

**THE ALABAMA COUNCIL ON HUMAN RELATIONS, INC.**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD REPORT for August - October 2021**

**Nancy Spears, CEO; Dianne Kent, Fiscal Coordinator**

**Janet Burns, Administrative Coordinator**

**GRANT APPLICATIONS, REPORTS AND RELATED ITEMS**

- Community Services Block Grant. Status sent; minor corrections made - complete.
- Child Care Feeding Program (HS/EHS and Family Day Care Homes). Status: complete.
- Early/Head Start Continuation Grant (Yr4). Work on this grant has begun.
- General Fund Grant due. State legislature approved an increase, in the case of ACHR, from \$10,000 a year to \$12,860. Status: Budget planned for approvals and submission.

**STAFF CHANGES/NEWS IN CENTRAL POSITIONS**

- Tina Evans, transfer to Programs Coordinator complete.
- Jessica Mersino Ballard, former EHS Home Based Lead Parent Educator and Coach had resigned in good standing to accept a position elsewhere, partly to get hours toward a degree, applied for the position of Family Engagement Supervisor, was interviewed, and has started in the position with Tina Evans (former Family Engagement Coordinator) supervising.
- Wanda Jackson hired in fiscal with intent that she learn the position as Fiscal Coordinator. Dianne Kent, our long-time Fiscal Coordinator, has begun training her.

**OTHER ITEMS**

- After another meeting with some of the new board members at Mother Mary Mission, MMM sent a letter through their lawyer insisting that we begin rent payments immediately though the building had no certificate of occupancy, getting it there would be very costly and ACHR would have had to bear the costs including HVAC units. Those costs were in addition to the cost of making parts of the building accessible, cutting additional exit doors per the Fire Marshal, the electrical, plumbing and so forth to put in the additional toilet, diapering, feeding, kitchen areas, internet and camera systems and bringing the kitchen up to code for food prep. It was not feasible. We will begin hunting again.
- The Annual E/HS Self-Assessment ramped up in late September with the intent of completing, compiling, adding the Improvement Plan and distributing ahead of the grant. Due to the projects described in this report (and more) and having not found much-needed support staff, it did not get out early as planned.
- Community Needs Assessment for Lee County completed as required by CSBG. Submitted with the grant in September. CSBG requires a CNA every three years; E/HS every five years so we will be doing another full CNA in two years to go with the full E/HS proposal. In both cases, up-dates reflecting changes are required in "off" years.
- Contractor recently notified us that sheet metal continues to be unavailable for the King Center Gutter project. Janitorial/maintenance staff is working to keep the existing gutter system as clear as possible. We continue to have leaks in hard rains, but they have been more manageable.
- Running our computers/networks is becoming an expensive, challenging endeavor. Greenlink Technologies (GTI) for several years has had the contract to monitor our network, provide security software, do all fiscal program-related up-grades, and assist when we had repair needs beyond what Dana Strickland can handle. In early August, GTI notified us that their costs of providing anti-virus, anti-malware and anti-ransomware for all ACHR computers (155!) and monitoring our networks was going to increase and would be reflected in the contract renewal, which was coming soon. The amount of the increase was breath taking. GTI has been responsive to our needs. However, we searched for other companies that could provide this service, including onsite assistance if needed. The other viable quote also

was high and left too many costs open-ended. GTI had the best quote. With GTI's help, staff began searching for a solution.

In the end, we worked out a hybrid solution. GTI will monitor our two servers and 15 key computers (including fiscal, of course). From other potential vendors, we got the idea of directly purchasing software licenses for network monitoring and for anti-virus etc. Dana, who likes a challenge, agreed to take on this project. Our Purchasing/Property Assistant, who also has good computer skills, agreed to be her back-up. We worked with GTI to assure that our choices caused no conflict on the network with their monitoring software and that we chose good quality programs. We purchased licenses for AVAST and Team Viewer for use on all but the servers and the 15 computers. Dana Strickland has almost completed installation. With Team Viewer installed, she can monitor computers for signs of problems and do some tasks without having to go to the computer itself. This saves her time, and already has reduced computer down time.

We believe that this plan will work for the present. However, longer term we need to plan for increased costs in this area.

- Our cybersecurity project, mentioned in the previous board report, has continued. We have reviewed suggestions from the vendors we worked with on the previous project as well from C-Spire, the company in the process of completing the shift of our phone/internet. We have taken some steps. For example, as Dana installs the new system, she is insisting on strengthening passwords to computer & email, and setting computers to go to screen save if not active for a few minutes. We have checked the privacy and security policies of computer programs we use such as Child Plus, COR Advantage and E-DECA (all good) and FACSPRO, required by the state, in question. We have been notified that the state will be migrating to other software. We are continuing and will continue to review, consider and do what we reasonably can to mitigate risks.
- A related project is an improved data plan for Head Start/Early Head Start, which we have learned must be board approved, so it will be with your packet. In September, five staff attended a three-day webinar on the use of data provided by Head Start Region IV T/TA. The final three days were in early November, just ended at this writing. We received many good resources and have much to consider or reconsider. That section of the training included a segment on data security. Soon after the training, one of the education staff sent a memo to education and related staff directing that they cease downloading certain reports from the cloud to their computers, and print only what is essential. What we do not have, we do not have to worry about storing and eventually properly destroying as we follow our document retention plan.
- We had expected the new phone/Internet system to be complete by the end of September – which it is not. The connection at Airport Road Garage has slowed their work. The garage could rely on cell phones and get by, but Therese Sampson in Transportation has become very dependent on ChildPlus (on line only) to be able to up-date children's addresses for the weekly bus rosters as well as on Email regarding children's pick-up/drop-off changes. Van Sanasith uses the Internet to search for parts. We considered trying to rely on a hotspot, but it would require a large data plan, so we will simply have to be patient. Equipment almost held us up – but the C-Spire staff member we are working with reported that they have managed to secure that (supply chain problems – again).
- No one else has claimed it in their report, so we will note here that all cameras and DVRs have been replaced at Darden, and ACOM (the vendor) provided key staff with training on use of the system, including logging in from a computer to view a classroom. We hear that the video/audio is very clear.
- In addition, with all the projects, (see maintenance board report) and two janitorial staff having some physical problems, we did not have time to clean out Geneva to sell it before the deadline with the Opelika Historic Commission. Staff went back to the drawing board and studied the pictures to see that what the Commission wanted that we can do. A door needed to be replaced/painted. It is oddly shaped, only five feet high (is access to under a porch) and off plumb. ACHR's two maintenance staff cut a door down to fit, installed it and painted it. They also replaced some wooden siding and, to our surprise, matched the paint well enough that it may be good enough. Per photos we have seen, it certainly is an improvement. Proud of our guys. Tina Evans drove by and looked at it, and then sent the photos to the person who will present it to the Historic Commission. We will see.

## ACHR BOARD REPORT - FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

*August, September, October 2021*

### SUCCESS STORIES to SHARE

1. Ms. Lucinda Aldridge

September 7, 2021; FEA sent text message and e-mail to parent to learn reason for child's absence. Parent responded with e-mail stating child was absent, due to scheduled doctor's appointment in Birmingham, for a procedure that he will be having soon. Parent had previously indicated she was unemployed and could not find a job she qualified for. FEA asked if she needed assistance with a gas voucher to transport child to appointment in Birmingham. On September 8, 2021, parent responded with an e-mail "YES, she is interested in obtaining assistance with a gas voucher." Parent also stated, "Thanks so much for checking on her child & keeping the kids safe!" FEA sent (Achievement Center) an e-mail and attached Parent Referral Form. Achievement center responded with e-mail stating that she will be able to assist her with a \$50.00 Gas Voucher. FEA sent parent e-mail with Achievement Center contact number. On September 20, 2021; Parent received Gas Voucher and thanked FEA, "Thanks for being so supportive. (OUTCOME: Parent obtained a \$50.00 GAS VOUCHER to assist with transporting child to appointment in Birmingham and Community Partner's contact information for future reference.)

2. Ms. Carolyn Davis

Head Start child was acting out in classroom. The behaviors were concerning enough that teacher reached out to education staff about the behavior issues. FEA notified that the mother had been contacted about concerns and there was paperwork ready for her to review and sign to obtain special services to support the child. When FEA talked to parent, parent stated, "I am on my way." She did come to center that day to sign the necessary forms. There was a zoom conference meeting with all the available ACHR staff and parent to discuss support services. Due some safety concerns, parent had kept the child at home. However with support services in place parent was excited for child to return to school. Lastly, transportation was needed to transport the child to our program. The FEA contacted the parent to obtain a transportation agreement. Parent came right away to complete the transportation agreement form. The parent called me back to say that she wanted to Thank ACHR Staff for helping her get the service that was needed for her child.

3. Ms. Breah Ferreras

On August 11, 2021 FEA completed the Family Engagement Summary. On August 19, 2021 the FEA worked with the parent to complete the Family Goal Sheet. Two of the Goals were:

- 1.) Mother will obtain transportation in order to pick up child from school.
- 2.) Mother will gain more knowledge of parenting skills and techniques.

**Goal one:** To meet transportation goal, parent was referred to LETA transportation. The service is free. She also was informed that a gas voucher could be provided to someone giving her a ride. On August 23, 2021 the FEA followed up to check the parent. Parent reported that she was waiting to get immunization records back before setting up transportation services for her and her child. Mother called FEA on August 30<sup>th</sup> and reported she was successful in obtaining the immunization record for her child and setting up transportation services. The mother stated that her child would be starting his first day of school the following day.

**Goal two** for this parent was improving her parenting skills. This parent has attended our weekly parenting classes consistently for 30 days. Mother has completed this goal and utilizes transportation services daily in order to pick up her child from school.

4. Ms. Elaine Jackson

FEA worked with family of a single mom with two children. Parent just moved from Columbus Georgia to Alabama. After she moved into affordable housing in Phenix City, Alabama, her children's health benefits and immunization records needed to change to Alabama. Parent was struggling to get this done because of other things that she needed to be done after moving to a new area. FEA contacted Russell County Health Department to see if the FEA could obtain the new immunization record for the parent and to get the immunization record transfer from Georgia form to Alabama form. FEA obtained the immunization record transfer form so the parent could complete the immunization records transfer from Georgia to Alabama. Parent was very excited and happy for the assistance. Additionally FEA shared information about the Early Head Start Home Base Program. Parent began to participate in the program. After speaking with (EHS parent educator), mother is now working a new job.

5. Ms. Kambria Tolbert

Each family completed their family engagement summaries this quarter. When completing the summary and goal sheet, a parent identified that she had not been able to find a job best fitting for her family. On September 2, FEA set up a resource table to allow parents to stop by and grab information on resources that they needed for their family. The parent stopped by to speak with FEA and said she was still having a hard time finding a job that fit our EHS hours. I informed her that our Head Start program was actively hiring and encouraged her to stop by the front office to apply. The parent has since applied, interviewed, and been hired into a vacant HS position.

6. Cleo Day as of 11-5-21 no success story**TRAINING****August – no training events****September - Family Engagement Advocates participated in 13 trainings:**

- Fall Leadership Institute, Update on COVID-19 Infections and Vaccines for Children and Adults, Men's Health and Fatherhood: What Do Dads Need to Know?, Elevate partners, Head start forward; A Q &A Opportunity to engage with show cased programs, Child tax credit navigator, Head Start forward; Health and safety considerations, What the eyes don't see; listening to children and families to uncover environmental injustices, Understanding child abuse and prevention, Traveling with precious cargo, From food to physical activity, Safe sleep and sweet dreams for infants, Cut the cookies and communicable disease and prevention in child care, Keeping our children safe; planning ahead and being prepared

**October - Family Engagement Advocates participated in 9 trainings:**

- Learning stories are beneficial to children as well as families and caretakers, Story-telling is a natural form of communication that engages families, and draws them into the conversation about their child, Focus group; why we got vaccinated, Natural versus vaccine immunity, Solutions seminar; learning stories for family engagement, Head Start Heals; Podcast series, NHSA Touch point; celebrating head start awareness month, Office of Head Start FY 2022 Monitoring kickoff, How to call people in; instead of calling them out, Learning stories for family engagement solutions

**COMMUNITY AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT****August**

- Edelman Community Resource Event

- Ridgcrest community Event
- Opelika National Night Out
- Drake Community Event
- Moton Community Event
- Raintree Community Event
- **Beyond Expectation Edelman Backpack Feeding Program**
  - Enrolled Students Served - 14
  - Siblings Served - 6
  - Food Bags Distributed - 80
  - Meals Provided - 480
  - Program Withdrawal - 1 Family

### September

- Community resource event held at Edelman center 9-8-21
- FEAs Set-up Recruitment Table at Sites: Family Dollar, Opelika –, Dollar General, Hurtsboro, Rainbow Foods,
- **Beyond Expectation Edelman Backpack Feeding Program**
  - Enrolled Students Served - 8
  - Siblings Served - 3
  - Food Bags Distributed - 44
  - Meals Provided - 264
  - Program Withdrawal - 3 Families

### October

- Auburn National night out held by Auburn housing authority
- Gene bus will be set up at King center for families to come out and receive literacy information and other activities
- King center set up spirit week for breast cancer awareness
- FEA'S Set-up Recruitment Tables at Sites: Dollar General, Opelika. Dollar Tree, Auburn
- Distribute recruitment flyers, brochures, in the appropriate community location (local/rural): DHR office, Russell County Health Department (WIC), Phenix City Library, BECO, School districts, Domestic Violence Shelter, Family Connects, and other appropriate agencies/companies
- **Beyond Expectation Edelman Backpack Feeding Program**
  - Enrolled Students Served – 15 Siblings Served - 14
  - Food Bags Distributed – 0 (due to food shortage)
  - Meals Provided – 0 (due to food shortage)
  - Program Withdrawal - 0



## Education Board Report August-October, 2021

### August:

- Staffing: ACHR continues to have difficulty finding the numbers of qualified classroom staff needed. We continued to look for staff using online job site advertisement, flyers to Community College and communication with college professor from same, and advertising on ACHR website and in centers.
  - At Darden in August:
    - 1 HS teacher, S.G, resigned to work for pre-k (more \$\$\$).
    - 1 HS assistant teacher, T.H., quit with no notice, frustrated at being asked to return to working in the center instead of from home when the CDC quarantine for workers was dropped from 14 days to 10 days with a COVID test.
    - 1 HS Teacher Substitute, B.C. quit with no notice to work for MCHS as mentor teacher (more \$\$\$).
    - HS Teacher Substitute JM accepted position to move to ACHR Purchasing Agent – following retirement of JH.
    - 1 EHS teacher, S,W quit with no notice after an attendance warning.
    - 1 EHS Intern (DM) hired. 1 EHS Substitute teacher (NW) hired (working on CDA)
    - Hired 1 home visitor. Still short 1 Home Visitor from previous time period. Then lost 1 more EHS Home Visitors: MH resigned and started new position with public school system back in her home town (more \$\$\$). So 2 Home Visitors are needed.
  - At Edelman Center:
    - 1 HS teacher assistant KG resigned for another job after receiving her CDA.
    - 2 EHS teachers resigned: 1CDA teacher DP, 1 BS degree teacher resigned both over COVID/family stress issues.
    - Need 2 bus aides. 1 did not return for this school year. 1 (DI) resigned after ACHR needed her to start her bus route at a different location and she would not do it.
  - At King Center:
    - 1 HS teacher, AT retired. JH moved from second position in classroom to be lead teacher to replace AT. JH has AA in Child Development.
    - 1 HS bus aide, (DS), asked to move to intern position to cover second position left when JH moved to lead.
    - Hired 2 HS interns with CSBG Covid \$ to help with special needs children in the center.
- King and Edelman HS staff attended Transitional Home Visit Training, distancing in auditorium and wearing masks.
- Extensive HS classroom staff training held Aug 18-20 with Darden, King, and Edelman HS staff via their classrooms and Zoom included HighScope Curriculum, Increasing adult- child connections through Conscious Discipline activities, rituals/routines, USDA requirements and training concerning ways to work with children who have special needs. Teachers received special greeting aprons (with greeting symbol cards/pockets) to use with children during morning greetings.



King children later graphed favorite greetings

- Darden HS rooms H and I had 14 day COVID quarantines in August.
- King and Edelman HS completed transitional home visits with families. *Going to Preschool* booklet and accompanying Reading Activities and Growth for Success (RAGS) activity were given to HS families as part of transition activities.
- Darden HS/EHS/ Homebased DECA social-emotional screener) screeners completed. Home/school strategies for children with concerns were printed from tool and shared with families. Teachers use identified strategies with individual children in classroom.
- Darden HS/EHS Teacher’s Health Observations of children completed and shared with Health.
- King and Edelman HS children began program year on August 21.
- King and Edelman HS started teaching Conscious Discipline calming breathing techniques – STAR to HS children. STAR necklaces w/ directions for parents went home on children.
- COVID Vaccinated Foster grandparents are returning to King & Edelman Center. They are recruiting more for all centers.
- Darden/Edelman HS duration children received dental booklets.
- Fire, weather, and shelter-in-place drills were held at Darden and EHS Edelman Centers. King and Edelman HS held first fire drill of program year.
- Darden HS and Edelman HS duration children completed Head Start portfolio sets, time 1.
- Darden Educators gave staff a pizza party to celebrate the first week of school.



### September:

- ACHR continues to have difficulty finding the numbers of qualified classroom staff and home visitors.
- Head Start Staffing:  
At Darden in September: Still struggling to cover rooms. Having to use Center Educators (directors), coaches, and mentor teacher to cover in classrooms—making it difficult to support classroom staff and carry out interviews.
  - 1 HS teacher, SR, resigned for higher paying job, no notice.
  - 1 HS teacher, LH, resigned with no notice because of COVID fears after having COVID.
  - EHS hired 2 EHS teachers (BF)(DS) in anticipation of new rooms opening in near future.
  - EHS Home Based Program still looking for Home Visitor.
 At Edelman:
  - Need 2 EHS teachers, were able to promote 2 CDA floaters to EHS teachers. Low enrollment in Room P made it easier to cover. Hired 1 EHS floating intern (AH)
  - Need 1 HS floating intern.
 At King:
  - Fully staffed.
- New Alabama DHR Licensing and Performance Standards went into effect September 13, 2021. Its purpose is to increase the quality of childcare in Alabama. It includes requirements for completion of CCDF health and safety training as pre-service training. This means it takes longer for a new hire to be able to work with children (whether teachers or support staff of any kind). Together with ACHR’s already extensive new classroom staff orientation/training that lasts more than three days, it will be more than a week before a new classroom hire can begin work with children and counting in the ratio.
- Edelman EHS Rm R had a teacher quarantined due to family exposure.
- Darden EHS Rm R closed for 14 day COVID quarantine in September (virtual services offered as staff were not ill).

- Darden EHS Rm P closed for 5 days due to RSV cases (virtual services were offered). Extra sanitation of room ensued. Pediatric Clinic reported many cases of RSV were in the community and local daycare centers.
- Several new classroom staff attended CPR/First Aid Training and CCDF Health and Safety training at Darden (now required as pre-service training by Alabama DHR licensing).
- King and Edelman HS teachers taught Conscious Discipline breathing techniques: balloon, drain & pretzel, one per week and a necklace w symbol w/ corresponding/instructions for parents went home on children each week.
- Completed fire, weather and shelter-in-place drills at each center.
- King and non-duration Edelman HS children completed Head Start portfolio sets, time 1.
- Dental Booklets went home with King and Edelman HS children.
- King HS DECA social-emotional screener) screeners completed. Strategies for children with concerns were printed from tool and shared with families.
- King HS Teacher's Health Observations of children completed and shared with Health.
- Vaccinated Auburn Nursing students completed needed ASQs developmental screeners on HS children.
- Darden Staff were given an ice cream social-distancing party from Educators.

#### October:

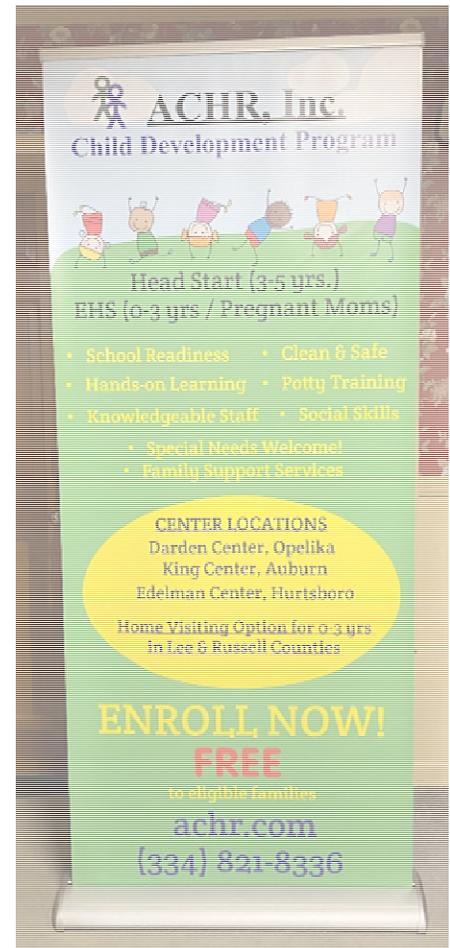
- Darden Staffing: ACHR continues to have difficulty finding the numbers of qualified classroom staff and home visitors.
  - 1 HS Intern, M.C., left with no notice for higher paying job.
  - Still short 3 HS Assistant Teachers/Interns and 2 teachers. Center really struggling to keep HS classrooms opened and covered by qualified staff. Have frequently borrowed EHS staff and center Educators to cover classrooms. This interferes with ability to carry out classroom observations etc. as well as a disruption to children and gathering assessment data.
  - EHS Home-Based Program had newer home visitor leave for the military (7 months). This means 2 Home Visitors are needed. Interviewed 2 possible staff.

#### Edelman Staffing:

- No staff left. Hired 1 EHS teacher with short child development certificate and 1 EHS floater.
- 1 HS teacher going out on maternity leave in November.
- 1 HS intern floater (TH) hired and working on CDA.

#### King HS Staffing:

- 1 teacher out on maternity leave.
- King/Edelman HS completed DECA social emotional screeners - and shared results with parents.
- Auburn Nursing Students started coming to King Center for teaching projects – through end of November (They will come total of 4 times).
- Auburn Human Development and Family Studies Students began coming to Darden EHS classrooms to gain infant/toddler experience.
- 3 Educators are studying to re-take CLASS observer recertification exams. King Educator completed and received CLASS recertification in October.



- Fire, weather, and shelter-in-place drills held at each center.
- Several education team members were on self-assessment teams and other education team members participated by being interviewed and providing information and documentation to team members.
- Parents with children that have referrals for Auburn City School (ACS) set up initial meetings with ACS for Nov. and Dec.
- Lee County schools did speech referral on 2 children at King Center – did not qualify.
- HS staff participated in Zoom training on Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan presented by Karen Lusk (trainer) and Sue Williams (Early Childhood Coordinator).
- King HS did a parade for Breast Cancer Awareness Month.
- All classrooms in HS/EHS received pumpkins to explore, then decorate or carve.
- Darden EHS Home Based program had their first in-person socialization activity since COVID began. Pumpkin activities, a firetruck visit, and playground activities were held. 15 families attended including 12 moms, 3 dads, and 12 children.
- Darden staff received fall treats from Darden Trainer and “Boo” certificates for free items at Wendy’s from Early Childhood Coordinator.
- Period 1 of child assessment complete. Analysis to come regarding baseline.
- Sue Williams (Early Childhood Coordinator), Natalie Stephens (Health Coordinator), and Karen Lusk (trainer) are working on plan to provide HS classroom staff with consultation/training from outside content experts in child mental health and disabilities to give teachers additional support and knowledge in areas of expressed needs.



Summary of Progress on Darden EHS Classroom Conversion Work & DHR COVID pandemic grants for childcare providers:

- Darden EHS Conversion:
  - Work on Darden Wing 1 continues across August, September, and October 2021. Supply chain/COVID issues are making it difficult to find and receive needed items in a timely fashion. Needed fencing, playground equipment and furnishings all are taking much longer to procure. Work includes:
    - Hot water and sinks installed on wall where diaper changing and food prep areas will be.
    - Microwaves and small refrigerators purchased and received.
    - Food prep tables purchased and received.
    - New rugs purchased and received.
    - Changing tables w/ steps purchased and received.
    - Half-moon low children’s tables purchased and received.
    - Rocking chairs purchased and received for new classrooms.
    - Toddler riding and playground toys purchased and received.
    - Infant-toddler low book holders purchased and received.
    - Some new toys and materials purchased and received.
    - Others on order.
    - Munchkins hands-free diaper pails purchased and received.
    - Classroom walls and floors were painted.
    - Installation of ramps at playground doors, replacing steps. New handrails are ordered. This will allow for safer crib evacuations and will be easier for toddlers to navigate.



- A concrete pad was added to Wing 1 playground in preparation for a shade structure with soft tiles to be added.
  - An infant-toddler climber is ordered for Wing 1 playground. Shipping estimated to be in December, with installation occurring 1-2 weeks afterwards.
  - HS furnishings and materials from conversion classrooms being evaluated and re-distributed across HS centers and new EHS classrooms (where appropriate).
- DHR Pandemic Grant
 

Each center received funds from the state of Alabama to make improvements in childcare centers. This grant is helping our centers to make improvements/enhancements to classrooms and playgrounds. ACHR must spend these funds by June 30, 2022. We are still in the process of requisitioning, receiving, labeling, and distributing additional items.

Things we have done so far:

    - Under sink water heaters added under classroom sinks at Darden and Edelman.
    - New ceiling fans installed in Darden Classrooms.
    - A Bye-Bye Buggy that holds 6 infants/toddlers purchased for new Wing 1 EHS conversion classrooms.
    - An additional playground shed ordered for Darden HS Wing 2 playground to better hold and organize outdoor materials and riding toys.
    - New roll-up door ordered for existing Darden HS Wing 2 shed.
    - Black fencing ordered but delayed for several projects. 1) to make a fenced grassy area at King for additional playground space and to have a fenced in evacuation area; 2) to replace EHS Wing 3 chain-link fencing at Darden; 3) to surround Darden Wing 1 preschool climber to limit access from young infants and toddlers, but keep it accessible for oldest toddlers and preschool daycare in the afternoons.
    - A rest room built in the school age classroom. There is a sink inside the restroom and a double sink outside the restroom. This is a great improvement.
    - Worn furnishings such as standing mirrors, front-facing preschool children's bookcases, and doll beds replaced. Infant-toddler
    - New riding toys purchased and received.
    - Additional children's chairs purchased to replace broken chairs. Additional chairs purchased for the school age room to replace previous chairs, which were a bit too high.
    - Existing EHS classrooms at Darden and Edelman received new rocking chairs.
    - Munchkins diaper pails added to large children's restrooms at Darden.
    - Park benches purchased and received for placement outside the front of the King Center.
    - New emergency bags purchased and received for classrooms at all centers.
    - A variety of materials for social-emotional development, fine motor, and STEM activities ordered and received.
    - A washer and dryer purchased and received for all 3 centers.
    - An ice machine ordered and received.



**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF  
THE ALABAMA COUNCIL ON HUMAN RELATIONS, INC.  
HEALTH/NUTRITION/SPECIAL SERVICES**

**for the period August-October 2021**

**Natalie Stephens RD LD, Health Services Coordinator**

**HEALTH/DENTAL/OTHER**

- Immunizations: All are up-to-date at this writing
- Health screenings: All required were completed within the 45 days (end of 45 day period varies between Darden, FBK, and Edelman; depends on child's start date.)
- Dental: We are able to pull the required preventative dental screen from each child's physical/well baby check up.
  - We have identified the children that do not have a regular dentist and have referred them to local dentists.
    - Staff created an updated list of local Pediatrics dentists and Pediatricians (and contact information). Staff distributed the list to parents of children without a Dental Home or Medical home.
    - The information is posted on our website (ACHR Family).
  - We are working with Family Engagement Advocates to have parents bring in dental exam documentation.
- Growth assessments: We obtained heights and weights with help from Southern Union Nursing students.
  - All student volunteers were screened for COVID before coming into the centers and volunteers must be vaccinated (per procedures)
  - Parents of all children categorized other than "normal" have been or will be contacted in person, by phone, or in writing (depending on level of concern of RD and parent preference). Parents are given information based on factors including anthropometric data; subjective data; eating habits; activity/exercise habits while at the center.
- Vision/Hearing Screenings: all children that needed treatment and have been referred.
  - Focus First did vision screenings. (If child was not present during the screening dates, health staff screened them using the vision chart.)
  - Hearing screenings were done with the help of Southern Union Nursing students.

**NUTRITION - KITCHENS**

- Kitchen Health Scores - Darden: **98**, FBK: **100**, Edelman: **99**. These scores are not easy to get so we are very proud of our kitchen staff.
- New Fall/Winter menu cycle started in the beginning of October. These menus can be found online at the achr website under the ACHR Family section. (Parents were provided a hard copy at request).
  - Substitutions are made for children with food allergies, religious needs, or sensory issues to certain textures.
- Annual USDA training took place (and documentation was filed) for all staff in August.

**NUTRITION – LIFE (Learning Information about Food and Exercise)**

- **Nutrition/Exercise Counseling** continues to be offered by appointment; depending on need may be zoom, email, phone, or in person consultations.
- **Nutrition Activities** continue as opportunities and scheduling availability arise. These include:
  - Exercising and nutrition activities with children Oct/Nov.
  - Learning “Pumpkin Facts” and carving them Oct.
- **Garden** – Plans are being made and the garden budget was decided to be able to do a spring garden at both the King and Darden Centers.

**Special Services:**

- **ASQ Screenings:** We performed Ages and Stages assessments on all the children in the centers. The returning children’s questionnaires were completed by our Intervention/Behavior Specialist with parents and teacher help. The new children were assessed and screened by Auburn University Nursing students.
  - Children that did not pass the screener have either been referred to an outside organization to receive services or monitored in the classroom and rescreened.
- **Children with an IEP/IFSP** – Currently, we have 30 children with active IEP/IFSP’s.
  - Developmental Referrals: 22 additional children referred to Early Intervention or the School Systems and are awaiting evaluation and possible treatment.
  - Behavior Referrals: 10 children referred to East Alabama Mental Health for services.
    - Referred either to the ABC Program or the Parents as Teachers Program.
  - Receiving Services from outside agencies: 3 children are currently receiving services from outside agencies.
- **Mental Health:** East Alabama Mental Health continues to partner with us to cover the required mental health services and meet the needs of our children, families and staff. They are meeting E/HS requirements by offering the services of a licensed clinician. Our I/B Specialist, is continuing to work with them using the Conscious Discipline techniques to better help our students, families, and classrooms.

**Behavior/Trauma/Disability Trainings:**

Natalie Stephens trained staff in multiple departments on Disabilities and Behavior concerns (and when/how to refer to I/B S); however, staff (especially classroom staff) needs additional support/information on these topics. We are contacting multiple resources and outside agencies to discuss the possibility of doing small trainings and follow consultations among staff.

**Staff Updates/Changes:**

In September, we transitioned an Early Head Start teacher at the Darden Center, Justice Knight, to Intervention/Behavior Specialist. Ms. Knight has an undergraduate degree in Psychology and is pursuing her master’s degree in Education with a concentration in Special Needs. She is an asset to have in the position of Intervention/Behavior Specialist.

Alabama Council on Human Relations, Inc.

**Board Report - Special Projects and Technology/Parent Involvement**

Saundra Aldridge, Special Projects/Technology/Parent Engagement Coordinator Aug-Oct, 21

**Parent Engagement, Technology and Special Projects**

S.T.E.P.S. Adrienne is working with families when they contact her. When they make the contact, you know they will follow through.

We are working in partnership with another STEPS Organization that works with girls 9-17. The objective is to introduce young ladies to the world and all the possibilities.

We are looking forward to summer when they will be having more activities.

I am so excited that the administrative staff has embraced using ChildPlus to complete our end of the year report PIR (Program Information Report.) I did a mini-training with them on using the Dashboard. We were involved in data training. I was glad I had chosen to introduce them to the Dashboard.

We will meet every 3 months.



**EMERGENCY SERVICES PROGRAMS QUARTERLY BOARD REPORT: AUG. — OCT. 2021**

<b><u>AUG.:</u></b>	<b>HOUSEHOLDS ASSISTED:</b>	<b>CLIENTS' INFORMATION OBTAINED/UPDATED:</b>	<b>SERVICES &amp; INDICATORS:</b>				<b>HOUSING COUNSELING PROGRAM</b>
			<b>SRV: (S)</b>	<b>FNPI: (I)</b>	<b>4i: Utility Payments 4j: Utility Deposits 4k: Arrears Payments 4z: Avoid Shut-off</b>		
LIHEAP GEN./CARES:	255/129	575/312	SRV: 4i 255	FNPI: 4z 255	SRV:	SRV:	Tabitha assisted 1 client by telephone counseling (approved by HUD due to COVID) with Locating, Securing and Maintaining Rental Housing. All clients receive Fair Housing Literature.
LIHEAP CRISIS:	072	0125	SRV: 4i 72	FNPI: 4z 72	SRV:	SRV:	
ABC TRUST:	015	017	SRV: 4i 15	FNPI: 4z 15	SRV:	SRV:	
EFSP/EFSP-COVID	000	000					
CSBG/CSBG-COVID	001	001	SRV7: Case Management				
NO SHOWS:	MISSING DOCUMENTATION:		SURVEY:				

<b><u>SEPT.:</u></b>	<b>HOUSEHOLDS ASSISTED:</b>	<b>CLIENTS' INFORMATION OBTAINED/UPDATED:</b>	<b>SERVICES &amp; INDICATORS:</b>				<b>HOUSING COUNSELING PROGRAM</b>
			<b>SRV: (S)</b>	<b>FNPI: (I)</b>	<b>4i: Utility Payments 4j: Utility Deposits 4k: Arrears Payments 4z: Avoid Shut-off</b>		
LIHEAP GEN./CARES:	319/03	957/015	SRV: 4i 319	FNPI: 4z 319	SRV:	SRV:	Tabitha assisted 10 clients by telephone counseling. 5 with Securing Rental Housing, 4 households, referred by the City of Auburn and/or Opelika's Down Payment Assistance Prog., received Pre-Purchase Home Buying Ed., and 1 household w/Home Maint.
LIHEAP CRISIS:	071	128	SRV: 4i 71	FNPI: 4z 71	SRV:	SRV:	
ABC TRUST:	018	018	SRV: 4i 18	FNPI: 4z 18	SRV:	SRV:	
EFSP/EFSP-COVID	000	000					
CSBG- COVID	004	023	SRV7: Case Management				
NO SHOWS: 8	MISSING DOCUMENTATION: 12		SURVEY:				

<b><u>OCT.:</u></b>	<b>HOUSEHOLDS ASSISTED:</b>	<b>CLIENTS' INFORMATION OBTAINED/UPDATED:</b>	<b>SERVICES &amp; INDICATORS:</b>				<b>HOUSING COUNSELING PROGRAM</b>
			<b>SRV: (S)</b>	<b>FNPI: (I)</b>	<b>4i: Utility Payments 4j: Utility Deposits 4k: Arrears Payments 4z: Avoid Shut-off</b>		
LIHEAP GEN./CARES:	254/020	498/048	SRV: 4i 274	FNPI: 4z 274	SRV:	SRV:	Tabitha assisted 10 clients by telephone counseling. 8 households received Securing Rental Housing and 2 households, referred through the City of Opelika's Down Payment Assistance Program received Pre-Purchase Home Buying Education.
LIHEAP CRISIS:	025	068	SRV: 4i 25	FNPI: 4z 25	SRV:	SRV:	
ABC TRUST:	000	000	SRV: 4i	FNPI: 4z	SRV:	SRV:	
EFSP/EFSP-COVID	000	000					
CSBG- COVID	007	037	SRV7: Case Management				
NO SHOWS:	MISSING DOCUMENTATION:		SURVEY:				

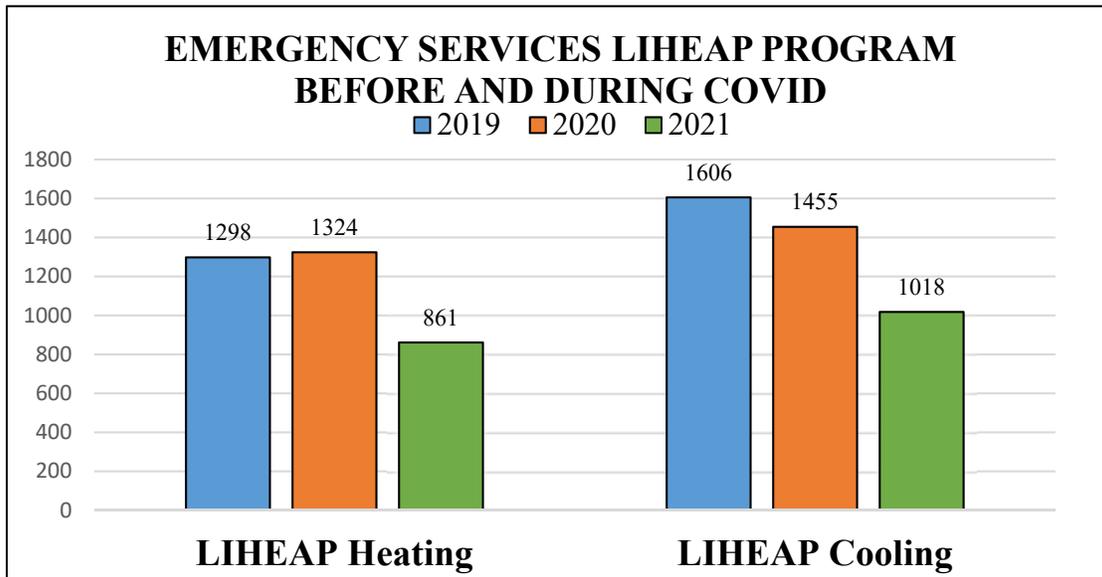
**LIHEAP** (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)  
**ABC TRUST** (Alabama Business Charitable Trust: Funded by Alabama Power)  
**EFSP** (Emergency Food and Shelter Program)  
**CSBG** (Community Service Block Grant Program)

Any questions, call Emergency Services at 334-821-8336 ext. 406 or you may send an email to:  
 Tabitha.Perry@achr.com



**EMERGENCY SERVICES PROGRAMS QUARTERLY BOARD REPORT: AUG. — OCT. 2021**

**HAPPENINGS:**



The Emergency Services Program closed its 2021 LIHEAP Cooling Program on September 30<sup>th</sup>. We assisted: LIHEAP Cooling: 1018 households, LIHEAP Crisis Cooling: 173 households and LIHEAP Cares: 610 households. Although we assisted a combined total of 1801 during the 2021 LIHEAP Cooling Program, we did experience a decrease of 437 households from the 2020 LIHEAP Cooling Program. We attributed the 437 decrease in services to the utility bill credits that Lee County households had on their utility bills so fewer needed assistance during the summer months.

After speaking with several other CAAs, they shared that they had seen decreases in their numbers, but they had given combined awards (LIHEAP Heating and LIHEAP Cares) during the 2020-21 LIHEAP Heating Program which gave households totals of 1000 to 1500 on their utility bills. Though these households had credit on their utility bills, clients were still coming back during the LIHEAP Cooling Program to receive additional assistance and the agencies were giving them the assistance regardless of the abundance of credit. In the past, ADECA would not allow agencies to do this, but after discussing this concern with ADECA Tabitha was told that this would be acceptable because of COVID.

The beginning of September ADECA released the American Recovery Plan (ARP) funds for use. The ARP Program allows an additional 900 dollars (divided into 3 programs over the span of a year) to be placed on a client’s account: 2021 Cooling Program, 2021-22 Heating Program and 2022 Cooling Program. ACHR’s Emergency Services Program received 799,937 to be placed into the community. Because the 2021 Cooling Program ended in September, ADECA allowed agencies the opportunity to go back to the beginning of the LIHEAP Cooling Program (June) and assist those clients who had already received a cooling award. We were able to serve 982 households during the 2021 LIHEAP Cooling ARP Program. We were able to utilize 253,520 during the month of September before the cooling program ended.

**COVID Related:** The Emergency Services Program disbursed all of the following COVID awards by September 30<sup>th</sup>: LIHEAP Cares (583,000), EFSP COVID (14,000), ABC COVID (5718) and CSBG COVID (220,124.89). During COVID (2020-21) we utilized a total of 822,842.89 COVID funds and served 1036 households.



**EMERGENCY SERVICES PROGRAMS QUARTERLY BOARD REPORT: AUG. — OCT. 2021**

**AUG.:** On August 18<sup>th</sup> the Emergency Services Program had its annual LIHEAP and ABC monitoring review through Zoom. The LIHEAP General, Crisis and Cares Programs were audited and all programs were found to be in compliance. The ABC Energy and Cooling Programs were audited and both of these programs were also found to be in compliance.

During the monitoring Zoom exit conference, it was shared with Tabitha that ADECA's content management system (CMS) will be moving from FACSPRO to LITT. They are looking for the change to occur sometimes during this fall. All of ACHR's documented services and outcomes will be able to migrate to the new system.

**SEPT.:** ACHR's CSBG 2022 Work Plan was submitted on time to ADECA on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Six areas (out of 88) needed additional information. 1. Description for allocating CSBG expenditures by domains, 2. Board Chairperson and Executive Director needed to sign the plan, 3. Spire's Dollar Help Programs needed to be added to Program Summary, 4. Admin expenditures are different (37,696/39,978), 5. OSPRO and CAP Plan must reflect the same and 6. Executive Director's signature for refunds. All corrections were submitted and accepted.

ADECA's LIHEAP Annual Conference was held on September 21<sup>st</sup> through Zoom. Jennifer Lee, the Community Programs Unit Chief, shared information about the LIHWAP Water Assistance Program that will be offered to clients in 2022. Wendy Littles, the LIHEAP Program Manager, emphasized the closing of the LIHEAP Cooling and Cares Program on the 30<sup>th</sup> and she discussed the 2021-22 LIHEAP Program that would begin in October.

September 21<sup>st</sup>, Tabitha and Mr. Matthew McClammey, Opelika's Housing Authority Executive Director and CAP-LC's Chairperson, discussed the CSBG's Senior Food Program Project and the agency's desire to purchase half (150) of the food cards from Wright's Grocery, a home owned and operated food store in Opelika. Mr. McClammey communicated this with Mr. Wright while Tabitha corresponded with Winn Dixie and Kroger for the other half. Kroger's manager did not return Tabitha's call so the remaining 150 food cards were purchased from Winn Dixie who also offered the agency a 5% discount. A total of 300 food cards were purchased.

Beginning in October, the CSBG Program would return to its 125% federal poverty guideline from the 200% COVID FPG. Because those seniors who were over the 125% FGL would not be able to participate in the food card drive in November, the Emergency Services staff enrolled those clients for the program before October to be able to assist all Outreach clients. All action plans for these services were completed.

September 30<sup>th</sup> ended ACHR's 2021's submission of the State's Organizational Standards. Tabitha submitted all of the agency's standards and the agency met 57/58 of its standards.

**OCT.:** October marked the beginning of the 2021-22 LIHEAP Heating Program. All LIHEAP General and Crisis funds from the 2021 Cooling Program were rolled over to the heating program. The first two weeks of October were used to prepare for the heating program. *Beginning of the Program* letters were mailed to Outreach clients, updated applications were produced and information was placed on ACHR's website, placed in Charity Tracker (community CMS) and on Face Book.

November marks the beginning of recertification for the Outreach Program, so the Emergency Services staff prepared updated Outreach applications and updated each client's information that is kept on file.

**Alabama Council on Human Relations  
Transportation, Maintenance, Weather Housing  
Board Report - August – October 2021  
Michelle Cosper**

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is still abiding by all the COVID regulations. The drivers have assigned seats for the children and are sanitizing the bus after each route. Due to COVID regulations, we are not able to carry a max load. There are only 17 children allowed on a bus.

Another challenge that has been hurting the number of children transported is not being able to find bus aides. The ratio is one adult to eleven children. As to date, we need to hire four bus aides. We interviewed twelve applicants, but for different reasons were not able to hire anyone.

We are also short two bus drivers, one at Edelman Center and the other at Darden Center. A driver has been hired for Darden and is awaiting required paperwork before starting. The decision was made not to hire a driver for the Edelman Center due to enrollment.

The buses have been running pretty smoothly. There was a recent bus accident was no fault of our driver. A car rear-ended the bus that was sitting at a red light. The transportation staff did an excellent job of following procedures to ensure the safety of the children. Although the car did not fare well, there was no damage to the bus and children and staff were not hurt.

## **MAINTENANCE**

### **King Center**

- Gutter work at King Center still delayed due to a supply shortage. In the meantime, we are still monitoring the air quality and running a large capacity air scrubber to remove harmful particles. Roof is being monitored closely, keeping all leaves and debris removed so to not stop up the already weak gutter system.
- Due to continued (though smaller leaks) the carpet in the Main Office wing recently was steam cleaned by our janitorial staff. Carpet in the Head Start hallway and office areas removed and replaced with Luxury Vinyl Tile, which will help with cleanliness as well as odor. Maintenance personnel removed all interior doors in the Head Start wing and trimmed them so they would close after new flooring installed.
- Janitorial staff at King Center does a good job performing their daily routine duties such as cleaning, mopping, taking out trash, raking leaves, trimming trees, etc., as well as continued routine spraying with a chemical to prevent the spread of COVID.
- Removed the bushes and poison ivy from the island at the bus loading area.
- Replaced damaged countertops in two classrooms.
- Repaired water leaks on the sink and toilet in classroom A.
- Repaired a gate on playground fence.
- Dug a trench to the new laundry shed for water and electrical lines.
- Dismantled, moved and reassembled furniture for our new accounting employee.

- Several toilets in the Head Start wing need new spud washers, which have been ordered and will be repaired in the coming weeks.
- A leak in the dishwasher was repaired.
- Grease trap emptied; and requested the company empty on 6-week schedule to help reduce odor.
- The King Center had a robbery first of October. The new outdoor building was broken into. They took the new washer and dryer, and a pressure washer along with the covered trailer. The police were called to do a report. Our camera system caught a red truck on the premises but was not able to get a tag number or identify anyone. We are looking into a way to put a security fence at that end of the parking lot around the area of the outdoor buildings to help with security.

### **Darden Center**

- Maintenance and janitorial staff at Darden continue with everyday tasks of cleaning and taking out trash as well as routine maintenance items such as replacing light bulbs, replacing damaged ceiling tiles, changing a/c filters and performing building and playground inspections as well as well as continued routine spraying with a chemical to prevent the spread of COVID.
- An enormous amount of work has been done as we prepare for the reopening of Wing 1, which will soon house Early Head Start classrooms. Remodeling included
  - new plumbing and electrical to support required new food prep areas, changing tables and hand washing sinks at each area. All items had to be put together before they could be installed.
  - Our staff painted all 6 rooms and repainted floors; rehung all pictures, shelves and storage racks in Wing 1 classrooms after painting completed.
  - The education staff n going through all items that were in the Head Start classrooms and selecting items that will be Early Head Start appropriate.
  - Wing One Playground being updated to meet Early Head standards. A large concrete pad poured that will be covered in a rubber coating and a shade structure for toddlers to play. Concrete ramps were poured at each outside classroom door with handrails so that strollers and little ones can easily get out of the door.
- Wing 3 playground has to be updated due to DHR Standards. New metal fencing ordered for Wing 3 playground; until it arrives, have made temporary repairs to the existing fence to satisfy DHR. Replaced washer and dryer in the laundry room on Wing 3. New lattice installed around Wing 3 playground deck, repaired the outdoor playhouse, fixed the gate, and repaired the door going to the playground. Wing 3 inside: replacing a lock on cabinet in classroom S, replaced safety lock on drawer in classroom P, and installed new locks on refrigerators in all Wing 3 classrooms.
- Precision Glass replaced all window glass in the gym windows with Plexiglass. This made a huge difference in outside appearance of the school, and now that broken glass has been replaced, it will help with heating and cooling and keep out unwanted pests.
- Lee's HVAC repaired a broken drainpipe on the a/c on Wing 2.
- R&D Construction, in addition to the Wing 1 remodeling, installed a new bathroom in the after school classroom in the Darden gym. In addition to the sink in the new bathroom, a double sink and vanity was installed in the after school classroom to allow children to wash hands more frequently.
- New storage building ordered for Wing 2 playground should be delivered and installed in coming weeks. A new sink vanity has been ordered for the bathroom next to the break room and should be installed in the next few weeks.
- Maintenance personnel installed 30 new ceiling fans throughout Darden Center. Playground equipment like scooters and tricycles were assembled. Several water leaks on faucets and toilets have been repaired. Replaced/repainted several doorknobs on Darden offices.

## **Edelman Center**

- Maintenance/janitorial staff at Edelman continue routine janitorial duties such as cleaning, sweeping, mopping, taking out trash as well as continued routine spraying with a chemical to prevent the spread of COVID.
- They also help with maintenance issues such as changing light bulbs, changing a/c filters, painting and routine inspections; they report any issues they are unable to repair to their supervisors.
- A new washer and dryer installed in laundry shed.
- Joe Henry (janitorial) repaired a leaking faucet and a urinal that would not flush.
- Dan Hart Refrigeration called to Edelman recently to repair the freezer and the cooler, both needed new compressors.
- A-Com replaced the battery in the alarm panel.
- Lee's HVAC repaired air conditioners in the office, the kitchen and the break room. The unit in the kitchen needed a new compressor.

## **WEATHERIZATION**

Weatherization staff continues working on our goal to help as many clients as possible. Our two-weatherization grants – DOE and LIWAP – require we weatherize 17 houses for fiscal year 2021. Mike Furr is in the process of renewing his Building Performance Institute (BPI) certification, which is required to perform weatherization work in Alabama. He has started assessing homes for this fiscal year and hopes to have our first bid opening in the coming weeks.

## **HOUSING**

Currently Housing has four properties that are either being sold or rehabbed. There is also plans in the mix to apply in 2023 to build a new property.

Recently a board member reported that the spelling of the name of the apartment complex in Camden Alabama was misspelled. The signage should read Threadgill-Witherspoon. It currently is spelled Threadgill-Wetherspoon. My deepest apologies to the family. Because the property has reached its tax-credit maturity it will be sold or rehabbed to prevent a \$800,000 HOME Loan reaching maturity and requiring payment. This is a current project. When a rehab is applied for, the name of the property has to change due to IRS regulations for receiving tax credits to obtain funds to pay for the rehab. I am so sorry this was not brought to my attention earlier.

List of each property and their status is separate.