



North East Community Center

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2023



**An oasis in a desert
of community resources**

www.neccmillerton.org

Together, We Are Thriving

This past year has brought a marked increase in the number of community members accessing services through the North East Community Center. Though we have not added any new programs, we have expanded our reach.

In all program areas, we are feeling a tension between providing for the urgent needs of our neighbors and the work to address the barriers that keep them from accessing the services they need. We have built new partnerships and started people talking in a number of critical areas, from food access to housing assistance to childcare to transportation.

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We are very grateful to be a part of this remarkable community and are excited to see how the coming year will guide us into NECC's future and how, together, we can keep our community thriving.

**— Christine Sergent
Executive Director**

2023 By the Numbers

**\$2.7 million
Budget**

**36
Staff Members**

**3,800
Clients Across
14 Programs**



NECC is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Program Provider, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, political belief, marital status, veteran's status, or disability.

You Are Making an Impact

The end of the year brought a welcome gift of property. NECC now owns the former elementary school building on Route 44. We have a pressing need to consolidate our programs under one roof so that we can more easily address our neighbor's urgent needs and the systemic challenges we all face. We are excited to begin the process of figuring out how this gift might be used to strengthen our offerings.

Though that one big gift will make a huge impact, we want to stress that the support of all our donors, from the monthly \$25 gift to the six-figure contribution, is what makes this work possible. We hope that as you read through this report, you will begin to understand the impact you are having on your neighbors.

*Thank you for your partnership in 2023.
We are proud of what we have accomplished together!*



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NECC advances the well-being of all people in our rural region by responding to their diverse needs through services, programs, and partnerships.

— NECC Mission Statement

Planning for the Future

NECC worked with Anne Gardon of Strategies for Change Now to update its strategic plan in 2023. A group of senior staff members and board members worked together to identify top priorities for the coming three years.

By creating several aspirational statements — NECC is a safe and welcoming space where all people belong; NECC is well known and recognized as a resource throughout its region; NECC’s work is based on recognizing and addressing structural and systemic barriers, and reflects its values of inclusivity, transparency and respect — the team identified resources and a timeline to start to make this vision a reality.

The three priorities of the plan are to identify and plan a new building that is well-suited to NECC’s programmatic needs and launching a capital campaign to fund it; to create a right-size infrastructure; and to promote inclusion and belonging through the organization.

As you will read in the following pages, NECC programs found success in 2023 by following the vision of the new strategic plan. In all areas, we focused on stabilizing supports for the needs of our neighbors while working to remove barriers from inclusion and access.

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Everyone in our rural region has equal access to the support and opportunities they need to thrive.

— NECC Vision Statement

Looking ahead, NECC is exploring options for a new building and the feasibility of launching a major capital campaign effort. The board and the staff have engaged in conversations around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and continue their efforts to make NECC welcoming to people of all backgrounds.

To read the full strategic plan, visit our website at www.neccmillerton.org.

NECC FOOD PROGRAMS



2023

By the Numbers

2,775 Clients
191% increase from 2022

240,000 Meals
164% increase from 2022

94,978 lbs Fresh Produce
111% increase from 2022

NECC's Food Pantry saw a historic increase in the number of families it served in 2023. The demand for the fresh and culturally appropriate food choices found in our pantry has never been higher. It has become clear that the food systems in place in Dutchess County are not meeting the need.

With the support of a grant from Glynwood Center for Food & Agriculture, NECC has been able to host conversations with farmers, health care providers, community foundations, and others working to expand food access to begin to imagine what affordable, accessible, community-supported grocery access

looks like in a rural, under-resourced community. NECC also undertook a feasibility study with the USDA to gather data about food access needs in Dutchess County.

Looking ahead to 2024, NECC's Food Program will analyze the data collected and begin to work on new solutions. In the meantime, we continue to address our neighbors' urgent needs through a choice-based pantry that restores dignity to the process of accessing food.



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The goal, increasingly, is that we operate like a regional fresh food access hub. There is a lot of pressure to meet the immediate need, but we need to work at a systems level or nothing will change. We have generated a lot of momentum this year toward getting culturally relevant, fresh, healthy food to people in a way that feels good.

**— Jordan Schmidt
Food Programs Director**

NECC FAMILY PROGRAMS



Through our Family Programs unit, our neighbors access a wide range of support services, from heating assistance to rental assistance to health care referrals to mental health support. We work with clients to stabilize their housing situation so that they can apply for jobs and provide for their families.

During 2023, we saw an increase in the need for housing support. Both renters and homeowners needed help to stay in their homes. And it was critical to keep people in their current homes because there are so few affordable housing options available.

It became clear that there were no systems in place to help owners of mobile homes stay in their homes when heating oil and other costs

skyrocketed. Working with partners at Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, we were able to find an agency and funding to start addressing that urgent need. Looking forward, plans are in place to create an ongoing fund for this work.

In addition, we started a new partnership with Hudson Valley Justice Center to educate renters on their rights. We hosted our first Housing Law Workshop in July. NECC clients have connected with HVJC for legal advice and have even been represented by their attorneys in eviction cases.

2023
By the Numbers
\$26,894
in Direct
Family Assistance
26
Households Received
\$50 Utility Vouchers
\$2,500
in School Supplies
Distributed

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I was very apprehensive before our meeting yesterday. I did not know what to expect — I feared condescension, disdain. Instead, you showed me kindness and compassion. I am truly grateful to you.

— Case Management Client



NECC YOUTH PROGRAMS



2023

By the Numbers

Across our three programs we have:

72

Families

14

Educators

90

Students

24%

**of Families Received
Financial Assistance**

NECC offers childcare for children ages 18 months to 5 years old in the Early Learning Program and to elementary-aged children in the After School and Summer Enrichment programs. What makes NECC's Youth Programs stand out is our emphasis on social-emotional learning at all age levels.

In 2023, we introduced restorative practices to our Out-of-School Time programs (After School and Summer Enrichment). Restorative practices allow children to practice resolving conflict in a supportive community. Rather than have a person in authority dictate a punishment for undesired behavior, the group works together to figure out how to resolve conflict and move past it. This practice encourages communication and problem-solving skills that the children will bring forward into all areas of their lives as they mature.

This year the biggest need of our community was in summer programs. The Summer Enrichment program was fully enrolled with 20 students, and at the ELP, both the toddler room and the pre-school room were full or nearly full all summer long.



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I like school because of the books.

— *Fatima*

I like school because we play outside.

— *Marion*

I like to play cars.

— *Matthew*

NECC COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



The Transportation Program saw consistent use during 2023. The need for rides to medical appointments has remained consistent, but the distance traveled for each client has increased. As small clinics close and local hospitals trim services, our seniors are having to go farther and farther away to access medical care. NECC has been able to keep up with the demand, whether the client is using our services for a short time while they deal with an acute issue or whether NECC is their main method of transportation.

NECC has continued to work with the TriTown Coalition to address the lack of affordable housing in the area, which exacerbates many of the other struggles our neighbors face.

We hosted several community events this year, including a Composting Workshop as part of the village's Earth Day celebration and the Hispanic Heritage Festival, held for the first time at Eddie Collins Memorial Park.

2023
By the Numbers
2,703
Rides
599
Clients
38,000
Miles Driven
102% increase from 2022

“

I'm a 70-year-old who's unable to walk. I have been relying on the Transportation Program for four years now. The Driver and Transportation Coordinator are amazing.

—Kenneth Dykeman

The Farmer's Market continues to thrive, welcoming several new vendors this summer. As the only local market to operate in the winter months, we routinely host 7 to 8 vendors and see a consistent, loyal customer base. The Market continues to match up to \$30 for shoppers using SNAP benefits.



NECC TEEN PROGRAMS



2023

By the Numbers

1654

**Hours of Community
Service**

26

Youth in Teen Jobs
*6 hired from their
assignment*

22

**Young Adults in the
School-to-Work
Program**

NECC's three teen programs provide local teenagers with access to resources and experiences that otherwise would be unavailable to them in this rural, isolated community. NECC Teen Program Director Meredith Hamilton is part of the Northeast Dutchess Coalition for Youth Success, a group of 12 organizations working to promote quality of life and supporting youth in a collaborative way across the Millbrook, Dover, Webutuck, and Pine Plains school districts. Together, the coalition identifies trends affecting youth and ways to make services more accessible.

Teen Team meets on Wednesdays for community service projects (a high school graduation requirement!) and on Fridays for fun, social activities. A trip to New York City on the train and regular trips to the mall allow our

youth, who often work part-time jobs and lack transportation, to both expand their horizons and have a typical teen experience.

Teen Jobs connects young people ages 14 and 15 with their first work experience, partnering with small, local businesses. In 2023, a record number of Teen Jobs participants were hired from their placement into a traditional part-time job. NECC works with the Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board to place teens in six-week summer internships.

The **School-to-Work** program works with older teens to help them find full-time employment that will lead to a sustainable career. S2W provides resume advice, interview practice, and connections with local employers.

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My experience with NECC Teen Jobs has always been smooth, professional, and supportive every step of the way. It has been my pleasure to work with students placed as Moviehouse Team Members and see them grow into core members of our staff. I would greatly encourage any eligible business to engage in this program!

**—Jeremy Boviard
General Manager
The Moviehouse**

Thank You Donors and Friends

2023 Chef & Farmer Brunch

The annual Chef & Farmer Brunch, NECC's signature fundraising event, raised a record \$480,000 in 2023. Held at the beautiful Mashomack Preserve in Pine Plains, the event welcomed 325 guests and 20 sponsors. Guests enjoyed bidding on the silent auction items while guitarist Jonathan Fritz played new and old favorites. After a lunch that featured the talents of the Mashomack staff and the produce of the region's farmers, NECC heard from the year's honorees, Sherryl Anderson and Rob Kuhbach. The day concluded with a lively auction and paddle raise.



Adopt-a-Family

NECC took over the beloved Adopt-a-Family holiday gift program from Stacey Moore and her team in 2023. We dedicated our Giving Tuesday fundraising to the program, raising a record \$3,000 in one day. In addition, Webutuck schools supported the program with a dress-down day fundraiser. Because of this support, 165 children received gifts through Adopt-a-Family this year.

2023 By the Numbers

751
Gifts

463
Donors

\$1 million
Raised

Community Support

Several community groups went out of their way to show their support for NECC in 2023. We are grateful for the creativity of our neighbors in raising money for our programs.

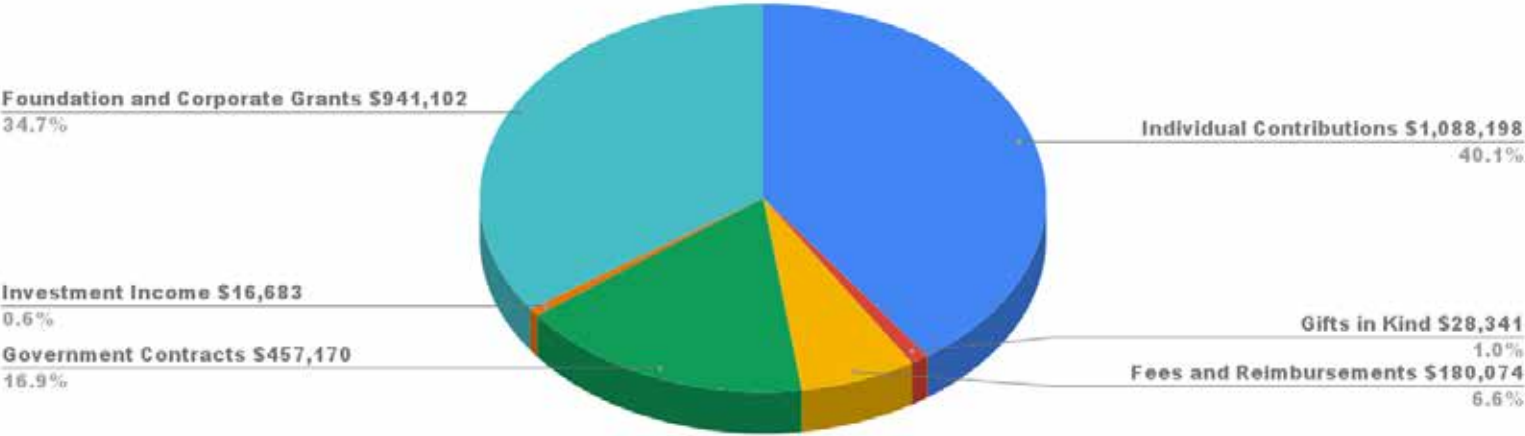
- Oblong Books & Music sponsored a "shop & give" program.
- Students from The Hotchkiss School held a fundraiser.
- The Farmer's Wife donated a portion of Thanksgiving sales.
- Several local business people came together to create The Black Barn Market, a ticketed holiday shopping event.
- Stop & Shop in Canaan, CT, named NECC the beneficiary of its November community bag program.



Fiscal Year 2023 Reporting

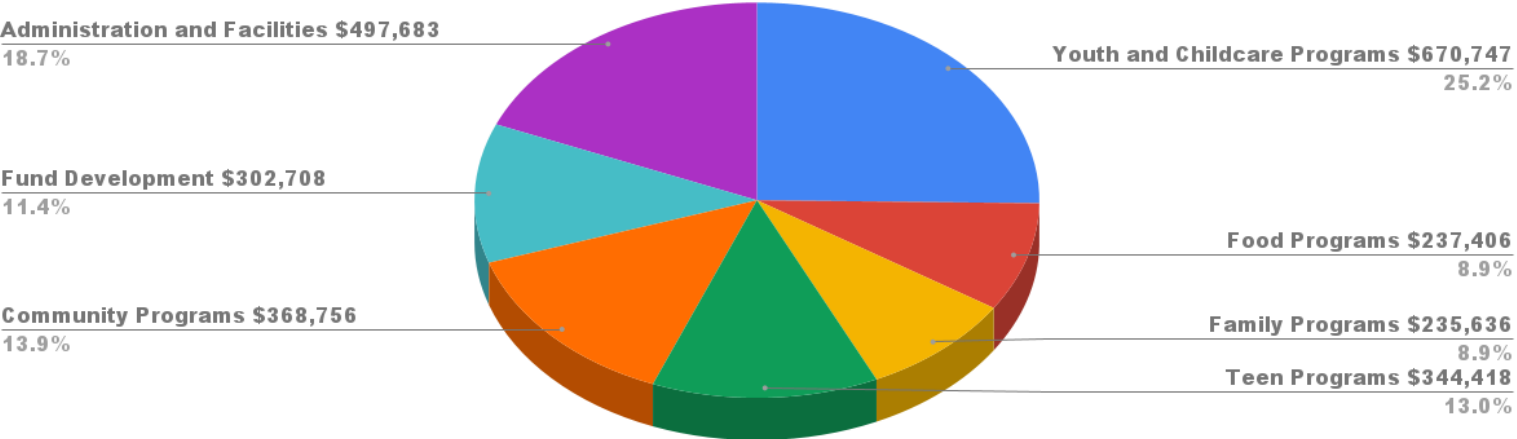
2023 Income

\$2,711,568



2023 Expenses

\$2,657,354



Address Service Requested

P.O. Box 35 51 South Center Street
Millerton, NY 12546



Thank You for Supporting NECC!

A gift to North East Community Center supports the programs and services highlighted in this report. Your contribution will strengthen the community in which we live and help support those who rely on our services.

North East Community Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. To make a tax-deductible donation, please go to www.neccmillerton.org.

