

Distance Learning



Another exciting project for NEOCAA is our "Distance Learning" center.

Once the entire system is in place, the equipment will be used to record & distribute training as the agency develops it. The equipment has been installed and once we get fiber optic internet service, our staff will begin working with Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College to begin offering classes both locally and remotely. The classes and training will be available "live" or by reviewing them later via a website. All the details will be made available once the system is completed, our staff is trained, and we are ready to begin teaching with our "Distance Learning" center.

More Open House Photo's Do You Recognize Anyone??



Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
"Helping People, Changing Lives"

2016 Annual Report

May 2015 – April 2016



Executive Director's Report 2015-2016 - The Year of Expansion

This agency is extremely proud to report that several new project initiatives were completed during this year! Several of these projects were *years* in the making and significantly expanded the agency's ability to assist many more of our community's individuals and families whom we were unable to help in the past.

These new and expanded projects are important because they rely on *partnerships* with a wide range of individuals & organizations. In addition, the range of supportive programs has also increased, enabling us to expand "*community awareness*" of Community Action programs & services that are available. We are now capable of reaching a much wider population than we were previously able to.

These expansions have resulted in additional funds being spent in our service areas. This year's **spending** increased by 19 %, with spending of \$3,643,166.00 compared to last year's spending of \$3,053,482.00. The **number of employees** increased to 48 employees. Both spending and new employees will continue to increase over the next year as these new programs become fully implemented. One of the agency's goals has been to expand its net worth each year by \$50,000. This year was an exceptionally successful year for the net worth of the agency. The total **net assets** of the agency increased by \$952,791.00 with last year's total of \$4,340,493.00 to this year's total of \$5,293,284.00. This represents an increased **net worth** of 36%.

- Board Membership**
- ★ Anna Knight
 - ★ Corey Bunch (A)
 - ★ Robin Kemp
 - ★ Dr. Ron Cambiano
 - ★ Kate Randall
 - ★ Laura Garner
 - ★ Donna Wofford
 - ★ Amity Sparks
 - ★ Rep. Will Fourkiller
 - ★ Kim Roblyer
 - ★ Sherri Sherwood

- Officers**
- ★ John Ann Thompson – CHAIRMAN
 - ★ Rebecca Jim – Vice CHAIRMAN
 - ★ Gary Buchanan – SECRETARY
 - ★ Jeanie Reed – TREASURER



Jean Cooper, EdD
Executive Director
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2015 - 2020 Strategic Plan



Education & Wealth Building

ROMA Goal 1 – Low-income people become self-sufficient.

- ♥ Increase opportunities of low-income people to complete the education needed for full-time, living wage employment
- ♥ Provide clients the skills needed to claim ownership of their finances through education, accountability, and, financial empowerment services
- ♥ Job-placement and training

Approximately 26,480 people are food insecure in our five counties. (Feeding America)

Health & Well-being

ROMA Goal 6 – Low-income families, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

- ♥ Increase information sharing with clients re: health resources
- ♥ Provide prescription assistance
- ♥ Assist Community Health Clinic double clientele, open second clinic, and increase number of health providers willing to donate services or work on sliding scale fee within three to five years to meet dental and medical needs
- ♥ Implement Community Food Garden initiative: Produce and Posies

Over half of the housing stock is 35+ years old.

Community & Housing Development

ROMA Goal 2 – The conditions in which low-income people live are improved

ROMA Goal 4 – Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved

- ♥ Add more affordable rental housing units, assist families wanting to own a home, and, provide owner occupied rehabilitation services in the five-county area
- ♥ Increase awareness of available housing services to communities and residents
- ♥ Form community partnership to increase access to transportation within three to five years

Agency Capacity

ROMA Goal 5 – Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.

- ♥ Establish and implement a referral system for agency and external services
- ♥ Develop marketing plan to effectively communicate agency services and the need for resources via Facebook, radio spots, social media, etc.
 - ♥ Increase agency's net worth by 10% and expand agency reserves \$50,000 a year
 - ♥ Expand partnerships with providers, supporters, and clients to develop solutions to meet needs identified in the community assessment
 - ♥ Enhance partnerships (community, state, and national) to educate staff on national trends
 - ♥ Strengthen services and maintain or increase the number of applicants served

Delaware County Journal

By Kylea M. Hutson-Miller khutson@grovesun.com Posted Aug. 31, 2016



Honoring a legacy of service: Community dedicates building in Jones' memory



Beverly Jones and Dr. Jean Cooper, executive director for the Community Action Partnership, showcase the plaque which honors Jones' late husband, Stan Jones, during the dedication ceremony for the group's newly renovated facility in Jay.

Amid laughter and a few tears, members of the community gathered to dedicate the newly renovated Community Action Partnership facility in Jay in the memory long-time city leader Stan Jones.

The Aug. 23 ceremony was "a long time" coming, says Dr. Jean Cooper, executive director for the Community Action Partnership, as she stood alongside Jones' wife, Beverly, and dedicated the facility in his honor, naming it the "Stan Jones Community Services Center." "[Jones'] was so helpful to us throughout all these years," Cooper said, recounting how Jones helped the organization obtain its first home and later, helped update the facility as the programming grew. "We are proud to dedicate this building today," Cooper said. Beverly Jones, who attended the ceremony with the couple's three adult children, said she was "extremely humbled and gratified" for the honor. "[Stan] had a heart for the community and for commercial properties coming to Jay," Beverly Jones said, explaining that he first purchased the structure in 1978. "He and Jean were great partners. Together they made this [organization]. Stan provided the building, Jean grew it from the ground up."

In 2013, Beverly Jones sold the facility to Community Action Partnership, which allowed the organization to apply for, and qualify for grants for the newest renovations. "I'm grateful to live in a community like this. I'm so humbled to live here," Beverly Jones said. "We came here, Stan had always lived in the city, but he loved it. "What started as a small venture turned into a facility that Jay can be very proud of - stemming from two individuals that wanted to see our little community grow and serve the needs of our county together, with other neighboring counties as well." Cooper said it was natural to name the new facility after Jones. "He was so good to us," Cooper said. "When we first got started, we had so few resources. He just invested his heart and his energy into this building and making it a place for us. "He would just do anything for us."

About Community Action Partnership

Community Action Partnership began in 1999, as Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency, Inc Community Action Partnership began in 1999, as Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency, Inc.

Serving clients in Adair, Cherokee, Craig, Delaware and Ottawa Counties, Community Action Partnership's offerings include housing assistance, weatherization, and emergency and homeless assistance, as well as providing programs related to RX for Oklahoma, taxes, Early Head Start and the Route 66 Health Clinic.

During the renovation project, which took almost two years, the north end of the main building was gutted to create three classrooms, while the former conference center was remodeled to contain three classrooms as well. As part of the grant, Education Station, a private childcare facility, now shares space within the Stan Jones Community Services Center. Four other facilities, including Kids Company in Grove, Melissa Huffman Family Care in Commerce, Joyful Learning in Miami, and a tribal facility for the United Keetoowah tribe in Tahlequah, will also undergo renovations in the coming weeks to bring the facilities, as well as the teaching, up to the Early Childhood Head Start standards. Cooper said the grant will allow 72 children, within the five facilities, to take part in the programming, which is designed to "provide quality childcare" and "give children an upper hand when they go to school."

For Cooper, who will retire after 18 years in October, the remodeling project and the expansion of the Community Action Partnership programming, was a long time in coming.

Open House



This Photo By Kylea M. Hutson-Miller



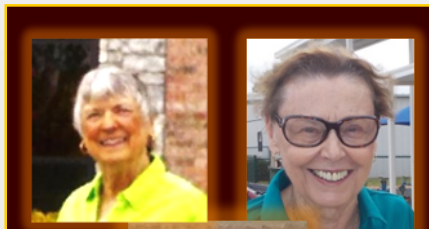
On August 23, 2016, many folks came out to help celebrate the agency's "long in coming" Open House. Past employees, city officials, and many familiar faces joined us in the celebration. Even Ron Sparkman made an appearance (He is responsible for starting up Community Action in the 60's)!

Beverly Jones honored us with her assistance to help honor Stan Jones, her late husband. Stan owned the building that houses Community Action. Together, with a great vision for the future, Stan Jones & Jean Cooper created a partnership that would grow to create positive ripples throughout the entire Northeast Oklahoma region and beyond.

Several years ago, Beverly Jones allowed Jean Cooper to purchase the building and the construction journey began! The ribbon cutting ceremony celebrated the end of a "years in the making" construction journey with the completion of the remodeling that made room for our continually growing agency to welcome "Early Head Start" and our own "Education Station" to join the rest of our agency's many services for the community.

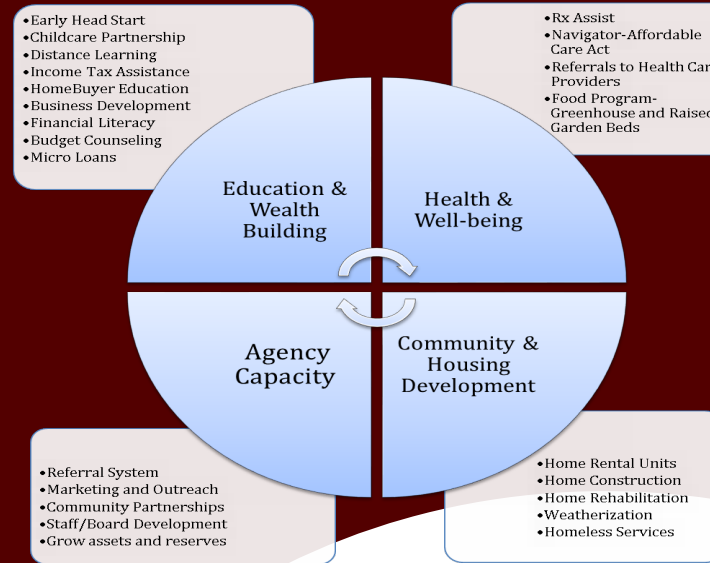
There was a tour of the entire facility made available, as well as a shuttle to our garden project "Produce & Posies" Greenhouse and Gardens. There was food, drinks, and laughter to be had by all. It was a true celebration of helping our community for many more years to come.

The Open House was a bittersweet celebration as it marks the beginning of a new era & at the same time, the ending of another. Sadly, Jean Cooper (the Executive Director), MaryAnn Overall (Services Director), & Julia Teska (Special Projects Manager) will all be retiring later this year. Their combined brilliance and strength, with the help of all their employees, have created & held together this agency for many years. This trio's retirement will be felt by many people and they will be truly missed by all!



Programs & Services

2015 - 2020 Strategic Plan



"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."

Services

Outcome

Rapid Re-Housing Emergency Services for Families At Risk of Homelessness.....	130 Individuals
Emergency Shelters / Transitional Housing.....	739 Individuals
Continuum of Care.....	32 Individuals
TANF Literacy.....	14 Individuals
Free Tax Preparation.....	668 Individuals
Financial Literacy Assistance.....	1 Individual
Jobs/Training & Assistance.....	29 Individuals
RX for Oklahoma.....	134 Individuals
Navigation for Health Insurance/Affordable Care Act.....	117 Individuals
Total # of Individuals Served.....	1,864

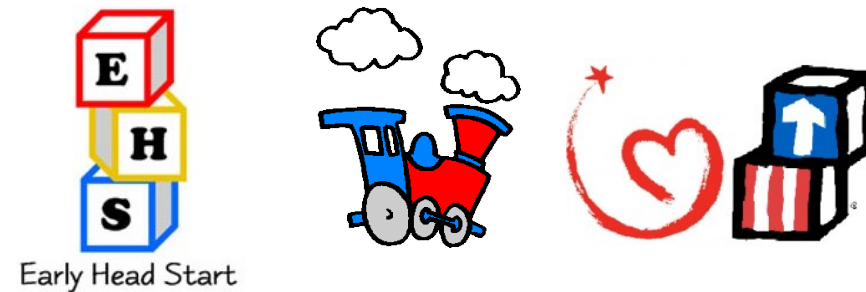
Housing Rehabilitation.....	9 Units
Housing Weatherization.....	29 Units
Agency Rental Housing	32 Units
New Construction.....	6 Units
Total # of Housing Units Completed.....	76

Early Childhood Programs

It's All About the Children

This year has been a great year full of new adventures and lots of forward progress at NEOCAA for Early Childhood programs. Early Head Start has once again become an offered program through the agency.

In addition, NEOCAA has also become a part of the "Early Head Start Child Care Partnership" grant and is currently working with 5 child care centers to enhance each center in all areas through higher standards and extra funding to better serve our community's children and families. Together, these 5 facilities combined will have room for a total of 72 children!



NEOCAA is proud to report that the "Education Station" name is known throughout our community. Children are continually growing and as they age & outgrow each program and proceed to the next stage of their lives, we have successfully created a waiting list and as a result we are able to immediately assist both current & new children who have already signed up and are on our waiting list.

Our own Education Station is proud to be part of the next steps forward in infant and toddler care by participating in this Early Head Start Child Care grant. We work with children from 6 weeks to 3 years of age and provide programs for pregnant moms as well.

We look forward to all the changes and cannot wait to see where another year takes us!

Melissa Huffman Family Daycare

Child Care Partnerships



Kids Company Family Child Care Center
In Partnership with Early Head Start

Henry Lee Double Head - Tahlequah
Early Head Start Partnership



Joyful - Miami
Early Head Start Partnership



Jay Education Station
Early Head Start Partnership



Northeast Oklahoma
Community Action Agency
Early Head Start Partnerships

Weatherization

Our agency has a Weatherization Manager, Debby Foreman, a 2 man crew, Ernest Flagg & Will Bark (they work for three different departments), & an inspector, Victoria Stewart.

The Weatherization Dept. has weatherized 29 homes throughout the year and are currently weatherizing homes year round.

Our agency has a Weatherization Manager, Debby Foreman, a 2 man crew, Ernest Flagg & Will Bark & an inspector Victoria Stewart.

The Weatherization program has strict compliance & part of that compliance is that each completed home be inspected by a "Quality Control Inspector". Our agency is proud to be the only agency in the state to have two QCI's on staff, Victoria Stewart & Ernest Flagg. They both passed the rigorous & comprehensive testing required to be federally certified.

The Weatherization program takes advantage of two available grants per year: DOE & DHS. Together, with these grants, we work hard to enable clients to save on energy bills and as a result making their homes more comfortable, safe and livable.



Repair or Replace Appliances with High Energy Usage
Water Heater Replacements, Tank Insulation, Pipe Insulation
Refrigerator Replacements & CFL Lightbulbs supplied



Weatherization Works
Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
Weatherization Program



Ramps, Roofing, Electrical, Siding, flooring, bathrooms, kitchen etc.

AHP Housing Rehabilitation Department
In Partnership with Federal Home Loan Bank



EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency
Housing Rehabilitation Program



Our Housing Rehabilitation department manager, Cameron Dozier, along with the help of Debby Foreman, works hard by making use of our AHP grant and allows clients to get much needed work completed on their homes that they cannot afford to complete otherwise.

This year, 9 homes have been completed through the hard work of Cameron, Debby, Ernie, and Will. They also have the occasional assistance of our agency housing lawn maintenance person, Billy "Blue" Hanna (formerly a Housing Rehabilitation employee), to lend a helping hand with construction during our busiest times.

Housing Rehabilitation

Agency

New Construction Rental Housing

NEOCAA & Cameron Dozier, our housing manager, are proud to have the opportunity to build affordable housing for our clients in areas where rental housing is difficult to obtain. We are happy to say we now provide low income rental housing in all 5 counties – Adair, Cherokee, Craig, Delaware, and Ottawa!



Colcord New Construction Rental Housing



Jay Rental Housing
Northeast Oklahoma
Community Action Agency
Housing Department

With the completion of 2 duplexes in Westville, 2 single family homes in Jay, and 2 duplexes in Tahlequah we now have a total of 32 rental units. More than 30 families & 105 individuals have benefited from these rentals.



Miami Rental Housing
Northeast Oklahoma
Community Action Agency
Housing Department

Tahlequah New Construction Rental Housing

Westville New Construction Rental Housing

It's All About Healthy Eating, Planting & Growing

NEOCAA Garden Project

The NEOCAA Garden Project has been extremely productive during the past year, not just in terms of vegetables, but also in terms of new ventures. The Farmers Market in downtown Jay began taking SNAP cards in payment for produce which helps to ensure that the target market is reached.

Local farmers joined us at the Market, thus increasing both the volume and variety of produce offered. Grants were received for construction of a mobile market as well as for staff and gasoline to take the market to Food Desert areas of the 5-county area served by NEOCAA.

Produce not sold at the Market is donated to the Food Bank which is a part of The Caring Kitchen located on Washbourne Street in Jay. Several volunteers donate time to the gardens and receive free produce for their contributions.

The gardens themselves, as well as the greenhouse, were in full operation throughout the year, thanks to the mild winter. Bedding plants and potted plants grown in the greenhouse helped to provide funding to operate the gardens for the remainder of the year.

Some fall crops are area being harvested now and others are being planted. Children from area schools and programs volunteer at the gardens and take fresh produce home so they can enjoy the "fruits of their labors".

Triple Cross Ranch, the site of the gardens and greenhouse, partner with NEOCAA during the summer months. These groups also take vegetables with them to prepare at home.

Raised garden beds have been installed at schools of Afton, Brushy, Fairland, Oologah, Kansas, Kenwood, Turkey Ford, Thunderbird Youth Academy, Leach, and Vinita.

We have also installed beds at Miami Health Department & Library. In addition, NEOCAA Head Start and Education Station now have their own gardens as well. We have plans to install beds at Roland school & Claremore Head Start will soon have beds installed as well.

Garden staff will continue to market this service and anticipate that the number of orders for raised beds will grow. Garden Project staff have begun hosting canning classes in partnership with Triple Cross Ranch. The canning equipment was supplied by another community partner, the Cherokee Nation. The program was well received and the number and location of the classes is expected to expand.

Staff from Channel 13, OETA, interviewed Director Jean Cooper and gardeners Rhonda Sloan and Thelma Saklar about the Garden Project. The program aired on Friday, September 9, between 7:00 and 7:30.

A copy of the interview can be found at YouTube at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1-4IGFTA6k> & will be available for viewing in the Distance Learning Center.



NEOCAA Garden Project

We had a busy year!
May 2015 Through September 2016

Over 1,000 lbs. of Produce Planted & Harvested With 350 lbs. of Produce Donated!!

How it all began....

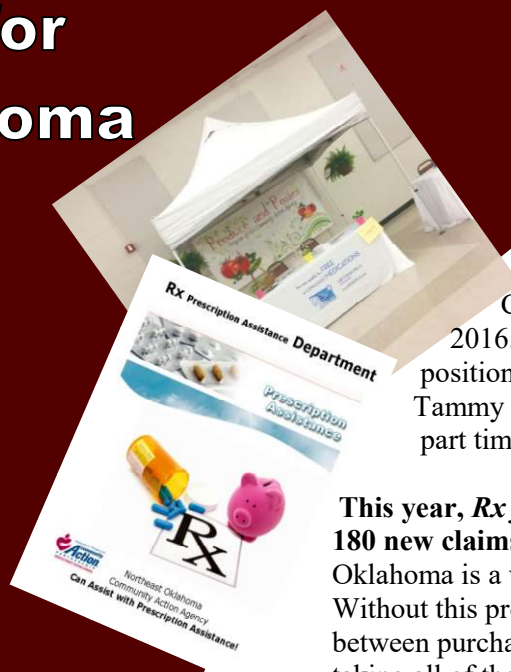
Initial Construction of raised beds was completed thanks to a grant from the Donna Nigh Foundation. This grant paid the salary of a client from the Delaware County Friendship Homes to build the beds. Mrs. Nigh & her husband, former Governor George Nigh, recently toured the gardens to view the completed project. They were delighted to see flourishing beds & sampled some of the delicious produce.

A big thank you goes out to Amy & Dewey Stanford for their generosity in providing space for the gardens at their place!

To those whom have not yet visited the gardens, we extend an open invitation to come out & enjoy nature's best! The gardens are located at Triple Cross Ranch located between Jay & Grove, just



Rx for Oklahoma



Leslie Bark, former Rx for Oklahoma's Regional Area Director, left the Rx program for a position with Early Head Start at the end of March, 2016.

Cindy Templeman took over as Region 3 Area Director in April, 2016. Cindy will continue to do the Customer Service Representative position as well as the Regional Area Director. Rx for Oklahoma added Tammy Lockhart, current Navigator and VITA tax return preparer, to part time Customer Service Representative.

This year, Rx for Oklahoma Region 3 assisted 134 new clients, assisted with 180 new claims for a total savings to the clients of \$192,240.00. Rx for Oklahoma is a valuable program for the clients in our five-county service area. Without this program, a large number of our clients would have to choose between purchasing their medications and buying food. Many clients were not taking all of their prescribed medications because they could not afford them. Rx for Oklahoma helps these clients get their medications at no cost or low cost enabling them to use their limited income to instead pay for their house payment or rent, pay their utilities and buy food for the month. Rx for Oklahoma helps clients stay healthier and improve their well being. Our clients are very grateful for the services they receive from Rx for Oklahoma.

Navigator



NEOCAA also offers free licensed Navigator services for clients who are in need of assistance signing up for health insurance through the Marketplace, ACA (Affordable Care Act). Open Enrollment is from November 1st through January 31st. However, Navigator assistance is available all year long and can help you with any health insurance issues!

In the words of our lead Navigator, Tammy Lockhart, "I have witnessed tears of joy & gratitude as well as tears of frustration and helplessness". Tammy says that her job has evolved from simply signing up clients for health insurance to becoming her client's counselor, teacher, and confidante.

The agency is proud to have served **117 clients this year**. In addition, we have attended 17 different marketing & outreach events to further educate ourselves and our clients. These events have resulted in 1,370 contacts in Adair, Cherokee, Craig, Delaware & Ottawa counties. Way to Network & Get Educated!!!!

Taxes



NEOCAA offers *free tax preparation* and e-filing for our clients convenience. Our tax preparers, along with the generous volunteers who dedicate their time towards helping our tax preparers, work diligently to ensure our client's taxes are filed timely and correctly. This year we **assisted 668 clients** with filing their taxes!

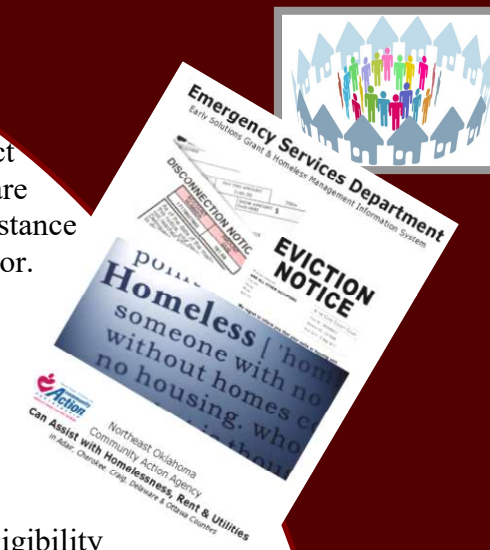
Emergency Services

Whether it's a job loss, sudden illness, or an unexpected life event, financial struggle can affect anyone regardless of social status. It is often those that are considered to be "average working people" that needs assistance when those unexpected life events come knocking at your door.

This past year, 133 individuals were assisted with a total of 356 services. A total of \$64,756.48 of funds used from multiple grants was used for rent payments. An additional \$28,715.11 was used for utilities.

The various grants we use for Emergency Services each have their own eligibility requirements & income guidelines that must be followed. However, often these grant follow different income guidelines so that we can match more clients with whichever grant they can qualify for. This enables us to serve more people when they need us the most.






The case managers in the emergency service department, **Terri Cole & Virginia Lillich**, do not just provide intake & financial service for the clients. They also provide resources that may be able to further assist clients & they give referrals to clients for other entities if the client needs help. Our case managers go the extra mile to help their clients in every way possible by not just assisting with the immediate need, but working with the household/individual after the assistance has been given so the client has all the tools to help remain self-sufficient.



We use an "Emergency Solutions Grant" which enables us to partner with these shelters and share funding so that more clients in our community are assisted with their immediate shelter needs.

The yearly count of individuals served from May, 2015 – April 2016

The entities we are partners with, & the number of clients served this year, are as follows:

	The Ark Shelter	- 121 clients
	The Ark Transitional	- 143 clients
	Community Crisis Center	- 204 clients
	The Harbor	- 208 clients
	Hope House Shelter	- 63 clients
In addition to the shelters, we also help clients with "Rapid Re-housing":		
	Neocaa/Ark RRH	- 26 clients
	Neocaa/Community Crisis Center RRH	- 36 clients
	Neocaa/Hope House RRH	- 49 clients
	Neocaa/Harbor RRH	- 22 clients



Tahlequah Continuum of Care Housing

Listed below are our "Continuum of Care" Permanent Supportive Housing units and # of clients served this year:

Grand Lake Men's Permanent Supportive Housing	- 3 clients
Grand Lake Women's Permanent Supportive Housing	- 2 clients
Cherokee Home Permanent Supportive Housing	- 3 clients
N. Miami Permanent Supportive Housing	- 4 clients
Creeks Men's Permanent Supportive Housing	- 9 clients
Creeks Women's Permanent Supportive Housing	- 11 clients

CoC &

Emergency Solutions Grant