



The Regional Review

The latest news from the Western Illinois Regional Council & Community Action Agency.

WINTER 2019

VOLUME 29, ISSUE 1

Together We Are Stronger, Shaun Pritchard, Executive Director

As of now, WIRC & WIRC-CAA, along with our member cities and counties, breathe a collective sigh of relief as the partial federal shutdown has ended. WIRC & WIRC-CAA are quasi-governmental and non-profit agencies respectfully. As such, we operate on the slimmest of margins and funding shutdowns put all of our programs and services in immediate peril.

While there has always existed great debate on the topic of our government's involvement in the economy, the fact remains that the public sector represents over one-third of our country's gross domestic product. Our country's economy has a private/public sector interdependency. Our organization reflects this reality through our programs for public infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation, and weatherization of

homes. These programs provide jobs to our local carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and building suppliers. Another example is our nutrition assistance program which helps to support our local grocery stores.

It's important to note that while administering programs is a big part of what we do here, we're equally charged with being wise stewards of public resources. From our fiscal department - to our management - to our frontline staff, the over 40 employees of WIRC and WIRC-CAA are stretching every penny to make the greatest impact in people's lives. We are also leveraging these public resources with the financial assistance and sweat equity of other organizations, businesses, individual donors, and volunteers to make an even greater impact in your communities because together we are stronger.

This organization is also poised

to make an even greater impact throughout our region. We are on the move this year through the addition of new programs, expansion of existing programs, leading the way in tackling regional concerns, and increasing our capacity to deliver services.

Inside this newsletter you will learn more about what makes WIRC & WIRC-CAA such a special and trusted organization to our member communities and to the citizens of western Illinois.

Wishing you a warm and bright Spring 2019!



Shaun Pritchard
Executive Director
Western Illinois
Regional Planning
Council and
WIRC-CAA
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WIRC-Community Action Agency News

Project Santa Staff Say Thank You

PROJECT SANTA: WITH YOU, WE CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN.

Project Santa provides a happy holiday full of gifts, food, and clothing to children in need in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties in western Illinois. For more information call (309) 837-2997 or visit wirpc.org.



This was another busy year for our Project Santa (PS) Program! The PS Program and its small staff and band of merry elves and volunteers provided a happier holiday season to 109 families and a total of 282 children in the four Community Action Agency counties of Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren.

As in previous years, all of our donors, sponsors, and volunteers came through helping

us to complete the season, as this program requires an intensive effort on the part of many to make the PS Program happen. In addition to the tremendous effort on the part of the staff and the volunteers, this continues to be a substantial community undertaking. A few of those who contributed to this project include: WIU departments and organizations for fundraisers, adoptions and donations of time; Colchester Lions Club; Laverdiere

Construction; Macomb Women's Club; Macomb Master Gardeners; Macomb Kiwanis Club; Macomb Ladies Auxiliary Post 1921; McDonough County Health Department; McDonough District Hospital staff; No Place Like Home; Industry United Methodist Church; Lomax Christian Church; Community of Christ Church, Carthage; Blandinsville First Christian Church; Blandinsville Blue Ribbons 4-H Club; West Prairie FFA; St. Paul School for the coats and gifts; McDonough Telephone Cooperative; the Day of Pie event; the Vino & Vinyl event; Macomb Wal-Mart; the Lamoine Valley Chapter of A.B.A.T.E. for the donation as a result of the Hancock/Henderson fundraiser held in Dallas City; and many other clubs, schools, teachers, students, businesses, organizations, and individuals who so generously contributed money, gifts, coats, the sponsorship of a family, child, or several children, *(continued on page 3)*



Project Santa staff and volunteers shop for items on each child's wish list using funds donated to Project Santa.



Project Santa volunteers wrap thousands of gifts each year for children in western Illinois.

and/or time to this undertaking by wrapping or shopping.

We would like to recognize and thank Suzan Nash for all of her extra assistance this season throughout the entire PS Program, including planning, wrapping, shopping, and distributing gifts. Additionally, we would like to send our thanks again this year to Patti Nemec and Penny Lawyer for the hours spent wrapping, organizing, and assisting the volunteers as we undertook that daunting task of wrapping several thousand gifts. Special thanks to Tim Howe for his volunteering to be Santa for the day in Carthage, staff person Tim Manock for

volunteering his time to be Santa for two evenings in Macomb, Gary Ziegler for his assistance sorting gifts, Jan Stoneking for her assistance shopping, and to Kevin Six and the members of ABATE for the delivery of the gifts and food in Dallas City for both Henderson County and a portion of Hancock County.

Thank you, again, to everyone who participated in our program in some way. You are the reason that we saw smiles on the faces of so many children. We know we couldn't have done it without you!

Shaun Pritchard, Jamie Roth, and Teresa Cadle ~

for all household members. If additional information is needed, the household has 15 days to provide the necessary documentation.

Prospective applicants should call WIRC-CAA staff at 309-837-2997 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday to obtain an appointment. ~

LIHEAP Staff Provide Assistance at Ameren Illinois Event



WIRC-CAA LIHEAP staff answered questions and assisted local families with electrical assistance applications during the Ameren Illinois event held in September 2018.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program Keeps Families Warm

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is familiar to many in the region for helping families pay their heating bills. The program, administered by WIRC-CAA, runs from October through May, and is available to eligible low-income households in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties.

Assistance payments are made to the energy supplier, or to the household, according to the program guidelines. Funding may be applied toward current bills, past due bills, late charges, and reconnect fees. In addition, LIHEAP also offers a furnace assistance component for emergency heat restoration.

In Program Year 18, the following number of individuals were assisted by the LIHEAP:

- 4,566 individuals for WIRC
 - 3,968 individuals for Knox County
 - Total: 8,534 individuals
- WIRC-CAA staff members want

to emphasize that LIHEAP funds are still available to families that have not applied since September 2018. A household may qualify for assistance if the gross income for all household members for the 30 day income period beginning with the date of application does not exceed the following levels: \$1,518 for a one-person household, \$2,058 for a two-person household, \$2,598 for a three-person household, and \$3,138 for a four-person household. For each additional household member, \$540 should be added.

Applicants must provide the following information to document eligibility for the program: proof of gross income for all household members for the 30 day income period beginning with the date of application; a complete and current copy of the heating and electric bills or a statement from the energy suppliers (if the household is responsible for paying its own bills); and social security cards

While WIRC-CAA frequently informs the public about its services through press releases, print advertising, and online advertising, WIRC-CAA staff also periodically attend outreach events. In September 2018, WIRC-CAA LIHEAP staff provided income verification assistance during the Ameren Cares Customer Assistance Event. The event, hosted by Ameren Illinois, was held at the Spoon River College Outreach Center in Macomb. Residents applied for a one-time \$150 grant to be applied to their electric bill. ~

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Offers Several Programs to Improve the Lives of Local Residents



Welding Students:
Want Help Paying for Tuition, Fees & Books?
Apply for the WIRC-CAA Trade School Scholarship!
For more information, call WIRC-Community Action Agency: (309) 837-2997

Students in western Illinois studying a trade like welding or information technology are welcome to apply for the WIRC-CAA Trade School Scholarship.

Scholarships

WIRC-CAA staff announced that ten scholarships were awarded to local students in need in 2018. Five of the scholarships were Post-Secondary awards, and the remaining five were Trade School awards. The Post-Secondary Scholarship is available for individuals desiring to further their educational training through an Illinois community college, vocational school, college, or university. The Trade School Scholarship is available to individuals desiring to study a vocational trade, such as cosmetology, welding, or information technology. Both scholarships are grant-funded, meaning they require eligibility determination. Applicants must be a resident of Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties and be a member of an income-eligible household. Successful applicants have the option to take classes at academic institutions outside of the four-county area.

Budgeting Class

Once again, WIRC-CAA

staff were pleased to administer a budgeting class to residents of Macomb and Monmouth. The class was implemented as a result of a survey sent to individuals currently enrolled in other CSBG programs. Participants learned basic money management, how to design a budget, and how to track their progress. Tessa Hobbs-Curley, Family Life Educator for the University of Illinois Extension, and WIRC-CAA staff were the instructors. The class was open to the

public and free pizza was provided. 90 days later, a follow-up budgeting class was offered for participants to review their progress one-on-one with instructors. In 2018, seventeen individuals attended the two-part budgeting class.

Youth Camp

For many children, attending a youth camp in the summertime is something to look forward to, but the cost of attending camp can keep this dream out of reach. WIRC-CAA works with local youth camps to pay the cost of attendance for low-income children. This past year, 13 children were able to attend local youth camps.

Contact Information

For more information about the CSBG and its programs, please call the WIRC-CAA at 309-837-2997 or visit wirpc.org.

**Visit us online at wirpc.org
or find us on Facebook!**



Do You Feel Like Your Money Is Flying Away?
Attend A FREE Budgeting Course!
RSVP to WIRC-CAA: 309-837-2997

Class #1: July 23, 2018, 5:00 - 7:00 PM
Village at Wheeler Clubhouse,
1641 E Wheeler Cir., Macomb

- Learn Basic Money Management
- Learn How to Design a Budget
- Learn How to Track Your Progress

Class #2: (90 Days Later - Date TBD)
• Review Your Progress One-on-One with Instructors

Your Instructors

- Tessa Hobbs-Curley, Family Life Educator, Univ. of Illinois Extension
- WIRC-Community Action Agency

Free Pizza Provided!
Attend Both Classes and You Can Earn a \$25 Walmart Gift Card!

Low-income residents were able to attend a two-part budgeting class in Macomb or Monmouth during Summer 2018.

WIRC-CAA Food Pantry a Necessity for Many Local Families



WIRC and WIRC-CAA staff brave the cold temperatures to unload food commodities to the WIRC-CAA Food Pantry.

Each year, thousands of individuals visit the WIRC-CAA Food Pantry. While the pantry purchases federal food commodities using grant funds, it also relies on donations from generous citizens. The pantry accepts both monetary and food donations. Donations are kept local, serving hungry families in Macomb and the surrounding area. In addition, ground venison is distributed through the Hunters Helping the Hungry program, which is also administered by WIRC-CAA staff. Hunters Helping the Hungry allows hunters to donate their deer meat to feed the hungry in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough,

and Warren counties.

In 2017, 1964 individuals (unduplicated count) were assisted by the program. The WIRC-CAA Food Pantry, located at 223 South Randolph Street in Macomb, primarily serves residents in need in McDonough County. The pantry is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., excluding holidays.

For more information about how you can help bring food to the table for local families, or how you can apply to get food from the pantry, please call 309-837-2997 or visit wirpc.org. ~



WIRC-CAA Food Pantry volunteers prepare bags full of food for those in need.

WINTER 2019

WIRC-CAA's Hunters Helping the Hungry Program Staff Say Thank You



The Hunters Helping the Hungry program has distributed over 5,000 pounds of deer meat in the last year to hungry families in western Illinois.

WIRC-CAA wish to extend a thank you to all who made this a successful season for this program. Through the generosity of many hunters and the participating lockers, over 5,500 pounds of deer burger has been distributed through the WIRC-CAA's food pantry, and other food pantries throughout the region, to those in need of food assistance in the last year.

To the participating locker plants in Blandinsville, Bowen, Bushnell, Carthage, and Stronghurst, we send a big thank you. We are very grateful for your willingness to assist us in this program. And to all of the hunters who generously donated the deer, we couldn't do this program without you! You make it possible through your part in management of our natural resources and your willingness to help those in need, and
(continued on page 6)



WIRC and WIRC-CAA staff come together to unload food commodities, no matter the weather.

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we thank you! Your generosity will help us, and the other participating food pantries in the region, provide nutrition for those who are less fortunate.

Again, thanks to all, and we appreciate each and every one of you for your donation.

Shaun Pritchard and the
WIRC-CAA Staff ~

Illinois Home Weatherization Program Provides Service Report

The Illinois Home Weatherization Program is an energy conservation program that assists eligible low-income households in making their homes energy efficient by eliminating air infiltration and heat loss. Depending on the circumstances and condition of the housing, some of the following weatherization work may be done: sealing cracks with weatherstrip and caulk, insulating attics and



Before: This homeowner was using a furnace that was not energy efficient.



After: The Weatherization Program replaced this homeowner's furnace with an energy-efficient model.

walls, repairing windows and doors, replacing windows, and repair and replacement of heating systems.

The following report was provided by WIRC's Weatherization Department.

Health and Human Services Funding

July 2017 to September 2018

- Applications taken: 55
- Applications approved: 55
- Amount spent: \$260,808

Dept. of Energy Funding

July 2017 to September 2018

- Applications taken: 46
- Applications approved: 46
- Amount spent: \$212,466

State of Illinois Funding

July 2017 to September 2018

- Applications taken: 55
- Applications approved: 55
- Amount spent: \$117,418

For more information about WIRC's Illinois Home Weatherization Program, contact Tim Manock at 309-837-2997 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. ~

WIRC Community Development News

WIRC Announces the Retirement of Two Long-Time Staffers



Wiehardt and Mayfield announced their retirement from WIRC.

The Western Illinois Regional Council (WIRC) announces the retirement of two long-time staffers.

For nearly 20 years, Diane Mayfield helped to give voice to victims of domestic and sexual assault/abuse as the Victim Services Director at WIRC-CAA.

Diane has guided a staff of counselors, case managers, prevention educators, judicial advocates, support staff, and volunteers through that time span. She led efforts to expand WIRC-CAA's Victim Services Sexual Assault Program to Knox and Fulton Counties, with offices in Galesburg and Cuba. Additionally, she held key leadership positions with the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic
(continued on page 7)

Violence and the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

In retirement, Mayfield plans to devote more time to her hobbies of reading and travel. She will also continue to be involved in social justice advocacy. Mayfield received special recognition for her leadership in victim services by the WIRC-CAA Board at its business meeting on December 13.

For over 37 years, Kevin Wiehardt provided leadership in almost every program area of WIRC and WIRC-CAA. Wiehardt has led WIRC efforts in securing millions in state/federal funding for infrastructure improvements for the communities throughout western Illinois. Wiehardt also served as Community Services Director, guiding programs to improve the quality of life for the less fortunate.

In retirement, Kevin plans to increase his travel and enjoy spending more time with his grandchildren. ~

WIRC Reports Current Application Progress

WIRC's Community Development staff have announced they are currently working with local officials on the following projects:

Bushnell: The city has requested WIRC help prepare and administer an application to spend down their Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) as per requirement of DCEO. It is unsure at this time what the project will fund. The city has also requested WIRC prepare an application for the Illinois Housing Development Authority Abandoned Property Program (APP).

Galesburg: The city has approached WIRC to submit and

administer an application to spend down its RLF as per requirement of DCEO. This project will involve road resurfacing.

Hamilton: The city has requested WIRC to re-submit an application to help fund the removal of four abandoned homes in Hamilton.

Lewistown: An application was submitted to IDOT in November requesting funding under the Safe Routes to School Program. If funded, this project will replace sidewalks and move a dangerous crosswalk to make pedestrian traffic to school safer.

Macomb: WIRC is preparing an application for the Abandoned Property Program. ~

Grant Award Enables Purchase of New Buses for Aging Fleet



MCPT's new busses will increase safety, comfort, and accessibility.

By securing a federal grant, the City of Macomb and McDonough County Public Transportation (MCPT) are pleased to announce that five new busses have been purchased for the fleet. The new busses will increase safety, comfort, and accessibility for passengers. The new buses are expected to arrive in summer 2019.

WIRC provides administrative staff and program support to MCPT. ~

Over One Million Pounds of Electronics Recycled in 2018



The Tri-County Resource and Waste Management Council truck transports recycling materials to its facility.

Tri-County Resource and Waste Management Council (TCR&WMC) represents and meets the solid waste management needs of incorporated and unincorporated communities in McDonough, Mercer, and Warren counties. The Council, administered by Tri-County, provides recycling services for computers, paint, and other assorted electronics.

Solid Waste Coordinator Tim Lobdell reports that 1,011,765 pounds of electronics and 168,435 pounds of paint were recycled by TCR&WMC in 2018. The Tri-County Council continues to establish new recycling programs, expand existing programs, and provide leadership through the effort of its Solid Waste Coordinator.

TCR&WMC is located at 210 North Pearl Street in Macomb, with additional drop-off locations throughout McDonough, Warren, Mercer, and surrounding counties in western Illinois.

For more information about TCR&WMC and its services, call Western Illinois Regional Council at 309-837-3941. ~

WIRC's Community Development Team Secures Multiple Grant Awards for Public Infrastructure Improvements

Through grant submissions by WIRC, multiple communities in western Illinois have been awarded Public Infrastructure Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) by the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity. A list of projects currently being administered include the following:

Abingdon Bond Fund: (\$60,637)
- The city bond funds for the backup generator project is completed. Our staff is still doing quarterly reports in case the funds are ever released. There is still about \$4,000 owed to the city from the State.

Abingdon: CDBG Public Infrastructure (\$500,000) – Sanitary sewer rehabilitation. Project has been bid. Construction to start in the spring.

Carthage: CDBG PI (\$450,000)
– Water treatment system. Finishing water treatment plan. Next phase will be construction of a reverse osmosis system.

Colchester: Bond Fund Program (\$135,000) - Funding for resurfacing streets in Colchester. The city has received \$33,750 from the state. The Governor has suspended the remaining funds. Staff is still completing quarterly reports.

Dallas City: CDBG PI (\$450,000) – Sanitary sewer lining and rehabilitation. Construction nearing completion.

Gulfport: Ike Disaster Recovery Public Infrastructure CDBG PI (\$5,729,206) - Hurricane Ike flood prevention. Pump house rehab approximately 90% complete with purchase and installation.

Joy: CDBG PI (\$500,000) – New Award - Water tower replacement. Project will be bid out in early 2019.

Keithsburg: IKE Disaster Recovery Public Infrastructure CDBG PI (\$3,288,500) – Hurricane Ike flood prevention. All three phases of this project are underway (1 - Construction of new water tower completed 12/10/18, 2 - storm water drainage and construction of flood gate, and 3 - wetland mitigation). The project has a completion date of 6/30/19.

LaHarpe: CDBG PI (\$500,000)
– New Award – Target area water main replacement. Bid opening was 1/17/19.

London Mills: CDBG PI (\$441,535) – Target area water main replacement. Project is complete. Awaiting programmatic closeout.

Macomb: CDBG PI (\$450,000) – Target area water main replacement. Construction underway. Project near completion.

Monmouth: CDBG PI (\$500,000) - New Award - Municipal water main construction in a targeted area of the city. Project will be bid out.

Warsaw: CDBG PI (\$417,044)
– Sanitary sewer extension project. Project nearing completion. Installing lift station and residential pumps soon.

In January 2019, WIRC was proud to announce that additional Public Infrastructure CDBG awards went to the following communities: the Village of London Mills in Fulton County (\$500,000 for water system improvements); the City of Hamilton in Hancock County (\$350,000 for

water main replacement); the Village of Williamsfield in Knox County (\$500,000 to replace water main lines, fire hydrants, valves, etc.); the City of Macomb in McDonough County (\$500,000 for water system improvements); and the Village of Blandinsville in McDonough County (\$500,000 for storm drainage system improvements).

WIRC, based in Macomb, serves its member communities in the six-county region of Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough and Warren counties. WIRC Community Development staff assists local governments in addressing public infrastructure and housing needs by utilizing state and federal funding opportunities.

For more information about how WIRC staff can help your community apply for grant awards, call 309-837-3941 or visit wirpc.org.



Community Development Block Grant Application Dates Announced

2019 Community Development Block Grant Applications (CDBG) will be due on August 29, 2019. If you need assistance submitting CDBG applications for your community, please contact Josh Mercer, Principal Planner at Western Illinois Regional Council, by calling 309-837-3941 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. ~

THANK YOU!

With your continued support,
you are making a difference in
the lives of families in need.

Rural Development Applications Submitted by WIRC

WIRC's Community Development staff are currently assisting with Rural Development (USDA) Projects for four communities in western Illinois. A storm siren application was submitted for Avon and is currently awaiting federal funding. Industry's application for funding was approved, and will be used to purchase a new municipal truck. Marietta's application for a new storm siren has been submitted and is currently awaiting a federal budget for funding. Vermont's application was approved and is expected to be funded soon for the purchase of a new police vehicle. ~

Housing Program Provides Assistance for Home Repairs

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Rehabilitation Program assists eligible homeowners to make necessary repairs and improvements



Before: Based on an assessment by WIRC staff, this home was deemed unsafe to live in. The homeowners did not have the resources or ability to improve their living conditions.



After: Extensive repairs were made to the home to bring it up to code and to make it more accessible for the disabled residents.

to their homes in order to eliminate health and safety problems, building code violations, and to preserve the long-term integrity of the units. Grant funding is provided by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity CDBG Program. Housing rehabilitation work is completed by local contractors who have been selected by competitive bid and who meet all licensing and insurance requirements.

In 2017, the WIRC Housing Program assisted 27 homes, with funding totaling \$1,163,000. ~

WIRC-CAA Victim Services News

Victim Services Seeks Volunteers, Offers Crisis Intervention Training

WIRC-CAA Victim Services is once again offering its Crisis Intervention Training for individuals interested in volunteering to work

with victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and sexual abuse. This is a non-credit course that covers all required training for working and/or volunteering at an Illinois sexual assault crisis center and/or domestic violence agency/shelter. The class is taught by Victim Services staff members who work firsthand with victims and their significant others. Classes for the Spring 2019 session began on Wednesday, February 20 and will end Wednesday, April 24.

The cost is \$100 for students and community members; \$150 for working professionals. Class size is limited, so preference is given to those willing to give a year's commitment to volunteering on Victim Services' 24-hour crisis line, responding to hospital calls, sheltering clients, advocating for victims, and providing outreach within the communities we serve. The registration deadline for Spring 2019 classes has passed. For more information about future Crisis Intervention Training courses, call (309) 836-2148 and ask for Mac or Naomi.

Victim Services also needs individuals interested in volunteering for non-direct service opportunities throughout the year. Individuals available to give an hour or two a month for these activities may also call (309) 836-2148 and ask for Naomi. This spring, Victim Services will need assistance for April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month activities. ~



Victim Services Reports Increase in Services, Promotes Awareness

WIRC-CAA Victim Services Director Naomi Taylor is pleased to report they are on track to increase services to survivors of both domestic violence and sexual assault. Taylor acknowledged this is due to additional staff providing services that were not fully available in previous years, such as the addition of full-time domestic violence and sexual assault children's service staff, a full-time domestic violence case manager, and more.

In calendar year 2017, 292 individuals received domestic violence services. From January 2018 to October 2018, 284 adults and 42 children, totaling 326 individuals, received domestic violence services.



Former Victim Services Director Diane Mayfield presented information about child abuse during the April 2018 Hands Around the Courthouse event.

In calendar year 2017, 101 individuals received sexual assault services. From January 2018 to October 2018, 46 adults, 6 adult significant others, and 60 children, totaling 112 individuals, received sexual assault services.

Throughout the year, Victim Services hosts several events to promote awareness of domestic and sexual violence. These events are often centered around a theme for the month.

- **January:** Stalking Awareness Month; Human Trafficking Month
- **February:** Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month
- **April:** Sexual Assault Awareness Month; Child Abuse Prevention & Awareness Month
- **October:** Domestic Violence Awareness Month; Bullying Prevention Month

Many of the events draw hundreds of people together to promote awareness and find support.

In April, Victim Services staff and guests give presentations about child abuse and child abuse prevention during the Hands

Around the Courthouse event. Attendees hold a teal ribbon around the McDonough County Courthouse to raise awareness of child abuse in western Illinois.

In May, the Kathy Simmons 5K Walk/Run/Roll is held in memory of Kathy Simmons, her family, and those who have been affected by domestic violence. Simmons was a western Illinois nurse who became a fatal victim of domestic violence. The 2018 race, held in Macomb, raised over \$4,000 for domestic violence survivors served by Victim Services.

In June, Silvie's Ride is held in memory of 5-year-old Silven "Silvie" Yocum, a fatal victim of child abuse who lived in western Illinois. The event raises funds for child



Kathy Yocum (second from left) speaks with a volunteer at the sign-up desk for the May 2018 Silvie's Ride.



Runners in the 2018 Kathy Simmons 5K Walk/Run/Roll were eager to start the race and raise awareness for domestic violence in western Illinois.

abuse victims/survivors of Victim Services, and helps to sponsor future Silvie's Ride events. Attendees enjoy breakfast before traveling a pre-determined route through western Illinois. Attendees travel by motorcycle, scooter, and car to raise awareness for child abuse. Over \$5,000 was raised during the 2018 event.

In October, Victim Services hosts several events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Perhaps the most well-known is the Take Back the Night (TBTN) March and Rally, held in collaboration with Western Illinois University, the WIU Women's Center, and the City of Macomb. TBTN is held to raise awareness of the crimes of sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. Hundreds of students, alumni, faculty, and local citizens attended the rally in 2018 and held candles in support of victims/survivors. Victim Services staff, WIU President Jack Thomas, and WIU student event



Before the screening of Home Truth, attendees mingle and view awareness materials in the lobby of the West Central Illinois Arts Center.

organizers began the evening by reading the TBTN Proclamation to the audience. Victim Services Director Naomi Taylor followed by discussing the free programs Victim Services provides to victims.

Phrases like, "No matter how we dress, no matter where we go, yes means yes and no means no!" became a rallying cry for marchers walking from Western Illinois University to Chandler Park, located near the Macomb downtown square. Gathering around the park's gazebo, marchers had the opportunity to speak their mind and share their experiences of sexual assault.

Also in October 2018, Victim Services presented a free screening of the documentary *Home Truth*, followed by a candlelight vigil in Chandler Park. *Home Truth* tells the harrowing story of Jessica Gonzales, a mother who three daughters were abducted and murdered in 1999 by her estranged husband.

Victim Services provides free and confidential services in a safe environment with knowledgeable staff members who are ready

to provide emergency services, advocacy, counseling, professional training, and public education.

For more information about how you can support Victim Services, or to inquire about volunteer opportunities, call 309-837-6622 or visit wirpc.org. If you are in crisis, call the free and confidential 24-hour crisis hotline at 309-837-5555. ~



Victim Services Director Naomi Taylor speaks about sexual assault and Victim Services to hundreds of attendees at Take Back the Night.



A group of women hold candles in memory of sexual assault survivors during Take Back the Night in front of Sherman Hall at WIU.

WIRC Phone Directory

WIRC is the parent agency to WIRC-Community Action Agency and WIRC-CAA Victim Services. Each department within the agency has its own unique services and programs. Please refer to this phone directory when seeking information about our services. We look forward to hearing from you!

Western Illinois Regional Council

309-837-3941

-
- Community Development Block Grant Inquiries
 - Economic Development District
 - Grant Writing & Administration
 - Human Services Transportation Plan Inquiries
 - Local Technical Assistance
 - McDonough & Hancock County Public Transportation
 - Tri-County Resource & Waste Management Council
 - Membership Benefits

WIRC-Community Action Agency

309-837-2997

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- Clothing Center
 - Community Services Block Grant Inquiries
 - Food Pantry / Non-Food Pantry
 - Homeless Prevention Assistance
 - Housing Rehabilitation
 - Hunters Helping the Hungry
 - Home Weatherization
 - Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
 - Project Santa
 - Scholarships
 - Scholastic Scholarship
 - Technical Scholarship

WIRC-CAA Victim Services

Domestic Violence Program:

309-837-6622

Sexual Assault Program:

309-836-2148

24-Hour Crisis Hotline:

309-837-5555

-
- Advocacy
 - Counseling
 - Domestic Violence Services
 - Emergency Services
 - Prevention Education
 - Sexual Assault Services

