



The Regional Review

The latest news from the Western Illinois Regional Council & Community Action Agency
Now located at 133 West Jackson Street, Macomb, Illinois

SUMMER 2020

VOLUME 30, ISSUE 3

Camden Named WIRC & CAA Executive Director

During the August 31 board meeting, the Western Illinois Regional Council & Community Action Agency (WIRC & CAA) Boards of Directors promoted Fiscal Director Tracy Camden to Executive Director. Suzan Nash, who has been serving as Interim Executive Director since January 2020, will assist with the transition.

Camden brings many years of non-profit experience and business education to her new role. Prior to WIRC & CAA, she worked in various management roles at Mosaic in Macomb. Starting in March 2002, she managed fiscal accounts for over 70 people in her role as Office Manager before being promoted to Business Manager in 2004. As Business Manager, she created and monitored an agency budget worth over \$5 million. Camden accepted the position of Fiscal Director at



Tracy Camden was promoted from Fiscal Director to Executive Director by the WIRC & CAA Boards of Directors on August 31, 2020. [Photo by Jamie Roth/WIRC]

WIRC & CAA in October 2008, and continued in that role for over 10 years. As Fiscal Director, she oversaw all fiscal operations for the two agencies and served as the Human Resources Assistant. In addition, she prepared and maintained budgets and cash flow for over 70 grants with a combined annual budget of \$6 million, and managed fiscal audits with various grant funders. Camden briefly left the agency in 2019 to pursue her Certified Public Accountant certification and to work as an accountant for Duntelman & Company in Bushnell. Camden returned to WIRC & CAA in her previous role as Fiscal Director in December 2019. Throughout her career, Camden studied at Western Illinois University to earn a Bachelor

(continued on page 2)

In This Issue:

Camden Named WIRC & CAA Executive Director	Page 1
WIRC Taking Extra Precautions to Protect Clients and Staff	Page 2
Local Paint and Electronics Recycling Facility Moves	Page 3
Project Santa Program to Continue During Pandemic	Page 4
WIU Hosts Fundraiser for Victim Services	Page 4
Sutton Chosen to Lead MCPT	Page 5
Staff News	Page 6
Tree Planted in Memory of Nathan Cobb	Page 7
MCPT Requires Facial Coverings for Public Transit Customers	Page 8

The Regional Review

Summer 2020; Volume 30, Issue 3

EDITOR & DESIGNER

Jamie Roth

Public Relations Manager

(309) 837-3941, ext. 131

jamie@wirpc.org

Articles written by Roth unless otherwise noted

The Regional Review is published four (4) times per year by
Western Illinois Regional Council
133 West Jackson Street
Macomb, IL 61455

Send address changes to:
wirc@wirpc.org
or call (309) 837-3941.

(CAMDEN...continued from page 1)

of Business Management in 1997, a Master of Business Administration in 2001, and a Bachelor of Business in Accountancy in 2019.

Camden is excited to lead the agency that she has come to love over her many years of employment. "I believe in the work that we do, and it is rewarding to make a difference in peoples' lives and in the communities in which we live," said Camden. "WIRC & CAA is like a second family, and I want to maintain our valued team and the work environment that is in place. I also want to explore available opportunities to ensure the viability of the agency going forward."

WIRC & CAA is a multi-faceted organization based in Macomb, Illinois that provides community development and social services throughout several counties in western Illinois. WIRC provides technical assistance to local governments and elected officials facing complex community and economic development issues. WIRC's Community Action Agency department provides efficient and diverse human services to help individuals and families help themselves, as well as providing services to survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. For more information, visit wirpc.org, find them on social media, or call (309) 837-2997. ☺

**WIRC-CAA Food Pantry is
OPEN for curbside pickup
between
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.,
Tuesdays, Thursdays,
and Fridays
(excluding holidays)**

WIRC TAKING EXTRA PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT CLIENTS & STAFF

WIRC provides a wide range of social services to help people in need in western Illinois, including a Food Pantry and Clothing Center. Throughout the early stages of the pandemic, WIRC has continued to provide many services virtually and by phone. The agency is taking the following precautions out of concern for the safety of clients and employees:

- The WIRC & CAA offices are closed to the public until further notice.
- The Centers for Disease Control social distancing guidelines are being followed.
- Applications for programs are being taken by phone and mail.
- Each visitor who has business requiring entry to the office will have to check their temperature upon arrival and will be asked a few basic health screening questions.
- The Clothing Center is temporarily closed to the public; however, beginning September 21, the Clothing Center will be open on the sidewalk during favorable weather in front of the WIRC-CAA office, 133 West Jackson Street, Macomb. The hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays.
- Clothing is also available for curbside pickup at the WIRC-CAA office by calling (309) 837-2997. CAA staff will pick out clothing based on the sizes requested, and will provide a timeframe for when

the items will be ready for pickup at the front entrance.

The agency, located at 133 W. Jackson Street, Macomb, is a multi-faceted organization that provides community development and social services throughout several counties in western Illinois. For assistance with community development projects, call (309) 837-3941. To apply for social service programs, call the Community Action Agency department at (309) 837-2997. ☺

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): 309-837-2997



Simmons 5K Update:

2020 Kathy Simmons Memorial 5K Walk/Run/Roll was canceled out of concern for the safety of participants, volunteers, and employees during the pandemic.

An online silent auction is being held in its place. Bids opened September 16; bids close September 30, 2020.

View items up for bid at:
<http://www.facebook.com/WIRCCAAVictimServices/>.

Look for the photo album titled "Victim Services Silent Auction Fundraiser 2020."

LOCAL PAINT AND ELECTRONICS RECYCLING FACILITY MOVES



Thousands of pounds of e-waste and household paint are processed for recycling every year at Tri-County Regional Collection Facility in Macomb. [Photo by Jamie Roth/WIRC]

Tri-County Regional Collection Facility provides paint and electronics recycling services in Mercer, McDonough, and Warren counties in western Illinois. For many years, the facility has been located on Pearl Street in Macomb. As of June 16, 2020, the facility moved their base of operations to 129 West Jackson Street near the Macomb Downtown Square.

Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth says there is a noticeable demand for recycling services in the region. "Since the program started in September 2005, over two million pounds of paint and eight million pounds of electronics have been kept out of landfills," says Roth. "The facility often has pallets stacked up to eight feet tall with old televisions, computers, and paint cans. We are busy year-round."

The collection facility is open from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of each month (excluding federal holidays). The facility's entrance is on the south side of the building and is accessed by entering the parking lot off West Washington Street.

In order to comply with Illinois law, collection facility staff must inspect all items submitted for recycling. Any items dropped off without inspection and/or outside of operating hours cannot be accepted, are considered illegal, and are subject to appropriate fines.

"We are grateful that people want to do the right thing by recycling their electronics and paint, but we need to follow certain regulations in order to make sure the process is done safely and properly," Roth said. "We do our best to make this process as easy as possible, and encourage anyone with questions to call our facility ahead of time."

Tri-County Regional Collection Facility provides a service that properly disposes of e-waste and unwanted paint. Tri-County Resource & Waste Management Council oversees the operation of the facility with administrative support from Western Illinois Regional Council. For more information about the facility and its services, call Solid Waste Coordinator Tim Lobdell at (309) 331-4782.

☺ ☺ ☺

PROJECT SANTA PROGRAM TO CONTINUE DURING THE PANDEMIC

For 37 years, the WIRC-CAA Project Santa Program has brought smiles to thousands of children in need living in western Illinois. While the Coronavirus pandemic is causing the agency to make a few changes, this special program will continue this holiday season.

The Project Santa Program provides a happy holiday full of gifts, food, and clothing to children of low-income families in the western Illinois counties of Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren. WIRC & CAA Interim Executive Director Suzan Nash and former Clothing Center Manager Teresa Cadle created the program in 1983. WIRC-CAA collaborates with local school administrators who refer families to the program. Approximately \$75 is spent on each child, which includes toys and clothing. Staff and volunteers, called “elves,” shop for and wrap thousands of gifts every year using funds that are donated to the program. The elves often shop as a group, and are a familiar sight at local stores during the holiday season. Community members are also welcome to sponsor an anonymous child or family by purchasing gifts on their own time and using their own funds. Each family also receives a holiday meal that they can prepare on Christmas Day.

This year, Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth says the program will look a little different. “Typically, we have volunteers coming to our office to help us wrap gifts, and the Project Santa children are given an opportunity to meet with Santa Claus and open

one gift with him,” says Roth. “Our highest priority is the health and safety of the families we serve, our volunteers, and our employees. This year, we will have the parents/guardians pick up the unwrapped gifts on a designated day and send wrapping supplies home with them. Santa and the children are both at higher risk of the virus, so Santa will not be able to meet the children this year.”

Roth continued that parents or guardians interested in applying for the program should contact their school administrators to get an application form. Application forms should be mailed to WIRC-CAA, 133 West Jackson Street, Macomb, IL 61455. The deadline for receiving applications is 4:00 p.m. Friday, October 2.

For more information about Project Santa, call WIRC-CAA at (309) 837-2997. ☎

You Can Make A Difference!

If you suspect that someone you know is being abused, call Victim Services' free and confidential 24-hour crisis hotline:

(309) 837-5555

Crisis Hotline Volunteers Needed!

If you would like to volunteer for the crisis hotline, call (309) 837-6622.

WIU HOSTS FUNDRAISER FOR VICTIM SERVICES



Representatives of Western Illinois University, the WIU Women's Center, and WIU Multicultural Center present a donation to Victim Services Director Naomi Taylor on June 25, 2020. [Photo Courtesy of WIU]

On behalf of Victim Services, I wish to thank Western Illinois University (WIU), the WIU Women's Center, the WIU Multicultural Center, and all those who attended the Spring 2020 performance of “The Vagina Monologues” for their support of our agency.

“The Vagina Monologues” is an entertaining and important play that includes pieces on sexual violence and consent from different women's perspectives. All proceeds from the celebrated play were generously donated to Victim Services to further our mission to provide free advocacy and counseling to survivors of domestic and sexual violence in west central Illinois.

This year, \$1,270.50 was raised for and donated to Victim Services.

We appreciate all of the years of continued support and collaboration for events with WIU, the Women's Center, and the Multicultural Center regarding these important issues in our society.

Naomi Taylor,
Victim Services Director

SUTTON CHOSEN TO LEAD MCPT

After interviewing several qualified candidates, WIRC and the City of Macomb have announced Lori Sutton as the new Transit Director for McDonough County Public Transportation (MCPT). Sutton is following in the footsteps of the late Nathan Cobb, who directed the organization for many years under his kind, steadfast leadership. Cobb tragically passed away in January 2020. In his absence, Suzan Nash has been simultaneously serving as Interim Transit Director and Interim Executive Director of MCPT and WIRC & CAA, respectively. Sutton officially started her position as Transit Director on May 18, 2020.

Sutton, a graduate of Western Illinois University, brings a wide range of technical, research, and leadership experience to her new position. Over the course of her impressive career, she has served in various roles at the following notable organizations: Eagle View Community Health System; Western Illinois University's Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA); the West Central Illinois Continuum of Care Consortium (WCICCC); and University of Iowa's State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL).

Sutton spent three and half years as Executive Director of Eagle View Community Health System. During her tenure, she was able to secure grant funding to start and expand behavioral health services, increase quality improvement activities, and upgrade dental infrastructure improvements.

For 22 years, she served at Western Illinois University's



After an extensive search, Lori Sutton was selected as the new Transit Director of MCPT. [Photo Courtesy of Sutton]

IIRA. Sutton's final years of tenure included Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources. As Assistant Director, she ensured grant compliance on 37 grants to federal and state entities worth \$1.8 million.

Sutton spent 19 years providing technical assistance at WCICCC, including the following: grant writing; monitoring and evaluation of service provider projects; research, including interpreting regulatory requirements; and development of a new board with creation of policies and procedures.

At SHL, Sutton was a Research Support Coordinator working with primary investigators, university offices and sponsors. Her portfolio included 35 grants to federal and state entities worth \$1.2 million and 21 fee-for-service contracts valued at \$4 million.

WIRC provides administrative support to the MCPT and Hancock

County Public Transportation (HCPT) programs. Interviews for the position of Transit Director were conducted in collaboration with administrative staff from the City of Macomb and WIRC.

WIRC, based in Macomb, provides administrative and technical assistance to local governments and elected officials facing complex community and economic development issues. For more information about their programs, visit wirpc.org, find them on social media, or call (309) 837-3941.

The MCPT program provides mass transit options to the residents of McDonough County, including fixed-route service through Go West Transit and scheduled demand response service. The City of Macomb and Western Illinois University (Go West Transit) have partnered since 1999 to provide fare-free, fixed-route transportation to the WIU campus and Macomb community. Door-to-door pickup for seniors, the disabled, and others is available by reservation for a limited fare through MCPT's Demand Response service. For more information about MCPT, call (309) 837-7433 or visit 837ride.com. 📞

Don't forget to update your address book!

**WIRC & CAA has moved to:
133 West Jackson Street
Macomb, IL 61455**

STAFF NEWS

CADLE, ELAM RETIRE AFTER OVER 36 YEARS OF SERVICE



On August 28, 2020, Interim Executive Director Suzan Nash (center) presented Jeff Elam (left) and Teresa Cadle (right) with commemorative gifts for their years of dedicated service.

Jeff Elam and Teresa Cadle, both longtime employees of WIRC-CAA, have retired after providing over 36 years of service to the less fortunate in western Illinois. On August 28, their fellow WIRC & CAA employees followed physical distancing guidelines to celebrate them and their many achievements.

Elam, hired in February 1983, was the Housing Specialist for WIRC-CAA's Housing Rehabilitation and Weatherization programs. He assisted eligible homeowners with making repairs and improvements to their homes in order to eliminate health and safety problems, remove building code violations, and preserve the long-term integrity of the homes.

Cadle, hired in November 1984, was the Clothing Center Manager and provided clerical support to the Community Development department. As Clothing Center Manager, she was responsible for

the intake and distribution of free, gently used clothing to people in need. Cadle was also known to many families in the region for coordinating the Project Santa program, which provides gifts, food, and clothing to children in need in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties.

Cadle and Elam were known by their co-workers and the people they served for their compassion, integrity, and perseverance to improve the lives of the less fortunate in western Illinois. Interim Executive Director Suzan Nash presented both with commemorative gifts for their years of dedicated service. ☺

NELSON RECEIVES SPECIAL RECOGNITION



Suzan Nash (left) visits Betty Nelson (right).
[Courtesy photo]

On May 25, 2020, WIRC & CAA Interim Executive Director Suzan Nash and WIRC Administrative Assistant Rose Elam presented Betty Nelson with a Tree of Life necklace as thanks for her many years of service to WIRC-CAA.

The Centers for Disease Control physical distancing guidelines were followed during the visit.

Nelson worked in WIRC-CAA's



Rose Elam (left) visits Betty Nelson (right).
[Courtesy photo]

clothing center for over 25 years before transitioning to a part-time capacity. Nelson recently retired from WIRC-CAA at the age of 95.



Staff Departures

We are sorry to note we recently had the following staff departures. We wish these individuals the best in their future endeavors.

Teresa Cadle

Clothing Center Manager/
CD Clerical Support

Jeff Elam

Housing Specialist

Alondra*

Bilingual DV Legal Advocate

Ireanna*

SART Advocate

Emily*

SA Medical/Legal Advocate

Alexandra*

SA Counselor

Ricky Newcomb

Census Outreach

Visit our website at wirpc.org
or find us on social media!

Staff Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following staff that recently celebrated special employment anniversary milestones:

One Year

Dean Torreson
Planner/HSTP Coordinator

Debbie*
Preventionist

Alisha*
SA Counselor

Rosemarie McCoy
LIHEAP Outreach

Caroline*
DV Legal Advocate

Five Years

Darrin Taflinger
Weatherization Assessor/Inspector

10 Years

Beth Carson
LIHEAP Coordinator

15 Years

Tim Lobdell
Solid Waste Coordinator/
CSBG Coordinator

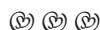
20 Years

Royal White
Housing Programs Manager

30 Years

Tim Manock
Weatherization/Housing
Coordinator

**Full names of Victim Services employees are kept confidential out of concern for their safety and the safety of their clients.*



**October is Domestic
Violence Awareness Month**

TREE PLANTED IN MEMORY OF NATHAN COBB



Family, friends, and co-workers of the late Nathan Cobb plant a tree in his memory at McDonough County Transit Center, Macomb on May 8, 2020. [Photo by Jamie Roth/WIRC]

Nathan Cobb, Transit Director of MCPT, tragically passed away in January 2020. Cobb was known for his kind leadership and concern for others, especially the less fortunate.

On May 8, friends, family, and co-workers gathered in a private ceremony to plant a red crabapple

tree in his memory on the grounds of the McDonough County Transit Center, 701 East Pierce Street, Macomb.

A public ceremony is planned to be held in the future to commemorate Cobb's memory with a plaque. ☺



**Parents: are you tired of
teaching and need a break?**

**Contact Debbie at
WIRC-CAA Victim Services!**

**Free Virtual One-on-One Lessons
for Pre-K through 2nd Grade Levels**

How to Tell Grown-ups About Sexual Abuse

Lesson 1: Play It Safe

Lesson 2: Good/Happy & Bad/Uncomfortable Touch

Lesson 3: Secret Safety



To schedule a lesson, email deborah@wirpc.org
or call (309) 836-2148, ext. 141.

MCPT REQUIRES FACIAL COVERINGS FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT CUSTOMERS

By Lori Sutton, Transit Director

As of August 21, 2020, all riders of public transportation over age two will be required to wear facial coverings while on the McDonough County Public Transportation (MCPT) vehicles. This new policy includes Go West Transit buses and Demand Response vehicles.

All riders must comply with this policy unless they have a valid medical reason. If wearing a facial covering would be difficult or harmful, an individual should not do so. Examples would be someone who has a physical disability that makes it difficult to easily wear or remove a facial covering, or someone who has been advised by a medical professional to not wear one. In these cases, MCPT drivers may need to implement social distancing where only ten riders can be on the bus until all passengers have facial coverings. If during the route the bus reaches its social distancing capacity, the marquee on the bus will display "At Capacity" and dispatch is then notified of any skipped stops with passengers. Once the bus is below its social distancing capacity, or all passengers are wearing facial coverings, the driver will then resume picking up passengers. It is not always apparent who has a facial covering exception. MCPT asks riders to avoid policing other passengers who are not wearing a facial covering.

A facial covering is considered to be a commercial or homemade mask, bandana, or a scarf which covers from above the nose down to the lower part of the face at or

below the chin. The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has numerous online videos that instruct how to make an appropriate facial covering. The new policy is consistent with the CDC recommendations and requirements issued by the State of Illinois in regard to asking people to wear a facial covering over their noses and mouths when in a public setting where social distancing is not always possible.

The facial covering requirement is the latest example of MCPT's commitment to provide a safe environment for its drivers and customers. Other precautions already in place include:

- Buses are boarding from the rear entrance, when possible
- Visual aids are on the buses to assist in social distancing
- Buses are disinfected between route runs (approximately every 2.5 hours)
- Demand Response vehicles are cleaned between passengers
- All vehicles are deep cleaned at the end of the day
- Temperatures are taken for all transit vehicle operators at the beginning of each shift
- All vehicles are equipped with hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, and gloves
- All operators are required to wear facial coverings and have been provided gloves when loading and unloading an individual that requires hands-on assistance, i.e., securing a wheelchair.

It is everyone's responsibility

to follow public health guidance and slow the spread of COVID-19. We need to be accountable to each other, the vulnerable community members, and to our essential workers, which include the public transit drivers. MCPT thanks the community in advance for the cooperation in following the new facial covering policy. As the CDC or state mandates change, the MCPT policies will be updated as needed.

The MCPT program provides mass transit options to the residents of McDonough County, including fixed-route service through Go West Transit and scheduled Demand Response service. The City of Macomb and Western Illinois University (Go West Transit) have partnered since 1999 to provide fare-free, fixed-route transportation to the WIU campus and Macomb community. Door-to-door pickup for seniors, the disabled, and others is available by reservation for a limited fare through MCPT's Demand Response service. For more information about MCPT, call (309) 837-7433 or visit 837ride.com.



THANK YOU!

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

**You are valued.
You are not alone.**

