

Assistance & Resource Center 2016 Annual Report



January 2017

To our Clients, Supporters, Donors, and Volunteers,

In 2008, a small group got together to form an organization called ARC. In 2009, ARC began to provide financial assistance and resources to those living in the River Falls School District. In 2013, ARC expanded its service area to include the Ellsworth School District. ARC is the “go to” resource in both River Falls and Ellsworth for people who need that “extra help” to get back on their feet. Whether it is a gas card to get to work, help with their utility bill, or rent money to avoid an eviction, ARC is there. Out of a grassroots effort, ARC has become an organization that the people of River Falls and Ellsworth can count on.

2016 was a busy and fulfilling year for Assistance & Resource Center, Inc. (ARC), from receiving over 1,000 calls, to providing services for 581 families and 407 individuals. Our mission is to provide short term financial assistance to members of the community to help meet their basic needs and provide access to additional resources.

As ARC expands services, it continues the focus on “partnering” with our clients. ARC wants our donors and supporters to know that **96 cents out of each and every dollar donated goes to serve those in need.** We have found that by encouraging our clients to set up payment plans, do matching payments, and access other available resources, we are able to help stretch the 96 cents even further. **ARC is 100% volunteer. ARC has no paid staff. ARC has no offices that require rent or utility payments.**

ARC is dedicated to servicing clients who need help and we sincerely want to thank those who support the ARC mission. More than the provision of financial assistance, ARC’s vision is to create, at some small level, both a greater sense of dignity and hope for those we directly serve and also solidarity in the community at large.

The ARC Board of Directors

Our Clients

Families and individuals who call ARC requesting services live in River Falls, Ellsworth, and the surrounding communities. To be eligible for financial assistance, callers must reside in the River Falls or Ellsworth school districts. Callers from surrounding communities will be referred to agencies in their area. A typical scenario may be the following: A family where the income just pays the bills. The brakes on the car are a safety issue and are replaced, resulting in the inability to pay the electric and gas bills. The next week, one of the children is ill and mom misses three days of work (unpaid) to care for the child. The electric bill goes unpaid yet again. ARC receives a call from the family that they are facing a shut-off notice and need assistance. ARC will work with the client and utility provider to meet the need. Another scenario, ARC receives a call from a family where there is an employment opportunity, but limited gas money to get to the job until the first paycheck is issued. ARC will support the client by assisting with “fuel only” gas cards. The majority of ARC’s clients are in a situation that involves the inability to fund a basic need, and that is why the organization was formed. ARC fills a very real need in the community which would otherwise go unaddressed.

Services

The heart of ARC is the service we provide to those in need. In addition to rent, utilities, food, gas, laundry, auto repair, transportation, and clothing, we continue to find ways to meet new requests made by our clients. Whether it is the cost of the uniform for a new job, a birth certificate, license plate tabs, dental bills, minutes for a trac phone, tires, or any one of an unending number of requests, ARC is committed to doing what we can to serve the community.

Finances

In 2016, over **\$53,000** in services were provided to clients. ARC's goal is to be a good steward of the donations and grant monies that have been so generously given. **96 cents of each dollar donated is used to assist clients.** ARC has no paid staff, pays no rent or utilities for an office space, and has a Board that is focused on making certain our donors can trust the monies given are used for the purposes stated. Each month the Board reviews the Yearly Budget, factors in income and expenses (phone bill and postage), and votes to adjust the budget accordingly.

Grant Writing

ARC owes a huge debt of gratitude to our dedicated grant writers: Cheryl Dinteman, Paige Miller, and joining the team in 2016, Tonnja Magee and Peter Carr. In June, Paige Miller's resignation was reluctantly accepted as her teaching duties were taking her abroad. We cannot thank her enough for all of her past work and support for ARC.

Tonnja Magee has taken on the role of grants coordinator and she, along with the grants team have put together twenty grant applications in 2016. Successful awards totaled \$23,500.

Community Support

Underlying the entire mission of ARC is the continued generosity of area churches including financial support, staff assistance, facility use, and spiritual support. Thank you!

Providers/vendors in both communities (utilities, landlords, car repair shops, grocery stores, etc.) help ARC meet client needs by their willingness to work with the client and ARC through challenging and often stressful situations. Thank you!

Community Partnership

In the spring and fall of 2016, ARC continued to build on a partnership established with the River Fall Municipal Utilities in 2015. RFMU again hosted "Breaking the Cycle" workshops for clients having difficulty keeping up with utility bills. A Family Means financial educator helped folks look at basic financial management, budgeting, and spending in their own household to see what positive long term changes could be made. 41 households participated in "Breaking the Cycle" in 2016. This educational component fits well within ARC's overall philosophy of offering a "hand up" rather than a "hand out". Attendees were very positive in feedback,

evaluations, and encouraging ARC to continue planning for similar educational offerings. Thank you RFMU and Rhonda Davison!

Community Events

Three events early in 2016 provided much appreciated financial support for ARC. In January, ARC was the designated recipient of the proceeds from the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast held in River Falls. \$1500 was given toward ARC's local mission work.

In early March, Assistance & Resource Center was selected as the recipient of income generated by UWRF annual Bowls for Hope soup supper event. Extensive planning, outstanding community involvement, and brisk ticket sales resulted in a \$6000 donation to ARC. Also in March, the River Falls Women's Bowling League presented ARC with over \$500, proceeds from their winter fundraiser.

The Ellsworth community again showed their support for ARC by patronizing the Coke Wagon provided by Nilssen's Foods in early June. Ignoring waves of significant thunderstorms passing overhead for the better part of the weekend, customer traffic was excellent, earning ARC profits of over \$900.

Pancakes were enjoyed by parishioners and community alike at St. Bridget Church in the fall, bringing in a donation of \$1500.

ARC closed the year celebrating the holiday season with enthusiastic and energetic UWRF marketing/communication students at their aptly named "Holiday Cup", held at Juniors Bar and Restaurant. The Sales Promotions & Events Planning Class raised \$1,400. Thank you Dr. David Bonko and students!

Dedicated Volunteers

ARC has an amazing group of volunteers, many who have been with the organization from the beginning. Their commitment and compassion is from the heart. A big Thank You to ARC's Phone Volunteers who fielded over 1000 calls in 2016!

ARC's Process

When a client calls ARC, a phone volunteer fills out an intake form, recording basic information and the client's request. The Client Service Coordinator then reviews the request, verifies the information, and calls the client back within 24 to 48 hours. If the request is approved, the ARC Treasurer writes a check and mails it to the provider i.e. landlord, utility company, automotive repair shop, etc. Funds are never given directly to a client. Information recorded on the intake forms is entered into a database to track the number of times a client has requested assistance and has been given assistance. The process is an efficient, effective, and equitable way of distributing financial assistance for those who live within the River Falls and Ellsworth School Districts. Those clients living outside ARC's service territory will receive referrals to the appropriate agencies in their community.

Key ARC Operating Statistics for 2016

Financial and Referral Services Provided

Families	581
Individuals	407
Total	988

Breakdown of Services Provided (Number of Households)

Rent	103
Utilities	221
Transportation (gas, repair, tabs, registration, taxi)	224
Food, laundry, other	58
Referral	382
Total of Services Provided	988

Client Service Expenditures

Housing	\$ 22,105.00
Utilities	\$ 16,748.00
Transportation (gas, repairs, tabs, titles, and renewals)	\$ 10,001.00
Food, laundry, other	<u>\$ 4,818.00</u>
Total Services Provided	\$ 53,672.00

ARC Cumulative Expense Report

Year	Client Services Pay Out	Admin Expenses	Total
2009	\$ 19,744	\$ 1996	\$ 21,740
2010	\$ 29,503	\$ 1102	\$ 30,605
2011	\$ 24,831	\$ 1088	\$ 25,919
2012	\$ 34,641	\$ 1363	\$ 36,004
2013	\$ 38,276	\$ 1681	\$ 39,957
2014	\$ 49,584	\$ 1395	\$ 50,979
2015	\$ 50,189	\$ 2157	\$ 52,346
2016	\$ 53,672	\$ 1076	\$ 54,748
Total	\$300,440	\$11,858	\$ 312,298

In 2016, ARC's operating cost was just under 3%. Ninety-seven cents out of each and every dollar donated went directly to serve those in need.

The accumulative chart shows a continuing and ever growing need for ARC services. The increase beginning in 2013 reflects the addition of the Ellsworth community to our service area. The chart documents our low administrative costs and since the first year when we had start-up costs, we have maintained a 95% plus client services standard. Administrative expenses this year included postage, computer software, and a cellular phone plan. ARC has no paid staff and relies on donated office space.

Thank you to ARC's 2016 Donors

Foundation, Business, Community, and Individual Support

\$1000-\$6000

St. Croix Valley United Way
Green Bay Packer Foundation
Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services
Family Fresh Receipt Collection
Hugh J. Andersen Foundation



Otto Bremer Trust
UWRF Bowls for Hope
MLK Celebration Breakfast
Viola E. Lundeberg Trust
AnnMarie Foundation

\$500-\$999

St. Croix Electric Cooperative
Shopko
River Falls Women's Bowling League

River Falls Knights of Columbus
Kwik Trip

\$250-\$499

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Janet Hansen

Traveler's Insurance

\$25-\$249

Kinni Café Family Restaurant
Peachy Pie Designs & Finds
Durham Executive Group
Gregory and Sharon Babcock
Lucy and Joseph Paulose
Ron and Kay Hagen
Melissa and Gary Porter
Robert and Patricia Feidler
Kristin Garza
Patrice Marvin
Chuck and Cindy Dehler
Steve and Rhonda Davison
R and J Rommel
Stuart and JoAnn Lentz
Julia Webster
John and Holly Bjorseth

South Fork Café & Catering
Mainstreeter Bar & Grill
Greg and Anne Armstrong
John and Pat Kjosa
Mary Japs
Laura Gerlach
Cindy Schartz
Robert and Bernice Hessler
Sue Beckham
Joel and Sharon Schulze
Cathy Cliffe
Judy and Doug Fahrendorff
Dale and Sheila Olson
Michael and Diane Kretz
Richyne Meyer
Christine Doherty

Churches and Religious Organizations

Ellsworth area:

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Crossroads Community Church
Eidsvold Lutheran Church
English Lutheran Church
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
St. Francis Catholic Church

River Falls area:

Abundant Life Church
Ezekiel Lutheran Church
First Congregational Church
First Covenant Church
Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
The River
St. Bridget Catholic Church
United Methodist Church
United Universalist Society
Rush River Lutheran Church

In Kind Business, Community, and Individual Support

Nilssen's Foods
River Falls Lions Club
River Falls Public Library
Jensen's Automotive
Bowen's Garage
Maple Street Repair
Auto Value Parts
Kristin Jepson State Farm
Peachy Pie
Forgotten Realms
Mainstreeter Bar & Grill
Rush River
Crank Worx
Northtown Cleaners
Swede's Service
Advanced Auto
Johnnie's Bar
Shooter's Pub
Em & Jen Designs
Cabela's Oufitters
Dr. David Bonko
Patricia Kjosa
Sandra and Michael Colloton

Dick's Fresh Market
St. Bridget Catholic Church
River Falls Municipal Utilities
Junior's Bar & Restaurant
Dave's Transmission
Brickner Oil
Jackelen Brothers Auto
Rick Vorwald & Edina Realty
South Fork Café
22 & Co.
River Falls Fighting Fish
Belle Vinez
Lunds Fly Fishing
St. Francis Catholic Church
Auto Glass Express
Car Quest
Kinni Café
Subway
Globally Made
Judy Thorsen
Dale Olson
Rhonda Davison
Jim Ellis

Members of the ARC Board:

Lori Rodewald, Treasurer. Lori has a Masters in School Counseling as well as a Masters in Special Education. She has strong community ties to both Hudson and River Falls having raised her 4 children in the area. Lori works at Sholom in St. Paul as Volunteer Coordinator.

Ronna Ellis, Client Service Coordinator. Ronna is one of the founders of ARC. A 35-year-resident of the Hudson/River Falls area, Ronna has been involved in numerous volunteer organizations. She received her degree from UWRF, focusing on Sociology and Criminal Justice.

Cheryl Dintemann, Grants and Publicity. Cheryl and her husband Dave are residents of River Falls. Cheryl is busy with 3 young children and a business, Johnnie's Bar. She enjoys raising her children in a smaller town environment where a sense of community is important. She enjoys helping with their business and does her best to remain active in the community.

Sharon Schulze, Chairperson. Sharon and her husband, Joel, live just outside of Ellsworth. Their 3 children and families reside in California and the Twin Cities area. Sharon retired from Public Health nursing (PCPH) in Jan. 2012, after 32 yrs. The Schulzes left ownership of Ellsworth Village Pharmacy at the same time and are enjoying retirement.

Don Richards, Member-at-large. Don served as Mayor of River Falls from 2004 to 2012. He was a teacher in River Falls, Prescott, and UW Whitewater. A River Falls native, educated in the River Falls Public Schools, graduated from UW-River Falls, and earned advanced degrees at UW-Madison. He is married to Ellie, and has four children.

Jim Erickson, Member-at-large. Jim and his wife Judy, live outside of Ellsworth. Two of their children live in Kenosha, and one in Prescott. Jim retired from SNAP-ON INC in 2003 after 30 years and moved to Ellsworth. Jim has been very involved in the Northwest and Greater Milwaukee Lutheran Church Synods.

Judy Perkins, Community outreach and fundraising. Judy lives in Ellsworth. She is retired from the Ellsworth School District where she worked in Early Childhood Special Education, and continues to volunteer her time. Judy is President of the Ellsworth Public Library Board. She has 3 children and 5 grandchildren.

Colleen Westhuis, Secretary. Colleen and her husband, Kevin, relocated to River Falls in 2013. They previously resided in Fort Collins, Colorado where they raise their two children. Colleen has a degree in Economics and several years of experience in the financial services industry.

Paige Miller, resigned in May after serving as a dedicated board member since 2010. Paige served as Grant Coordinator and Secretary. Dr. Miller is a professor of sociology at UWRF and is involved in a number of groups on campus.

Board Support:

Sheila Olson, Volunteer Coordinator. Sheila and her husband, Dale, are 28 year residents of River Falls. She has a degree in Business with an emphasis in Management from UWRF. Sheila is an election official in her township and currently works part-time at Associated Dentists.

Tonnja Magee, Grants Coordinator. Tonnja and her husband, Patrick are 20 year residents of River Falls. Before she retired from Imation Corp, one of her job responsibilities was with the Community Affairs Department. She reviewed grant applications and coordinated company donations and contributions. Tonnja and Patrick have two children and four grandchildren.

Peter Carr, Grant Research. Peter is a retired epidemiologist. He most recently worked for the MN Dept. of Health as the AIDS and STD Director. Peter serves on the Pierce County Board of Health and is technical assistance provider for the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Director's Global Program.

Phone Volunteers:

Cathy Cliffe

Leslie Clauss

Don Richards

Mary Japs

JoAnn Lentz

Karen Rickard

Sheila Olson

Dori Holter

Ginny Hilden

Sue Danielson

Rosemary Matzek

Judy Perkins

Sharon Schulze

Colleen Westhuis