is proud to announce the impending launch of the Purchase-Rehab-Lease-Purchase program in Fairbury, and it's unlike any other housing initiative you'll find in the state. It's a homebuyer and property renovation program funded by a \$500,000 grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED). The City of Fairbury provided \$50,000 in matching funds to secure the grant, and BVCA will administer the program. BVCA expects to start accepting applications in early 2020.

Purchase-Rehab-Lease-Resell will help at least four qualified applicants achieve the goal of owning a home. Qualifications include at least a 600 credit score and earning 120-percent or less of the median income in Jefferson County. The program will use 2019 figures, so the income limit for an individual is \$58,800 and \$67,200 for a married couple. The income limit goes up \$6-8,000 dollars per additional family member. A family of five, for example, is \$92,720.

Once qualified, applicants will identify a for-sale home within Fairbury city limits, costing up to \$100,000. If the home passes inspection, BVCA will purchase it and spend up to \$24,000 to rehabilitate the property. The goal of rehabilitation is to bring the house up to state minimum rehabilitation standards, with a lifespan of 20 years from the time of completion. The main areas of rehabilitation emphasis are safety, first and foremost, and then energy efficiency.

After the home is renovated, BVCA will lease it to the applicant for up to two years. Their rent will be based on an estimate of what their mortgage, homeowner's insurance, and property taxes would cost if they owned the home. During this time period, the applicants will be participating in BVCA's Housing Counseling program, which will work with them on getting their credit score mortgage ready and also educate them on the responsibilities and costs of being a home owner. BVCA will also set aside \$100 of each month's rent to help with the down payment. If all goes to plan, after leasing for two years, the applicants will purchase the home from BVCA.



The program will aid at least four homebuyers, providing the community of Fairbury with at least four rehabilitated homes for the next 20 years. Most home owners stay in their homes for less than 10 years, so potentially two or three households will benefit from the work done on each house.

This is a unique program BVCA is excited to bring to Fairbury, and the organization is grateful to the City of Fairbury and NDED for making it possible.



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BVCA Partnership Announces Scholarship Opportunities



Blue Valley Community Action Partnership is now accepting applications for their 2019-2020 scholarship opportunities. All scholarships will be in the amount of \$1,000 and can be used for tuition, books and fees associated with enrollment. Three scholarships will be awarded. BVCA Partnership will offer the following scholarships this year:

- The “BVCA Partnership Scholarship” will be awarded to an individual planning to attend or currently attending a 4-year college.
- The “BVCA Partnership Vocational Scholarship” will be awarded to an individual planning to attend or currently attending a 2-year or less program at a vocational college.
- The “BVCA Partnership Southeast Community College Scholarship” will be awarded to an individual planning to attend or currently attending Southeast Community College.

Applicants must reside in BVCA Partnership’s service area which includes Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Polk, Saline, Seward, Thayer and York Counties in Nebraska. Scholarship applications, guidelines and a listing of eligibility requirements may be obtained from area high school administrative or guidance counselor offices, or by contacting the BVCA Partnership Center in your area. Applications can also be downloaded from our website: www.bvca.net. For more information, contact Heather Lytle, Administrative Director at (402) 729-2278 ext. 122. All applications must be received or postmarked on or before March 1, 2020.

Individuals wishing to donate to BVCA’s Scholarship Fund are asked to contact Shari Wurtz-Miller, BVCA Partnership’s CEO at (402) 729-2278 ext. 162 or smiller@bvca.net.

Employee Achievements

BVCA’s Board of Director’s Scholarship Committee selected Mercedes Leibel and Taylor Tyser (pictured l-r) as the recipients of BVCA’s first ever National Community Action Conference staff scholarships. Full-time staff who have been with the agency three years or more were invited to complete a scholarship application for a chance to attend Community Action Partnership’s 2019 Annual Convention held at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile in Chicago, Illinois, on August 28-30. Congratulations Mercedes and Taylor and thank you for taking advantage of the opportunity to advance your professional development!



BVCA Lot Provides Additional Parking for Staff & Community

Additional parking is now available at BVCA’s Administrative Office located at the corner of 5th & “G” Streets in Fairbury. The new parking area is across the street on the northeast corner of the office.



BVCA and the City of Fairbury worked together to demolish and remove a condemned house five years ago. An agreement was made between BVCA and the City of Fairbury that the area would be made into a parking lot that could be utilized by BVCA as well as the general public. There are two driveways available to enter into the new parking area—one on the west side and one on the south side. When coming to the Administrative Office for meetings or trainings, or to Fairbury for local events, please feel free to park in the new space.

BVCA Partnership Offers Programming to Alleviate Homelessness

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homelessness includes four broad categories:

1. People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided.
2. People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled up situation within 14 days and lack resource or support networks to remain in housing (Imminent Risk of Homelessness).
3. Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state.
4. People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

According to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, "As of January 2018, Nebraska had an estimated 2,421 experiencing homelessness on any given day, as reported by Continuums of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Of that Total, 236 were family households, 171 were Veterans, 157 were unaccompanied young adults (aged 18-24), and 455 were individuals experiencing chronic homelessness". Sadly BVCA is experiencing an increase in the number of homeless clients. In 2017, BVCA served 324 individuals who were homeless which was 4% of the total number of clients served that year. In 2018, the percentage of homeless individuals served increased to 8% bringing the total of homeless clients served to 639. Many people do not believe that homelessness exists in our rural area but as you can see that is not true. BVCA staff have assisted clients who are living in vehicles, in storage units, under bridges or in parks.

One of the programs that BVCA offers to clients is the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program (NHAP). NHAP is a grant program that is comprised of the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Trust Fund and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). Organizations that receive NHAP funding are encouraged to seek other sources of funding and collaborate and coordinate programs and services with other organizations to optimize the use of NHAP funds. The purpose NHAP is to provide an overall "Continuum of Care" approach to address the needs of people who are homeless and near homeless in Nebraska by:

1. Assisting in the alleviation of homelessness;
2. Providing temporary and/or permanent housing for persons who are homeless;
3. Encouraging the development of projects that link housing assistance with efforts to promote self-sufficiency.

BVCA has NHAP funding available in all nine counties in our service area. The program is administrated by the following Family Development Partners: Alice Herman (Fillmore & Thayer Counties), Julie Hibbs (Gage County), Melanie Hooper (Jefferson & Saline Counties), Debra Aegerter (Butler and Seward Counties), and Elizabeth King (York & Polk Counties). If you are working with a client that is experiencing homelessness or is close to becoming homeless please contact your local Family Development Partner.

Below is a letter of appreciation from a client, Cesar Escobar, that Julie Hibbs assisted. Cesar gave permission for his story to be shared with others. Thank you, Julie, for helping to make a difference in Cesar's life!



July 10, 2019

I came from Spain and was struggling by myself in America. I was staying in a shelter and got a job and saved money to buy a car. Then I decided to leave the shelter because it was hard to sleep. I slept in my car for almost 2 years while waiting for housing in Lincoln. I would go to work and then sleep in my car and I ate at Matt Talbot's. A friend brought me to Beatrice and I got a job right away. Then I met Julie at BVCA. Julie helped me find a place to live with a very nice landlord. I was so excited because this is my first place to live in America. Since I got a house I've been happy because now I feel safe and I can sleep and shower and relax.

CESAR ESCOBAR

Cesar Escobar

4th Quarter Outreach

Early Head Start Home Based	96	Individuals
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership	48	Individuals
Infant/Toddler Quality Early Childhood Initiative Program	12	Individuals
Head Start	244	Individuals
Sixpence Program	25	Individuals
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)	888	Individuals
Compassionate Projects	356	Individuals
Emergency Assistance	65	Households
Fillmore County Transit Service	808	Rides
Food Security Programs	444	Households
Foster Grandparent Program	47	Individuals
NHAP/ESG	45	Households
Project FIRST/RRH (Families In Residence with Support in Transition/Rapid Re-Housing)	16	Households
SNAP Outreach (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)	32	Applications
SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access & Recovery (SOAR)	9	Individuals
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)	59	Individuals
Thrift Stores	750	Individuals
Friends of Blue Valley Volunteer Program	247	Volunteers
Bridge to Care	350	Individuals
Immunization Program	231	Shots
Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)	798	Individuals
WIC Peer Counseling	40	Individuals
Homeownership Opportunity Program	0	Households
Housing Counseling	56	Individuals
Lease-to-Own	58	Households
Owner-Occupied Rehab	2	Households
Rental Apartments	83	Households
Rental Duplexes	12	Households
Rental Elderly Apartments	31	Households
Weatherization	5	Households
Family & Youth Involvement Center (FYI)	31	Individuals
Opportunity Passport	51	Individuals
Rural Southeast Nebraska Connected Youth Initiative (RSNCYI)	64	Individuals
BVCA Partnership Scholarships	0	Individuals