

YOUR MONEY: INVESTING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

1st MidAmerica donates charity golf outing proceeds to Madison County Child Advocacy Center



Shown in photo, from left: Travis Widman, CAC Board Member; Jeff Whitaker, VP of Commercial Services and CAC Advisory Board Member; Elysa Robin, VP of Human Resources and CAC Friends Board Member; James Cherry, SVP of Information Technology and CIO; Carrie Cohan, Executive Director for the CAC; Caroline Livingstone, Fund Development Specialist for the CAC; Alan Meyer, President and CEO; Sheriff Jeff Connor, CAC Board Member; Olivia Turner, Marketing Manager, and CAC Friends Board Vice President; Perry Withers, SVP of Lending and CLO; Bob Blacklock, SVP of Finance and CFO. (Photo courtesy of Madison County Child Advocacy Center)

Madison County Child Advocacy Center recently received more than \$26,000 from 1st MidAmerica Credit Union’s annual charity golf outing, as credit union officials presented the CAC with a check for \$26,614.

“Our partnership with the CAC has been a rewarding endeavor,” President and CEO of 1st MidAmerica Alan Meyer said. “The CAC is an incredible resource in our community and we are pleased to have such a positive impact on the organization.”

Since 2013, funds raised from 1st MidAmerica’s golf tournament have been donated to the CAC.

“The credit union is an active ‘partner in hope’ with the CAC and consistently supports its mission,” CAC Executive Director Carrie Cohan said. “The support that the Center received through this tournament is incredible. We are grateful for our long partnership with 1st MidAmerica and their investment in our mission and services.”

The CAC is a resource for children and families in Madison and Bond Counties experiencing an abuse allegation. The Center provides vital services to children and families including forensic interviews, case management services, on-site therapy services and prevention education.

Cohan said the CAC provides a safe haven for children to talk about the physical or sexual abuse they may have experienced and to help limit the number of times a child is interviewed.

“Before the CAC opened, a child who was a victim or witnessed a violent crime would often be interviewed by eight to 12 different people before the case went to trial,” Cohan said. “Because of the CAC, abused children no longer have to endure such a strenuous interviewing process and authorities are better able to prosecute abuse cases.”

Meyer said 1st MidAmerica Credit Union is committed to supporting their local communities, where their members live, work, learn, and play and to non-profit organizations such as the CAC. 1st MidAmerica is recognized in and out of the industry for an outstanding commitment to its members and communities and the RiverBend Growth Association recognized the credit union twice as a “Captain of the Riverbend” for community support.

At the state and national level, 1st MidAmerica received first-place awards for community support and financial education.

“We are grateful to our partners and the people in our community who choose to support us,” Meyer said.

Cohan said in 2023, the CAC would celebrate 20 years of fighting child abuse in Madison and Bond counties.

For more information on how to become a CAC donor, visit madco-cac.org, call (618) 296-5390, or email childadvocacy@madisoncountyl.gov. Readers can also visit the Madison County Child Advocacy Center website or follow them on Facebook @madcocac to learn more.

Community Hope Center: A community investment that offers spirit-filling returns

Community Hope Center (CHC), located in Cottage Hills, is a Jesus-centered “More-Than-Food-Pantry” that has been serving the Riverbend area for 34 years. “The main thing we do is food, but the most important thing we do is prayer,” said Paul Militzer, who is in his ninth year serving as Executive Director. “What sets CHC apart from all the other wonderful service agencies in the community is that every guest meets with a spiritual care volunteer who listens to them and prays for them if desired.”

CHC has transitioned to a “Guest-Choice” model of food distribution—people choose food they want, based on the number of people in their household. The food pantry features healthy foods and nutrition information. Guests can “shop” (there is no charge) for groceries every other week and can also receive clothes, household items, and toiletries. Other services include underwear and socks for children, basic medical care, and lunch at the “Soup for the Soul Café” for everyone—guests, volunteers, staff, and residents of the community. CHC also holds a Christmas toy giveaway and provides Easter baskets for children.

CHC wants to provide people with more than food; they want people to thrive and flourish. CHC’s mission is: Connecting neighbors through service and partnership to build flourishing lives and communities. CHC now offers “FreshStart” and “Community Navigation.” FreshStart offers one-to-one coaching to help participants meet their goals and overcome barriers. This

program has been proven to improve food security, self-sufficiency, life stability, nutrition, and overall well-being. Community Navigation provides a “warm hand-off” for guests to services in the community that can assist them in their special circumstances.

CHC would not exist without its dedicated, caring, volunteers. An average of 25 people volunteer daily. Positions include receptionist, intake, checker, bagger, stocker, driver, sorter (donations), spiritual care, community navigators, warehouse, food preparation/serving, and gardening. Group service days are welcomed as well. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Sherry Keller if interested.

Groceries are available by appointment Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to Noon, and Thursdays from 4 to 7 p.m. Call (618) 251-8021 to make an appointment and (618) 259-0959 for general information. Website: communityhopecenteril.org.

Donations of clothing and household items are accepted Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday between 9 a.m. and Noon, and occasionally on Saturday. Check CHC’s Facebook page for more information.

Opportunities to support and connect with CHC include volunteering, donating material goods, organizing a food drive, giving financially, and most importantly, praying. Call, or email Paul Militzer at pmilitzer.chc@gmail.com, to hear more about the ministry of CHC or to schedule a time for him to speak to your business, church, or group.



Community Hope Center

A “More than Food” Pantry

- Client Choice Food Pantry
- Household Items and Clothing
- A warm hand-off to Community Services
- FreshStart Program with one-on-one coaching
- Spiritual Care



1201 Hope Center Lane
Cottage Hills, IL 62018
Appointment Line: (618) 251-8021
Main Office: (618) 259-0959
www.communityhopecenteril.org



Community Hope Center

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partnership to build flourishing lives and communities.



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healthy relationships, loving homes,
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