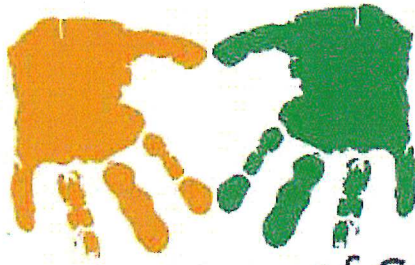


COMMUNITY



ACTION

of Greene County, Inc.



2019 Annual Report



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

Just as our 2019 Annual Report was being completed, COVID 19 struck, changing everything in our lives- both personally and professionally. As a provider of “essential services” our offices did not close. In order to reduce risk of exposure to staff, yet increase access to essential food, housing and safety services, staff began working in rotating shifts, our days became a bit shorter, yet all services were available at all times. Immediately we saw an increase in the number of first time visitors to our food pantry- people affected by sudden unemployment who had never had to reach out for assistance previously. We implemented our Mobile Food Pantry, and began delivery of food door to door, to mobile COVID testing sites throughout the community, as well as to sites where school districts delivered meals to their students. We were able to obtain financial support for this mobile program through Dyson Foundation, Bank of Greene County, and Mid Hudson Cable Vision. In addition, donations from the community have been steady and most generous.

Through this crisis we have forged new partnerships in the private sector, working with such local businesses as Catskill Elks Lodge #1341 who is lending freezer space, and See and Be Kitchen, Mermaid Café, and Simone’s Kitchen who have each developed programs to serve meals to those in our community needing assistance.

Through our core funding source, the Community Services Block Grant, we have significant funding available to us for emergency assistance to respond to COVID, and will be able to assist Greene County residents with rent and security, utilities, as well as daycare expenses.

While much remains to be seen in regards to the coronavirus; whether or not we experience a second wave, if schools reopen in the fall, how many businesses are able to rebound, know that Community Action of Greene County is here to assist, to mobilize resource, s and to continue our important work in offering relief to our community in this time of global pandemic.

In 2019, Community Action of Greene County, Inc. continued to work towards eradicating the causes and consequences of poverty in our community. Change in existing programs, additions of program areas and services, and new partnerships continued our focus on such vital service areas as housing, food insecurity and protection from violence, and expanded our scope to include opioid addiction and social justice. Our board and staff remain steadfast in their commitment to serving all of Greene County with information, referral, services and programs to help them become most self-sufficient.

With the growth of short term rentals in our communities, we have seen a decrease in the number of rental units available for our consumers. Homelessness remains an issue for many- for some due to poverty, for some due to mental health issues and or substance abuse. We continue to work with these individuals and families, utilizing a “housing first” approach- once one is stably housed they are more likely to be able to focus on other issues affecting their lives. We continue to administer two HUD Permanent Supportive Housing grants-one for chronically homeless individuals, the other for families fleeing domestic violence. The program pays for the apartment lease, and allows regular case management to assure that support services are made available. We have just been approved for a third HUD housing grant, which will serve single persons affected by domestic violence. All of these programs are scattered site- with apartment being leased throughout our communities in both Greene and Columbia Counties.

Effective 10/1/19, we were approved for a new, five year grant through NYSOTDA, for STEHP (solutions to end homelessness program). We were granted the maximum, \$300,000 for each of the 5 years, and have expanded this program to serve Columbia County residents as well as Greene. STEHP serves both literally homeless individuals, and assists them in obtaining permanent housing, as well as those at imminent risk of homelessness due to rental arrears. With the increase in allocation we were able to hire a full time case manager to work with those in Columbia County.

As food insecurity continues to face many families in our communities, we work towards creative partnerships and solutions to increase access to food, and eliminate waste. Through our partnership with Family of Woodstock, our Farm to Food Pantry program really took off this year! Several local farms, including Bulich’s

Creekside, Story Farms, and Stoneledge Farms donated excess food to us, which we in turn shared with other Greene County pantries. In addition, we also continue to receive food three times a week from the Catskill Walmart store through Feeding American, and received food from Clearchannel Radio's Stuff the Bus, Greyfox Bluegrass Festival, and several other community organizations/food drives.

A frequent problem we ran in to was having an abundance of produce, more than we could distribute or refrigerate, and volunteers in other pantries were not available right away to receive any excess. Unfortunately, produce was being disposed of as a result. In response, our Weatherization Crew built a walk in cooler, centrally located in Cairo, from a shed, an air conditioner, and a "cool- bot"- a mechanism that tricks an AC unit into working harder than it normally would. We now have a cooler, built at a fraction of the cost of a walk in unit, that is accessible to us and the network of pantries we work with, who can collect the produce when they have the manpower. Each pantry has its own shelf, and so far this is working splendidly!

We did receive a grant this year from the DEC, which was used to purchase a Ford Connect Van to be used for food and farm pickups. We will be also using this vehicle to start a mobile food pantry in early 2020- to target areas of the county where transportation is least accessible, remote mountaintop communities, to motels that serve the homeless.

We continue our partnership with the Prattsville Art Centre, sending staff each Friday to the center to perform outreach and inform the residents of services available. Through our partnership, Prattsville Art Center now also has representatives from the Healthcare Consortium and alliance for Positive Health performing outreach as well.

Our domestic violence program continues to benefit from the Annual Women's Expo in Windham. We received over \$9, 000 in 2019 from the event, and this year's is already in the planning stages. Taking place at WAJ this year, the purpose for the fundraising will be to perform much needed repairs on the exterior of our shelter.

In addition, the Domestic Violence Program continues to provide both residential and non residential services in both Greene and Columbia Counties, as does our Crime Victims Advocacy program. We continue to advocate for victims' rights, and provide educational presentations throughout our community.

Weatherization continues to work, and to struggle to meet the goals of the contract. With limited multifamily units in our community , and a regulation preventing us from being able to re-weatherize a home, regardless of when one may have received this service, it is increasingly difficult to complete the contracts. We have , and will continue, to be creative in our outreach efforts in order to boost participation in this program that can save households money on their energy bills!

In 2019 fifteen Greene County high school students, representing four of the six school districts in Greene County, completed a 20 hour Peer Court training, and were sworn in by the Judge Wanda Dorpfeld of Coxsackie! Three actual cases were heard this year; with sanctions for the offender including letters of apology, community service at a local nursing home, and serving as jurors for future cases. We have received wonderful feedback from the students involved- one young woman's mother told us after involvement in our Peer Court, she decided to pursue a career in law! We look forward to our next recruitment and training sessions for new participants, and more referrals for youthful offenders. We also look forward to more active involvement with the New York State Association of Peer Courts, and having our students participate in trainings.

The Grow it Forward Greenhouse Project began growing microgreens at its Cairo location in late fall, and had a ribbon cutting with the Greene County Chamber of Commerce. We look forward to more wholesale and direct sale (farmers markets) opportunities in 2020, and will focus on marketing our produce! Revenue earned through this social enterprise will support our programs, allowing us more flexibility in serving the community.

We in the Community Action network place great value on community partnerships- we realize that we are not “in this alone”, nor can we work and help others acting in isolation. Through community partnerships we are all stronger, and are better able to effectively work with those we serve. We appreciate the partnerships we continue to enjoy with Greene County, and the support we receive from the legislature. I, myself, am also thankful for the dedicated Board of Directors and staff that give so tirelessly and selflessly in serving others. In closing, a quote from Theodore Roosevelt:

“This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in.”

Florence Ohle,
Executive Director

Community Action of Greene County Inc.

Senior Staff

Executive Director	Florence Ohle
Operations Officer	Vacant
Director, Family, Community And Victim Services	Barbara Palmateer
Director, Weatherization Assistance Program	Eugene Kelly
Thrift Store Manager	Bryan Hale

Board of Directors

President	Tracee Magee Ricci (representing NYS Assemblyman Chris Tague)
Vice President	Lori Torgersen
Treasurer	Carrie Multari
Secretary	Carol Pfister (Representing Village of Athens Treasurer Gail Lasher)
	William Reich
	Julie Wade
	Maryann Scalera
	Nancy Barton
	Tracy Jo Szepessy
	Aidan O'Connor Jr.

Grow it Forward Greenhouse Project, Inc.

Farm Manger
Marketing and Sales

Allison Brabham
Delphina Madera

Board of Directors

President

Stephen Hadcock

Vice President

Daniel King

Treasurer

Nancy Richards

Secretary

Julie Wade

Heather Stine

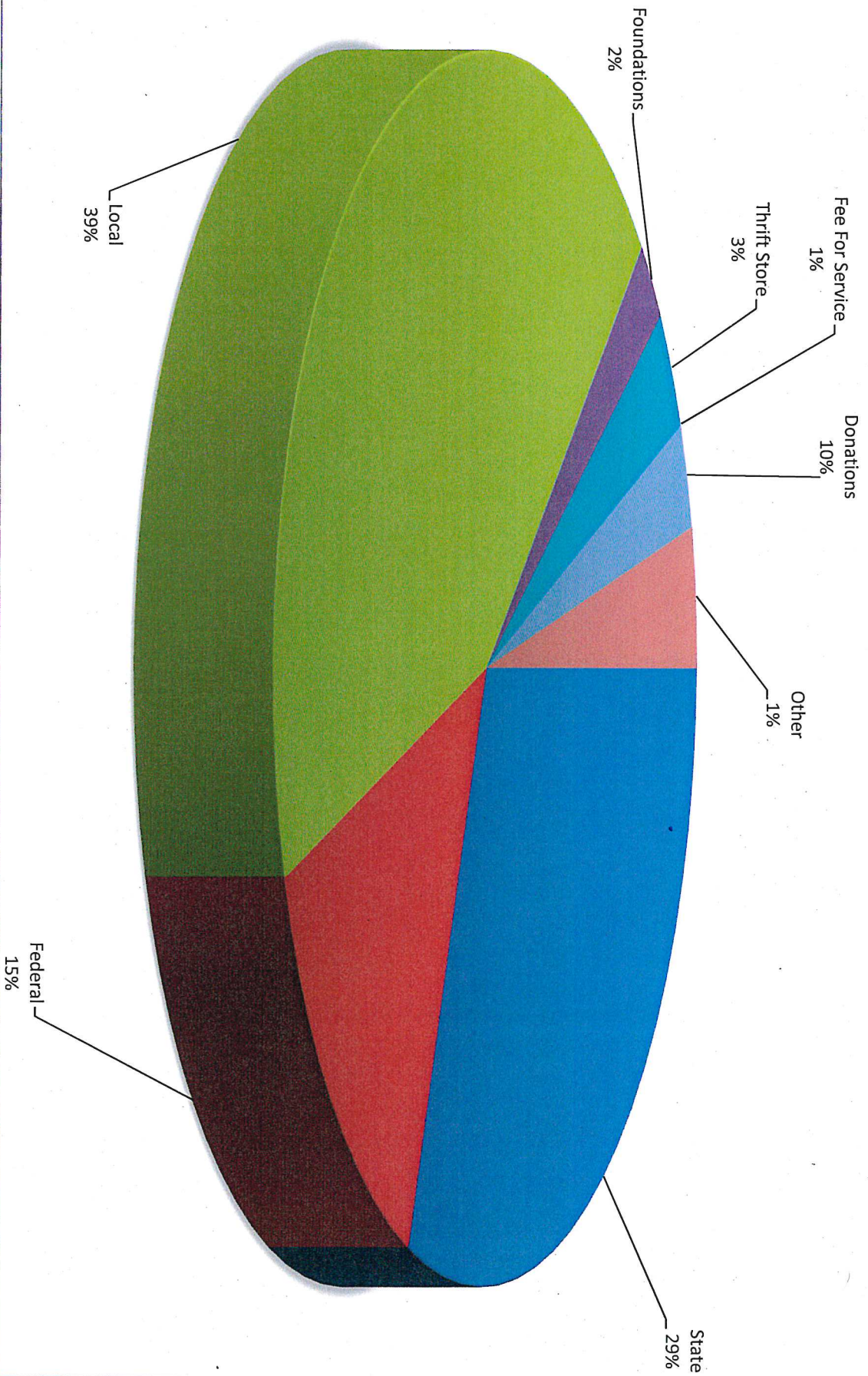
Russell Le Count

Aidan O'Connor, Jr.

At A Glance

Food Pantry	3,165 persons, 289 unduplicated households, 1,439 food packages, 28,755 meals
Feeding America	140 food pickups, 45,029 lbs of food
Store Vouchers	234 clothing, 83 household items, 5 furniture
Emergency Assistance	8 rent/2 security, 10 utilities, 2 auto repair, 2 other
Healthy Homes Case Management	26 households
STEHP (Solutions to End Homelessness)	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)	18 unduplicated people, 52 visits
Wheels for Work Auto Loans	5 loans open, 2 paid off
Domestic Violence Hotline Calls	1064
Shelter – Greene County	55 individuals
Shelter – Columbia County	80 individuals
Greene – Orders of Protection	56
Columbia – Orders of Protection	67
VITA	235 tax returns, \$242, 111 in refunds
Weatherization	35 households
Thrift Store	8 CWEP volunteers, 183 hours 5 community volunteers, 43.5 hours 2 youth Interns 251 donations, \$58,694
Here Comes Christmas	414 children served
Back to School	206 children served

*Community Action of Greene County, Inc.
Annual Income
2017*

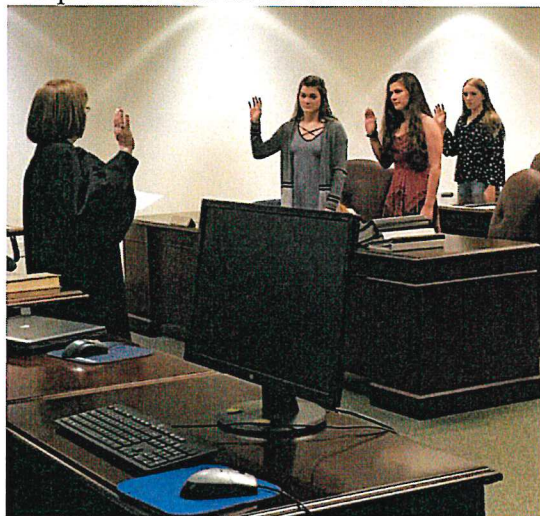




Assemblyman Chris Tague and volunteers served 111 homebound persons
On Thanksgiving Day! Catskill Elks Lodge #1341 offered their kitchen, members and volunteers!



Peer Court swearing in ceremony in the Greene County Legislative Chambers. Below, Judge Wanda Dorpfeld swears in the members.





Farm to Food Pantry produce!



Outreach table outside the Prattsville Art Center



Staff of Community Action receive backpack donations from the United Way of the Greater Capital Region



Greener Pathways mobile clinic is at our offices twice per month!



Catskill Teacher's Association donates toys from "Run for a Claus" event