



Food Security Programs Help Fill in the Gaps for Families

Karrie, a Monroe County resident, first began utilizing food pantries when her daughter was very young, and she was a single mother, first in the La Crosse area, and now in Sparta. [Click here for Karrie's story.](#)



“It made a huge difference in being able to provide food for my family as a single mother.”
- Karrie

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Making Affordable Housing a Reality

Prairie Cottages will offer 24 units of housing in Prairie du Chien



On July 24, 2024, Couleecap and Gerrard Corporation officially broke ground on Prairie Cottages, a new affordable housing development in Prairie du Chien. This project will provide 24 units of high-quality housing for income-eligible workers, seniors, and disabled residents, addressing the growing need for affordable housing in the area.

The development, located within walking distance of downtown Prairie du Chien, will consist of two single-story buildings with 12 units each. The buildings will offer a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, making it suitable for individuals, families, and seniors. Residents will also benefit from a range of amenities, including a community room, patio, garage and private driveway parking, and a playground.

Sustainability is a key feature of Prairie Cottages. The development will meet the highest energy efficiency standards through Wisconsin's Green Built Home program. Solar panels and other energy-saving technologies will be incorporated to reduce utility costs for residents and ensure long-term affordability. These efforts are part of a forward-thinking approach that prioritizes both environmental sustainability and financial relief for tenants.

“Every community is unique, and we need to bring housing solutions that reflect that,” said Hetti Brown, Executive Director of Couleecap. “Prairie Cottages was not only designed to meet housing needs of today, but with thought for tomorrow. For example, we made units that are well suited for families, but that people can age comfortably in. Our choice to implement solar and heat pumps will improve sustainability.”

Prairie Cottages is being developed with support from several organizations, including the City of Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), Cinnaire Solutions, Wisconsin Department of Administration, Federal Home Loan Bank Chicago, Solar for Good, and Focus on Energy. This collaboration highlights the importance of partnerships in addressing the region's affordable housing challenges.

At the groundbreaking event, WHEDA's Community and Economic Development Officer Rebecca Giroux and Cinnaire Solutions' Senior Vice President of Business Development Chris Jillings emphasized the significance of the project. WHEDA and Cinnaire are providing critical





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on a waiting list**

financing to bring the development to fruition.

“WHEDA believes that to be successful, people must have safe, reliable housing and thriving neighborhoods to grow and prosper,” said Shreedhar Ranabhat, WHEDA’s Director of Commercial Lending. “We are proud to be part of Prairie Cottages, which will make a notable difference in the lives of people who call this home.”

Paul Gerrard of the Gerrard Corporation, a company recognized for its work in affordable housing, also expressed pride in the project. “Prairie du Chien is an ideal location for housing development. It is a hub for business, healthcare, education, and community organizations. Quality housing that the local workforce, retirees, and other residents can afford is fundamental for the success of the local economy.”

Prairie Cottages is expected to be completed in early 2025, with the first residents moving in by April. This development will provide much-needed affordable housing for the Prairie du Chien community, offering sustainable and comfortable living for years to come.

How Can YOU Help Your Community?

Consider the Impact of a Recurring Monthly Gift

Consider making a recurring gift to Couleecap, and you’ll be contributing to a brighter, more sustainable future for our community. By choosing to give regularly, you provide stability and support that allows Couleecap to plan ahead and implement long-term solutions to poverty and inequality. Your recurring donation ensures that essential programs, such as affordable housing, food assistance, and job training, continue to make a lasting impact on the lives of those in need. Plus, it’s a hassle-free way to give, as your generosity is automatically processed, saving you time and effort. Together, we can create lasting change and empower individuals and families to break free from the cycle of poverty. Join us in building a stronger, more resilient community by making a recurring gift to Couleecap today.



Visit our www.couleecap.org/donate to set up a monthly recurring donation with your credit card.



The Benefits of the Weatherization Assistance Program

Who is eligible?

Households who qualify for the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) may also qualify for weatherization.

What is the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program?

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) offers crucial support to eligible households during the heating season, spanning from October 1 to May 15. WHEAP provides a one-time payment that assists with a portion of energy costs but is not meant to cover the entirety of a residence's energy expenses. The specific amount of assistance you receive depends on several factors, such as your household size, income, and energy costs. WHEAP is a valuable resource for helping individuals and families manage their energy bills and maintain a comfortable living environment.

If you qualify for WHEAP You May Also Qualify for Weatherization

The Weatherization Assistance Program is a valuable resource for both homeowners and renters looking to reduce energy costs and enhance comfort within their homes. Weatherization improvements may also contribute to a safer and healthier home environment. These improvements are installed by Couleecap. By weatherizing your home, you can expect reduced energy bills, increased indoor comfort, and more sustainable living space.

If you qualify for home weatherization services you may receive one or more of the following energy efficiency measures:

- Insulation
- Sealing air leaks
- Heating System Update
- Energy-Saving Products

How to Apply Weatherization Services?

Your 1st Step:

Apply for the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) by contacting your county.

Call for an appointment between October 1st and May 15th to receive a regular benefit.

Applications can be accepted year round.

Crawford County: 608.326.0248

La Crosse County: 608.785.5582

Monroe County: 608.487.9356

Vernon County: 608.637.5210

Homeownership Empowerment Program

Equity in Homeownership

Supported by the WHEDA Foundation, Couleecap launched the Homeownership Empowerment Program in September 2022. These funds have allowed us the opportunity to be extremely intentional about building trust and transparency to connect to our neighbors that dream about one day becoming a homeowner, but they are confused and frustrated with the process. They have barriers they do not know how to overcome and do not know how to get to where they need to be.

The Homeownership Empowerment Program is for all of those looking to find their best path to homeownership, but we are most proud of our reach and trust that has been built among communities of color. Since the launch of this program, we have seen tangible results in increasing racial equity in homeownership. In the last two years, 51.7% of our neighbors who have closed on homes of their own have been from the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or People of Color) community.

If you or someone you know wants to own a home at any point in their life, this program is where to start! We provide the road map that is needed to accomplish homeownership and financial empowerment. There are scores of homeownership products, services, and programs in this country and trying to find the best fit is tough. We provide a neutral place for neighbors to come talk about options. We weigh the pros and cons, dispel myths, and answer all your questions.

How does one get connected to this program, you ask? It just starts with a phone call or email to our Homeownership Empowerment Manager, Dalia Servi. Dalia has been a HUD Housing counselor for almost four years. She will meet with you in a safe, judgment-free zone and help you find your way. The housing market can be scary and seem like a dark place at times, let Dalia and the Homeownership Empowerment Program be your light!



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Homeownership
Empowerment Program

Ready to reach your housing
and financial goals?
Not sure where to start?

Contact our HUD certified housing
counselor for:

- Client driven 1-on-1 housing & financial coaching
- Group homebuying education classes once a month
- Down payment assistance (as eligible)

Couleecap
your local community affairs program

Questions:

Contact: Homeownership@couleecap.org
Ph: 608.769.2315



Toll Free: 1.866.904.4508
Website: www.couleecap.org
Email: contactus@couleecap.org

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200 E. Blackhawk Avenue
Prairie du Chien, WI 53821
Phone: 608.326.2463

La Crosse County
700 N. 3rd Street, STE 202B
La Crosse, WI 54601
Phone: 608.782.4877

Monroe County
217 N. Black River Street
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608.269.5021

Vernon County
201 Melby Street
Westby, WI 54667
Phone: 608.782.4877

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Do You Need Home Repairs?

Couleecap's Home Rehab Program Can Help

Our home rehabilitation program helps homeowners repair their homes. The focus is on repairs that make the home safe, sanitary, and energy-efficient.

Common home repairs include:

- Lead paint remediation
- Accessibility for individuals with disabilities
- Window replacement
- Well and septic repair or replacement
- Roof repair or replacement
- Siding repair or replacement
- Plumbing repairs
- Electrical updates

If you own your home and live in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, or Vernon counties contact us to learn more about how the home rehab program can help!



Scan to learn more!

Email: homerepairs@couleecap.org
Ph: 608-796-9062
Web: www.couleecap.org

