



AMHC

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Making a difference in your community every day.



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## ATLC Resumes Summer Camp at UMFK

Inspiring leadership and substance-free living.

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## Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic

Call Center, peer support, RN resources, and new service policy.

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## Agency Highlights and Achievements

New grants and expanded programs.

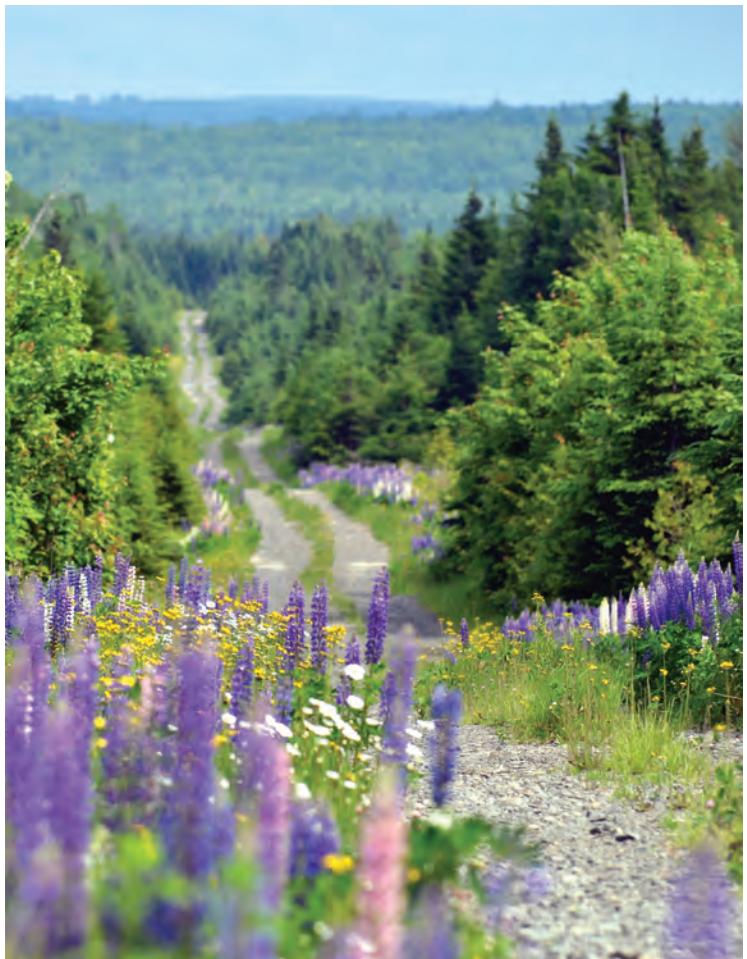
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## Staff Development and Retention Investments

AMHC improves staff benefits, wages, and training.

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## AROOSTOOK TEEN LEADERSHIP CAMP



After a two-year hiatus, ATLC resumed its summer camp at the University of Maine at Fort Kent during the week of July 23–28, 2022. “The camp was empowering and energizing,” explains Alyssa Tilley, District Youth Coordinator. “The week focused on building the knowledge and skills necessary to be drug-free and respectful leaders. Participants attended workshops to learn about the negative effects of drugs, alcohol, and vaping. Campers also received information on suicide awareness and safe coping strategies. Everything taught was connected to ATLC’s mission to develop leadership skills. This year was a huge success, and we can’t wait for 2023!” In its 36th year, ATLC serves Aroostook County teens in grades 5–12 through its summer camp program and an after-school program known as Operation Leadership. Major sponsors for 2022 include Versant, Harold Alfond Foundation, Maine Youth Access Network, Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Community Opioid Response Program Implementation III grant, District Masters & Warden’s Association, Trinity Lodge, Huber Engineered Woods, MMG Insurance Company, Fort Kent Lions, Robbie Morin Paving, Machias Savings Bank, County Federal Credit Union, and United Insurance. We are grateful to the two dozen local service organizations and businesses that provide donations and gifts in kind. All funds raised focus on promoting youth in positive ways with the hope of inspiring leadership and substance-free living.

# LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

As our world moves from isolation and lockdown to one that looks more like pre-pandemic society, AMHC and our partners and community stakeholders continue to address the challenges we face in Aroostook, Hancock, and Washington counties. In this report, you will read about new and existing programs focused on a central theme to increase access to behavioral health services on all fronts: prevention, treatment, and recovery.

This year AMHC earned the designation of a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic and was awarded more than \$3.8 million by federal, state, and private funders to pilot new programs. These programs include expanding youth prevention, enhancing support for co-occurring mental health and substance use, addressing workforce shortage challenges, and so much more.

Despite the challenges we face, the stories in this report offer hope. Each day our dedicated staff work to help those in need and collaborate with community partners to problem solve and share new ideas and approaches that offer opportunities to make a difference in our communities every day.

On behalf of agency staff, we thank the AMHC Board of Directors for their support and guidance throughout 2022. Their leadership and vision are key to the agency's success.

In appreciation,



Ellen Bemis, CPA  
Chief Executive Officer



Tanya Sleeper, RN  
Board President



2022-2023 Board of Directors from left to right: Shawn Babin, Cheryl Robbins, Richard Marston, Traci Peabody, Sheriff Shawn Gillen, Tanya Sleeper, and Peter Sirois. Absent from photo: Joshua Grass, Rev. Kevin Kinney, and Timothy Vernon.

## 2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Tanya Sleeper, RN, President**  
*Assistant Professor of Nursing, University of Maine at Fort Kent Caribou, Maine*

**Tim Doak, Vice President**  
*Superintendent of Schools, Eastern Aroostook RSU 39 Caribou, Maine*

**Ryan Pelletier**  
*Aroostook County Administrator Caribou, Maine*

**Traci Peabody, RN**  
*Chief Nursing Officer, Houlton Regional Hospital Houlton, Maine*

**Rev. Kevin Kinsey**  
*The Aroostook Episcopal Center Fort Fairfield, Maine*

**Richard Marston**  
*Businessman (retired)  
St. Agatha, Maine*

**Peter Sirois**  
*Former CEO, Northern Maine Medical Center (retired)  
Fort Kent, Maine*

**Shawn Gillen**  
*Sheriff  
Aroostook County Sheriff's Office  
Houlton, Maine*

**Shawn Babin**  
*Labor Relations Manager, Twin Rivers Paper Company  
Madawaska, Maine*



## HONORING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Peter Sirois is recognized for 30 years of service on AMHC's Board of Directors. He began in 1992 and served as Treasurer from 1995–1999, Vice President from 1999–2000, President from 2000–2002, and again from 2009–2011. "It is a remarkable achievement to volunteer on a board for three decades," said Ellen Bemis, AMHC CEO. "We are so fortunate to have Peter's experience and expertise, especially as a healthcare leader. Peter has always offered sound advice and challenged the agency to be forward-thinking."

Recently retired as the CEO of Northern Maine Medical Center (NMMC), Peter holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and a Master of Science in Business from Husson College. Throughout his professional career, Peter has worked as Chief Operation Officer at NMMC; Administrator of the Maine Veterans Home in Scarborough, Maine; Administrator of Borderview Manor in Van Buren; Controller for NMMC; and Credit Manager for Romeo Roy, Inc. in Upper Frenchville. He also serves/has served on other boards, including Maine State Nursing Home Administrator Board; Maine Hospital Association; America's First Mile; Acadia Federal Credit Union; Hanley Health Leadership; Aroostook Home Health Services; and Valley Home Health Services. In addition, Peter is a trained paramedic, registered Maine Guide, and a Maine Notary Public. He has been a licensed Maine Nursing Home Administrator since 1990. Peter and his wife, Nola, have been married for 45 years. They have two daughters and five grandsons.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Ryan Pelletier, the County Administrator for the County of Aroostook, served on the AMHC Board of Directors from 2011–2022. During that time, he served as Vice President and later as President. "It was an honor to recognize Ryan for ten years of service in last year's annual report," shared Bemis. "We are grateful for his many years of leadership on our board."

Tim Doak, Superintendent of Schools for RSU 39, served on the board of directors from 2018–2022, serving as Treasurer for two years and Vice President for one year. "Tim kept us informed of behavioral health concerns relating to youth," said Bemis. "We appreciated his support in this regard, and his contributions will be missed."



Ryan Pelletier



Tim Doak

# AMHC STAFF ASSUME NEW ROLES WITHIN SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Michelle Ferris, LCSW, was appointed Chief Operations Officer in January 2022. As COO, Michelle oversees AMHC's day-to-day operations across all services and sites in partnership with the senior leadership team. "Michelle's experience in direct service, administration, and as a member of the senior leadership team, combined with her 15 years of service to AMHC, makes her well suited for the role," stated Ellen Bemis, AMHC CEO. Michelle joined AMHC in 2006 and assumed increasing roles of responsibility, primarily in emergency services. She joined the senior leadership team in 2019 as the Program Director of Crisis Services in Aroostook, Hancock, and Washington counties. Michelle graduated from Columbia University School of Social Work in the City of New York.

Sarah Wright, MHRT-CSP, was promoted to Program Director of Crisis Services in March 2022. In her role, Sarah oversees Mobile Crisis Services in Aroostook, Hancock, and Washington counties and Adult and Children's Crisis Stabilization Units in Aroostook. "I am pleased to have Sarah as part of the senior leadership team," said Bemis. "When it comes to delivering crisis services, Sarah has a collaborative approach with our community partners that will grow in her expanded capacity." Sarah has fifteen years of behavioral health experience. She joined AMHC in 2015 as an Emergency Services Specialist and, after a brief hiatus, rejoined the agency in 2019 as the Supervisor for the Mobile Crisis Team for Aroostook County. Sarah is currently pursuing her Master of Social Work. She lives in southern Aroostook with her family.

Shannon Gove, LSW, MHRT-C, OQMHP, was appointed Program Director of Residential/Crisis Units in Washington County in May 2022. Shannon oversees the residential programs in Calais, including children's residential and both the children and adult crisis stabilization units. "I am pleased Shannon accepted this new role," shared Bemis. "Throughout her eight years with the agency, she has demonstrated strong leadership and a passion for delivering excellent services to our clients." Shannon joined AMHC in 2014 as a Targeted Case Manager/Outpatient Site Coordinator in Calais. In 2019, she was appointed the Children's Services Manager for Hancock and Washington counties. Shannon received her Bachelor's in Behavioral Science from the University of Maine Machias. She lives with her family in Dennysville.



Michelle Ferris, LCSW, Chief Operations Officer



Sarah Wright, MHRT-CSP

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

Ellen Bemis, CPA  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Michelle Ferris, LCSW  
*Chief Operations Officer*

Christy Daggett, MPP  
*Chief Financial & Administrative Officer*

Laurie Deerfield, D.O.  
*Medical Director/Psychiatrist*

Brittany Ballard  
*Director of Human Resources*

Christine Brown, LCSW  
*Program Director of Community Integration*

Lorraine Chamberlain, LCSW, CCS  
*Program Director of Behavioral Health & Integration, Aroostook County*

Clement Deveau, LCSW, CCS  
*Program Director of Behavioral Health & Integration, Hancock & Washington Counties*

Shannon Gove, LSW, MHRT-C, OQMHP  
*Program Director of Residential/Crisis Units, Washington County*

Debra Jacques  
*Director of Marketing & Development*

Julia Miller  
*Program Director of Prevention & Sexual Assault Services*

Sarah Wright, MHRT-CSP  
*Program Director of Crisis Services*



Shannon Gove, LSW, MHRT-C, OQMHP



*“As this chapter of your life ends, may a new and exceptional one begin.”* -Unknown

# BEST WISHES ON YOUR RETIREMENT



Jennette Hitchcock, LCSW, Chief Operations Officer



Barb Faye, Information Technology Specialist



David Goodrich, MSW, Therapist-Consultant

Jennette Hitchcock, LCSW and Chief Operations Officer, retired on February 18, 2022. She was with the agency for thirty-nine and a half years. Jennette began her AMHC career in 1982 as a residential counselor at Skyhaven in Presque Isle, advancing to expanded leadership roles, including community support coordinator, assistant program manager, program manager, and residential services manager. Jennette transitioned to the senior leadership team in 2005 when she was appointed Director of Quality Management. She has served AMHC as its Chief Operations Officer since 2014. As COO, she oversaw the day-to-day operations across all services and sites. Jennette is passionate about leadership development, leading AMHC's High Performing Team (HPT) model. In addition, she is a Ken Blanchard-trained instructor for Situational Team Leadership, Situational Self Leadership, Situational Leadership II, and Coaching. Countless staff members have benefited from her leadership training for nearly two decades. Many would describe Jennette as a teacher, careful listener, thoughtful planner, and good friend. Her guidance, institutional knowledge, calm demeanor, and sense of humor will be missed. Jennette holds an Associate of Liberal Arts degree from Colby-Sawyer College, a bachelor's degree in Music from Eastern New Mexico University, and a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from the University of Maine at Orono (UMO). Jennette and her husband, Randy, have one son and two grandchildren. They look forward to spending more time with family and traveling.

Barb Faye joined AMHC in 1976 when she was hired as a temporary keypunch operator. Her talents were recognized immediately, and within three months, Barb was hired as a full-time data entry specialist. She was instrumental in ensuring that service data was entered accurately and timely

into the agency's data information systems. In 2015, Barb was promoted to Information Technology Specialist. In this role, the data management changed to editing, uploading, and importing the data. She became responsible for processing the monthly invoices, running reports from ClaimTrak (the agency's electronic health record), and assisting the System Analyst/Developer. Barb retired in October 2021 after 45 years of service. It is a significant accomplishment to be dedicated to one organization for four and a half decades, and we wish Barb well in retirement.

David Goodrich began his employment in 1980 at Skyhaven Adult Residential in Presque Isle. In 1982, he transferred to the Houlton Outpatient Office as a Community Support Counselor. With support from the Vickers Education Fund, he completed his Master of Social Work degree and transitioned to Therapist-Consultant/ Supervisor in 1992. He was also one of the initial Team Leaders in an outpatient setting for the High Performing Team (HPT) initiative. During his tenure, David provided clinical services for a range of needs for individuals and families, as well as providing emergency services consultation and Detoxification Management System (DMS) clinical rotation as a Utilization Manager. In addition, David has a background in providing integrated behavioral health services in several rural health centers in northern/eastern Maine and, for several years, has been primarily based at East Grand Health Center in Danforth. David's commitment to AMHC's mission has been visible throughout his career. He readily supported staff in their clinical growth and development, positively impacting the agency's ability to meet the needs of our community and clients. In August 2022, David retired after 42 years of service. He and his wife Cindy live in Houlton and have two adult children.

## HOPE STORIES: RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE

*"Carrying an AMHC tote bag into her local grocery store, Helen was approached by Andrea\*, who asked if she worked for the agency, to which Helen replied, "Yes, I do." In Helen's words, "This lady looked at me with a huge smile on her face and shared that she is so thankful for everything we do. Andrea is nearly 20 years in recovery; two decades ago, she sought out AMHC for substance use services and, at her first meeting, was told she matters. Andrea explained that this moment changed her life because her provider, Kelly, sounded like she meant it." Andrea went on to say that she got her life back and is now expecting her first grandchild. Helen's story is a reminder that AMHC is making a difference every day in the lives of the individuals we serve."*

\*name changed to protect privacy

*"It's taken me some time to write, but I wanted to let you know how much my time at The Farm (AMHC Residential Treatment Facility, Limestone) meant to me. While it didn't stick right away, eventually, I got tired of the running and the using and the whole game. I finally made the choice to move and try to put my life together, but it didn't come easy. After a lot of hard work and putting into practice things that I learned at The Farm, I'm happy to say that I am two years clean. I never thought this would be possible, and I would like to thank everyone in the program who pushed me while I was there. If it wasn't for that place and the things I've learned, I wouldn't be alive today. Thank you all so much for what you do. It doesn't go unnoticed."*

## AMHC PARTNERS WITH UNITED WAY FOR AROOSTOOK COUNTY SUBSTANCE USE SYMPOSIUM

AMHC was pleased to partner with the United Way of Aroostook, who hosted the first-ever Aroostook Substance Use Symposium on April 1, 2022, at the University of Maine Presque Isle. Participants heard from individuals who have lost loved ones due to overdose, what it means to become a recovery-friendly employer, the benefits of naloxone distribution, and a panel discussion from community stakeholders in law enforcement, healthcare, business, and an individual in long-term recovery. AMHC was pleased to have Lorraine Chamberlain, LCSW, CCS, Program Director of Behavioral Health and Integration, and Erik Lamoreau, CADC, Project Coordinator, participate on the panel. The day ended with an address from Gordon Smith, the State of Maine Director of Opioid Response. Attendees found the day informational as well as hopeful. Plans are being discussed for another symposium in 2023.



A panel of community stakeholders addressed substance use in Aroostook County including (l to r): Erik Lamoreau, CADC, AMHC Project Coordinator and person in recovery; Chief Michael Gahagan, Caribou Police Department; John Thyng, PA-C, Medical Director, Northern Light A. R. Gould Memorial Hospital; Judy Dionne, Human Resources, Twin Rivers Paper; Trudy Raardon, Houlton Regional Hospital and Link for Hope; Lorraine Chamberlain, LCSW, CCS, AMHC Program Director.

## AMHC IS DESIGNATED A CERTIFIED COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINIC

In July 2021, AMHC received a two-year, \$2 million Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) grant. This model provides a specially designated clinic that provides a comprehensive range of mental health and substance use services. One year after receiving the award and completing several of the grant deliverables, SAMHSA officially designated AMHC a CCBHC. In its first year of the grant, the agency advanced its integrated care model by developing a 24/7, 365 Call Center, added peer support and RN resources and implemented a policy to serve all individuals regardless of their ability to pay.



Lorraine Chamberlain, Program Director of Behavioral Health and Integration oversees the implementation of CCBHC.

## DOWNEAST CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER OPENS IN MARSHFIELD



From left to right: Christina Mallock, Family Services Advocate and Brenda Clements, Forensic Interviewer

The Downeast Children's Advocacy Center opened on July 1, 2022, at 14 Steve's Lane, Marshfield, Maine. Prior to opening, families would have to travel to the children's advocacy center in Bangor. A local CAC reduces the barriers in navigating a sometimes complex system while connecting the child and family with resources and support. "The

CAC is committed to minimizing trauma and promoting healing for children and their families following the allegation of sexual abuse," explained Julia Miller, Program Director of Prevention and Sexual Assault Services. "The program provides a streamlined, timely, and evidence-based community response in a safe and neutral environment."

## HOPE STORIES: RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE

*"I am a person in long-term recovery, and for me, that means that I have not found it necessary to pick up a drink or a drug to change how I'm feeling since January 20, 2016. Since coming into recovery, I have become a loving member of my family, and someone people can count on. I am beyond grateful for the life I have." – Stacie*

*"In May 2021, I was knocking on death's door due to my addiction. It was at this point in my life that I found the desire to fight for my sobriety and to be the loving husband and father I knew I could be. My wife and best friend said she would walk hand in hand with me on my journey, but I had to do the work. From that day forward, I have continued to fight for my recovery because I am worth it." – Neil*

*"Unhealed wounds, childhood traumas, and a lack of a higher power placed me on a path that I was sure I would never come back from. December 18, 2020, I stood on the path to recovery, barefoot, broken, and scared. It has been the best path I've ever taken. Some days are hard, but every day is worth it. Twenty-two months of recovery have given me a higher power, a business of my own, self-love, a feeling of worthiness, and most recently, my first very own home." – Jennifer*

*"I met a lot of supportive people who shared my story and had my back no matter what. They became family. They taught me how to be a mother, a daughter, a granddaughter, an aunt, and a member of the community again. For that, I will forever be thankful. We do recover." – Kristine*

# AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS

## MOUD ACCESS INCREASES ACROSS SERVICE AREA

A five-year, \$2.5 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) awarded in July 2021 has allowed AMHC to expand MOUD (Medication for Opioid Disorder) across all three counties. Previously known as Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), AMHC has expanded access to MOUD clinics in Aroostook County at the outpatient offices in Madawaska, Caribou, Presque Isle, Houlton, and Hancock County at the Downeast Treatment Center. In addition, a new clinic has been added in Washington County at the Machias Outpatient Office. “This grant has also provided an opportunity for AMHC to offer more than one type of medication to our clients,” explains Clem Deveau, LCSW, CCS, Program Director of Behavioral Health and Integration. “As with any medication, some clients respond better to one type versus another. By having more than one option available, we have a greater chance of helping our clients succeed in their treatment and recovery from substance use disorder.”

## NALOXONE OFFERED TO ALL INDIVIDUALS LEAVING AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL

Funding from the agency’s Health Resources Administration Services (HRSA) Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) Implementation Grant\* has made it possible for all individuals leaving the Aroostook County Jail to leave with a naloxone kit. “Individuals with substance use disorder who are released from jail are particularly vulnerable to overdose,” said Erik Lamoreau, Project Coordinator for the grant. “Before they are discharged, individuals receive education on their reduced tolerance and how to administer naloxone.” Lamoreau worked closely with Sheriff Shawn Gillen and his team to implement the program, which is receiving statewide recognition. Sheriff Gillen reports: “We are pleased that from May 1, 2022, to September 15, 2022, AMHC and ACJ distributed 75 kits of naloxone to individuals released from incarceration. We believe we are saving lives through this initiative.”



## EXPANSION OF RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FACILITY RECEIVES FEDERAL AND STATE SUPPORT

AMHC’s Adult Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) will soon expand from 12 to 16 beds. In 2021, the AMHC Board of Directors approved the purchase of a property at 176 Academy Street in Presque Isle, Maine, with the intent to expand the RTF, pending funding. In 2022, AMHC was approved for a \$1,000,000 Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) Congressionally Directed Spending grant with additional funding awarded by the State of Maine. Funds will be used to renovate the interior of the building to support a residential facility that is handicap accessible with individual bedrooms, private meeting spaces, a designated medication management room and an exercise room. “These amenities are not available in our current location,” explains Lorraine Chamberlain, LCSW, CCS, Program Director of Behavioral Health and Integration. “We are looking forward to opening this state-of-the-art facility in 2023.”

## CHILDREN’S CRISIS STABILIZATION UNIT TEAM TURNS A CHALLENGE INTO AN OPPORTUNITY

Workforce shortages have created challenges for every industry, and behavioral health is no exception. Earlier this summer, the Children’s Stabilization Crisis Unit (CCSU) in Fort Fairfield experienced shortages that prevented its ability to provide 24/7 services. Instead of temporarily closing, the staff proposed a pilot project to offer a drop-in youth center during the summer. The team takes pride in working together to identify creative solutions to continue serving the community’s needs. “The State of Maine approved our pilot project, and it was very successful,” explains Sarah Wright, Program Director of Crisis Services. “This was a win-win for our community and staff: for parents and guardians and their children who could utilize behavioral health supports during the day; for existing staff to continue to work; and for new staff to receive on-the-job training.” As of September 11, 2022, the CCSU is again offering 24/7 services.

## COVID RESPONSE FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE MAINE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Maine Community Foundation provided AMHC with a \$15,000 grant to support the agency’s organizational and programmatic expenses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the third COVID Response Fund donated by the foundation.



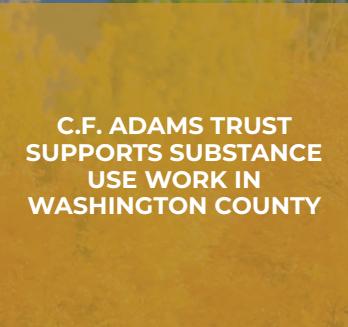
## **AMHC PARTNERS WITH MCD GLOBAL TO OFFER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NAVIGATORS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY**

AMHC is pleased to be a key partner with MCD Global Health, who received a two-year, nearly \$1,000,000 award from “Pull Up for Maine” to fund mental health telehealth supports for youth in school system AOS 90 Princeton, East Range, Woodland, located in Washington County. As a rural, underserved area, it will support Behavioral Health Navigators to deliver mental health services to students in Pre-K through 12. An estimated 120 unduplicated students will receive 2,736 hours of telehealth behavioral health services during the grant period.



## **YOUTH PREVENTION EFFORTS EXPAND ACROSS SERVICE AREA**

Recent federal grants have allowed AMHC to expand youth prevention services. “Although efforts unexpectedly stalled during the pandemic, the agency is pleased to build on the youth prevention work established through Aroostook Teen Leadership Camp (ATLC) and Maine Youth Action Network,” explains Julia Miller, Program Director of Prevention and Sexual Assault Services. “We have extended our work to the Downeast area with a prevention specialist who is offering outreach and support to schools, youth, and youth leaders with evidence-based programming in mental health and substance use tools including life and leadership skills, bullying, dangers of using substances and more. We anticipate hiring an additional prevention specialist in 2023 to expand efforts throughout Hancock and Washington counties.”



## **C.F. ADAMS TRUST SUPPORTS SUBSTANCE USE WORK IN WASHINGTON COUNTY**

The C.F. Adams Trust committed \$225,000 over three years to assist AMHC in its collaborative work with Community Caring Collaborative, Healthy Acadia, and Sunrise Economic Council in Washington County to address substance use challenges in that region. In a thoughtful gesture to thank the substance use staff in Washington County for their hard work, the trustees gifted an additional \$5,000 for scheduling time for activities that foster collaboration and relationship building among the team.



## **AMHC AWARDED HRSA RCORP BEHAVIORAL HEALTH GRANT**

In August 2022, AMHC received a \$2 million, four-year grant from Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), which provides funding to expand access to behavioral health services across our service area. The agency is pleased to have the following partners support the deliverables of the project: the University of Maine Presque Isle, Healthy Acadia, Jonesport-Beals (School Union 103), and the City of Calais. Together the group will collaborate with other community stakeholders to increase access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services.



## **AMHC SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES AWARDED STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN GRANT**

The Department of Public Safety and Justice Council granted \$29,367 to Sexual Assault Services allowing the program to do a train-the-trainer series and a 10-week support group led by Jennifer Storm, author of Blackout Girl and Awakening Blackout Girl. “Creating safe spaces for survivors and advocates of sexual assault is critical to individuals willing to participate in support groups,” shares Julia Miller, Program Director of Prevention and Sexual Assault Services. “This funding provided an opportunity for participants to engage in a unique experience with the author as well as training for our educator/advocates so we can offer the support group to survivors throughout 2023.”

\*This is supported by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant #GA1RH42873-01-00. The information, conclusions, and opinions expressed in this product are those of the authors, and no endorsement by FORHP, HRSA, or HHS is intended or should be inferred.

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION INVESTMENTS

Recent improvements in AMHC's financial position, combined with taking advantage of funding opportunities that focus on staff development, have allowed the agency to support several initiatives that will have long-term benefits to staff retention. "The previous decade was financially challenging for AMHC," explains Ellen Bemis, CEO. "We have worked hard to offer competitive wages, benefits, and staff training and development opportunities. These items will remain a top priority as we seek to become the behavioral health employer of choice."

## AMHC PRIORITIZES EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The results of a 2019 employee survey have assisted the agency in prioritizing the types of benefits most important to employees. With the agency in a stronger financial position, AMHC's board of directors has been pleased to approve the following:



Reinstated employee  
retirement match &  
increased to 4% in 2021



Restarted career  
development & tuition  
reimbursement programs



Increased vacation rollover  
amount & added vacation  
sellback program



Updated employee wage  
scales & compensation  
guidelines

## FARRIS FOUNDATION HOME COMMUNITY FUND SUPPORTS STAFF DEVELOPMENT

AMHC is grateful to the Celia Lipton Farris and Victor W. Farris Foundation Home Community Fund of the Maine Community Foundation for granting an extension of \$50,000 in funding through 2022. The extension provided the agency with the opportunity to expand staff training in trauma-informed care.

## AMHC IS DESIGNATED RECOVERY FRIENDLY EMPLOYER

AMHC has joined the Northeastern Workforce Development Board's (NWDB) Recovery Friendly Employer network. "By joining this initiative, AMHC reinforces its commitment to a healthy, safe, and stigma-free work environment to eliminate barriers to recovery for those impacted by addiction," said Brittany Ballard, Director of Human Resources. "Being a designated Recovery Friendly Employer is a great step in AMHC formally declaring the agency's support for recovery." A major goal of the network is for employers to formally recognize their support of recovery and then decide how that can be implemented within our workplace practices. AMHC strives to adopt a culture that openly supports recovery, which can improve employee satisfaction and better our community.



## FIRST SUBSTANCE USE STAFF RETREAT DAY

AMHC recently held a substance use staff retreat for a team building day. Because staff work across three counties, it was the first time many members had met one another in person. "The point of the day was to build connection," said Erik Lamoreau, CADC, Project Coordinator and event organizer. "It was important to bring this group together as a reminder that although we are spread out, we are still one team and can rely on each other for support." Partial funding from the agency's Health Resources Administration Services (HRSA) Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) Implementation Grant\* made this day possible.

\*This is supported by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant #GA1RH42873-01-00. The information, conclusions, and opinions expressed in this product are those of the authors, and no endorsement by FORHP, HRSA, or HHS is intended or should be inferred.

# STAFF RECOGNITION

We recognize **22** staff for their milestone anniversaries. Altogether these individuals have provided **265** years of service to AMHC, and we celebrate their tremendous accomplishments!

## 5-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Jean Anderson, RN  
Behavioral Health Home Nurse, Caribou Outpatient

Stacey Baker, LCSW  
Therapist-Consultant, Presque Isle Outpatient

Elizabeth Bartlett, OQMHP-C-PNMI, MHRT-1  
Prov., MHRT-CSP  
Children's Crisis Counselor, Calais Children's Crisis Stabilization Unit

Sarah Corbett, CADC, LSX  
Substance Use Disorder Counselor, Caribou Outpatient

Julie Clavette, MHRT C  
Residential Counselor Shift Lead, Madawaska Group Home

Nathan DeFelice, MHRT-C, MHRT-CSP  
Project Coordinator CCBHC, Central Administration

Susan Labbe  
Medical Assistant, Presque Isle Outpatient

Kimberly Morrison, LCSW  
Substance Use Counselor, Ellsworth Outpatient

Amelia Stiles, MHRT-CSP  
Mobile Emergency Services Specialist, Ellsworth Outpatient

Myra Tardie-Theriault  
Administrative Support Specialist, Fort Kent Outpatient

Brian Walton, OQMHP-C-PNMI, MHRT-CSP  
Manager, Crisis/Residential Units, Calais Children's Crisis Stabilization/Residential Units

## 10-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Heather Berce, LCSW, CADC, MHRT-C  
Therapist-Consultant, Madawaska Outpatient

Valerie Bernard, MHRT-1  
Residential Counselor-Residential Lead, Skyhaven

Andrea Chasse, LCSW, MHRT-C, OQMHP-C-PNMI  
Therapist-Consultant, Caribou Outpatient

Shannon Lane, MHRT-CSP  
Mobile Emergency Services Specialist, Calais Outpatient

## 15-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Norma Watson, LCSW  
Therapist/Consultant, Presque Isle Outpatient

Louise Nadeau, LCSW  
Therapist-Consultant, St. John Valley Outpatient  
Office Manager, Fort Kent/Madawaska Outpatient

## 20-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Katherine Bartlett, OQMHP-CR, MHRT-CSP  
Family Services Advocate, Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), Fort Fairfield

Lois Watson, ADCA, MHRT-I, OQMHP-C-PNMI  
Residential Counselor, Skyhaven

## 25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Dave Harris, MHRT-C  
Adult BHH HHC/Community Support/Skyhaven Case Manager Caribou Apartments In-house Site Case Manager and Supported Housing/HUD Program After Hours Representative/Emergency Services Specialist

Jamie McClay, MHRT-I, RCA  
Residential Services Manager, Skyhaven/Madawaska Group Home

## 50 YEARS AND COUNTING—THANK YOU!



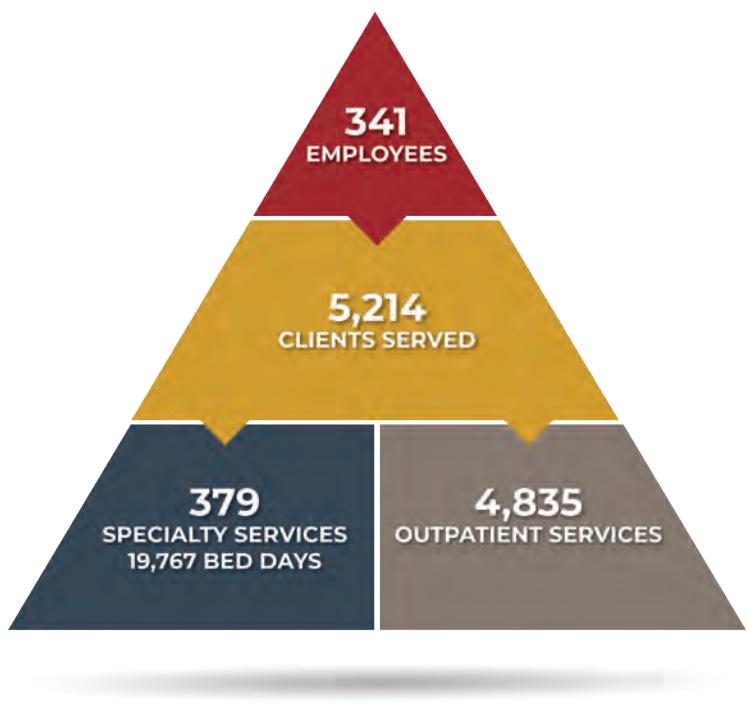
Bonnie Davenport, Executive Administrative Assistant

Bonnie began her career at AMHC in 1972 as the Executive Administrative Assistant, a position she continues to hold to this day. As Ellen Bemis, CEO states: "I will never recognize another employee for five decades of service. It is fitting, therefore, to acknowledge this significant anniversary milestone in this year's annual report." During her tenure, Bonnie has worked under every AMHC Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, including Bob Vickers for twenty-three years, Wes Davidson for sixteen years, Greg Disy for ten years, and current CEO Ellen Bemis, for four years. She has seen the staff expand from 30 to more than 300 and kept pace with program growth in Aroostook, Hancock, and Washington counties.

Bonnie states: "The agency has grown rapidly over the years yet has maintained its mission and values to become an excellent behavioral health center. It has provided me the opportunity to expand and develop my own professional skills, in addition to meeting and working with a lot of exceptional people. I truly enjoy working with the staff and the Board of Directors over my 50-year tenure with AMHC."

Bonnie holds an associate degree in Secretarial Sciences from Northern Maine Community College (NMCC). Bonnie has three children and three grandchildren.

# IMPACT REPORT & FINANCIALS



**61%**  
ADULTS  
OF THE 5,214 CLIENTS SERVED

**24%**  
CHILDREN  
OF THE 5,214 CLIENTS SERVED

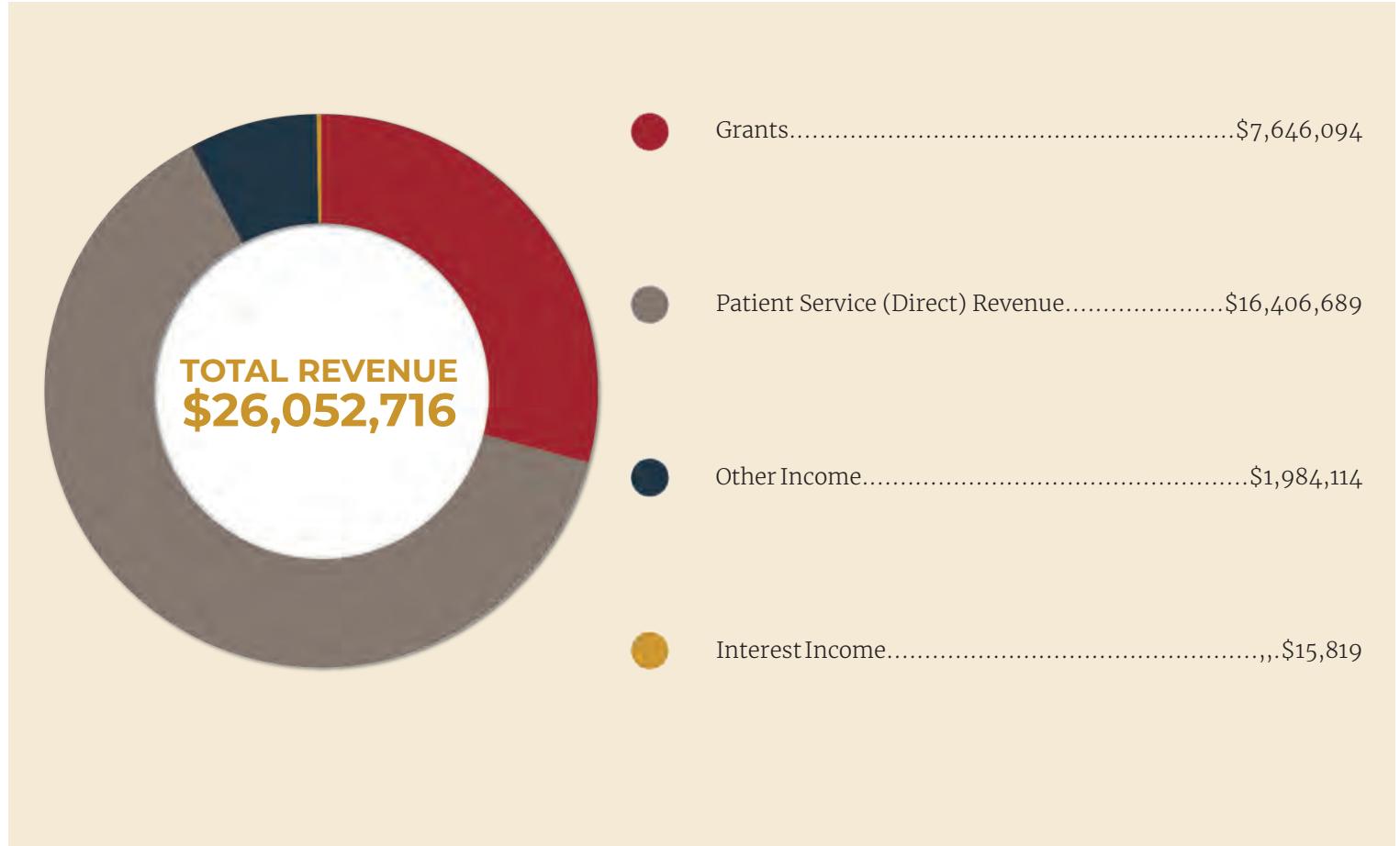


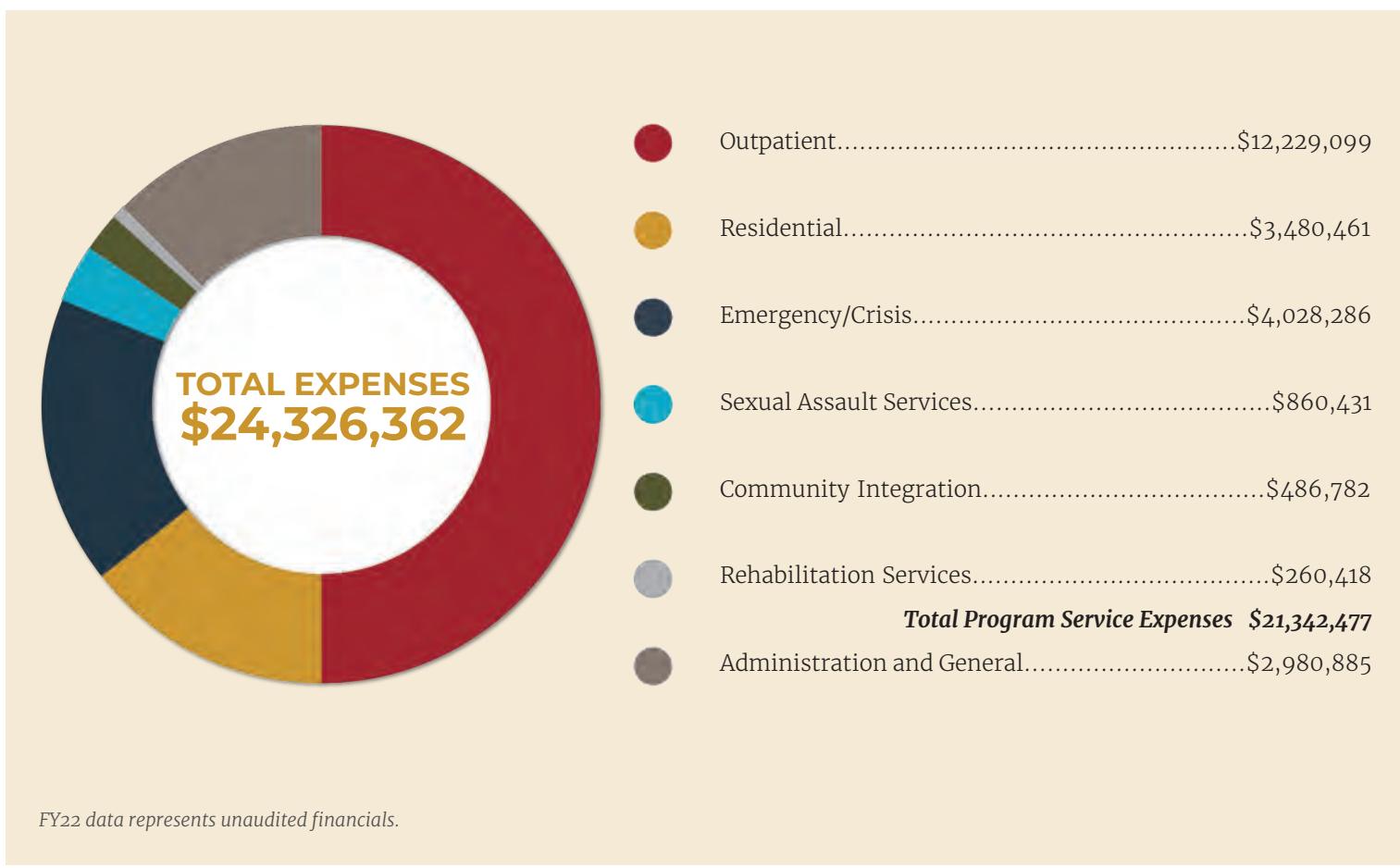
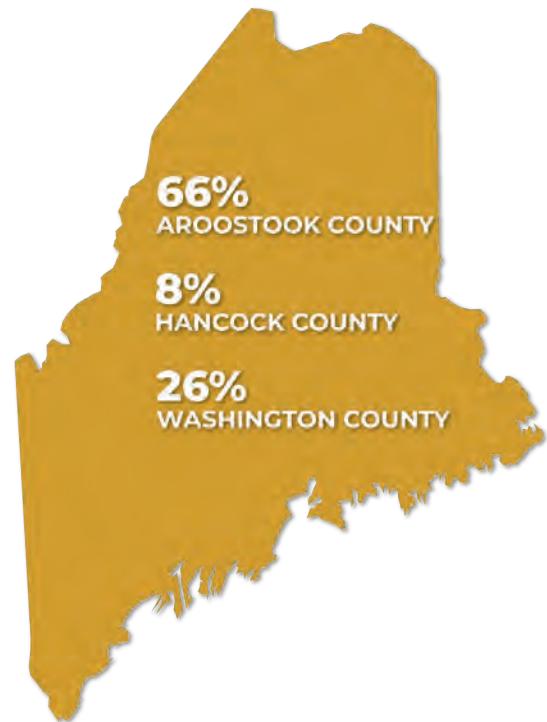
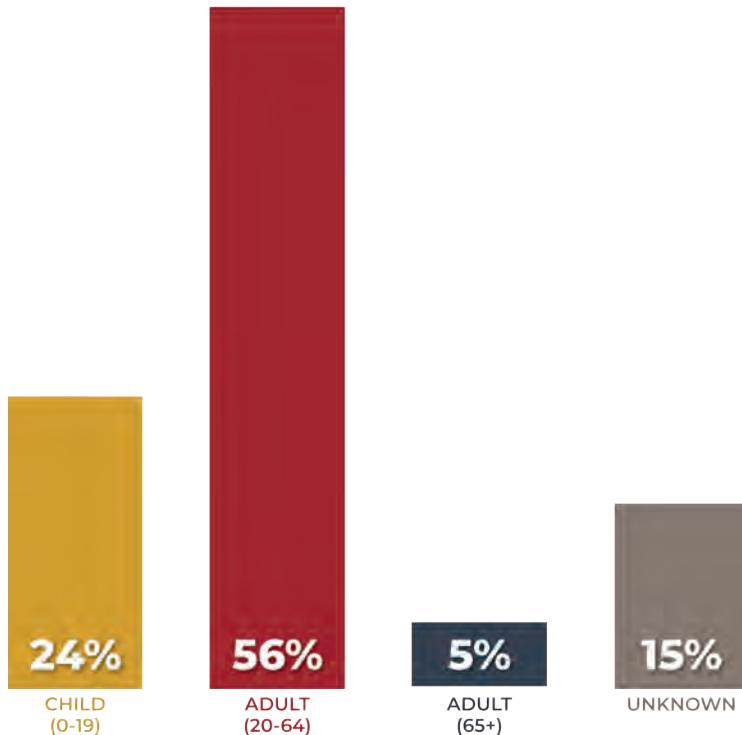
15% UNKNOWN OF THE 5,214 CLIENTS SERVED

**47%**  
MEN  
OF THE 5,214 CLIENTS SERVED

**46%**  
WOMEN  
OF THE 5,214 CLIENTS SERVED

**7%**  
OTHER/UNKNOWN  
OF THE 5,214 CLIENTS SERVED







# AMHC

*Making a difference in your community every day.*

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