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June 2023

Issue #3

Dear friends,

The sunny weather is here, and the future of RCAP Solutions couldn't be brighter! The theme of this edition of *The Community Connection* is BUSY! The RCAP Solutions team – from Central Massachusetts, throughout the greater Northeast and the Caribbean – have been extremely busy at work helping communities to thrive.

We've engaged with legislators on numerous occasions; welcoming the Central Massachusetts delegation to our Worcester headquarters for an informational briefing and traveling to the Massachusetts State House to discuss our private well advocacy efforts.

In addition, our housing team has partnered with several community-based organizations to expand access to financial assistance for renters. The Agua4All program splashed into the Scranton, Pennsylvania School District, where we celebrated the installation of twenty water bottle filling stations and provided students with reusable water bottles to help them stay hydrated and healthy.

We hope you enjoy learning about these exciting initiatives and more in this quarter's edition of *The Community Connection*.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Scales, President & CEO

RCAP Solutions

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Board of Directors Spotlight

Timothy Morse, Jr.

Timothy Morse, Jr., Vice Chair of the RCAP Solutions Board of Directors, recently announced his retirement from the Board after dedicating 7 years to the support and growth of the organization.

Tim has a clear passion for supporting families and making a difference in the community he works and lives in. He mentions that he "was first drawn to volunteer with RCAP Solutions because of the mission of helping people and

communities in great need." He continues, "many people debate about social programs that help people and how government funds are spent. There used to be safety nets that would help others in their time of need. I believe people need to be helped and provided with resources to get on their feet and sustain themselves." He concludes by saying "I believe that the real value of RCAP's services is in helping to restore dignity to those who need support."

[Full Story](#)

RCAP Solutions Hosts "Lunch with Legislators" Event with Central Massachusetts Delegation

RCAP Solutions staff members pose for a photo with attendees at our "Lunch with Legislators" informational briefing.

Earlier in May, we were delighted to have "Lunch with Legislators" at our headquarters office! During this informational

briefing with the Central
Massachusetts
delegation, we discussed
our safe housing,
homelessness
prevention, and clean
water programs.

We were thrilled to be
joined by so many
legislators, legislative
staff, and local
government officials to
engage in a conversation
about the issues facing
families throughout
Central Massachusetts
and talk about how RCAP
Solutions can help.

[Watch the Recording](#)

Join Our Team - We're Hiring

*Achieve your professional
goals while making a
difference in the community!*

RCAP Solutions is always
looking to recruit
talented individuals who
are ambitious, creative,
data-driven, diligent,
passionate, proactive,
problem-solvers, and
committed to providing

services to those who need them.

Are you one of those individuals? If so, check out our list of available career opportunities and apply today!

Apply Today

Education and Training Services

*"In learning you will teach,
and in teaching you will
learn."*

Workshops and trainings
and webinars, oh my!

RCAP Solutions provides
virtual and in-person
housing workshops,
environmental education
for the water and
wastewater sector, and
trainings for small
business owners.

Our events calendar is
full of upcoming
offerings. Register for a
class today!

HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATES

RCAP Solutions Partnering with Several Community-Based Organizations to Expand RAFT Program Access Throughout Central Massachusetts

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) is a state-funded financial assistance program which helps keep families safely housed.

RCAP Solutions is proud to announce a partnership with [Valuing Our Children](#), the [Spanish American Center](#), and the [Worcester Community Action Council](#), which expands access to the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) program for individuals and families throughout Central Massachusetts.

Thanks to this partnership with these community-based organizations (CBOs), clients who are unable to access or complete an online application may contact RCAP Solutions or one of

these CBOs directly to schedule an appointment. During the appointment, clients will be guided through the application process. These appointments can be conducted in-person or virtually. **For more information, [click here](#).**

RCAP Solutions administers RAFT funds and provides application assistance to residents throughout Central Massachusetts, except for those living in the city of Worcester. Effective immediately, residents of the city of Worcester who apply for the RAFT program will have their application processed by the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance (see our [RAFT Service Area Map](#)).

[Learn More](#)

Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) is Now the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities

(EOHLC)

EOHLC works with municipalities, local housing authorities, non-profits, and development partners to provide affordable housing options.

The Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) has transitioned into the **Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities (EOHLC)**.

This change was made based on the Healey-Driscoll Administration's decision to establish a standalone secretariat focused on housing.

RCAP Solutions looks forward to this administration's work to address housing solutions and affordability, so that everyone can have a sanitary, stable, and dignified place to call home.

[Learn More About EOHLC](#)

Heidi and Zoe's Story: Using Funds From the Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP) to Improve a Family Member's Quality of Life

HMLP can benefit anyone in the house who has a disability or mobility impairment; the homeowner themselves, their child, or an elderly family member.

This testimonial features Heidi and her daughter Zoe. Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and Autism Spectrum, Zoe has limited mobility and requires assistance for basic living functions. Using stairs and getting into the bathtub proved to be a challenge for both Zoe and her parents – who she relies on to assist her.

The [Home Modification Loan Program \(HMLP\)](#) provided funds for a ramp to the front entrance of her home, a walk-in shower with grab bars, and several other modifications which allow Zoe to traverse her house with ease and

provide her with
increased independence.

[Watch the Video](#)

Jesenia and Tania's Story: Two Proud Participants of the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Are Exceeding Their Goals

*In addition, RCAP Solutions
also offers the [FSS Savings
Match Homeownership
Program](#), which is designed
for higher income earners
who are interested in
purchasing a home.*

This powerful testimonial
features Jesenia and
Tania – two proud
participants of the [Family
Self-Sufficiency \(FSS\)
Program](#), who are not
just meeting their goals –
but exceeding them!

The FSS Program helps
Housing Choice Voucher
holders and Project-
Based Voucher recipients
reach their employment
and education goals,
while financially
rewarding them with an
interest-bearing escrow
account for increasing
their earned income.

During this 5-year program, participants are provided supportive counseling, financial education, and credit success workshops.

We also offer several other economic opportunity programs for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher holders and Project-Based Voucher recipients, including the [MassHire Career Path Success Program](#) and the [SNO Mass Housing Mobility Program](#).

[Watch the Video](#)

Landlords and Property Owners - List and Lease Your Available Units

RCAP Solutions is here to support landlords and tenants.

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is seeking participants who have available units to lease. All property owners and landlords are encouraged to participate, including

those currently renting to HCV tenants! By participating in the HCV Program, we can help you meet your financial goals as a property owner and provide families with a place they are proud to call home.

To market your available units to potential HCV families, visit

AffordableHousing.com

and select "List Your Property". You may also email information about your available units to:

RentalAssistance@rcapsolutions.org

In addition, landlords with units located in [high-opportunity areas](#) are encouraged to participate in the [SNO Mass Housing Mobility Program](#); participating in this program makes you eligible for an \$1,800 cash bonus (broken into two installments)!

[Learn More](#)

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL

RESOURCES UPDATES

Coalition for Safe Drinking Water Hosts Informational Briefing at the Massachusetts State House

The [*Coalition for Safe Drinking Water*](#) is a group of diverse individuals and organizations advocating for equitable access to safe drinking water for private well owners across Massachusetts.

Earlier in May, the [*Coalition for Safe Drinking Water*](#) hosted an informational briefing for Massachusetts legislators and their staff. The event highlighted *An Act Promoting Drinking Water Quality for All* ([S.482/H.902](#)), which aims to provide drinking water protections for the 500,000+ Massachusetts residents who rely on private wells.

Joined by The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, and lead bill sponsors, Senator Jamie Eldridge, State Representative Dan Sena, and

Representative Smitty Pignatelli, the event was a great success and featured testimonials from health experts, private well homeowners, and advocates.

[View the Photos](#)

Increasing Wastewater Treatment Access in the Community of Broad Top, Pennsylvania

We provide on-site technical assistance and training to support small water and wastewater utilities' staff and boards to build, improve, finance, operate, and manage their systems.

This video from from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) highlights technical assistance we provided to the community of Broad Top, Pennsylvania!

RCAP Solutions has worked with this small, rural community since 1994 - addressing their challenges of sanitary

wastewater disposal and
clean drinking water
resources.

[Watch the Video](#)

RCAP Solutions Hosts Agua4All Event Celebrating Access to Safe Drinking Water in Pennsylvania Schools

*The Agua4All program
increases access to clean
drinking water in schools and
communities that need it the
most by installing water
bottle filling stations.*

In May, RCAP Solutions gathered at Isaac Tripp Elementary School to celebrate the installation of twenty water bottle filling stations throughout the Scranton School District, provide students with reusable water bottles to help them stay hydrated, and to teach them about water quality issues and healthy beverage choices.

In collaboration with the
Rural Community
Assistance Partnership

(RCAP) and made possible thanks to The Chris Long Foundation's Waterboys initiative and Liquid I.V., the Agua4All program increases access to clean drinking water by installing water filling stations in schools and communities that need it the most!

We highly appreciate all speakers, school staff, students, and other attendees (including Congressman Matt Cartwright's office) who gathered with enthusiasm for safe drinking water access in schools!

[Watch the Video](#)

Solid Waste Case Study: Municipality of Comerío, Puerto Rico

*Case Study Written By:
Edwin Vázquez-Asencio,
Sustainable Materials
Management Specialist*

After the hit of hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, the high

volume of debris and waste stressed the limited capacity of Comerío's municipality to deal with it. They depend on a small Transfer Station (TS) for the management of the materials and waste to be disposed.

A Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) with noticeable challenges was part of the strategy but it ends in the closing of the program in 2019, adding significant pressure to their TS and incrementing the cost of the operation running over its capacity. The process to reopen the MRF and reduce the waste, and the operational cost required an operator with technical knowledge about the materials but also about facilities, development, and permits.

[Read More](#)

discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities.

Our mission is to foster personal and public self-reliance and improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and the communities in which they live.

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