

PENQUIS

ANNUAL REPORT
FY 2022



Our **mission** is 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** is for a poverty-free Maine, where all people lead healthy lives full of opportunities to work and learn.

Our **goal** is for all Maine people to be safe, healthy, connected and financially secure.

Our **focus** is on helping families and communities make measurable improvements in four areas: economic security, reliable transportation, school readiness and healthy lives.

Dear Community Members,

This past year, we were relieved to see that COVID-19 was lessening its hold on our communities. We remain ever mindful, however, that the lingering effects of the pandemic and the higher cost of living present challenges for many individuals and families, as well as for our businesses and service providers.

Despite the tireless efforts of many individuals and institutions, financial instability and homelessness are increasing. We have been grateful for the ability to provide emergency assistance to help residents meet basic needs, and we continue to work with community stakeholders to develop long-term solutions. This past year we secured funding to expand affordable housing and support services, and we also advanced our work to support children and youth. These initiatives are in addition to the many other programs and services we provide each day that are essential to the wellbeing of our region's residents.

Penquis has not been immune to labor and market challenges, but we have been fortunate in our ability to respond to them. To strengthen capacity and maximize resources, the Penquis Board approved funding to ensure all employees received 5% in one-time incentives, which helped staff offset the increase in costs across all goods and services. We expanded our use of new client-centered software to better support our whole family and no wrong door approach to services. Our services and supporting infrastructure remained strong. NeighborWorks America once again named Penquis an "exemplary" organization, and the IRS recognized our work with a Catalyst in Financial Stability award, one of three awarded nationally.

As a community action agency, Penquis is an organization "by the community for the community." Our board and steering committee members represent the public sector, the private sector, and the individuals and families we serve. Our staff work side by side with community partners on numerous coalitions, councils, work groups, and task forces. Our community members provide support as donors, volunteers, and advisors. Working together to lift up our communities, support our friends and neighbors, and make our region the best possible place for all of us to live and work — that is community action.

To all those who work with us and support us, thank you. We celebrate what we have accomplished together and look forward to the possibilities of the year ahead.



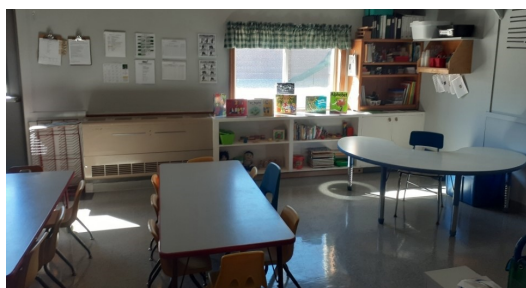
Kara Hay

Kara Hay
President & CEO



Mark Leonard

Mark Leonard
Board Chair



Penquis was awarded \$4.25 million in grant funding from MaineHousing to redevelop an existing hotel in Bangor into permanent housing. To be named Theresa's Place in memory of local advocate and family nurse practitioner Theresa Knowles, this redevelopment project will create 41 units of housing and include project-based vouchers that will cover the majority of the monthly rent.

MaineHousing awarded Penquis a two-year grant to implement a Housing Navigator Pilot Program in Penobscot, Piscataquis, Knox and Waldo counties. The program assists individuals experiencing or at significant risk of homelessness to locate housing, complete the rental process and maintain housing.

Penquis Child Development opened a pre-K classroom at Opal Myrick School in East Millinocket. The classroom will allow children to become familiar with the school where they will attend kindergarten and support in-person partnering between the pre-K and kindergarten staff. The previous classroom at Katahdin Higher Education Center is now used for a three-to-four-year-old program and a six-hour Early Head Start program.

Penquis launched its Host Homes program for youth 12-24 years of age who are experiencing homelessness in Greater Piscataquis County. Funded by HUD and private dollars, the program provides supportive services and safe spaces in community members' homes to enable youth to remain in their community and continue their education.

Penquis received a grant from the US Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, to fund the Substance Affected Youth program. The SAY program builds on work completed under a prior Office for Victims of Crime grant to improve resources and support for youth affected by others' substance use.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the opening of Olive Street Home, a new house in Bangor that six individuals with developmental disabilities now call home. This project was made possible with funding from MaineHousing.

Penquis initiated the use of solar energy to help meet its power needs under a Net Energy Billing program through Revision Energy. The source is a solar farm located on Mount Desert Island and the energy generated at the farm will supply our residential locations in territories served by Versant Power.

OUR FOCUS

ECONOMIC SECURITY



Services enable families and individuals to achieve financial stability and create wealth. We provide education and access to capital to increase assets and economic security.

RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION



Services provide safe, reliable transportation for medical, social and other needs. We help individuals and families access resources to support their health and independence.

SCHOOL READINESS



Services support healthy child development. We provide and facilitate quality early learning experiences in safe, nurturing environments to enable children to enter school ready to learn.

HEALTHY LIVES



Services support families and individuals of all ages in improving their health, resiliency and self-sufficiency. We address overall wellness, including behavioral health.

The Ripple Effect



According to the Cambridge dictionary, a “ripple” is defined as “a small wave or a slight movement of a surface, especially the surface of water.”

Likewise, the Merriam Webster dictionary defines “ripple effect” as “a spreading and usually unintentional effect or influence.”

The actions of every one of us has a ripple effect. Every word we say, every email we write, our smile, our handshake, *absolutely everything* that we put out into the universe has a ripple effect, and we decide exactly what it is that we are putting into the water. The question is, what are we putting in the water, especially when we understand that good influences more good and bad spreads bad?

When we set a good example, when we are kind, generous, helpful...it grows.

Imagine there is a glass bowl full of water in front of you. It represents our community. A drop of blue food coloring, representing one kind act, is added to the bowl. Look at the food coloring and think about how one kind act affects the community. The blue drop pretty much stays in one place, but it does spread a little. As more drops are added, look at the impact on the community. The community has noticeably changed.

One kind act, or drop of blue, spreads to the water directly around it. When one person shows kindness, it spreads to the people around them. When those people experience kindness, they spread kindness to others, just like adding another drop of blue to the water. As each person experiences kindness and then in turn shows kindness to others, there's a ripple effect.

When the drop of blue hits the water, it creates ripples in the water, spreading the color to the water close by. Kindness spreads in the same way. As we experience kindness, we want to show others kindness. Then those people want to show others kindness, and the kindness spreads like a ripple through the water.

At Penquis, our focus is on creating ripples of positive change in our communities and in the lives of the people we serve. We are grateful to everyone who joins us in this effort.

BY THE NUMBERS

Economic Security

51 individuals participated in the Family Development Account matched savings program to increase assets

21 individuals received financial coaching

1,086 individuals attended a homebuyer education class

266 families received pre-purchase counseling to prepare for home ownership

8 individuals received home loans for purchase, refinance or repair

100 families received foreclosure intervention counseling

38 individuals received rental counseling

46 individuals increased knowledge of business ownership

2 entrepreneurs received loans to build their businesses

353 housing units provided homes for families and older adults

8,692 households received help heating their homes

295 households received central heating improvements

486 homes received heat pump assistance

47 housing units were inspected for lead hazards

1,216 households in an emergency or energy crisis received home heating assistance

49 above ground storage tanks were replaced

209 individuals received assistance for household expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic

64 homes received needed repairs

334 individuals were provided tax preparation assistance

32 homes were weatherized

361 households received 100 gallons of heating fuel

32,311 received COVID-19 rental relief assistance



A New Home

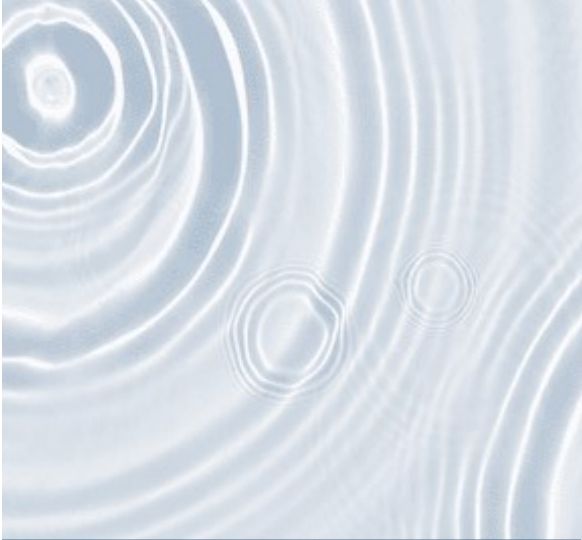
Watching Judah and Alyson's family play in their yard with their ducks, chickens, and dog makes it hard to imagine that the family of four did not always live here. The family had been living in a small in-town apartment and found themselves feeling as though they did not have what they needed to grow in that space. The apartment, which had no lawn, was not a welcoming place for their children to play and enjoy the outdoors. This was especially difficult since Judah and Alyson love the outdoors and wanted to share that love with their children as they grew. While the family made the most of the apartment, Judah described feeling like they were "losing themselves" in that space and knew they needed a change.

After connecting with Penquis through the suggestion of a coworker, Judah was soon on the path to making the family's dream of homeownership a reality. He received financial coaching, which helped him to set goals, check his credit score, and create a budget. He also opened a Family Development Account, which matched the dollars he saved 4:1 to help the family build a down payment. With this assistance, Judah and Alyson were able to move their family into a home of their own.

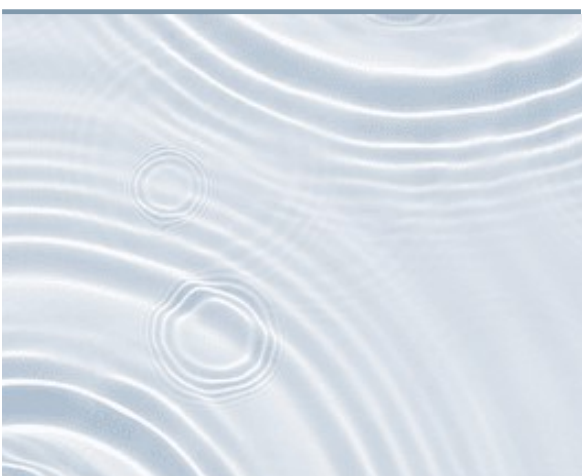
While it took a few months for everyone to settle into this big change, now they are all thriving in their new space. With a sprawling yard, there is plenty of space for their newest feathered family members – a flock of chickens and ducks – as well as a firepit to roast marshmallows on as they make new memories and share the love of the outdoors. When reflecting on their time in their new home, Judah says, "You don't really see how much a house completes a family, in a sense, until you're in it...it's just like everyone's falling into their place and things are falling into their place – it's pretty incredible."

When describing the assistance that they received from the Family Development Account program, Judah emphasizes the importance of the people behind the program. "It wasn't because the program was there and the money was there that this was good and worked," he says. "It was because of the *people* that were doing it. It was very evident that they cared. It was very evident that the things they did, they didn't have to do, but they did because they felt for us – they wanted to." The staff's help was available from the beginning, with house hunting, and continued through the closing process. Judah attributes "timing and having the perfect team" as the reasons behind being able to make his dream house purchase.

While Judah is quick to express appreciation for Penquis staff and programs, the family's new home would not have been possible without their careful financial planning and commitment to saving for a down payment. We celebrate their accomplishment and wish Judah and his family many years of happy memories in their new home!



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Reliable Transportation

5,269 individuals were assisted with their transportation needs

4,228 bus passes and tickets were issued

76,669 taxi trips helped to meet transit needs

116 volunteer drivers traveled **3,396,190** miles transporting people to where they needed to go

9,532,875 miles were traveled to get people to their destinations



“I am on dialysis and I wanted to be able to assist other dialysis patients with rides. It’s my way of giving back to the community. I love the fact that it keeps me busy with a daily schedule to give me a sense of purpose. I’ve come to meet a lot of people and hear their stories and I would even say I made some friends as well.”



A Sense of Purpose

It has been about five years since Hollis Rockwell first noticed the Lynx vehicle dropping patients off at the hospital to receive treatments. Hollis, a disabled veteran, had been receiving dialysis treatments himself when he realized a lot of people were using Penquis' transportation services to attend to their medical needs. Curious, Hollis took it upon himself to learn more about the program and the drivers who volunteer their time to help people access care and other services. Now, with more than 7,000 volunteer hours behind him, he describes volunteer driving as one of the factors that helped save him.

A typical week of volunteering for Hollis includes driving every day. Even in inclement weather, which here in Maine can create messy roads, Hollis is not deterred from helping people arrive at their appointments. He describes himself as the transportation department's "go-to person" and is willing to do whatever is needed as long as he is able. He recalls, for example, that during a recent snowstorm that spanned across the entire weekend, he was asked to pick up a rider and bring him to Patten. The drive, which is almost an hour and a half long during clear conditions, was a slow and arduous journey, but without Hollis' help, the gentleman would have been stranded until the start of the week. After arriving safely, the man was happy to be home and Hollis was happy to be of help.

While the days can be long and the drives through Maine winters can be treacherous, Hollis sees his volunteering as something that gives him purpose. He describes the time when he was first informed he would have to go on dialysis as the moment he thought his life was over. However, he states, "when I learned about Penquis, it gave me purpose. It helped save me." The joy that Hollis has found in volunteer driving is something he shares with his mother and aunt, who started volunteering as well. His mother, who is 70, started volunteering three years ago, and it has given her opportunities that were not previously available to her. For example, with the mileage reimbursement she receives as a volunteer driver, she was able to visit a friend in Florida for a month and buy Christmas presents for all of her family members.

Hollis shares that there are many things he likes about volunteering at Penquis. With this role, he has the opportunity to be a part of the community and specifically enjoys being able to take other veterans to their appointments. His family's involvement does not stop at his mother and aunt becoming volunteers; his daughter is able to join him occasionally on rides. She brightens the days of clients, who "absolutely love her to death," and she gets to experience parts of Maine with her father that they would not have otherwise seen.

Often volunteering all seven days of the week has made it so Hollis sees many different faces, from those of Penquis employees to his passengers and hospital staff. The appreciation shown by all of these people is very meaningful to Hollis. From the expressions of gratitude through thank-yous, cards, and gift cards for coffee, it is obvious how much Hollis' help matters to all those around him.

While a recent surgical procedure has forced Hollis to take a break from volunteering, he is looking forward to returning to driving once he recovers. He describes volunteering as something that "you get back out of it what you put into it" and hopes to increase his hours once he returns. It is a day that many eagerly await!

School Readiness

Children received quality care and early education that supported healthy child development and allowed parents to work or pursue an education:

- **196** children received Head Start services
- **138** children received Early Head Start services
- **93** children received child care services

80 providers received reimbursement for food expenses to lessen the cost of serving healthy meals

157 parents of young children received parenting information and support

“We couldn’t have had better people cheering us on.”





A Support System

Doug and Cindy have been involved with Penquis off and on over the years, starting when their son attended Head Start about 25 years ago. Now their two young grandchildren, whom they have adopted, attend the same program. While Doug and Cindy have had many different experiences throughout the years with Penquis, one thing that has stayed the same is how they feel about Penquis and its staff: “they’re a godsend.”

When the couple began caring for their grandsons, Colby and Presley, it had been years since they had parented a child. They enrolled in the Penquis Maine Families home visiting program for support. Their home visitor helped them navigate services for the youngest, Presley, who required speech, physical, and occupational therapy, and reacquainted them with the Early Head Start program for the oldest, Colby.

Living in a more business-centric district of town, Colby did not have many opportunities for socializing with other children his age, but once he joined the Early Head Start program, that quickly changed. Doug and Cindy say Colby flourished. When Colby turned three and had the opportunity to continue at Head Start or attend his town’s pre-K program, Doug and Cindy knew it was best for him to stay where he was doing well. With a positive atmosphere and supportive teachers (even when school was interrupted by the pandemic), Doug believes his grandson’s time at Head Start “made a big difference” for when he transitioned into Kindergarten.

Once old enough, Colby’s younger brother Presley joined the Head Start program as well. Doug and Cindy were concerned about the support for his special needs, but the staff “was amazing,” says Cindy, describing how the teachers worked with him and adjusted to his needs. Seeing the active and expressive child he has become, one might never guess the challenges Presley faced to crawl, walk, or talk. “A lot of that is due to Penquis,” says Doug.

Doug and Cindy describe how the teachers have gone above and beyond for them, with the teachers’ help not stopping at the end of the school day. The staff helped Doug and Cindy figure out the best ways to support their grandchildren with any and all challenges. The staff even offered their help when the family was working through the process of adoption. “We couldn’t have had better people cheering us on,” Doug says.

When given the chance to join the Head Start Policy Council, Doug took the opportunity eagerly, seeing it as a way to give back to the program. Even now, after Colby and Presley have both left Head Start, Doug continues to serve as a community representative. He says that his time on the council has given him a better understanding of all that goes into running the Head Start program. Doug mentions that he wants to continue to spread the word of all that Penquis does for those in the community who might not know about the vast array of services. He hopes that this can help others in similar ways to how Penquis has assisted his family.

The couple credits Penquis for help and guidance that have enabled their family to thrive. Both agree that “it really made a difference.” Doug and Cindy share a strong bond with their grandchildren and we know that, under their care, Colby and Presley have bright futures ahead of them.

Healthy Lives

1,860 families received support to safely isolate or quarantine due to a COVID-19 diagnosis or close contact

52 adults age 55+ volunteered in their communities

97 individuals received daily support to live independently

82 individuals received assistance with family law matters and **81** received legal representation

187 youth received services to improve wellbeing and increase leadership skills

1,625 K-12 youth received education from Rape Response Services to improve safety

1 pregnant/parenting youth received transitional housing services

154 families received children's advocacy services in cases of suspected child sexual abuse

138 men learned about the dynamics of power and control to decrease the use of violence in relationships

213 individuals received assistance to access mental health services and other community resources

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

41 youth received life skills to support better financial literacy and healthy decision-making

15 youth with a chargeable offense receive restorative justice services to take accountability for their actions and repair the harm caused

3 youth experiencing homelessness received support to access resources and improve self-sufficiency

56 individuals received counseling to improve quality of life and functional abilities

286 families with children in DHHS custody received supportive visitation services

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

32 individuals with disabilities received community integration support

50 individuals with an acquired brain injury, developmental disability or behavioral health diagnosis received residential services

2 adults with developmental disabilities received life skill services

352 individuals received behavioral health treatment plans

57 individuals received comprehensive case management services

10 women in recovery and their children were housed and supported

343 families were strengthened with parental education and support

563 professionals trained in topics supporting healthy children and families

1,200 children received backpacks and school supplies to start the new school year

835 coats were distributed to keep people warm

150 families received diapers and wipes

5,000 families enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal

1,400 children received holiday gifts



A Bright Future

Jacqueline's journey to paving her own path in life and breaking her family's cycle of addiction began when, at 34 years old, she discovered she was pregnant. After dropping out of school in eighth grade and then falling into this cycle of addiction at 15 with her parents and grandparents, she made unsuccessful attempts to be sober and was growing tired of going in and out of jail. She wanted something more for her life, and when she found out she was going to be a parent, she knew it was time for a change.

Her first step towards her new future was checking herself into a rehabilitation program, Wellspring, where she stayed for six months. After this, Jacqueline knew that instead of moving into her own living situation right away, she wanted to continue to build a support system. She saw this support system as a way to keep bettering herself and her future family. This desire led her to a two-year program at the McAuley House, which provides a comprehensive transitional housing program for women with children who are in recovery from substance use disorder.

Once Jacqueline joined her two-year treatment program at the McAuley House, she wanted to use the available resources that were now at her fingertips. In this space of support, she wanted to learn how to be a parent and how to advocate for herself and her child. While at the McAuley House, Jacqueline started receiving assistance from Maine Families, a program offered by Penquis that helps parents access resources and information to support their babies. Through Maine Families, she participated in parenting classes every week for almost two years. These classes taught Jacqueline everything from nutrition, including how to make her own baby food, to providing structure, something she never had during her own childhood.

I learned everything through the parenting Penquis class...They were the best classes...everybody there [at the McAuley House] feels that way. You learn the most – they're the most interactive. Everybody is engaged in it because we're talking about our children here. We want, you know, what's the best for our kids.

Knowing that she would be living on her own after the McAuley House, Jacqueline wanted to be sure that she built a support system to help maintain the structure and stability that had been helping her. She achieved this through continuing to take part in Penquis' Maine Families program, as well as Safe Families, getting a case manager, visiting a healthcare nurse once a month, and attending counseling once a week. Learning the importance of having a routine, not only for her child but also for herself, is something she attributes to Penquis' parenting classes. "Routine," she says, "is the number one thing that I feel keeps me clean every day."

Another Penquis program that Jacqueline describes as helping her meet crucial goals is Financial Coaching. This program helped her learn how to be more selective with spending, to organize her bills so they will be paid on time, and to create a savings account for her future. With help from this program, she has met several financial goals such as building up credit in order to qualify for a loan that she used to purchase a car.

Jacqueline describes Penquis as "going above and beyond through Maine Families" for their help with parenting classes, COVID-19 relief (including sending food, diapers, wipes, and movies when she and her child had to quarantine), and most importantly through the support she received. She now lives in an apartment while holding two jobs and parenting her daughter. Her sights are set on purchasing a house of her own within the next two years. With everything Jacqueline has accomplished, we at Penquis are confident that she will continue to achieve all the goals she sets for herself!

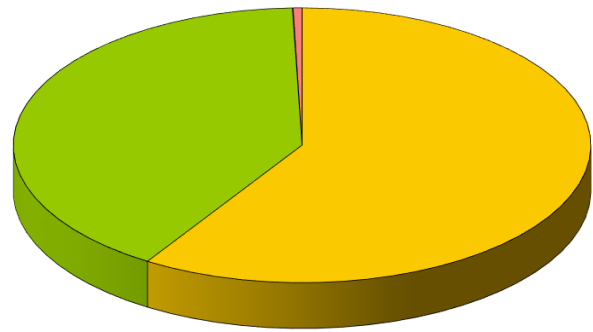
"I learned everything through the parenting Penquis class...They were the best classes...everybody there [at the McAuley House] feels that way."

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

SUPPORT & REVENUE

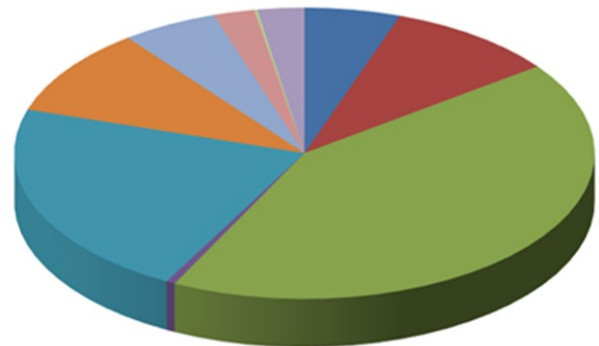
Federal & State Grants	\$	57,845,372
Program Income & Fees		39,706,729
Other Revenue		32,399
In-Kind Contributions		492,149
	\$	<u>98,076,649</u>



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

EXPENDITURES

Family Enrichment	\$	5,239,338
Child Development		9,318,739
Housing Services		41,713,792
Housing Development		484,876
Transportation Services		21,549,134
Charlotte White Support Services		9,533,300
Other Services		5,266,243
Board Designated		2,248,163
Fundraising		166,256
Management & General		<u>2,556,808</u>
	\$	<u>98,076,649</u>



- Family Enrichment
- Housing Services
- Transportation Services
- Child Development
- Housing Development
- Charlotte White Support Services
- Board Designated
- Fundraising
- Management & General

G O V E R N A N C E

Board of Directors

Mark Leonard, Chair
Laura Sanborn, Vice Chair
Connie Putnam, Secretary
Angela Fileccia
Brent Folster
Cynthia Gardner
David Green
Kevin Gregory
Joseph Leonard
Anette Moulton
Amy Sue McGill
Laura Mellits
Susan Phillips-Workman
Mary Prybylo
Keith Romprey
William Thompson
Chris Young

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Kara Hay
President and Chief Executive Officer

Denice Conary
Chief Financial Officer

Heidi LeBlanc
Chief Operating Officer

Jason Bird
Housing Development Director

Rebecca Dinces (retired)
Regional Programs Director

Priscilla Dorman (retired)
Compliance Director

Janeen Feero
Development Director

Jennifer Giosia
Housing & Energy Services Director

Mark Glovin
Regional Programs Director

Danielle Goodale
Human Resources Director

Mary Lynn Hersey
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

Steering Committees

Advisors to the Board of Directors

Charlotte White Steering Committee
Knox County Steering Committee
Penobscot County Steering Committee
Piscataquis County Steering Committee



PENQUIS

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