

MOVING FORWARD



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Homelessness Prevention Worker receives MAPA Citizenship Award

In 2011, an unexpected entrance into the field of human services led Tina Murray to her work preventing homelessness. Until then, Murray, now Director of Crisis Engagement at Together, had planned to work in probation services after finishing her degree. Now, she works diligently to change the narrative around homelessness, reject the stigma of poverty and help families or individuals obtain or remain in safe shelter and affordable housing.

"I get to help empower my team to empower participants to stabilize and make real change in their lives."

Tina Murray

"In Crisis Engagement, I have been able to implement the culture that not all situations are the same and that there need to be conversations around each participant's situation," said Murray. "I get to help empower my team to empower participants to stabilize and make real change in their lives."

One of Murray's recent accomplishments was initiating, building and implementing the Non-Congregate Shelter program in Omaha after recognizing the immediate need of housing the homeless during the pandemic.

The Non-Congregate Shelter program was an innovative project to utilize hotel facilities to provide people experiencing homelessness with their own space during the COVID-19 pandemic. The extra space and "non-congregate" environment helped slow the spread of COVID-19 while providing on-site case management and other services.

In her role, Murray also hired staff to take care of participant needs, worked late nights for those who needed shelter after hours and made sure there were fun activities like Movie Night and Game Night to make it feel like a real home and community.

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MAPA presents its 2021 Annual Awards

An advocate for homelessness prevention, an agency which makes the dream of home ownership possible for those in need and the director emerita of the Douglas County Health Department



who demonstrated extraordinary leadership during the pandemic are all recipients of MAPA's 2021 Annual Awards.

MAPA announced its annual awards at its Council of Officials Annual Meeting Oct. 13, 2021.

Award recipients include:

Award of Merit

- **Adi Pour, Ph.D.,** *Douglas County Health Department Director Emerita*

Demonstrated extraordinary leadership during the pandemic and made significant contributions in support of Heartland 2050, MAPA's regional vision

Regional Citizenship Award

- **Tina Murray,** *Director of Crisis Prevention for Together*

Addressed immediate need of housing the homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic by initiating, building and maintaining the Non-Congregate Shelter Program in Omaha

Regional Service Award

- **Habitat Humanity of Omaha**

Merged with Habitat Sarpy County, which allowed the organization to provide affordable housing to even more families in Sarpy County by repairing and maintaining current housing stock or building new, affordable neighborhoods

MAPA Annual Report features drone photography



MAPA released its 2021 Annual Report, "[Perspectives & Possibilities](#)" which showcases the agency's work during the past fiscal year. A special feature of this year's report is our drone photography services, which we used to capture the progress in many of the projects where MAPA is a partner.

We have a certified FAA part 107 Drone Pilot on staff who can work with our communities in a variety of ways. Contact Owen Stuckey at ostuckey@mapacog.org or 402-444-6866, ext. 3236.

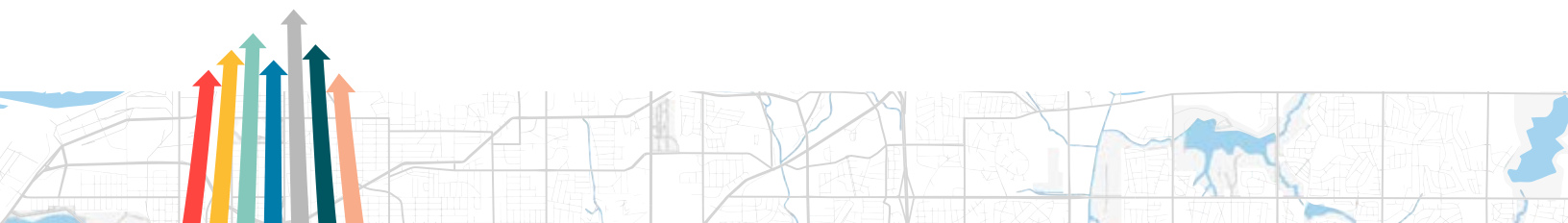
MAPA shares Impact Award with NROC districts

We have some exciting news! As a member of the Nebraska Regional Officials Council (NROC), MAPA received the 2021 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) along with the other seven development districts in NROC.

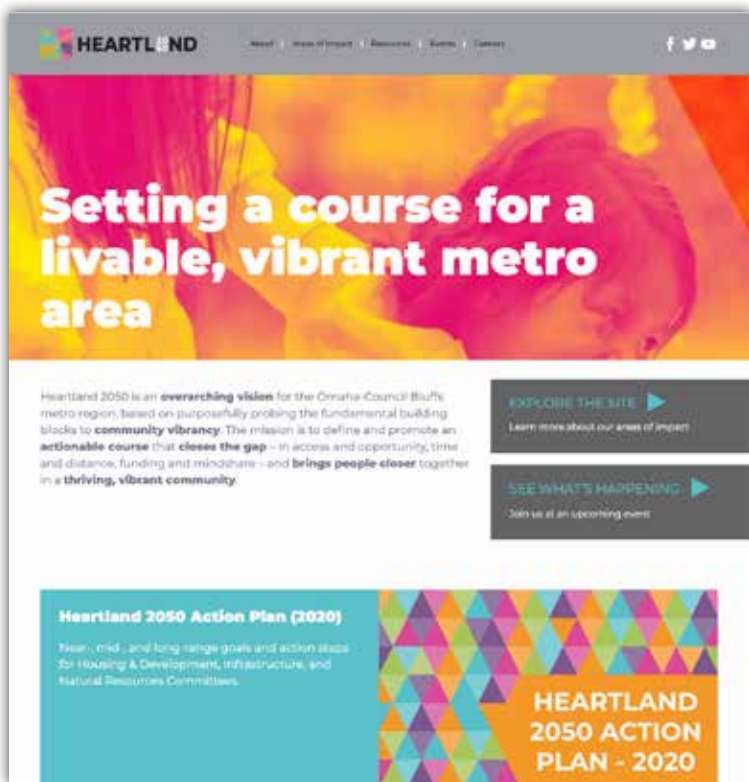
The Impact Award is for NROC's Broadband Speed Test Initiative. The Broadband Speed Test Initiative is a geo mapping project to provide a clearer view of the gaps in

internet services, access and speeds across Nebraska. Iowa's Pottawattamie and Mills Counties are part of the MAPA region and are participating as well.

A reminder you can take the Broadband Speed Test at speedtestne.org.



Heartland 2050 website has a fresh, new vibe



In case you missed it - the [Heartland 2050](#) website has a fresh new look and feel! Some features of the new site include:

- New Heartland 2050 branding
- Streamlined, simplified user experience
- Resources will feature heavily on the new site and are now searchable by topic

Be sure to check it out!

Call for Projects issued for regional funding programs

MAPA is calling for projects for a variety of regional funding programs from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Project applications for the FY2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding cycle should be submitted **no later than 4:30 pm on Friday, January 7, 2022**. The following counties are eligible for funding: Douglas and Sarpy Counties in Nebraska; Pottawattamie, Mills, Harrison and Shelby Counties in Iowa.

Types of funding include:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant Program
- FTA Section 5310 Program – Enhanced
- Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities

Access more program information:

bit.ly/FY23CallforProjects

Project applications and questions concerning this process may be emailed to transportation@mapacog.org also.

continued from Homelessness Prevention Worker receives Citizenship Award

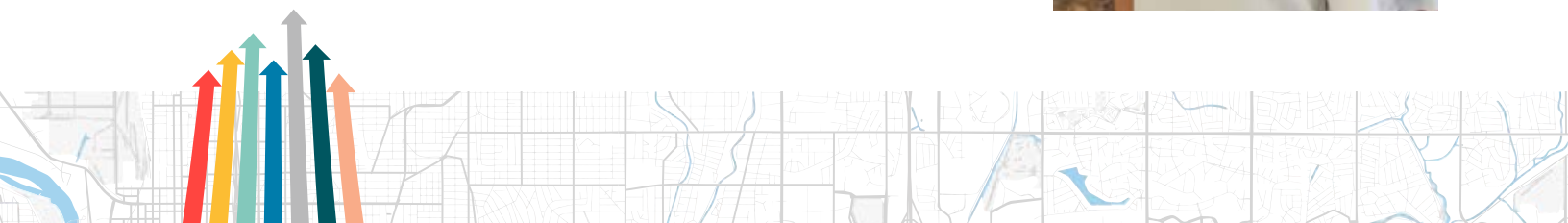
“As we built the program, we saw many gaps in the homeless system and adjusted quickly to meet the needs of the participants in the program, making sure individuals had the identification they needed to obtain work and housing,” said Murray. “We even had some individuals that stabilized enough to get clean and decide to go into treatment.”

In her current position, Murray’s top goal is to provide a place where people feel like they are seen as human beings and that their stories are being heard.

“I would like people to know that the stigma attached to the homeless is a false narrative. Many individuals are impacted by a traumatic event that has turned their lives upside down. Any of us could be in that position, especially with COVID-19,” Murray said.

“I have staff that work for me now that have been homeless, have a criminal background, are recovering addicts and truly want to give back to our community. If everyone was given the support that they need, and if our community backed progress with the homeless population, the change we could make in people’s lives would be endless.”

For building and implementing the Non-Congregate Shelter and leveraging resources and seeking innovative solutions to homelessness through advocacy and partnerships, MAPA presented Tina Murray with its 2021 Annual Citizenship Award.



Introducing MAPA's interns

RUTHIE MCKEE

MAPA welcomed Ruthie McKee as the Communications & Outreach intern in February.

Ruthie is majoring in Journalism on the Public Relations track at Creighton University and also has a certificate in Business Administration.

She is from Kansas City (the Missouri side) and is the eldest of four children.

When Ruthie graduates in May 2022, she plans to work in public relations, marketing or advertising, and wants to focus specifically on brand development.

She spends her free time hanging out with friends, traveling when time allows and trying new restaurants.

Ruthie is a very welcome addition to the C&O team!



RACHEL GOETTSCH

Rachel Goettsch, MAPA's GIS intern, started at MAPA in early July. She is currently in her fourth year at the University of Nebraska Omaha studying English with a concentration in language studies, environmental science with a concentration in geography and planning, and music with a concentration in entrepreneurial studies.

Rachel is the fifth of six children. Her family is from Holstein, Iowa but she grew up in Omaha.

Rachel has an array of hobbies and interests outside of work and school. She loves to research various topics such as onomastics, or the study of names, linguistics and languages, and handedness. She enjoys spending time with friends and family and also loves to play the violin.

After graduation in May of 2023, Rachel plans to study out-of-state for a Master's in Business Administration. Later she would like to establish a Kpop Christian music group. After this, she hopes to return to Omaha and work in the fields of green construction, data science and GIS.

We are glad to have Rachel as a part of the MAPA team!



CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2021

- 10 RPA-18**
11:00 a.m.
- 11 Veterans Day**
MAPA Offices Closed
- 25 Thanksgiving Day**
MAPA Offices Closed
- 26 Thanksgiving Friday**
MAPA Offices Closed

DECEMBER 2021

- 01 Finance Committee**
8:30 a.m.
- 03 Transportation Committee**
10:00 a.m.
Regional Planning (Heartland 2050 RPAC)
10:00 a.m.
- 08 RPA-18**
11:00 a.m.
Council of Officials
- 09 MAPA Board of Directors**
1:30 p.m.
- 24 Christmas Eve**
MAPA Offices Closed



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