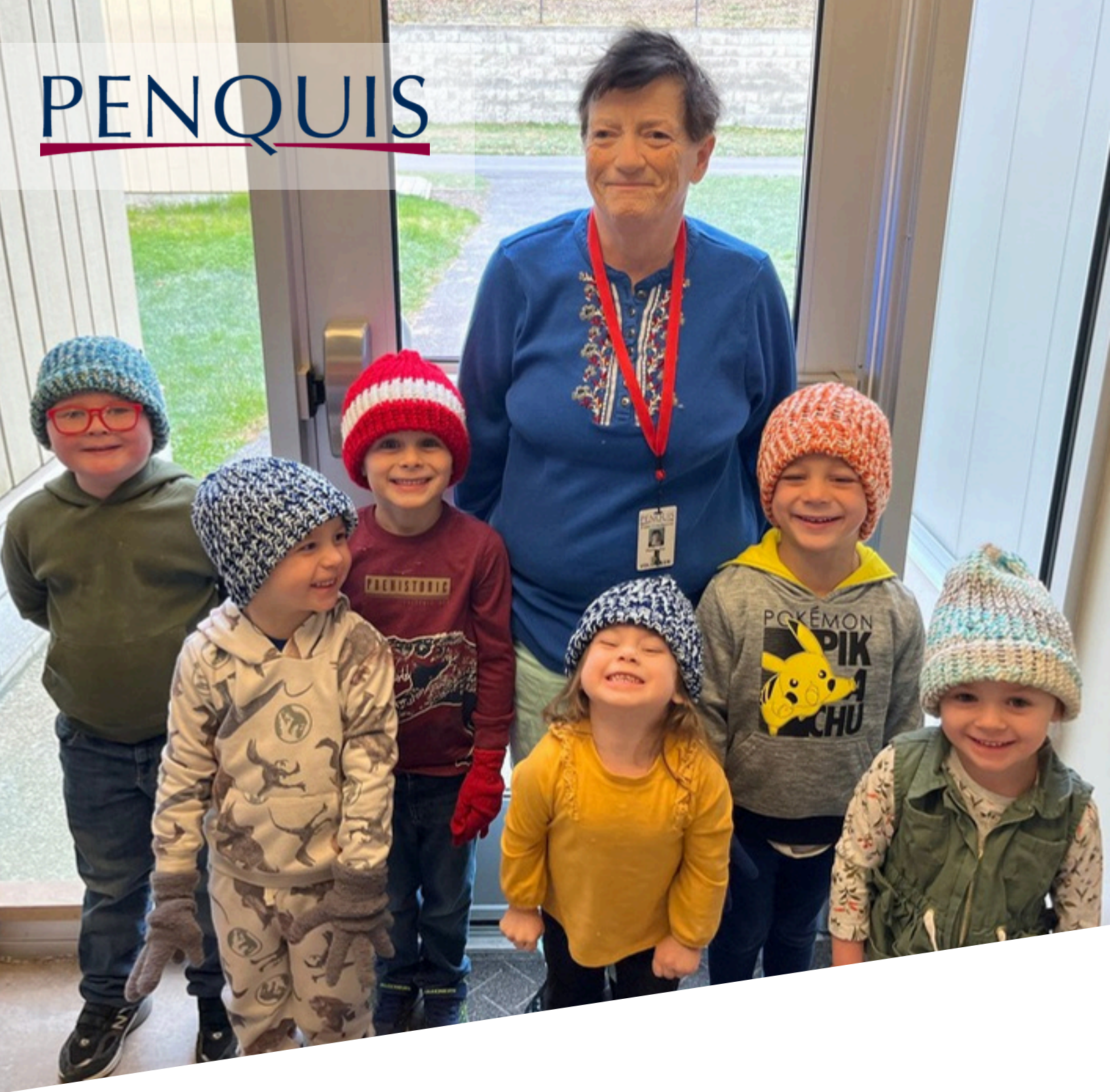


PENQUIS



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2025

OUR MISSION

To assist individuals and families in preventing, reducing, or eliminating poverty in their lives and, through partnerships, to engage the community in addressing economic and social needs

OUR VISION

For a poverty-free Maine, where all people lead healthy lives full of opportunities to work and learn

OUR GOAL

For all Maine people to be safe, healthy, connected, and financially secure

OUR FOCUS

To improve financial stability by supporting housing stability, access to transportation, school readiness, and healthy lives

Dear Community Members,

As we reflect on fiscal year 2025, we do so with deep appreciation for the people and partnerships that sustain Penquis and the communities we serve. Across our region, individuals and families are navigating persistent housing shortages, workforce instability, rising costs, and uncertainty about what lies ahead. These realities shape daily life across our communities and inform the work our staff carry forward each day.

Throughout the year, Penquis remained focused on strengthening stability while responding thoughtfully to evolving community needs. From expanding access to essential services to advancing long-term community investments, our work reflects a shared commitment to well-being and long-term impact. Whether supporting housing, transportation, early education, health services, or economic opportunity, our approach has been guided by listening, collaboration, and meeting people where they are.

We are deeply grateful to our staff, whose dedication and integrity are essential to our mission. We also thank our community partners, funders, volunteers, board members, and steering committee members for their continued support and partnership. Progress at this scale is never the result of one organization alone; it is built through trust, coordination, and a shared sense of responsibility.

While much work remains, we are encouraged by the resilience we see every day and by what we have accomplished together. In the year ahead, Penquis will lead with determination and a firm commitment to community-driven solutions that strengthen opportunity and long-term stability across Maine.

Sincerely



Laura J. Sanborn
Board Chair



Kara Hay
President and CEO

LETTER TO THE
COMMUNITY

Penquis broke ground on Bright Beginnings, a new child development center in Bangor that will expand access to high-quality early care and education for local families. The center will include 16 classrooms and serve up to 200 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, creating a developmentally supportive space to foster learning during the early years.



Penquis received one of ten Community Economic Development planning grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. These grants help communities stimulate new economic development projects in areas with struggling economies.



Renovations to the former Pine Tree Inn in Bangor were completed to establish Theresa's Place, a 41-unit permanent supportive housing residence. Theresa's Place provides stable housing paired with supportive services for individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, helping residents work toward long-term stability, safety, and independence.



Penquis received funding from the Northeastern Workforce Development Board to pilot a program based on restorative practices in collaboration with Eastern Maine Development Corporation. Relationship-centered strategies are used to improve communication, address conflict, and support employee retention across the region's workforce system.



The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center awarded Penquis one of twelve Rural Community Innovations Transportation Planning Grants. The award supports efforts to identify barriers and develop community-driven solutions that improve mobility for older adults and people with disabilities in rural areas.



MaineStream Finance was awarded a \$150,000 Financial Assistance/Technical Assistance Grant from the CDFI Fund to support the financial strength of the organization as it continues to support its mission.



FY2025 HIGHLIGHTS

ABC News sat down with CEO Kara Hay inside one of Maine's first bio-based, 3D-printed homes to learn about Penquis' partnership with the University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center, which is creating Maine's first 3D-printed neighborhood using renewable materials to build homes faster, more affordably, and more sustainably.



The Maine Department of Corrections awarded Penquis one of three restorative justice grants to deliver programming for juveniles. Penquis is working with three organizations to deliver services across seven counties. Restorative justice focuses on those who were harmed, the community impacted, and how a responsible youth can make things right. One youth stated, "I think I've become a better version of myself through this process."



With grant funds from AmeriCorps Seniors and the Maine Office of Aging and Disability Services, the Penquis Foster Grandparent Program provided volunteer opportunities for income-eligible adults 55 years and older to support children's school readiness and academic engagement. "The day I got enrolled by Penquis to be a Foster Grandparent was the best day of my life," said one volunteer. "Going to school every day and being with little kids gave me a purpose. So, I thank Penquis for giving me a great life."



Penquis received support for its Housing Assistance for Victims/Survivors of Human Trafficking Program from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, Heart of Maine United Way, and John T. Gorman Foundation. Funding helped survivors cover rent and meet basic needs such as clothing, food, and home essentials. One participant shared, "I am out of fight-or-flight mode and preparing my career and my future. Because of you all, I have hope for a new life!"



In fiscal year 2025, Penquis had the privilege of serving 31,748 people through more than 60 programs. Staff worked side by side with individuals to strengthen housing stability, improve access to transportation, prepare children for school, and support healthy lives. These efforts led to greater financial stability for families and helped build stronger, more resilient communities. This work was made possible by dedicated staff, volunteers, and federal, state, and private support.



31,748

Housing Stability

Increasing health, safety and stability through affordable housing access and availability

8,485 families received assistance to heat their homes

1,124 individuals received emergency heating assistance through the Good Neighbor Fund

458 rental units provided safe, affordable housing

9 individuals participated in the Family Development Account matched savings program to build assets

365 individuals received housing counseling on homebuying, renting, loan defaults, forbearance, foreclosure prevention, and credit issues

574 residents of affordable housing received service coordination and referrals

25 individuals received assistance to prevent foreclosure

18 individuals received lead hazard home inspections

3 entrepreneurs received loans to build their businesses

58 individuals increased their knowledge of business ownership through training and support

920 individuals attended homebuyer education classes

6 individuals received mortgage loans for home purchase, refinance, or repair

52 individuals received home repair services

40 individuals received home weatherization services

120 individuals received energy education to reduce usage and manage costs

52 individuals received central heating improvements

20 individuals received assistance with electricity bills

462 individuals received tax preparation assistance

60 individuals participated in financial literacy workshops

255 individuals who were experiencing or at risk of homelessness secured stable housing



By the
NUMBERS

Staying Home, Staying Independent

For more than two decades, Terri has lived in the home her community helped build for her after her husband passed away. It is where she raised her daughter and where she feels most connected to the wildlife and neighbors around her. However, Terri, who has cerebral palsy, a condition caused by a brain injury in early development, was experiencing progressive symptoms that further limited her mobility. She worried about how she was going to stay independent in her home. In particular, the home's shower and tub combination was increasingly difficult for Terri to navigate.

Terri knew that she needed modifications to stay safe and independent in her home, but asking for help was not an easy task for Terri. "It took a while for me to be able to [ask for help] because I had to fight through all those pre-taught ideas about it being a weakness," Terri shared. However, when she did contact Penquis, she was able to work with the Home Repair Program to install a more accessible shower. "It was like a ray of hope, because I released the burden a little bit onto someone that knew and understood. They walked me through the process to get what I needed. It was a big relief for me."

Terri's outdated bathtub was replaced with a safe, accessible shower. She described how exciting it was to watch the repairs happen, knowing that the end result would help her stay independent in her house. "Because of the help of Penquis," she said, "I'm able to take a shower daily, twice a day if I want to, to stay more clean and independent... It does a lot for my self-esteem when I can be clean and do it myself and not have to rely on someone else to do it for me."

With the repairs to her shower completed, Terri was able to remain in the place she has called home for the last 22 years. Terri described Penquis' home repair program as work that "changes people's lives." She added, "When I think about Penquis CAP and how they've helped me, it just makes me want to share the experience with as many people as I can and let them be aware that there's help out there and hope through this agency."

Penquis' Home Repair Program is honored to help people stay safe, independent, and healthy in their own homes.



“When I think about Penquis CAP and how they've helped me, it just makes me want to share the experience with as many people as I can and let them be aware that's there's help out there and hope through this agency.”

Access to Transportation

Supporting health, independence, and access to resources through safe, reliable transportation options

12,250 individuals received transportation to meet essential needs

730,129 trips assisted individuals in reaching their destinations

737 bus passes and **27,131** bus tickets were distributed

97,845 taxi trips were provided to support transit needs

123 volunteer drivers traveled **5,396,996** miles to transport individuals where they needed to go

14,644,925 total miles were traveled in the provision of transportation services



“

This service is a game changer! The drivers are great. If I had one complaint, it's that I wish I would have known about this service a long time ago! Well done!!!

”

"That one phone call changed everything."

For many years, Joy and her husband enjoyed a comfortable life in the rural town of Brownville. While Joy did not drive due to an eyesight condition, her husband was always happy to drive them wherever they needed to go. However, in 2008, Joy's husband experienced a stroke, and he was no longer able to drive. "Suddenly, we were stuck," said Joy. "I had no idea how I was going to get to doctor's appointments or even pick up groceries."

Joy tried to adjust to relying on her family for rides, though they often had to take time off work for her doctor's appointments. While this arrangement enabled the couple to get where they needed to go, Joy shared that she "always felt guilty for disrupting their [her family's] lives." One day she saw a flyer for Penquis' transportation program, Penquis Lynx. "I remember the moment I saw the flyer," Joy said. "When I got home, I picked up the phone and asked, 'Can you please help me?' And they did. That one phone call changed everything."

Penquis Lynx helps people in Penobscot and Piscataquis counties meet a variety of transportation needs. For 16 years and counting, Joy has relied on Penquis Lynx to get to doctor's appointments, run errands, and be active in her community. She values being able to get where she needs to go according to her own schedule. "That freedom is priceless," Joy said. "The service helps me to stay on top of my health, but it also allows me to do something so many people take for granted: grocery shopping."

While there are many wonderful aspects to living in a small town like Brownville, it can also be very isolating without a vehicle. Having access to a transportation program, such as Penquis Lynx, is crucial for people in rural areas without their own transportation. For Joy, these trips are more than just running errands; they are her days out of the house and her "chance to feel normal and independent." When Joy's husband passed away in 2023, these rides took on even greater importance. "They don't just take me where I need to go, they take away the loneliness. Without them, I wouldn't have much contact with anyone. These trips are more than just transportation; they're a lifeline."

When asked what she would tell others if they were considering reaching out to Penquis Lynx for transportation assistance, Joy said, "I want others to know the difference this can make... you don't have to come up with the money to buy a new car in order to keep on living."

Penquis knows how life changing having access to reliable transportation can be, no matter where you live. Penquis Lynx is proud to help Joy and others in similar situations with their transportation.



School Readiness

Preparing children for school through quality early learning experiences in safe and nurturing environments

458 children ages 6 weeks to 5 years and their families received early childhood development experiences and family support services

1,739 providers received reimbursement for food expenses to lessen the cost of serving healthy meals

643 family members benefited from parenting information and support

For 2024-25, Penquis outperformed state and/or national outcomes in 11 of Early Head Start's 13 program indicators (77%) and in 11 of Head Start's 16 program indicators (69%). These include the percentage of children with health insurance and medical and dental homes; percentage of families who received family services; and the percentage of families experiencing homelessness who acquired housing.

Parents and guardians participate in an annual family survey to assess the impact of services. In 2025, families rated Penquis Child Development 4.5 out of 5 or higher across areas such as "Staff support our family's needs and goals," "My child has increased their self-help skills such as toothbrushing, toileting, covering coughs/sneezes, handwashing, etc.," and "Staff work with my family to ensure the completion of my child's Well Child Exam, Dental Exam, and Lead, Vision, and Hearing Screenings."

Penquis uses the Desired Results Developmental Profile to assess children's development. Children's developmental progress is assessed across five domains:

- Approaches to Learning — Self-Regulation
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy Development
- Cognition (including math and science)
- Physical Development — Health



“

The teachers are the best! They always keep me informed and let me know if they have any concerns. They are so patient with the children, and my kids absolutely love them. The classroom is clean and tidy. I am always greeted with smiling faces & positive attitudes! Thank you so much to the teachers!

”

Fueling a Lifetime of Learning

Child development centers provide the foundation for young children's learning, offering opportunities to build social skills, independence, and confidence as they prepare for school. Ensuring children have the nourishment they need during these formative years is essential. Through its partnership with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Penquis helps guarantee that children in its programs receive healthy meals while also learning to try a wide variety of nutritious foods.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program is one of the USDA's child nutrition programs. CACFP provides reimbursement for nutritious meals and snacks served to children in licensed childcare centers, licensed home care providers, and adults in day programs. For Penquis, this partnership has transformed children's mealtime experiences. One parent, "Anna," whose children attend a Penquis child development center, said, "Something I truly have been very grateful and excited about is the different variety of foods my little ones are now eating."

By following CACFP's nutritional standards, Penquis serves meals that are colorful, varied, and nutritious. Food is offered in different textures and shapes to spark curiosity and build familiarity. Homestyle cooking, fresh fruits and vegetables, and family-style dining help children feel comfortable and eager to try new foods. Together, these practices give children a strong nutritional foundation that supports their health, growth, and daily learning.

These efforts begin with the simple but powerful idea that meals should both nourish children and excite them. The kitchen staff at Penquis child development centers work diligently to promote this vision through the use of colorful plates and appealing food presentations, which help promote positive mealtime experiences. Staff frequently hear comments such as, "My plate looks like a rainbow!" from children as they try new foods with confidence. One cook shared, "It's rewarding to hear that they've tried new things and are experimenting with different flavors and textures. Parents often tell us their kids won't eat something at home, but when I serve it here—in a different way—they do eat it."

This work extends beyond Penquis child development centers. Penquis is also a sponsoring organization for home-based childcare providers who would like to participate in CACFP. This partnership helps ensure that children in small, home-based settings receive the same high-quality, diverse meal experiences as children in childcare centers. One home provider shared, "We live in a very rural area where we don't get many services, but luckily Penquis was able to make it work for us and included us in their program. With their program, we have been able to provide good, healthy meals and snacks for the children in our care."

Penquis is proud to help ensure children receive nutritious meals that will fuel a lifetime of learning.



Healthy Lives

Building stronger, healthier, and more self-sufficient lives through services and supports that enhance well-being

91 individuals received daily support to live independently

46 adults aged 55+ volunteered in their communities to support children's learning and development

3,403 individuals received direct services, outreach, and education from Rape Response Services

241 children involved in cases of suspected child sexual abuse were served through the Children's Advocacy Center

144 men learned about the dynamics of power and control to decrease relationship violence

240 individuals were assisted in accessing mental health services and other community resources

29 children with a mental health diagnosis or intellectual disability received services to improve behavior and functioning

195 individuals attended the Youth Summit to improve relationships and increase leadership skills

86 youth received life skills training to support financial literacy and healthy decision-making

27 children received materials to support their behavioral health treatment plans

28 youth received restorative justice services to repair the harm caused

8 youth experiencing homelessness received support to obtain housing and resources

251 individuals experiencing financial hardship received assistance for household expenses

179 families with children in DHHS custody received supportive visitation services

69 families with children in DHHS custody received coaching services to promote healthy relationships

10 adults with a cognitive or developmental disability acquired long-term residential arrangements

19 individuals with disabilities received community integration support

494 individuals received behavioral health treatment planning services

43 individuals received comprehensive case management services

31 women in recovery and their children were housed and supported

532 participants received education and training to support healthy children and families

1,249 children received backpacks and school supplies for the new school year

1,000 coats were distributed to keep people warm

6,054 families received Thanksgiving meal assistance

1,207 children received holiday gifts

389 families received support to explore educational and employment options

25 individuals in Knox County received support to meet basic needs and improve stability

289 youth affected by someone else's substance use took part in activity groups and received resources and support

22 individuals with behavioral health diagnoses received residential services

205 individuals received information and referrals to address needs

55 individuals received outpatient therapy to improve mental health and well-being

"This is kindness."

Each November, as the holiday season approaches, Penquis partners with community organizations to support local families through its annual turkey drive. By collecting turkeys and monetary donations, this effort reflects the generosity of our community while helping to provide families with a Thanksgiving meal.

One event that supports the turkey drive is Free the Z, hosted by local radio station Z107.3. During the event, radio host Kid camps in the Brewer Hannaford parking lot to collect turkeys and donations. Volunteers join Kid and the Penquis team to help collect turkeys, load them onto the freezer truck, and distribute them to partner food pantries. The event is truly a team effort, made possible by individuals and organizations across the community.

"Penquis has been fantastic to work with every year," said Katie, co-host of Z107.3's Z Morning Show. "We love the fact that we can help Penquis collect turkeys with our radio station and the power of our listeners." With rising prices for groceries and other necessities, the additional help provided through the turkey drive can make a meaningful difference for families. "Once they are in Penquis' hands, the turkeys are very safely distributed all over the local area," Katie added. For distribution, Penquis partners with local food pantries to ensure families receive a warm Thanksgiving meal to share with loved ones.

Lee, a volunteer from the Hampden Food Cupboard, emphasized the importance of food drives for people experiencing food insecurity. "This is the difference between eating and sometimes not," she shared. "This is humanity. This is kindness. This is really taking the time to be able to say, 'I believe it's important for you to have a full belly.' You can't get more important than that."

For many families, the significance of a Thanksgiving meal extends beyond food. A staff member from Bangor Housing shared, "Thanksgiving is the only holiday with a culturally defined menu. Helping a family have that meal brings comfort, belonging, and a sense of normalcy during a challenging time."

Penquis is grateful to everyone who helps with the turkey drive, from donors to volunteers and partners. This collective effort makes the holiday season brighter for neighbors across the region.



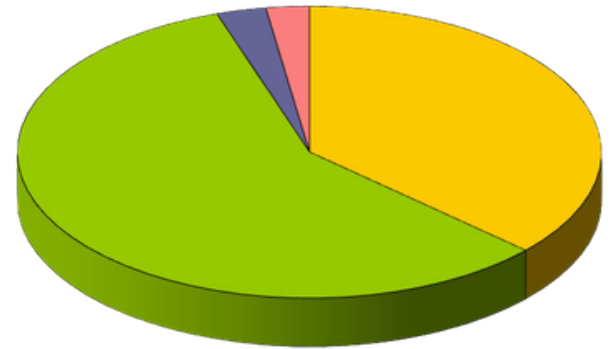
“Helping a family have that meal brings comfort, belonging, and a sense of normalcy during a challenging time.”

Consolidated Financial Statement

for the Year Ended September 30, 2025

SUPPORT & REVENUE

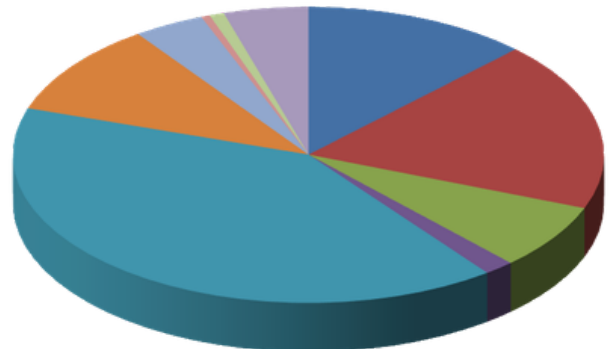
Federal & State Grants	\$ 28,747,607
Program Income & Fees	45,421,234
Other Revenue	2,146,979
In-Kind Contributions	1,875,865
	\$ 78,191,685



■ Federal & State Grants
■ Program Income & Fees
■ Other Revenue
■ In-Kind Contributions

EXPENDITURES

Family Enrichment	\$ 9,682,650
Child Development	14,470,093
Housing and Energy Services	5,589,273
Housing Development	1,288,348
Transportation Services	31,580,142
Charlotte White Support Services	7,907,667
Other Services	3,042,639
Board Designated	375,295
Fundraising	624,533
Management & General	3,631,045
	\$ 78,191,685



■ Family Enrichment
■ Child Development
■ Housing and Energy Services
■ Housing Development
■ Transportation Services
■ Charlotte White Support Services
■ Other Services
■ Board Designated
■ Fundraising
■ Management & General

Board of Directors

Mark Leonard, Chair (*through June 2025*)
Laura Sanborn, Vice Chair (*through June 2025*);
Chair (*appointed June 2025*)
Kevin Gregory, Vice Chair (*appointed June 2025*)
Connie Putnam, Secretary
Angela Fileccia
Brent Folster
Cynthia Gardner*
David Green
Heather Hansen
Joseph Leonard
Amy Sue McGill
Laura Mellits*
Patrick Polky
Breanna Stewart**
Jessica Taylor**
William Thompson

Steering Committee

Advisors to the Board of Directors

Scott Adkins*	Joseph Hufnagel
Angie Alfonso	Tom Lizotte*
Cindy Freeman Cyr	Jake Miller
Jane Danforth	James Pullen
Natalie DiPentino	Chris Rector
Kayla Dunn	Stephen Rich
Rebekah Falla	Charles Shaffer
Kara Frye	Jessica Taylor**
Cynthia Grass	Kimberly Turner
Danielle Hewes	Joanie Withee
Terry Thurston Hill	

*served part of FY25

**began service during FY25

Executive Leadership

Kara Hay
President and Chief Executive Officer
Denice Conary
Chief Financial Officer
Heidi LeBlanc
Chief Operating Officer
Jason Bird*
Housing Development Director
Janeen Feero
Development Director
Jennifer Giosia
Housing & Energy Services Director
Mark Glovin
Regional Programs Director
Danielle Goodale
Human Resources Director
Mary Kay Hallett**
Child Development Director
Aimee Kerrigan
Charlotte White Support Services Director
Tamar Mathieu
Family Enrichment Services Director
Staci Provost
Compliance Director
Steven Richard
Transportation Services Director
Lawrence Rogers**
Housing Development Director
Andrew Whitten
Information Technology Director
Dee Williams
MaineStream Finance Director

Executive Administration

Emily Watkins
Executive Assistant



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