

# CAAP BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

## CEO REPORT ON CAAP ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 15, 2014 – JANUARY 21, 2015

### KEY FOCUS AREAS

#### Public Policy/Partnerships

- Joined the Making Work Pay PA Coalition. Attended the initial conference call on November 21, 2014. Helped schedule the first in-person meeting – January 16, 2015.
- Joined the Better Choices for PA Coalition and attended their last meeting of 2014 on December 16, 2014.
- Attended PA Hunger Brief Drafting meetings. Completed the, “Hunger Challenge – A Briefing Paper for Governor Wolf”
- Attended LIHEAP Advisory Committee meeting on November 12, 2014.
- Attended the 2014 Energy Forum in Harrisburg, PA on November 14, 2014.
- Attended the PA Budget and Policy Center Economy and Budget Outlook Luncheon on December 16, 2015.
- Attended the CLIP Steering Committee Meeting on December 15, 2014. Met with Sandy Strauss to discuss Coalition for Low-Income Pennsylvanians (CLIP) direction for 2015.
- Rep. Reed’s staff asked CAAP membership to provide feedback on two specific sections of the, “Beyond Poverty” report. CAAP coordinated those efforts and prepared a concise summary of Community Action’s feedback which was submitted to Reed’s office on November 26, 2014.
- Participated in a Cliff Effect Focus Group to discuss policy recommendations regarding Rep. David Reed’s, “Beyond Poverty” report on November 19, 2014. The meeting was organized by PANO and Reed’s staff.

#### Organizational Standards

The national organizations – Community Action Partnership, CAPLAW and NASCSP – all held hope that an Informational Memorandum would be issued by OCS before the end of the year but so far have heard nothing.

CAAP continues to work with the state associations for Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland (includes Delaware and DC) to get information and begin work with a regional task group

consisting of local CAA directors, state offices and state association representatives to prepare Region 3 CAAs for the implementation of the organizational standards. PA CAA reps are John Litz and Megan Shreve, with Lynette Praster representing DCED. The task group will be contacted about a meeting schedule the second week of January.

### **Needs Assessment Tool**

We are kicking off the Needs Assessment User Group this month. Additional tools are added to the CAAP website the second week of January. DCED reports that 2015 work plans indicate use of the tool and they are pleased with how the information has been integrated. We look to work with members and DCED on adding information during 2015.

### **ROMA training**

CAAP did not receive discretionary grant funding to underwrite ROMA training costs during 2015. We will strive to coordinate affordable trainings between requesting agencies and Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers. In October, Dan Leppo was joined by Kristen Sweger, an NCRT trainee from STEP, Inc. to train 18 staff at the Scranton-Lackawanna Human Development Agency.

Additionally, we will offer statewide training sessions in April and October of 2015 similar to the one held in Camp Hill this past October. The October 2014 training provided Introduction to ROMA instruction to 43 staff from 15 agencies, including DCED's Center for Community Services. The future statewide sessions will aim for similar sized classes. We are currently awaiting confirmation on the April training location and know that the October session will again be held at the Camp Hill Giant.

Single agency trainings will continue. At this time, we have Bucks County Opportunity Council staff and board training set in February, CAP of Mercer County staff and board in March, and Warren-Forest Economic Opportunity Council's board in March and staff in May.

When possible, we will attempt to do regional trainings at facilities large enough to handle multiple agency staff. BCOC is kindly allowing a new CACLV board member to join their board training. Butler County Community and Economic Development expressed interest during the Region V fall meeting about training sub-recipients but opening it up to surrounding agencies.

Currently in Pennsylvania we have 19 NCRTs and 4 trainees (Master Trainers and trainees are NCRTs). Of this number, 6 are now out of the Community Action network due to career moves although 2 still have limited interaction. Of the 13 NCRTs within the network, 8 have been active in training. We hope to get the remaining 5 active again. We intend to grow the ranks again; with the help of RPIC funds to cover training costs (not travel) for 4 staff from CAAP member agencies at the May Region 3 ROMA Train-the-Trainer symposium to be held in Baltimore, MD. The solicitation of interest will be sent out the second week of January.

Since discretionary money was not awarded, we do not have the resources at this time to pursue internet training videos.

### **ROMA Next Generation**

We held a seminar on ROMA NG with a focus on Theory of Change techniques for strategic planning on November 14, 2014. We had 26 staff from 11 agencies attend, including the DCED Center for Community Services. The training was conducted by Dr. Barbara Mooney, now of the Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers, and Ken Ackerman of Virtual CAP. The training was well received with several attendees telling Dan that they learned tools they can apply immediately. The training was underwritten by the RPIC grant.

### **Shared Services**

- **Human Resources**

Community Progress Council is completed its contract to have Level 3 services provided by HR Resolutions.

We met last month with HR Resolutions to look at program services for 2015 that may be offered to CAAP members. We are awaiting a new – lower – cost structure of services that we will publicize in January.

- **Health Insurance**

We remain in contact with Gary Sefchok & Associates although there is no forward movement currently. The idea was to get critical mass from several agencies to achieve savings across the board. However, agencies have to act as their plans expire and cannot wait till GS&A gathers the critical mass.

## Member Services

- Facilitated a regional meeting for Region 5 on November 18<sup>th</sup> and provided information on Organizational Standards following a PowerPoint presentation by John Litz.
- Conducted monthly Work Ready calls that further interaction and information relaying between Work Ready program staff and DPW/BOP staff. The call also allows the WR program staff in its own separate session to discuss issues that peers may be able to assist. We encourage questions to be provided a week ahead of the meeting, with the intent of having the best answers possible during the meetings. The format and process seem to be working quite well.
- Updated the CAAP Service Matrix. Final proof was sent to the printer on December 30, 2014.
- Set up multiple listserv lists through L-Soft and established a support agreement with Netrepid.
- Responded to multiple member requests for information on various topics.
- Published two *CAAP Update* newsletters.
- Published two CAAP Advocacy & Partnership Updates.
- Currently researching internship opportunities at CAAP in collaboration with Penn State – Harrisburg students. Primary contact at PSU-Harrisburg is Karl Martz in career services.
- Forwarded CAPLAW information regarding indirect rates to CAA network.
- Secured auditor for Indirect Rate training for CAA network CEO and financial staff at April conference.

## VISTA PROGRAM

### 7 VISTAs are currently serving at the following sites:

CAAP

United Way of Berks County

Community Action Southwest

CHESCO

CAP Mercer

Berwick Area United Way

CASA of Lancaster County

**Recruitment:**

Due to an early termination and a withdrawal prior to the November PSO two agencies were allowed to recruit candidates for the February 2015 PSO. United Way of Berks County was successful in recruiting a VISTA for the February PSO. CASA of Luzerne County has communicated with a potential VISTA candidate but has not secured the candidate as of this date. A third agency CASA of the Susquehanna Valley also had a withdrawal prior to the November PSO and decided not to recruit for the February PSO.

**2015-2016 VISTA Projects:**

5 projects will be returning for the 2015-2016 year are as follows:

Ready. Set. Read! (UW of Berks Co.)

Food Access/ Nutrition – Berwick Area United Way

Faith Based Decades to Doorways- CHESCO

Veterans Vocational Training- CAP Mercer

CASA Lancaster County” CASA Lancaster

3 New projects have submitted preliminary concept papers to CNS:

Improving GED Attainment for At Risk Youth JEVS Services

Nutrition: CASWG

Healthy Communities: Lansdowne Economic Development Corp ( LEDC)

**DAY of Service**

Monday, MLK Day, January 19, 2015 is a mandatory day of service for all VISTA members.

Each has secured MLK Day of Service project. A full report from each VISTA is due to this office after the day of service has been completed. These reports are sent to the State office for review.

**Re-enrollment**

To date one current VISTA Balinda Raimondo plans to re-enroll for her 3<sup>rd</sup> and final year. Balinda is serving with the Berwick Area United Way.

**INTERNAL OPERATIONS:****Funding**

**CSBG** - Prepared FSR and invoices for Sept/Oct/Nov grant activities; prepare and submit year end budget modification request. Completed Fiscal Monitoring questionnaire for January DCED Monitor.

**Federal Grants –VISTA** – Prepared 9/30/14 federal cash management report and semi-annual program expense report. Attended meeting to review issues with CNCS management regarding outstanding balances from 2006. Forwarded copy of upfront check payment for services and double bill issues; issue remains unresolved.

R3PIC - researched agreements required by federal Supercircular for states involved in 2015 contract; Forwarded to Development Director for compliance.

**Operations**

**Financial Statements** - prepared September, October, November and December, 2014 month end agency financials; notes to financial statements; comparisons to budget for CAAP Operating; and CAAP Dues reports for monthly Executive Committee review. Forwarded weekly investment activity updates to Finance Committee.

**Audit** – Reviewed audit engagement letter and contract for signing; prepared documents needed and work with audit staff; completed 990 questionnaire and prepared schedules for draft audit document. Reviewed final draft for accuracy, and prepare analysis for Board review.

**Other -**

- Prepared Q3 2014 payroll tax reports and payments.
- Reviewed equipment and prepared cost worksheet for CAAP three bathroom renovations.

**COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT:****2015 Conference**

- Scouting a 2016 Conference Location. Under consideration are Radisson in Camp Hill, PA; Best Western Premier in Harrisburg, and the Holiday Inn Harrisburg East. Currently, Radisson and Holiday Inn are the lead contenders.
- Organized three Conference Committee Meetings to begin conference preparations
- Secured all three general session speakers.
- Secured all workshop presentations.
- Secured one sponsorship for \$3,000.
- Created and distributed the Distinguished Service Awards Nomination Packet. The DSA packet is attached.
- Created a new Conference Logo.
- Secured Scott Gilbert to host the Self-Sufficiency Awards. Secured other vendors to help staff the April Conference.
- Set up conference registration.

### **CAAP Website**

- For the time period of October 15, 2014 to January 7, 2015, the statistics are:
  - 2,408 CAAP website visits. Up 150 visits from same time-period (late 2013 to early 2014).
  - 76.25% were first time visitors.
  - Website visitors viewed an average of 4.3 pages for an average of 1:58 minutes.
  - Researched and began preparations to update the CAAP website. Receiving quotes: Preliminary price range seems to be \$5,000 - \$12,000 for nonprofits.
- CAAP's social media presence has steadily increased.
  - Facebook: CAAP gained 221 "likes" on its Facebook page. An increase of 21 "likes" since October 15, 2014.
  - Twitter: Regular posts, at least one per week, have kept CAAP's presence high. CAAP now has 433 "followers" (up 44 since the end of July 2014) and 632 "tweets"

### **GRANTS AND DEVELOPMENT:**

#### **2014 Regional Performance and Information Consortium**

Same as last time: CAAP has assumed leadership of the Region 3 RPIC (DC, DE, MD, VA and WV). The grant focus is to assist CAA's in understanding and achieving organizational

standards and performance standards as they are decided and released by OCS. We will receive \$40,000 for the grant administration, much of the reporting of which Dan has assisted VACAP with in the past few years, and \$62,500 for in-state work for the grant's mission. The RPIC is busy assembling a regional task group consisting of local CAA members, state office representatives and state association representatives to review and comment upon changes and implementation of performance management measures being issued. CAAP will create an organizational standards user group within PA to further the understanding and implementation of the standards.

### **Highmark Foundation**

This \$45,000 Highmark Foundation grant to conduct education on enrollment in the Affordable Care Act health insurance program is now done. The goal was to ensure that persons with low incomes received information about the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Our intent was not to sign them up for the health insurance program, but simply that they should be made aware of the ACA and how to obtain additional information to use the Health Insurance Marketplace and sign up when allowed. The grant activity took place between March 1 and October 31, 2014. Though the Marketplace website closed in February 2014 before the grant activity, we still encouraged families to check to see if they might be covered through other means that would allow children or others to be covered by health insurance.

#### Report Summary:

Through contracts with 11 member agencies, CAAP covered 20 counties, utilizing no less than 42 programs to distribute brochures to 4,069 households in the service area. The majority (58%) of interviewees was at or under 100% of the FPL and did not have health insurance options under the Marketplace. That was further complicated by Pennsylvania not being a Medicaid expansion state until late August. Of all respondents, 67% had health insurance at the time of the interview, 72% were aware of the Affordable Care Act, but most (74%) had a regular healthcare provided and had not looked at the Health Insurance Marketplace website.

The provision of insurance services was a mixed bag of assistance, running into the "Cliff Effect" in which gaining a better situation may actually destabilize progress a household has made toward self-sufficiency by having other assistance denied. Despite promotion of the health insurance, a good number of persons remain confused and in the larger scheme are concerned with what they perceive as more immediate needs for their families. Better information and



guidance on signing up and determining the costs and benefits of competing plans must be provided to those persons in need of health insurance.

### **Allegra FootPRINT**

Recognizing the desire to have the CAAP Service Matrix updated, CAAP pursued a grant from a national printer having local offices in Harrisburg to cover printing costs of this four page foldout promotion piece. We were awarded \$250 toward the cost of doing the specialty print. More on the Matrix is under the Communications Director's report.

### **2012-2013 CSBG Formula Grant**

We continue to work on completing actions recommended by DCED in its monitoring report. There are two remaining items, both of which are underway: board manual, and the development of a new strategic plan that addresses sustainability and future fund generating efforts.

The manual is being completed now.

We assembled a group of junior executives from members in each of the six CAAP regions to complete a new strategic plan. The plan is attached for the board's consideration.

A third item, the adoption of by-laws, was finalized.

We have been verbally informed by DCED that we will be monitored in February 2015.

### **CAAP STAFF TRAINING**

#### **Training**

- NCAF's Ideas and Innovations Conference (summary).

David Bradley sees the importance of a "national laboratory" for Community Action that will encourage innovation and partnerships with non-traditional partners. He sees the opportunity for a poverty debate in 2015 and 2016, with Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) helping to drive that debate. The Conference featured presenters from outside Community Action, focusing on issues of homelessness, financial education, social enterprise, energy (cap and trade), food security and veterans.

Dr. Beth Shinn, Chair of the Department of Human and Organizational Development at Vanderbilt University, focused on how to use data to target prevention of homelessness. The goal was to identify people at high risk of homelessness (efficiency), and to help people avoid homelessness (effectiveness). Her research focused on predictors of homelessness

based on data from intake interviews. The research concluded that previous stay in a shelter is the best predictor of future homelessness, and that there was a correlation with family dysfunction (young people aging out of foster care or leaving the juvenile justice system). Questions raised included whether services should go to people at highest risk of homelessness, or should we identify those at risk but not at such high risk that they are not likely to be helped. This research was conducted in New York City, and Dr. Shinn observed that the New York City model should be evaluated locally—models should be developed for each locality, and consistently tested and updated.

Julia Brown, Initiative Manager at Innovations for Poverty Action's US Household Finance Initiative, discussed using randomized controlled trials to evaluate program effectiveness. She viewed the problem with poverty programs as having limited evidence of what works best, limited use of available evidence, and ineffective policies and programs. She said that the result was wasted money and enduring poverty. Her solution was to design and evaluate potential solutions to determine which are the most effective. She reminded us that identifying correlation does not mean causation. Her main message was that the data must result in actions, we must be ready to implement changes the data indicates are needed.

Tyson Slocum, Director of Public Citizen Energy Program, and Meg Power of NCAF presented on the importance of having low-income consumers' views represented in the development of state implementation plans required by the new EPA rules on reducing greenhouse gases. The rule was released in June 2014, with public comment deadline by December 2014 and a final rule by June 2015. States would have until June 2016 (with a one-year extension possible) to file a state implementation plan that meets the proposed greenhouse gas reduction. Mr. Slocum discussed the importance of promoting energy efficiency to comply with the EPA rule, and said that energy efficiency incentives should be cost-effective and demonstrate specific and verifiably energy use and utility bill savings. He wanted intervenor funding programs to be built in to the state plan process to ensure consumer participation. He thought that compensating consumer advocates for legal, staff time and expert witness costs to place consumer groups on a more even footing with well-staff utility companies. He thought that renewable energy promotion should be equitable, and thought that the decline in the cost of rooftop solar may be significant to this process.

Rev. Faith Fowler, Executive Director of Cass Community Services in Detroit MI, was an outstanding and motivating presenter. She answered the question, “What happens when we can’t count on traditional funding sources?” Her program employs an unemployed and under-employed work force to manufacture trendy flip-flops out of illegally dumped tires discarded in the street and vacant lots. The mission of this social enterprise is to provide employment (people pick up the tires and bring them to the warehouse where other workers convert the rubber into “Detroit Treads” sandals). Rev. Fowler was convinced that the services provided by the church (food, day services, housing for the homeless) were not sufficient to turn around the lives of the people most in need and their communities. Rev. Fowler has expanded her businesses to include secure document destruction, hiring developmentally disabled employees who protect the security of the documents because most of them cannot read; recycled mud mats using tires; and coaster made from recycled glass and repurposed wood. The businesses developed were intentionally “green industries” because of her concern for the environment.

[Rev. Fowler will be speaking at the 2015 CAAP Annual Conference.]

Colonel (Ret.) Jim McDonough, Managing Director of Community Engagement and Innovation for the Syracuse University Institute for Veterans Military Families, spoke about community-based initiatives to assist returning veterans and their families. He presented the plight of returning veterans and their families as something that is not a transition or continuum but a veteran showing up in a community and starting over after however many years he or she has served in the military. With one million veterans separating from service in the next five years, he sees great opportunity for community partnerships to serve this population. Col. McDonough is available to work with other agencies to apply for federal funding for their area, and encourages community-based coordinated networks that facilitate intake, assessment and referral of veterans to service providers who can meet their unique needs.

David Bradley discussed HR 3854, the CSBG Reauthorization Bill, and its encouragement of innovation by CAAs (a provision that is strongly supported by Members of Congress). He plans reintroduction of the bill in 2015 and a real push for passage of the bill in the House next year. He thinks that CAAs need flexible resources—to approach tough problems in new ways, identify and solve these problems, and add new innovative partners from

different sectors. He sees current problems as: too few resources, federal and state restrictive rules on existing resources, and risk of failure. He observed that CAAs do not have “risk capital.” The bill will be introduced in the new Congress which begins in January 2015.

Karima Rose, Director of Grants and Operations at The Food Trust in Philadelphia PA., presented a lively and energetic description of a comprehensive program that deals with obesity and food security, working with a variety of community organizations, businesses and funders. This includes nutrition education in schools, working with neighborhood markets to expand healthy food offerings, managing farmers’ markets, and encouraging supermarket development in underserved communities. She also spoke about SNAP-Education programs funded by a national grant program under the Food and Nutrition Act.

### **ROMA Training**

- All CAAP staff received **Roma NG** training on November 14, 2014

### **Supercircular Training**

- **CFO attended** PANO webinar re implementation of new Supercircular