

COMMUNITY ACTION

of Greene County, Inc.



2017 Annual Report



Creating Opportunities... Fighting Poverty... Changing Lives



Letter from the Executive Director

Community Action of Greene County, Inc. celebrated its 50th year of service to Greene and neighboring county residents in 2017. Our staff and Board of Directors hosted several events this past year to bring more awareness to the community of the services we offer, and those we serve, as well as to celebrate our successes!

We kicked off our anniversary month, May, with a silent auction here at our offices. The event, was well attended despite the torrential downpours that evening. We were honored to have Congressman John Faso in attendance demonstrating his support of our achievements, as well as several of our local representatives.

Also in May, we hosted a Family Fun Day for the public, a Poverty Simulation (in order to let people know and better understand what it is like to experience poverty), and hosted a Free Family Movie night at the Greenville Drive In. Advertisements were purchased on Greene County Transit busses as well, informing the public of our services and our anniversary!

Programmatically, we continue to provide services to assist our consumers in maintaining self-sufficiency, secure housing, food security and safety. We continue to invest in our staff, providing training opportunities for growth and improved service delivery. We have begun important work on several new initiatives as well, forging new partnerships to address needs in our community.

Regarding housing and homelessness, we are in our third and final year of our Solutions to End Homelessness Program. We do intend to apply when the new RFP is released. Although the needs far exceed the funding, this program allows us to move homeless individuals and families out of motels, as well as to help avoid eviction for renters. This program, as in many government-funded programs, has strict eligibility criteria, and often one must be at rock bottom in order to qualify for assistance. Due to private donations and foundation grants, we sometimes can assist those who do not meet eligibility for STEHP.

Food insecurity continues to plague many Greene County residents, including working families. Through our Emergency Food Pantry and Feeding America Programs, we are able to continue to provide food to families in need. Our partnership with Family of Woodstock allowed us several volunteer orientations, hoping to enlist community volunteers to glean from local farms and increase access to nutritious food. We continue this partnership for a 2nd year, and learn from Ulster County's successful programs.

In order to increase access to healthy, local produce for individuals and families that qualify for SNAP benefits (food stamps), Community Action applied for, and was approved through the USDA as a SNAP Benefits Retailer. Beginning in April 2018, we are bringing Field Goods produce delivery to SNAP recipients. We are confident that this partnership will benefit not only the recipients, but local producers as well.

This year marks the end of a program that has had huge success and impact for many Greene and Columbia County residents. Beginning in 2000 as the Workers Auto Loan Club, or WALC, our Wheels for Work Program is coming to its end. State funding for this program, vital to rural communities such as ours with limited public transportation, ended several years ago. Due to the money earned through loans that have been repaid over the years, we were able to continue to offer auto loans at 5% interest, through the Bank of Greene County, with Program Income that was generated. At the close of 2017 funding remains for one last loan to be approved. We are thrilled with, and are glad to assist in promoting, the expanded Greene County Transit, and purchase vouchers to distribute to our consumers. We look forward to continued growth in this system to allow more mobility for our residents.

We are also exploring, at the encouragement of Medical Answering Services, the creation of a program to provide non-emergency medical transportation using volunteer drivers. Several Community Action agencies in rural New York State communities have already done so, at varying levels of success. We have applied to NYS Department of Health to become approved Medicaid Transportation Provider, and are working with other stakeholders in the community through the newly formed Transportation Advisory Council in Greene County.

Our Domestic Violence Program continues to offer services to men, women, and children affected by DV in both Greene and Columbia Counties. Both shelters saw increases in census, as well as increases in the number of Orders of Protection granted with our assistance. The Columbia Greene Domestic Violence Task Force, facilitated with our staff and a Legal Aid of North-eastern NY attorney, saw greater participation this past year, with much focus on the introduction of a lethality assessment process that would be adopted in both counties. The lethality assessment's goal is to provide an evidence-based standard of practice to reduce intimate partner homicide, increase victim safety, and enhance collaboration in every community. This group meets quarterly, alternating between Greene and Columbia County locations.

Our Weatherization Assistance Program has much to celebrate this year. In addition to both our Director and Auditor having their BPI (Building Performance Institute) certification, our Auditor also received his Quality Control Inspector Certification, and our Director was accepted to test for this certification as well. We are on track for successful completion of our 2017/18 contract, and once fully staffed look to expanding our program to include more fee for service opportunities.

We continue to offer such necessary seasonal programs as Back to School, Coats for Families, and our Here Comes Christmas/ Adopt a Family Programs. With each year, it seems more and more agencies and community organizations are taking on very similar projects. Ever dedicated to reducing duplication and maximizing resources, we are working towards a central registration process for these events, distributing lists by community, and sharing work and resources to allow limited resources to be expanded.

This past year we have pulled together various community partners and are extremely pleased and proud to serve as lead agency for the newly formed Greene County Peer Court. Working closely with Greene County Department of Human Services, Probation, the District Attorney's Office, Family Court and others throughout the county, we have met several times, formed an official advisory council and are currently creating our Policies and Procedures. We look forward to holding our first court in the late fall of 2018. Peer court, also known as youth or teen court, is an alternative approach to the traditional juvenile justice system. A youth charged with an offense has the opportunity to forgo the hearing and sentencing procedures of juvenile court and agrees to a sentencing forum with a jury of the youth's peers. Our Peer Court will be the adult judge model, utilizing actual judges, attorneys and other professionals in the criminal justice system as judge. Students from throughout Greene County will have the opportunity to be trained to serve in other rolls in the court, and or serve on the Peer Court jury.

Our Your Money Your Goals Financial Empowerment Program has been in the works in 2017. Being offered in spring 2018, this program will provide education on banking, credit, savings and more through a curriculum developed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Participants who successfully meet program requirements, including opening savings accounts and depositing monthly, will have their savings matched in order to create their own emergency funds. We are working with the Bank of Greene County on this project and are thrilled to offer tools to our consumers that can be used to make lasting changes in their lives!

Finally, much time this year has been spent in the planning of a new social enterprise. Alan Siegel, our Director of Retail Operations, has received several intensive trainings and has researched for the coming soon Grow it Forward Greenhouse Project. This separate corporation will operate a greenhouse and grow organic hydroponic lettuces and herbs for sale. In addition, Grow it Forward will also produce ultra-nutrient dense microgreens. Grow it Forward will be its own nonprofit organization and act as a job training site, as well as generate income to support our programs. We have already seated the new board, and are in process of finalizing bylaws, resource sharing agreements, etc. Stay tuned for more information!

We have experienced some concern about the future of Community Action, as the current administration had called for the elimination of our funding. We are fortunate to have support on both sides of the aisle in Washington, as well as a lobbyist who has seen the results of our network's work nationwide. We are confident that continuing to expand services to meet ever-changing needs, as well as exploring other revenue sources, will allow us to continue the work we do.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Community Action, I thank you for the continued privilege of serving those in our community who require assistance to meet basic needs.

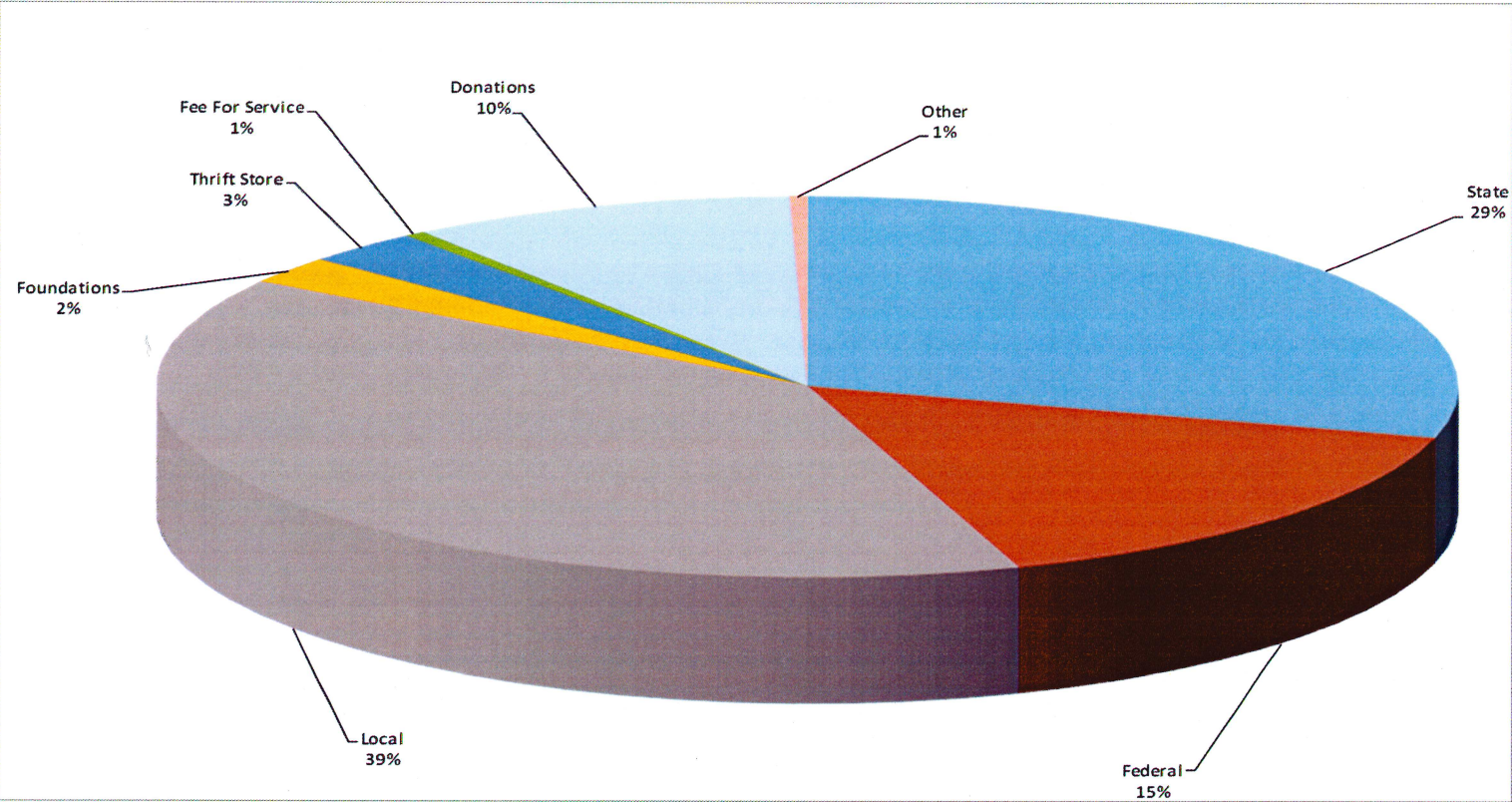
Sincerely,

Florence Ohle

Annual Report, January, 2017 through December, 2017

Funding Source	STATE	FEDERAL	LOCAL	PRIVATE
Columbia County Dept. of Social Services			\$ 47,697.71	
Community Services Block Grant - NYS Dept. of State		\$ 219,821.00		
Donations				\$ 42,275.23
Emergency Food & Shelter		\$ 7,090.50		
Federal Family Violence Prevention		\$ 29,666.00		
Fee for Service & Program Income				\$ 11,724.75
Foundation Grants				\$ 49,000.00
Greene County Dept. of Social Services			\$ 92,025.72	
Greene County Legislature			\$ 36,765.00	
Interest Income				\$ 551.48
Legal Aid Society				\$ 6,828.91
LDSS (Domestic Violence Per Diems)			\$ 619,201.14	
NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal	\$ 323,022.00			
NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services	\$ 39,451.64			
NYS Empower	\$ 5,340.70			
NYS Office of Temp/Disability Assist (STEHP)	\$ 65,822.56			
NYS Office of Victims Services	\$ 168,244.78			
Other Grant Funding				\$ 393.00
Pay it Forward Thrift Store Income				\$ 59,203.20
Regional Food Bank of Northeast New York				\$ 1,864.00
Transitional Housing Income			\$ 11,607.19	
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development		\$ 59,198.47		
IN KIND Services, Non Monetary Donations and Services				\$ 154,704.24
Totals	\$ 601,881.68	\$ 315,775.97	\$ 807,296.76	\$ 326,544.81

TOTAL AGENCY INCOME: \$2,051,499.22



Service	Number Served - 2017	Prior Year - 2016
Food Pantry	4419 persons, 427 unduplicated households, 2,141 food packages, 39,771 meals	4628 persons, 409 unduplicated households, 2,053 food packages, 41,571 meals
Feeding America	149 food pickups, 72,586 lbs. of food	154 food pickups, 97,600 lbs. of food
Store Vouchers	186 clothing, 59 household items, 1 furniture	234 clothing, 83 household items, 5 furniture
Emergency Assistance	8 rent/security, 8 utilities, 1 auto repair, 13 other	14 rent/security, 1 utilities, 1 auto repair, 2 other
Healthy Homes Case Management	15 households	20 households
STHEP (Solutions to End Homelessness)	19 homeless households (36 people) , 29 at risk households (75 people) served with security/rent, 1 household assisted with utilities	12 homeless served with security or rent, 34 at risk served with security or rent, 1 assisted with utilities, 3 homeless served with hotel stay
Resource Room (computer, Phone, Fax use)	28 unduplicated people, 129 visits	30 unduplicated people, 109 visits
Wheels for Work Auto Loans	2 loans approved	9 loans approved
Domestic Violence Hotline Calls	1682	1426
Shelter - Greene County	72 individuals	67 individuals
Shelter - Columbia County	132 individuals	119 individuals
Greene - Orders of Protection	91	66
Columbia - Orders of Protection	74	65
VITA	229 tax returns, \$282,809 in refunds	189 tax returns, \$242, 111 in refunds
Weatherization	42 households, 72 persons	35 households
Thrift Store	10 CWEP volunteers, 286.5 hours, 21 community volunteers, 361.25hours, 3 youth Interns, 627 donations worth \$156,609.	3 CWEP volunteers, 707 hours, 17 community volunteers,, 1221.75 hours, 5 youth Interns, 419 donations worth 64,126
Here Comes Christmas	178 families 440 children served	414 children served
Back o School	81 families, 208 backpacks distributed	206 children served
HUD Permanent Supportive Housing	2 chronically homeless, 3 families affected by domestic violence maintain permanent housing	2 chronically homeless individuals, 3 families affected b domestic violence maintain permanent housing
Greene - Crime Victim Advocacy Program	21 served	
Columbia - Crime Victim Advocacy Program	41 served	



Tracy Carrol and The Bank of Greene County assisted us with our "can shake" to raise funds for hurricane Harvey relief- \$3,000 was sent on to the Texas Association of Community Action Agencies.



130 people were served at our 2nd Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner. The dinner, open to all in the community, is a partnership between this agency and the Catskill Elks Lodge #1341.



A Christmas to Remember– Each year we decorate a tree at the Festival of Trees to inform the community of our services. This year, our display brought viewers back to the simplicity and nostalgia of days gone by....popcorn and cranberry garland, paper chains.....thank you to the women of Fortnightly for all of your efforts in planning and executing this amazing event!

Staff enjoyed a beautiful day at North South Lake, with Mason McDermott leading us through sound meditation.



Community Action Employees enjoyed a wonderful lunch and fellowship at the Creekside for our 2017 Holiday



Anne Donovan, Organizer, Florence Ohle, Gwen Wright, Executive Director of NYSOPDV, Carol Pfister and Lori Torgersen, Board Members, and Barbara Palmateer, Program Director at the Frist Annual Women's' Expo held at St. Theresa's Church in Windham. Over \$9,000 was raised for our Greene County Domestic Violence Shelter.



Operations Officer Karen Van Valkenburgh, Resource Specialist Diane McAneny, and Program Director Barbara Palmateer at the National Community Action Partnership Annual Conference in Philadelphia. Karen was honored, along with others from across the nation, for earning her Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) credential!



Greene Meadows Nursing and Rehabilitation Center donated 26 turkeys to Community Action Of Greene County, Inc.



Community Action
collects for
HURRICANE
HARVEY RELIEF

Thank you for your donation! **COMMUNITY ACTION**
of Greene County, Inc.

Creating Opportunities... Fighting Poverty... Changing Lives

Community Action Board of Directors

- **Robert Schrock**, President, Public Sector (*Representing Greene County Legislator Bill Lawrence*)
- **Rev. John Bowen**, Vice President, Low Income Sector
- **Carrie Multari**, Treasurer, Low Income Sector
- **Carol Pfister**, Secretary, Private Sector
- **Aidan O'Connor**, Public Sector
- **Nancy Barton**, Private Sector
- **William Reich**, Private Sector
- **Mary Ann Scalera**, Low Income Sector
- **Tracy Jo Szepessy**, Low Income Sector
- **Lori Torgersen**, Public Sector
- **Charles Shayne**, Private Sector
- **Tracy Magee Ricci**, Public Sector (*Representing Greene County Legislator Kevin Lewis*)

Community Action Senior Staff

Executive Director - **Florence Ohle**

Operations Officer - **Karen Van Valkenburgh**

Director, Family, Community And Victim Services - **Barbara Palmateer**

Director, Weatherization Assistance Program - **Jamie Linzey**

Director, Retail Operations - **Alan Siegel**