ECIAAA

Age Strong
Live Strong

East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging

Annual Report

Fiscal Years 2025-2026

ECIAAA

EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS AREA AGENCY ON AGING

54th Anniversary
1972-2026

Letter from the Chairperson of the Corporate Board

Good Afternoon and Welcome,

It is my honor to welcome you as once again we celebrate the privilege of helping the older adults of our 16-county area to have more comfortable and meaningful lives.

When the Magic Kingdom theme park opened at Walt Disney World on October 1, 1971, a visitor told Roy Disney, Walt's brother, that it was a shame that Walt did not live to see it, since Walt had passed away five years earlier. Roy replied, "Walt did see it. That's why it's here." Great things happen when people embrace a vision, and because you and the people of your respective agencies have "Embraced the Vision" of helping older adults, a lot of good has been accomplished. Because you and your teams "Embraced the Vision," during 2025-2026:

1. The East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging (ECIAAA) is serving over 23,900 older adults by awarding $9.1M in federal and state funding to a network of 21 community agencies throughout East Central Illinois.
2. ECIAAA funded nutrition providers operate 53 congregate and 56 home delivered meal nutrition sites serving over 8,000 older adults, helping them to have more healthy diets.
3. The ECIAAA Board of Directors, Advisory Council and staff members continue to implement the steps contained within our strategic plan. This focuses on carrying out ECIAAA's mission of leadership, advocacy, innovation, and collaboration in East Central Illinois.
4. On implementing the Illinois Social Connectedness Initiative, ECIAAA continues to support Pilot Projects in Champaign, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Livingston, Macon, McLean and Vermilion Counties serving 822 older adults.
5. ECIAAA works with community champions in Decatur, Moultrie County, and Champaign-Urbana which have been designated as Dementia Friendly Communities. Also, ECIAAA continues to provide leadership in launching the initiative in Bloomington-Normal.
6. ECIAAA received a Governor's Connecting Rural Illinoisans grant to fund a new 12-Passenger vehicle for Futures Connections to transport older adults in Ford County to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other activities for social engagement.
7. ECIAAA supported efforts in the establishment of Lindsey Life Adult Day Center in Decatur, fulfilling a longstanding need.
8. ECIAAA successfully advocated for Illinois funding ($5.3M) to continually support the AAA funded Caregiver Advisory Programs throughout the state, and for the sustained $63.3M for Home Delivered Meals for FY 2027. ECIAAA provides guidance to the Illinois Family Caregiver Coalition in supporting and advocating for Family/Informal Caregivers.
9. ECIAAA sponsors the Regional Ombudsman Program serving residents of 145 long-term care facilities. The Ombudsmen respond to inquiries and complaints, provide community presence, and direct advocacy.
10. ECIAAA supports five Adult Protective Services Agencies responding to victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Yes, much is being accomplished, but we recognize it is because of each of you that have "Embraced the Vision." With that in mind, please accept our heartfelt "Thanks!" But there are still more older adults out there that need our help. Will you join me in continuing to "Embrace the Vision" for 2026-2027?

Sincerely,

Ron Black, ECIAAA Corporate Board Chairperson

FY 2026 Board, Council and Staff

Board of Directors	
Officers	**County**
Ronald Black, Chairperson	Macon
Mindy Morgan, 1st Vice Chairperson	Macon
Margaret Messer, 2nd Vice Chairperson	Coles
Kathy Munday, Treasurer	Champaign
Mary Liz Wright, Secretary	Edgar
Members	
Joan Dixon	Champaign
Tom Webb	Cumberland
LuAnn Armantrout	Iroquois
LaKeshia Fox-Mizell	Macon
Virginia Jordan-Benson	McLean
Jamie Boas	Piatt
Melinda Wright	Shelby
Karen Donovan (Ex-Officio)	Vermillion

Advisory Council	
Members	**County**
Patrick Harness	Champaign
Nicole Dowling	Champaign
Sandy Bowman	Cumberland
Sheila Greuel	Coles
Judith Ondercho	Ford
Peggy Busey	Ford
Patty Haberkorn	Livingston
Julie Walker	Macon
Greg Fitzgerald	Macon
Jess Ray	McLean
Angela Hogan	Moultrie
Emily Dobson	Piatt
Cheri Burcham	Shelby
Tammy Leigh	Vermillion
Mary Catherine Roberson	Vermillion
Julie Bobbit	At Large

Staff	
Susan C. Real, Chief Executive Officer	Christian Weber, Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Amanda Hyde, Director of Operations	Jon Geier, Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Kelly Elsey Coffey, Controller	Katie Kobel, Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Kathryn Johnson, Community Liaison	Taylor Vazquez, Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Amber Carrier, Executive Services Assistant	Jen Hooker, Service Compliance Coordinator
John Thornburg, Grants Management Program Analyst	Jennifer Roberts, Service Compliance Coordinator
Ryan Gannaway, Regional Ombudsman	Kimra Shafer, Service Compliance Coordinator
Carmen Reyna, Long-Term Care Ombudsman	Wendy Lisanby, Service Compliance Coordinator

The Leadership Award in Honor of Dr. Arthur H. Larsen



To

Lindsey Communities

Lindsey Life

Mike Berkes, Director of Program Development

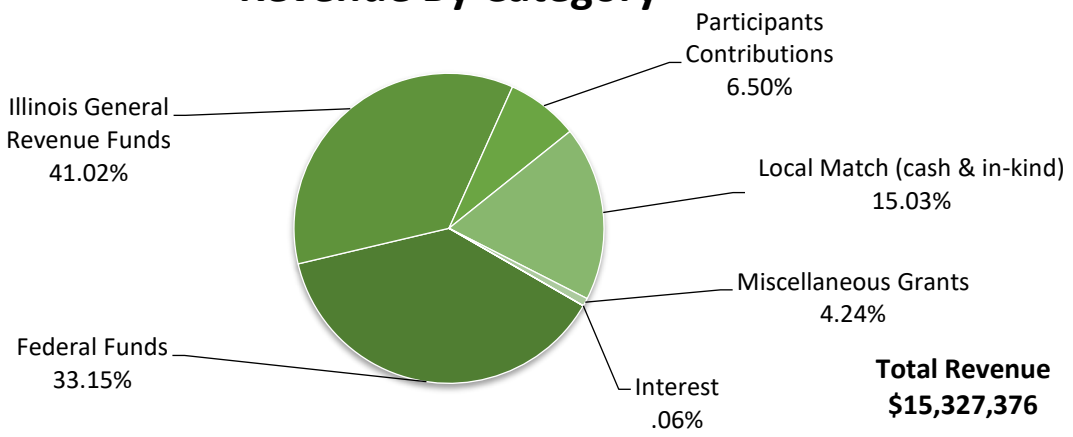
Laura Edwards, Vice President of Home & Community – Based Services



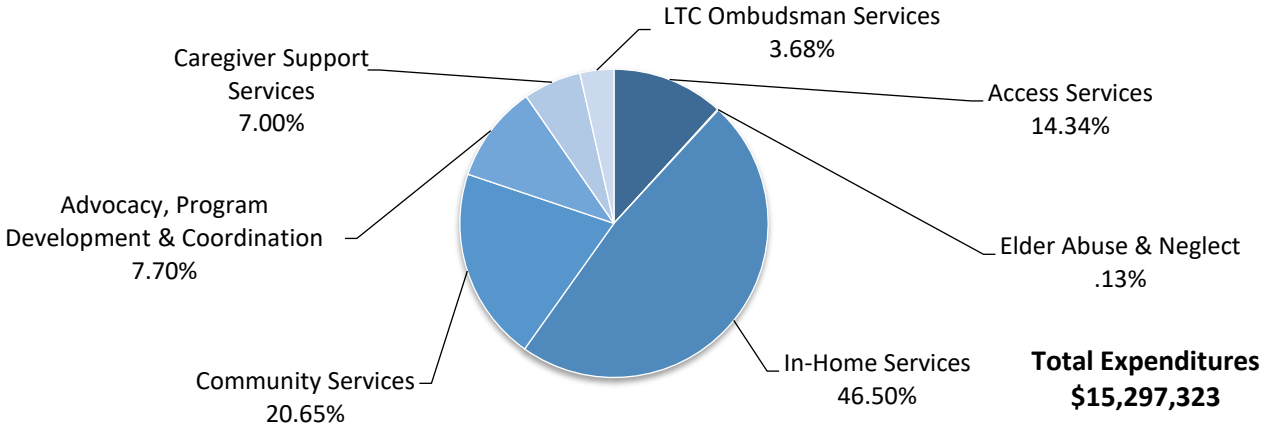
ECIAAA is honoring Lindsey Communities for their vision and leadership in expanding critical Adult Day Services in East Central Illinois.

Prior Year Audited Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue By Category



Expenditures By Service Category



FY 25/26 Aging Network Services	Persons Served	Service Units Provided
11 Senior Information Services/Coordinated Point of Entry	16,617	57,065 contacts
11 Options Counseling Programs	3,392	9,055 contacts
4 Congregate Meal Programs	3,902	139,996 meals
4 Home Delivered Meal Programs	4,206	653,980 meals
2 Legal Assistance Providers	381	2,487 hours
9 Caregiver Advisor Programs – Caregivers	1,169	7,709 contacts
9 Caregiver Advisor Programs – Grandparents Raising Grandchildren	340	3,143 contacts
7 Respite Service Programs	8	105 hours
2 Gerontological Counseling Programs	49	377 hours
9 Caregiver/GRG Gap Filling Programs	104	104 units
3 Diabetes Self-Management Programs/Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs/Fit'n Strong	67	552 sessions
3 Matter of Balance Programs/Bingocize	166	1324 sessions
1 Aging Master Program	16	68 sessions
ECIAAA – Sponsored Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program	Advocates on behalf of 10,733 residents in 145 facilities	
4 Adult Protective Service (APS) Providers	Investigated a total of 2,122 Reports: 446 reported victims were under age 60 & 1,664 reported victims were over age 60	
6 Care Coordination Units funded by the Illinois Community Care Program	Coordinated community-based services for 3,305 clients	
8 Reducing Social Isolation Pilot Projects	Served 822 clients through friendly visits, telephone reassurance, and outreach activities	

FY2025- FY2027 Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT:

Our mission is to lead and advocate for inclusive resources and services that empower the optimal aging of East Central Illinois' diverse older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their care partners.

VISION STATEMENT:

To optimize aging through innovative person-centered services in East Central Illinois.

CORE PRINCIPLES:

Principle 1: **Lead**

We are committed to leading through collaborative planning, effective communication and oversight, advocacy, and innovative service development to meet the diverse needs of those we serve.

Principle 2: **Advocate**

We are committed to optimal aging through advocacy that is person-centered, supported by public policy, and provided by adequately funded services.

Principle 3: **Innovate**

We are committed to encouraging, valuing, and supporting new and creative service ideas that meet the needs of those we serve.

Principle 4: **Collaborate**

We are committed to strengthening programs and services through inclusive and diverse community partnerships.

Nine Lights to Guide You for Everything Aging Asks of You

"Keep Your Mind Sharp, Keep Your Life Full"

"Wisdom and Potential- Generations Growing Together"

"Helping You Navigate to Your Right Health and Care"

"Financial Stability to See Your Future"

"Backup for the Selfless Everyday Heroes"

"Life Where You Love"

"Advocating for a Better Tomorrow"

"Illuminating the Path to Aging in Place"

"Tech to Connect, Not Disconnect"

ECIAAA FY 2025 Annual Luncheon

On September 17, 2025, ECIAAA Programs and Planning Staff recognized 9 Senior Information Services/Coordinated Points of Entry. Recognizing those service providers for exceptional performance, illuminating the path to aging in place in East Central Illinois. Mike O'Donnell, Former Executive Director of ECIAAA, was the keynote speaker. State Representative Sharon Chung, IL 91st District, joined in celebrating Jess Ray, former Normal Township Supervisor, in receiving the 2025 Governor's Engaging Aging Award, presented by Lisa Zuurbier, Manager, Community Relations & Outreach, Illinois Department on Aging.



ECIAAA FY 2025 Staff Recognition

At ECIAAA's annual meeting on September 17, 2025, staff received recognition for their excellent years of service. Ron Black, ECIAAA Corporate Board President, presented Susan Real, CEO, with a 40-year service award. Susan Real honored Amanda Hyde, Director of Operations, for 15 years of service. Susan Real recognized Christian Weber, Long-Term Care Ombudsman, and Jennifer Roberts, Service Compliance Coordinator with 5 years of service.



From left to right: **Ron Black**, ECIAAA Corporate Board President; **Susan Real**, CEO; **Amanda Hyde**, Director of Operations; **Christian Weber**, Long-Term Care Ombudsman and **Jennifer Roberts**, Service Compliance Coordinator.

Advocacy in Washington, DC

Susan Real, CEO, along with other AAA directors met with legislators at the USAging 2026 Policy Briefing in Washington D.C. on March 16 - 19, 2026 to discuss Older American interests and concerns. Susan met with Representative Nikki Budzinski, IL 13th District, Representative, Mary Miller, IL 15th District, and legislative staffers from U.S. State Senator, Tammy Duckworth, Representative Darin LaHood, IL 16th District, and Representative Mike Bost, IL 12th District.



Left to right: Left photo – **Maddy Bynes-DeVaney**, I4A Legislative Consultant; **Representative Nikki Budzinski**, IL 13th District; **Susan Real,** CEO, ECIAAA; Representative **Mary Miller,** IL 15th District.

Advocacy Events in East Central Illinois

On April 9, 2026, U.S. Senator Doris Turner, IL 48th District, held a senior fair at the Salvation Army in Decatur. ECIAAA participated as a vendor. Approximately 250 attended.



Photo on right: **U.S. Senator Doris Turner**, IL 48th District



U.S. Representative Nikki Budzinski, IL 13th District hosted two Older Americans Act Advocacy Days at the Helen Stevick Center at Family Service in Champaign on December 19, 2025 and April 7, 2026. Representative Budzinski met with constituents to discuss the vital role of the Older Americans Act in supporting local older adults and family caregivers. The conversation highlighted how federal services help older adults live independently in their own homes while empowering them to continue actively contributing to their communities.

Left to right: **Susan Real**, CEO, ECIAAA; **U.S. Representative Nikki Budzinski**, IL 13th District; **Nicole Dowling**, Executive Director, Family Service of Champaign County

Dementia Friendly America Communities in East Central Illinois

Dementia Friendly America (DFA) communities are rapidly expanding across East Central Illinois to better support individuals living with dementia-related diseases. Following the existing designations of the City of Decatur and Moultrie County, Champaign-Urbana officially joined the initiative in December 2025, with Bloomington-Normal anticipated to receive its designation in September 2026. To support this growth, the ECIAAA has formed a strong partnership with the U of I Extension Office serving Champaign, Ford, Iroquois and Vermilion and U of I Extension Office serving Livingston, McLean and Woodford. Together, we are expanding Dementia Friends training focused on reducing the stigma surrounding dementia and highlighting how individuals living with the condition can continue to actively contribute to their communities. In SFY 2026, 439 individuals were trained as Dementia Friends in East Central Illinois. Futures communities being explored for DFA designation include Gibson City, Pontiac and/or Watseka.

Dementia Friendly Highlighted Events in FY 2026

Dementia Friendly Decatur
A Member of the Dementia Friendly America Network ®







Dementia Friendly Decatur held a "No Hush" movie, *White Christmas*, on November 3, 2025 with 22 participants. Santa and Paw Print Ministries joined the festivities.



Other Dementia Friendly Decatur Events such as Scovill Zoo Days continued to be successful in its 4th year. Admission to the zoo is free and includes refreshments and social activities, including interacting with the animals. A second "No Hush movie, *"Seven Brides for Seven Brothers,"* was shown at the historic Lincoln Square Theatre in Decatur on April 15, 2026 with 29 participants.



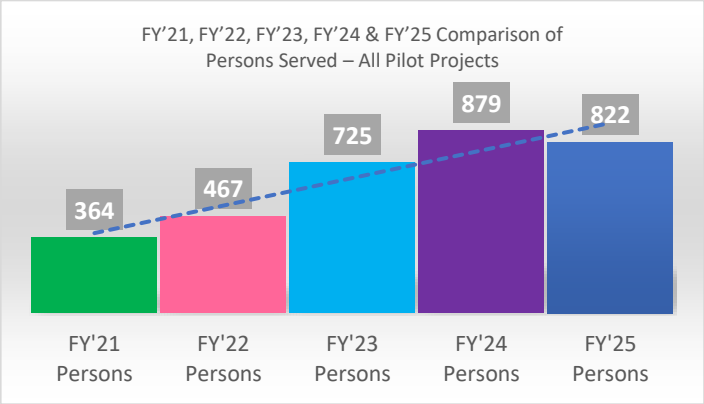
DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CHAMPAIGN-URBANA

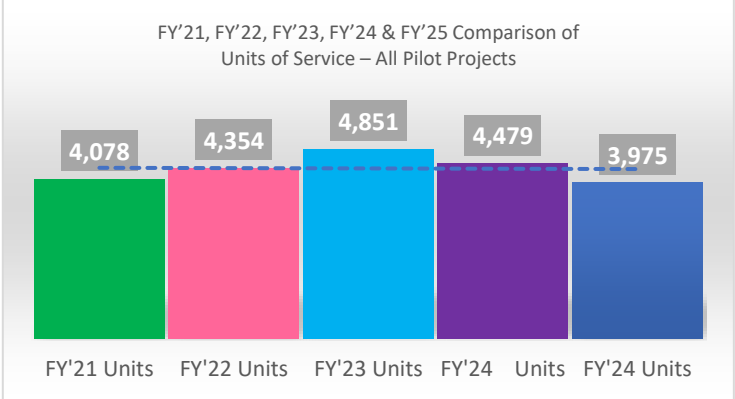
Dementia Friendly Champaign-Urbana launched its kick-off event on March 23, 2026 at the Urbana Free Public Library. There were 40 in attendance. Presentations were made by the Alzheimer's Association on "Building Brain Healthy Habits" and CRIS Healthy Aging on "Wits Workout." A "Live Dementia" interactive simulation demonstration was provided by Brookdale Senior Living.



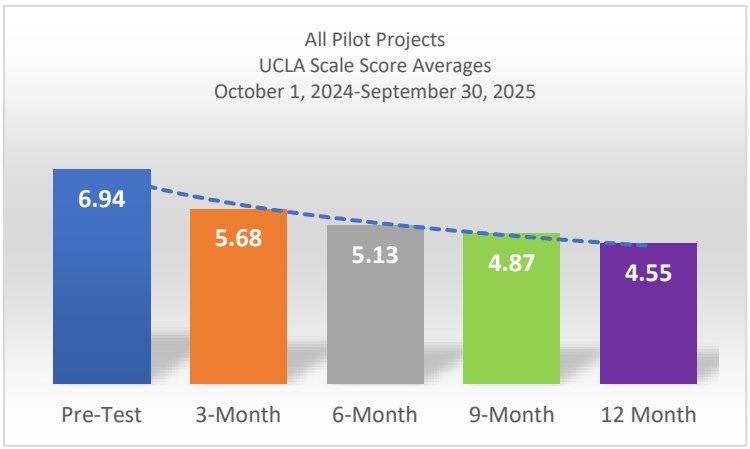
Dementia Friendly Moultrie County continues to explore opportunities to reach persons living with dementia and their family caregivers. With the anticipation of Bloomington-Normal receiving designation from Dementia Friendly America, a kick-off event is being planned for early fall 2026.

Social Connections in East Central Illinois





ECIAAA's Social Connections 8 pilot projects serve 10 counties including Champaign, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Livingston, Macon, McLean and Vermilion. UCLA Scale score averages are collected up to 12th month of participation in services. Average UCLA Scale scores improved 53% over the 12-month span. Social Connections are a critical pillar of healthy aging, impacting physical, mental, and emotional well-being.



Connecting Rural Illinoisans

ECIAAA received a Connecting Rural Illinoisans grant to fund a new 12-passenger vehicle for Futures Connections to transport older adults in Ford County to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other activities for social engagement. The Livingston County Regional Planning Commission served as the Program Compliance Oversight Monitor (PCOM).





Left to right: **Susan Real**, ECIAAA, CEO; **Patty Haberkorn**, Executive Director, Future's Unlimited; **Tim Nuss**, Ford County Board District 2; **Monte Andrew**, Program Compliance Oversight Monitor, Ford, Iroquois & Livingston Counties; **Cindy Ihrke**, Ford County Board District 2; and **Torin Mettille**, Director of Transportation, Futures Connections

Adult Day Services Re-Opens in Decatur



The Lindsey Life Adult Day Center held its official ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 27, 2026. The center is located at 1685 S. Franklin Street Rd., Decatur providing a secure, home-like daytime environment focusing on person-centered care, therapeutic socialization, medical monitoring, and gives family caregivers essential respite.

Left to right: **Mike Berkes**, Director of Program Development, Lindsey Life; **Laura Edwards**, Vice President of Home & Community Based Services, Lindsey Communities; **Susan Real**, CEO, ECIAAA; **Ron Black**, ECIAAA Corporate Board President; **Lisa Zuurbier**, Manager, Community Relations & Outreach, Illinois Department on Aging

Groundbreaking Ceremony, Decatur Park District's Clubhouse at Scovill Acres

The Decatur Park District held a groundbreaking ceremony on May 5, 2026, for a new 55-and-older clubhouse at Scovill Acres. The facility will offer recreational programs and supportive services, and it will house Lindsey Life Adult Day Services to promote health and community connection for older adults.



Photo on left (at podium): **Clay Gerhard**, Executive Director, Decatur Park District; Photo on right (at podium): **Micky McNaughton**, Senior Program Manager, Scovill Park West Activity Center

Illinois Brain Health & Healthy Aging Conference in Champaign

ECIAAA's Community Liaison served on the planning committee for the 2025 Brain Health and Healthy Aging Conference, held November 14, 2025 at Champaign's I-Hotel, which drew 151 attendees to sessions on healthy habits, care advancements, caregiver support and panel discussion. The Community Liaison is on the planning committee for the 2026 conference.



Photo on right (left to right): **Scott Burnsmier**, Alzheimer's Association Illinois Board Member; **Skye Satz**, Supervisor of Program Initiatives, CRIS Healthy Aging; **Dr. Daniel Llano**, Neurologist & Physician-Scientist at Carle Foundation Hospital; **Liz Sullard**, Synergy Homecare & Alzheimer's Association Community Educator Volunteer; and **Nick Hibbs**, Founder of Hometown Senior Care Advisors

Adult Protective Services Retreat

The ECIAAA Annual APS Retreat was held at the Scoville Activity Center in Decatur, IL on April 16, 2026. All APS staff from PSA 05's five APS provider agencies were invited to attend. This year's focus was on working with clients who have diminished capacity. Speakers included Leslie Evy and Marina Neufeld with Catholic Charities' guardianship program and Angela Boley with Land of Lincoln Legal Aid.



Photo on Left (left to right): **Jennifer Roberts**, Service Compliance Coordinator, ECIAAA; **Marina Neufeld**, Senior Service Supervisor, Catholic Charities; **Leslie Evy**, Elder Care Options Coordinator, Catholic Charities; **Carolyn Harmening**, Program Coordinator, IDoA; Photo on Right (left to right): **Angela Boley**, JD, LLM, Land of Lincoln Legal Aid; **Jennifer Roberts**, Service Compliance Coordinator, ECIAAA; **Carolyn Harmening**, Program Coordinator, IDoA

Thank You for Your Support!

ECIAAA

EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS AREA AGENCY ON AGING