

Community Action Angels New York State



Annual Report 2018

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Community Action for Wyoming County

Community Action Angels ~ New York

Community Action Angels is a volunteer and resource development program model administered by Wyoming County Community Action (WCCA). This program was founded by a one-time recipient of Community Action services in 1996 and gifted to the agency in 2002 for exclusive use by all Community Action agencies. Individual programs are custom to agency and community needs, coordinated by staff and assisted by an Advisory Board and other dedicated volunteers' representative of villages, towns and cities throughout the agency's service area.



“Angels Live In Hearts That Care”

Since 2002, New York State Department of State, Division of Community Services, has contracted with WCCA to provide technical assistance and training to all Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funded agencies to increase capacity through community engagement. Currently, there are over thirty Community Action agencies that are either operating a Community Action Angels program or have participated in Community Action Angels designed/developed/etc. initiatives.

Since the inception, Community Action Angel volunteers have distributed over 18 million dollars in donations of goods and services through the network of Community Action agencies in New York State. As a result of these donations, the network has been able to assist over 190,000 residents in overcoming challenges, especially, in times of disaster.

Our Mission

To provide the training and tools needed to increase the human and financial capacity of Community Action agencies across New York State through enhanced volunteerism, unrestricted resources and community partnerships so that all people who walk through our doors walk out with greater opportunity.

Our Goal

To work together through shared knowledge, data, resources and activities so volunteer work in Community Action is more organized, accountable, recognized and leaves a significant and positive impact on our state, communities, agencies and the people we serve.

Our Philosophy

We will help everyone who asks for help to the best of our ability. We will encourage those we help to help others to the best of their ability. *“The Circle of Giving.”*

Our Focus

Our focus is on helping all individuals and families to become self-sufficient as well as to help those whose employment income disqualifies them from assistance to remain self-sufficient. This program is committed to addressing the physical, academic and social needs of children where current programs fall short or are non-existent.

Meeting of the Minds

The 2018 Meeting of the Minds was held on September 11th and 12th at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Syracuse. Seventy-Five Community Action staff and board members from twenty-four agencies attended. Jackie Orr, CEO of NYSCAA, and Manuel Rosa, Director of DOS Division of Community Services, were also among the attendees. Mr. Rosa thanked those in attendance for their hard-work and commitment to helping those in need.



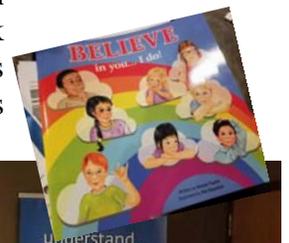
We covered a variety of topics that included fundraising, volunteerism, the radicalization and victimization of low-income youth and the value of community service as a deterrent. Virginia Wescott, Director of Circulation, Troy Public Library, spoke to the group about her life growing up in a home of poverty and abuse. Her moving story helped us all gain a better understanding of how the standards we strive to meet and the services we provide everyday impact lives.

Successful programs and projects focused on employment, hunger, partnerships and engaging community were presented by Community Action staff. A project description and other related materials necessary for replication of these best practices were printed, bound and distributed to each attendee. This year's presenters were: Shawn Futch, Director of Focus on Self-Sufficiency Department at Action for a Better Community,



sharing "Employment Retention Investment Curriculum"; Renee Carter, Executive Assistant, Mohawk Valley Community Action and Sandra Bain, Housing Coordinator, Community Action Programs of Madison County, shared "The Kindness Cupboard"; Andrea Ogunwumi, Executive Director and Anita Lewis, Vice President of Community and Donor Relations, Economic Opportunity Program of Chemung & Schuyler Counties, shared "Innovative Partnerships That Co-Create Community Resilience"; and Christina Ehlers, Community Services Director and Tricia Kerr, Marketing & Development Director, Seneca Cayuga Community Action, talked about their "Food Recovery Program".

Pat Standish and Vinnie Taylor, Pennsylvania Early Learning Investment Commission Ambassador, presented the storybook and project, BELIEVE in you...I do! This book helps children to learn about their inner strength, self-worth and the gift of dignity. This is the fourth book distributed to Community Action agencies at the Meeting of the Minds with the first addressing kindergarten readiness and the following focused on the emotional development of children in grades 1-4. With the illustrations and authorship donated, and over \$10,000 in private funding annually, Community Action Angels distributes books across the state at no cost to CAP agencies, schools, health care systems, food pantries and to many other organizations that work with children. To date just under 25,000 books have been printed and are distributed as requested until gone.



“Fostering Komfort” 2018 Statewide Project for Kids

Fostering Komfort is a project of JCEO of Clinton Franklin Counties Community Action Angels and was presented by Meghan Tedford, Development Director. The project purpose is to ease the transition of children entering foster care with a new backpack to carry their personal items.

Often, foster children are given trash bags in which to move their personal items and clothing to the next home. The backpacks provided by this project hold age appropriate items and allow children to move their things in a dignified manner.

This project was born at JCEO out of the surge of children entering foster care in Clinton County due to the devastating heroin epidemic. Children are removed from their homes because of their parent’s addictions. Many times, children have to move quickly and they may not have a chance to gather their things. Other times, they do not have anything to bring to their new foster home.

The challenge is for participating agencies to fill 1500 backpacks before the first of the year. If you would like to participate the project design can be found on the NYSCAA website.



Regional Meetings and Miscellaneous Updates

We had the opportunity to present at NYSCAA’s Regional Meetings which gave us an opportunity to share our plans for partnering at a greater level in the coming year.

We presented the DOS plan for a new, stand-alone website. The website will be interactive and hold all project designs, videos, photos, successful grants and all the materials created to help agencies save the time and expense in creating projects and developing materials to build volunteer and agency capacity. In addition to the website we discussed the results of the shared survey on TA needs and the portfolio of Community Action trainings and workshops available.

COMMUNITY ACTION OF GREENE COUNTY ~ Youth Court Coming Soon!

After attending the Meeting of the Minds in 2017 and hearing the presentation on Wyoming County Youth Court, Florence Orhle, Executive Director, invited me to her agency to meet with her Volunteer Coordinator and members of the community to discuss the creation of the first Youth Court program in Greene. “ We’re not up and running yet, but we do have interest from several school districts. The advisory council has been meeting regularly, we’ve had all of our forms approved by the council and the county attorney. We are now actively seeking adult judges from the community, and working towards enlisting students to perform the various court functions. We hope to have our first court, all going as planned, in early 2019.

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS - Technical Assistance

In the spirit of collaboration and continual partnership, Community Action Angels provided a one hour webinar on recruiting and retaining volunteers for the nine agencies across NYS operating the ONA Navigator Program. The ONA Community Navigator Program is the first State program of its kind in the country that creates a network of local leadership to support low-income immigrant and refugee communities with a variety of economic and cultural programming.

Technical Assistance and Training

NYSCAA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE Capitol Convention Center, Albany

“Community Action Response to the Opioid Crisis” Facilitated by: Pat Standish

Panelists: Michele McKeon, COO, Regional Economic Community Action Program (RECAP); Mitchell Kibler, Substance Abuse Counselor, University of Albany; and Katie Zuber, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, Rockefeller Center of Government.



Over forty people attended this session. Discussion revolved around findings from the Rockefeller Center of Government research on the local response to the opioid crisis in Sullivan County and the effects on rural communities including the stigma surrounding abuse. Michele gave a presentation on the wonderful work being done at RECAP to assist those addicted through multiple programs including residential housing opportunities. Attendees listened to Mitchell Kibler describe the treatments available as well as the personal needs of an abuser; the needs Community Action might address to assist in a successful recovery. Pat Standish presented, “Babies Raising Babies”, a presentation consisting of comments from teachers and other child providers and what they see in children living in homes of addiction. This presentation was distributed to those attending to use as an outreach and education tool in their community.

Prior to the workshop, Community Action Angels sent a five question survey to the Community Action network asking for information on current programming, what they would like for future programming and how they felt Community Action was best prepared to help in this crisis. With a 50% response rate the overwhelming consensus was that CAP agencies had a significant role in assisting individuals and families affected by substance abuse through more focused collaborations and supportive services.

“Recruit and Retain ~ Smarter Not Harder” Presented by Pat Standish

Another twenty-seven people attended the Community Action Angels workshop called, “Recruit and Retain ~ Smarter Not Harder”. Attendees learned about low cost volunteer recruitment and retention and how to attract top-notch volunteer, have them buy in your mission and make a long-term investment in your agency.

NYSCAA EMERGING LEADERS INSTITUTE Embassy Suites Hotel, Syracuse, New York

What a wonderful experience to work with all the up and coming leaders in Community Action. Twenty-five attended the Community Action Angels workshop titled, “Leaders Are Born ~ Not Made” Creating Leaders Through Maximum Feasible Participation. Participants learned about the role and responsibilities representatives of low income population have as members of the Board of Directors and the opportunities for growth in this leadership role.

Year In Review

Technical Assistance and Training

197 Community Action staff and volunteers from 30 agencies attended workshops and/or received onsite technical assistance. Participants received a total of 900 hours of capacity building training. The trainings provided covered 17 topics including 4 replicable programs.

Partnership Presentations/Training/Collaborations

NYSCAA Events as mentioned
NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Early Care and Learning Council
NYS Police, Office of Counter Terrorism, Intelligence Analysis Unit

Cash and In-Kind Donations

In-Kind - \$17,350.00
Cash - \$4,200.00

UPCOMING YEAR

Further partnering with NYSCAA - Training at Regional Meetings in the spring
Meeting of the Minds - Potential May, 2019 date
Quarterly Community Action Angels Newsletter
Watch for our new Community Action Angels website ~ Coming Soon!

AVAILABLE WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING TOPICS

**If you are interested in a workshop at your site please email Pat at pstandish@wccainc.org
If you wish a training on a topic other than what is listed please let us know.**

Bolstering the Low Income Voice ~ Building A Welcoming Community
Building a Working Advisory Board ~ Building Capacity Through Community Engagement
Building Beneficial Relationships ~ Can You Fire A Volunteer?
Capacity Building/Putting the Pieces Together ~ Circle of Influence ~ Collaboration Is Key
Communicating With Kids In Poverty ~ Community Action Angels Model/Benefits Beyond Volunteers
Low Income Board Representation/Recruitment, Orientation/Training, Conversation
Creating Impact & Creating Change ~ Creating Leaders Through Maximum Feasible Participation
Data Collection/You Cant Live With It and Can't Live Without It ~ Developing Volunteer Leadership
Engaging the Community In Your Mission ~ Head Start Fundraising/Building A Strong Policy Council
Identifying Hidden Assets/Looking Beyond the Obvious ~ Marketing and Branding Volunteerism
Preparing Staff for Volunteers and Donations ~ Recruit and Retain/Smarter Not Harder
Recruiting and Retaining Professional Volunteers ~ Telling Our Stories
The Challenges of ESOL Volunteers ~ Urban To Rural Refugee Relocation
Volunteer Focused Fundraising ~ Volunteer Management/Policy and Procedures
Volunteering Your Way Out of Poverty ~ Writing A Good Proposal