



# Couleecap's Strategic Plan 2018



**Our Mission** - Couleecap fights poverty and promotes self-sufficiency, economic development, and social justice. We are *People Helping People*, and every day our *actions* make a difference in the lives of people and families throughout the Coulee Region.

**Our Vision** - Couleecap makes a difference in the lives of people in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. To do this, we pledge to:

- *Empower people to achieve their full potential;*
- *Promote social and economic justice;*
- *Serve as a catalyst for change; and*
- *Strengthen families and communities.*

**Our Core Values –**

We hold ourselves accountable for transforming these values into action.

- **Integrity and Responsibility:** We are committed to our work and to excellence in our performance. We can be counted on to do what we say we will do. We recognize our responsibility to the people and communities we serve, our employees, and the society in which we live and work.
- **Professionalism:** We supply quality services economically and efficiently. We are committed to growth through learning for our customers and ourselves. Our staff is competent, responsible, flexible, and professional. We work to continuously improve systems and services.
- **Supportive Environment:** We believe in people's capacity to grow and change. We support people as they work towards self-sufficiency. We treat people with dignity, compassion, and respect.
- **Collaboration:** We pledge ourselves to teamwork and collaboration. We collaborate in communities to identify needs and the resources to meet those needs. Community collaboration includes serving on local Boards, committees, coalitions, and community groups in order to identify community needs, create new partnerships, develop plans for action, and leverage other resources to meet community and family needs.
- **Change Agent:** We advocate for social and economic justice. We create opportunities for people to improve their quality of life. We educate policy makers on issues related to poverty. We speak for those who have no voice.

***Our Services*** - We implement more than 50 contracts in five major service areas:

- **Housing** includes transitional housing for homeless families; permanent housing for homeless people with disabilities; weatherization; affordable housing development, construction, and rehabilitation; and homeownership counseling and home purchase assistance.
- **Emergency Assistance** includes food pantries; clothing centers; utility and rental assistance; emergency shelter; and information and referral.
- **Business Development, Employment, and Transportation** includes training, technical assistance, and loans for business start-up and expansion; employment and training assistance; and transportation assistance.
- **Child and Family Development** includes programs to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse.
- **Health** includes activities to improve public safety and health.

***Our History*** – In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson officially declared the War on Poverty, establishing hundreds of Community Action Agencies to fight poverty throughout the United States. Couleecap is one of these, a locally based, nonprofit agency founded in 1966 by a caring group of local citizens dedicated to continuing the fight to end poverty in the Coulee Region. The agency is governed by a 24-member Board of Directors – a highly dedicated group of people who care deeply about people in the Coulee Region.

**Couleecap, Inc.**  
**2018 Strategic Plan**

**Overall Purpose:** The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to guide Couleecap in its continuing evolution as one of the best community action agencies in the state and country.

To ensure the Strategic Plan is meeting the needs of the organization and community, and in full alignment with national community action priorities, the leadership team at Couleecap has devised updated goals and objectives. This document reflects these updates and provides new direction for organizational activity for January 1 – December 31, 2018. Revised strategic planning proceedings will continue throughout 2018, resulting in the delivery of an enhanced three-year Strategic Plan for 2019-2021.

**The Strategic Plan will serve to identify:**

- **Areas of planned programmatic growth.**
- **Resources that need to be acquired.**
- **Corporate goals for agency improvements.**
- **Marketing and advocacy initiatives.**

**National Community Action Goal #1:**

**Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security. (Goal category = Family)**

- 1. Increase housing stability for people with no income or low income in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. (Goal Category = Family)**

Objectives:

- A. Assist 50 households with services to prevent homelessness.
- B. Assist 269 people in securing stable or affordable housing.
- C. Connect 15 people with Social Security benefits to create economic and housing stability.
- D. Decrease rate of homelessness in service area by 5% over previous year.

- 2. Increase access to basic necessities by people with low income in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. (Goal Category = Family)**

Objectives:

- A. Provide accessible and affordable healthy food resources to 3,200 people with low incomes.
- B. Coordinate the distribution of 1,500,000 pounds of food to food pantries within the Coulee region.
- C. Assist 35 working households with low income with vehicle repair and replacement to enable effective transportation to and from their place of employment.
- D. Provide affordable or free clothing and household items to 2,500 people with low incomes.

**National Community Action Goal #2:**

**Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity. (Goal Category = Family)**

- 1. Provide access to education and employment opportunities for people with low incomes in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. (Goal Category = Family)**

Objectives:

- A. Assist 12 people in a career-advancement related program that will allow them to enter into a position that provides increased income and benefits.
- B. Create 12 small businesses and 30 jobs to increase opportunities for people with low income.
- C. Provide technical assistance and training to 20 entrepreneurs or small business owners.

D. Assist 25 people with increasing skills, knowledge, and abilities to enable them to develop employment or job skills through volunteer and training opportunities in Crawford County.

**2. Improve living conditions for people with low incomes. (Goal Category = Family)**

Objectives:

- A. Improve 100 housing units for safety and functionality through home rehabilitation efforts in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties.
- B. Provide access to home rehabilitative services to 100 households with low incomes in Trempealeau, Grant, Green, Iowa, Richland, Lafayette, and Jackson.
- C. Provide 210 households with improved energy efficiency and/or energy burden reduction measures in their homes through the Weatherization program.
- D. Provide emergency furnace repair or replacement for 285 households with low income during winter months.

**3. Increase economic stability for families with low income. (Goal Category = Family)**

- A. Provide financial counseling for 70 people with low income.
- B. Assist 25 households with low income in purchasing a home.
- C. Assist 10 people in opening a savings account or IDA.

**National Community Action Goal #3:**

**People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities. (Goal Category = Community)**

**1. Create a culture that supports and promotes people to become active community members. (Goal Category = Community)**

Objectives:

- A. Engage 25 program participants in civic involvement, voter education, and community engagement.
- B. Promote economic development in 4 small communities while connecting entrepreneurs with space and resources in which to succeed.

**Additional Agency Goals Focused on Capacity Building and Employee Engagement:**

**1. Identify income opportunities for Couleecap that will allow reinvestment in the mission. (Goal Category = Agency)**

Objectives:

- A. Develop community partnerships to plan and implement at least one income venture that will provide a safe and healthy home environment for people with low income, income instability, or advanced needs to stay in their home.
- B. Increase profit generated by the Prairie du Chien Bargain Boutique by 5% over previous year.
- C. Identify at least one opportunity to establish a 'shared resource' partnership.

**2. Increase donor support and brand presence in four-county service area. (Goal Category = Agency)**

Objectives:

- A. Increase the donor prospects mailing list by 20% over previous year.
- B. Achieve a response rate on our annual appeal prospect mailing list of 5%.
- C. Secure at least two foundation or community grants that were not obtained in previous year.
- D. Gain agreement from at least two community groups/businesses to host fundraisers for Couleecap.
- E. Conduct at least 10 community presentations in the four-county service area to promote Couleecap mission and services.

**3. Improve internal efficiencies and effectiveness. (Goal Category = Agency)**

Objectives:

- A. Utilize technology to improve candidate recruitment and hiring, fundraising, benefits management, timekeeping, and payment processing.
- B. Identify opportunities for documenting and tracking client interactions to increase intra-agency referrals and program performance.
- C. Integrate finance and performance management processes to enable effective strategic budget and program decision making.

**4. Gain insight to client experiences and improve client satisfaction. (Goal Category = Agency)**

Objectives:

- A. Increase number of returned client satisfaction surveys by 15% over previous year.
- B. Obtain client satisfaction rates of at least 85% for all programs.

**5. Build a culture of performance where employees are highly engaged.  
(Goal Category = Agency)**

Objectives:

- A. Increase cultural competency around diversity, poverty, racial disparities, and class by administering one poverty simulation for all agency personnel and Board of Directors members.
- B. Increase staff understanding of current programs offered and community resources available to people with low incomes by implementing at least two training opportunities for new hire or existing staff.
- C. Increase the use of staff recognition awards by at least 75% over previous year.
- D. Assess employee engagement through a formal process and develop a plan for areas in need of improvement. Demonstrate an increase in those areas by year-end.