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Agency Mission

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency is dedicated to empowering people to make a positive change by coordinating and administering resources.

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency strives to be the voice in our communities and our governments for those most in need.

WCMCAA Governing Board Chair Transition

*Thank you to Donna Neely
for 17 years of service
to Community Action.*

Donna Neely began her service as a board member in 1993. As a volunteer of Crosslines Food Pantry, Mrs. Neely served the WCMCAA Governing Board as a representative of the low income . She was elected as Board Chair in 1995 and served in this capacity for 15 years. In addition to her work in Community Action, Neely has served her community in various other capacities including volunteering her time to organizations such as: Hospital Auxiliary, Eastern Star, Cedar County Cancer Committee, and service to her church.

In January 2010, Mrs. Neely announced that due to personal health concerns, she must resign from the WCMCAA Board of Directors. With her resignation Mrs. Neely stated, *"It has been an honor for me to serve on the board ...WCMCAA has done tremendous work for not only the low-income, but for our entire communities. The staff of West Central are tireless and committed and it has been a joy to see their work over the years. Lastly, I want to say that I have valued the leadership, dedication and vision of Amos Jackson, President and Chief Executive Officer. It has been a privilege to work with him and I appreciate the growth the agency has had under his direction. I will truly miss being on the board of directors but am confident that the agency will continue to accomplish great things in the fight on poverty. Thank you for the opportunity that was given to me by serving and lending my voice on the board. I wish the agency only the best."*

Mrs. Neely's dedication and service to WCMCAA is greatly appreciated and she will be missed.

*Fred Bunch
accepts new role
as Board Chair.*

Mr. Bunch began his service to the WCMCAA Board of Directors in 1995. As a private practice attorney at Law, Mr. Bunch is a private interest representative. Prior to his recent election as Board Chair, Mr. Bunch served as an Executive Committee Member for a number of years.

Upon the announcement of Mrs. Neely's resignation at the January 28th Executive Committee Meeting, Mr. Bunch was nominated and elected by a unanimous vote as the Board Chair.

At the February 25th board meeting, Mr. Bunch remarked that he looks forward to the opportunity of serving as Board Chair. He announced that he appreciated the commitment and involvement of the board members to attend the meetings. He also stated that WCMCAA is a great agency, with great employees, a great mission and knowledge of what needs to be done to help people.

*This is the beginning of a new day.
You have been given this day
to use as you will.
You can waste it or use it for good.
What you do today
is important because you are
exchanging a day of your life for it.
When tomorrow comes,
this day will be gone forever;
in its place is something that
you have left behind...
let it be something good.*

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Community Services Block Grant Projects

As a result of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding being funneled through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Program in Missouri, West Central Missouri Community Action Agency has developed several new and exciting projects. On February 25th, Chris Tuckness, WCMCAA Community Services Director, provided the WCMCAA Governing Board with updates regarding strategies, progress made and future plans regarding these projects. The projects are as follows:



Community Empowerment Collaboration (CEC)

This is a state wide project that all 19 community action agencies are charged with to align local efforts to support the Missourians to End Poverty coalition and to develop a local recovery sustainability plan. Local groups have been formed or WCMCAA has joined with existing groups in all nine counties in the service area to accomplish these goals. *(Please see page 7 for a listing of scheduled events.)*



Community Improvement



This project was developed to work with five separate communities. In collaboration with WCMCAA, Drury University, Hammons School of Architecture's, city mayors, business owners and residents will work towards revitalizing these communities and developing long term plans for future success. Appleton City, Urich, Hermitage, Montrose and Windsor were selected. The Appleton City Vision Plan has been completed. Students are now working with Montrose and Hermitage. Work will begin with Urich and Windsor semester with a new group of Drury Architecture students.

Community Employment/Education Network

The goal of this project is to work in collaboration with the new Community Association of Regional Enterprises (CARE) group to market their new Community Development Center in Clinton, Missouri. This facility, which was formally Wetzel Clinic, has been renovated and will sponsor college class in the upper level provided by State Fair Community College (2 year degree) and Central Methodist University (4 year degree) and in the lower level has been furnished to house 22 incubator businesses. Currently, there are 8 incubator businesses located in the Business Development Center.





Back Packs

The goal of this project is to begin a Back Pack Program so that each child attending public elementary schools and WCMCAA Head Start Centers will receive food to take home on the weekends. School districts and Head Start centers typically serve breakfast and lunch to each child and in some cases this may be the only meals they receive that day. This will provide additional food so that we can be sure they have something to eat on the weekend. WCMCAA has established partnerships with organizations in each of the nine counties served to implement and sustain this project. Anyone wishing to contribute should contact WCMCAA to learn more about the project in their area.



RRR Project – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

This project could reduce our waste and have a significant impact on landfills and the environment. Our goal is to educate our children on recycling, and finding ways to reduce waste and reuse what is available to us. There are also opportunities of “green jobs” that already exist; this endeavor would bring awareness to these jobs. This program will be provided to 30 groups, schools or organizations.



Step Up to Leadership

This program is designed to help low-income individuals build self-confidence along with the skills and knowledge to serve on boards and committees in their community. The goal is for them to realize their potential and that they too can have a voice for change in their communities. One Step Up to Leadership Class has graduated in Belton, with two students applying for and receiving mini-grants to implement community projects. Classes are now underway in Clinton and Nevada.



Connecting Seniors

This project was submitted to develop a plan that will help seniors with issues that every rural community seems to be facing. The top five concerns: transportation for medical or errands, affordable housing/home repair/maintenance, senior supportive services, in-home assistance and social and civic inclusion. WCMCAA is partnering with Care Connection for Aging and Area Agency on Aging to implement this project.

Renewable Energy This is a state wide initiative. A feasible business plan will be produced for the 19 Community Action Agencies throughout Missouri to create renewable energy job opportunities in each area of the state.



Family Development Several additional Community Action projects are being implemented to help in the development of individuals and families in our communities: Life Skills Classes, Back to School Fairs, Energy Conservation Education and Financial Management.

For more information on any of these projects, please contact WCMCAA Community Empowerment Coordinators Betty Stephan (bstephan@wcmcaa.org) or Kristina Klass (kclass@wcmcaa.org) or call 660-476-2185.



This project/program is funded in whole/or part with federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds received from the U.S. Department of Health Human Service (HHS) provided by the Missouri Department of Social Services, Family Support Division. The funds received from the Family Support Division are all federally funded.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month



It only takes a minute...

- ...to hug a child
- ...to smile at a baby
- ...to listen to a child
- ...to tell a child you believe in him
- ...to give a child a compliment
- ...to ask a child how her day has been
- ...to tell a child you are proud of him
- ...to put your child's bike helmet on
- ...to sing to your baby
- ...to choose a book to read to a child
- ...to encourage a child
- ...to ask a child a riddle
- ...to play peek-a-boo with a baby
- ...to remind a child to buckle up
- ...to reach out to a stressed parent
- ...to tell a parent where to get help.

"Take Time Out To Hug A Child Today!"



To enroll a child in the Head Start or Early Head Start program, please contact your local WCMCAA Head Start Family Advocate, or contact the Central Office at 660-476-2185.

Prevention Strategies Include:

- Educate yourself on the indicators of abuse and neglect.
- Report known and suspected abuse / neglect promptly
 - Be proactive within your organization or agency
- Provide prevention education and share information.
 - Provide parents with education in development, parent and child relationships
- Provide parents with information on community resources
 - Encourage early and regular child and family screening and treatment
 - Enhance child care opportunities, i.e. crisis care, emergency or respite care.
 - Refer parent to Early Head Start and Head Start
- Maintain a network of contact with local social service agencies.
 - Contact your local Children's Division office
- **Remember prevention is everyone's responsibility.**

Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Number 1-800-392-3738

Other Resources:

Children's Division Contacts:

<http://www.dss.mo.gov/cdooffice/indes.htm>

Guidelines for Child Abuse & Neglect Reports:

http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/pdf/guideliens_can_reports.pdf

CD Child Abuse & Neglect Annual Report:

<http://www.dss.mo.gov/re/canar.htm>



On February 10, 2010, WCMCAA Head Start hosted a free training provided by the Missouri Head Start State Based TA and Region VII Head Start regarding Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect and Mandated Reporting. Area child care workers, family development specialist and others who work with children and families were invited to attend.

Dreams Really Can Come True with Hard Work and Perseverance!



Stephan and Lucinda Pennington enrolled in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program on 06/01/07. They completed the program successfully in just two years and recently purchased a home of their own. One might ask, "How did they do this?" The answer would be, they accomplished their goals with hard work and determination.

When they enrolled in the FSS Program, they were experiencing struggles like many families. Stephan and Lucinda had health problems and they were deep in

debt with limited income, as Stephan was not employed. However, in just two years they have overcome the barriers that held them back.

As a backdrop to our story, it is important to know that Lucinda grew up in foster homes and she experienced repeated abuse—both physically and sexual. She was a Ward of the State of Missouri and emancipated at a young age. It wasn't like she had planned for this future but she was a victim of circumstance and she felt trapped. Lucinda had trouble in school and was labeled "unable to learn."

As a person not likely to succeed, Lucinda proved the school system wrong. She enrolled in college and worked hard. She passed her classes. Prior to finishing college, she met Stephan and she left school to become a mother. Stephan was a pastor and they are raising four daughters.

As health issues surfaced and Stephan was no longer able to work, Lucinda went to work as a Youth Specialist for the State of Missouri. She worked with troubled youth and wrote curriculum that was adopted by the State of Missouri. Throughout her employment, she has continued to complete her studies. She graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Counseling from Calvary Bible College in May of 2009, as well as beginning her Master's Program in January 2009.

Stephan was approved for Social Security Disability and upon receipt of the Social Security lump sum payment, they paid off medical, vehicle and credit card debt. Not only were they able to clean up their debt but they were approved for the purchase of a home of their own. They used their WCMCAA Family Self-Sufficiency escrow balance of \$3,344.00 as a down payment on their dream home. ***Dreams can come true with hard work and perseverance—just ask the Pennington's'.***

If you thought the might be the end to the story, you would be wrong. In the last few years, Lucinda has not only lost 213 pounds but she has prepared manuscripts and she is currently working out the "book details" with a publisher on a story about her life. ***It just goes to show, that we are only limited by the barriers that we are unwilling to overcome.***



Would life in your community be better if:

- You had access to new hospitals and senior centers or enhanced health care services for ill or aging family members?
- Your children could learn in new or improved schools or child-care centers?
- Your commute to work were safer and less congested thanks to better roads or expanded public transportation options?
- Your local emergency services providers had up to date maps to ensure faster response in a crisis?
- Your local markets could better deliver goods and services to your community?

The 2010 Census will be a snapshot of our nation's population—capturing our changing and diverse America in a fleeting moment in time. But this historic event will do more than tell us who we are as a nation today.

It will affect Your Community's future.
Your country's future.
Your future.

The federal government distributes more than \$400 billion annually to state, local and tribal governments based on census data. One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Completing your census form is easy, important and safe. Your participation is vital. By participating in the census, you can help create a better future for you and those important to you. **To learn more, visit 2010census.gov**



Peculiar Charitable Foundation

provides generous support for
WCMCAA Women's Health Services

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency is very grateful to the Peculiar Charitable Foundation for their generous support in the amount of \$50,000 for Comprehensive Women's Health Services for the mobile clinic located in Harrisonville, including additional staff, and technology upgrades to ensure accessibility to electronic medical records.

The Peculiar Charitable Foundation was established in 1968 by Edward P. Schug, a lifelong resident of Peculiar and Cass County, who passed away in 1998. Its purpose is to provide support for the citizens of Cass County in the areas of health, education, cultural and other charitable endeavors which benefit these citizens. Mr. Schug worked with many people as part of his professional career in banking, and established the Foundation as part of his dedication to Cass County. The current President of the Peculiar Charitable Foundation is Mary Dobson, daughter of Mr. Schug.

The WCMCAA Comprehensive Women's Health program holds a mobile clinic in Harrisonville at the United Methodist Church located at 2600 E. Mechanic on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Additional services in Cass County include a clinic located at the WCMCAA Belton offices at 119 Congress, which is open Monday through Friday. Women's Health Services clinics are also supported by Title X, the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City, Missouri DOH Show Me Healthy Women, Client's fees and donations. Individuals desiring an appointment or more information concerning these clinics should call 816-322-5012 or toll free 888-577-4640. In addition, WCMCAA also provides Women's Health Services in Bates, Benton, Henry, St. Clair and Vernon Counties. For more information regarding these locations, please call 888-577-4640 or 660-476-2185.

**Thank you to all of the
Missouri Elected Officials
who have recently
taken the time
to learn more about
Community Action.**

Services Family Development Manager; and Malia Mount, Development and Communications Director. While in Washington DC for the National Community Action Foundation Conference the week of March 1st, Mr. Jackson also had the opportunity to visit with Congressman Ike Skelton.

*Representative Luke Scavuzzo
of the 124th District with
WCMCAA staff Malia Mount
and Peggy Kalberloh.*



On February 2nd, WCMCAA participated in the annual MACA Legislative Day activities at the state capital. The day included exhibits from each of the 19 Community Action Agencies in the state and visits with the individual legislators representing each service area. Staff who attended from WCMCAA were: Amos Jackson, President and Chief Executive Officer; Lea Ann Gatzemeyer, Employment & Training Director; Julie Engeman, Executive Assistant; Peggy Kalberloh, Community



*Representative Scott Largent
of the 120th District with
Julie Engeman, WCMCAA
Executive Assistant*

WCMCAA would like to extend our appreciation to all of the Missouri legislators and the

Congressman, as well as their staff members, who have taken the time to visit with us and learn more about Community Action by attending events, reviewing our annual report and other informational materials, visiting our programs and connecting community members to our services.

If you would like to learn more about legislation that affects you or your community, or to contact a Missouri elected official, please visit one of the following web sites:

Missouri General Assembly: www.mogo.mo.gov

Congressman Skelton: www.house.gov/skelton/

Senator Bond: www.bond.senate.gov

Senator McCaskill: www.mccaskill.senate.gov

Calendar of Events:

April 16th—All Agency Staff Meeting

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

May is National Older American's Month

WCMCAA Governing Board Meetings

- Scheduled for the fourth Thursday of each month.
March 25th April 22nd May 27 June 24th

WCMCAA Head Start Policy Council Meetings

- Scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month.
March 16th April 20th May 18th Summer meetings scheduled as needed.

WCMCAA Featured on 95.3 KDKD Radio Speak Out Program

- Scheduled for the second Monday of each month at 9:40am.
April 12th—featuring Kristina Klass and Betty Stephan,
from the Community Services Unit.

May 10th and June 14th—featured program TBA.

Community Improvement Meetings:

Montrose— March 8th April 6th May TBA 6 to 8 pm, *Knights of Columbus Hall*

Hermitage— March 11th *from 6 to 8pm* April 7th *from 5 to 7pm* May 12th 5 to 7pm

Community Empowerment Meetings:

Bates County Coalition—April 20th at 6:30pm at the Bates County Health Center.
Future meetings TBA.

Benton County Coalition—Second Thursday of each month, 9:00am at J&D Pharmacy in
conjunction with Benton County Human Services Council.

Cass County Coalition— First Wednesday of each month at 12:00noon at the Cass
County Justice Center in conjunction with the Drug Affected Families Coalition.

Cedar County Coalition—April 20th at 9:30am at the Expo Center in Stockton.
Future meetings TBA.

Henry County Coalition—Second Thursday of each month at 1:30pm at the Benson
Center in conjunction with Henry County CHART.

Hickory County Coalition—First Thursday of each month at 4:00pm at the Wheatland
Senior Center in conjunction with Hickory County Community Improvement Coalition.

Morgan County Coalition—April 8th at 6:00pm, location and future meetings TBA, in con-
junction with Morgan County CLEAR.

St. Clair County Coalition—April 8th at 12:00noon at Ellett Memorial Hospital in conjunction
with St. Clair County CHART.



The Promise

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and Makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire Community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.



West Central Missouri Community Action Agency

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If you or someone you know, would like to be added to the WCMCAA Newsletter mailing list or e-list, please contact Malia Mount, Development and Communications Director, at 660-476-2185 ext. 1106 or e-mail mmount@wcmcaa.org.



West Central Missouri Community Action Agency

Helping People. Changing Lives.

- *Community Development*
- *Community Empowerment*
- *Early Childhood Education*
- *Emergency Assistance*
- *Employment and Training*
 - *Energy Assistance*
 - *Energy Conservation*
- *Family Support*
- *Health Services*
- *Homeownership*
- *Housing Assistance*
- *Housing /Debt Counseling*
 - *Nutrition*
 - *Weatherization*



Serving: **Bates, Benton, Cass, Cedar, Henry, Hickory, Morgan, St. Clair and Vernon Counties**
 Limited Services Also Available in: Barton, Camden, Chariton, Carroll, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, and Saline

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WCMCAA is a member of the National Community Action Partnership and Missouri Association for Community Action.

