



Community Action Wayne/Medina

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CAW/M Open House and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Showcased Renovated Lincoln Way Facility

Community Action Wayne/Medina (CAW/M), serving the community for nearly 50 years, renovated the former Lincoln Way Elementary School as its new Wayne County home to help better serve the community in a welcoming environment.

A capacity crowd of community partners, neighbors, customers, Head Start families, government representatives and former Lincoln Way Elementary school staff attended an open house on Thursday, June 25 at the repurposed center located at 905 Pittsburgh Avenue, Wooster. Following a ribbon cutting ceremony, attendees enjoyed open tours of the facility.

Renovation improvements of the \$2.5 million project feature the consolidation of Wooster Head Start classrooms, the agency's administrative offices, Wayne County housing and economic assistance programming and the agency's warehouse space. Many low-income Wooster residents have limited access to transportation so the Lincoln Way site's central location is a plus. The interior space of the former school was refurbished to create inviting Head Start classrooms, centralized training facilities, direct service provision offices and customer reception spaces, new security/IT monitoring system and gymnasium. A new commercial kitchen was installed, allowing staff to prepare all the food for Wayne County Head Start centers at the location. At the site, about 10,000 services will be provided, 119 Head Start children will attend the program and home base family visitors' offices will be housed.

"At the open house, the community saw the results of dedicated planning and met some of the individuals who made the project possible," said Melissa Pearce, President/CEO. "The center provides a much more inviting environment for our Head Start students, families and individuals who receive services supporting them in self-sufficiency."

The project will enhance CAW/M's environment of service delivery as it continues to advance its mission that the quality of life for the people served is improved by supporting their self-

sufficiency, improving their living conditions, providing early childhood education and leveraging community partnerships to support these positive impacts.

A focus for the project centers on the facility being a neighborhood anchor and community resource. The first community event was held on Memorial Day weekend at the site's parking lot – a Habitat for Humanity project through Crossroad Ministries sponsored by Parkview Christian Church. Many CAW/M staff participated.

“We want our Lincoln Way site to be seen as an opportunity destination,” Pearce said.

Refreshments for the evening were prepared by former Head Start student Stephany Norris who now operates the local catering business, Soiree Professionals.

Founded in 1966, CAW/M is committed to the mission of supporting low-income individuals in becoming self-sufficient while engaging in education as a life-long journey. CAW/M's signature programs, Head Start and Early Head Start, work to narrow the achievement gap for young children which may occur through the impact of poverty. This comprehensive program goes much beyond traditional education, embracing the well-being of prenatal to five-year old children through a holistic approach encompassing physical, mental and emotional health for the entire family.

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To learn more about CAW/M, please visit the agency's website at www.cawm.org.