



December 2019

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CEO's Letter

Dear Friend,

On behalf of NYSCAA, I would like to wish all of you a wonderful holiday season and a year of growth and success. As we move into 2020, we are looking forward to working with each of you and making deeper connections with local, state, and regional partners. We recognize the vital role Community Action has in strengthening communities and providing critical services to help families and individuals succeed.

I would also like to extend congratulations to Traci Ross on her recent appointment to Executive Director at LEAP in Washington County. Please reach out and welcome her to the Community Action network.

Our Emerging Leaders Institute (ELI) will continue in the new year. [Applications](#) for this year-long leadership development program are now being accepted and are available on our [website](#). I welcome and encourage CAA staff to apply as a way to not only develop and enhance leadership skills but also for a deeper connection to the work of Community Action. The application deadline is January 20, 2020. I look forward to working with another group of committed professionals from our Community Action Agencies around the state.

We look forward to seeing you at our future events! It is our goal to always provide you an opportunity to connect, learn, and share with your Community Action colleagues.

Best,



[Jackie Orr](#), NCRMT

December's Poverty Myth

"America is the Land of Equal Opportunity and Upward Mobility" - False!

In the third installment of PBS's "[Busted: America's Poverty Myths](#)" series, a fundamental notion, America is a land of equal opportunity and upward mobility for all, is debunked. The question we ask is; why, in spite of a wealth of evidence to support the contrary, does this idea persist? [Click here](#) to read more and listen in on the history of the "rags to riches" narrative, which began with Benjamin Franklin over 200 years ago.



NYSCAA News

NYSCAA's Year in Review - Thank You for a Wonderful 2019!

2019 was filled with exceptional conferences, meetings, trainings and more throughout New York's Community Action Network. NYSCAA is pleased that we were able to provide professional development opportunities for Community Action staff members from around the state to accomplish personal and professional goals.

Some of the highlights of our year include:

Classroom sessions for Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers (NCRT) and Nationally Certified ROMA Implementers (NCRI) which resulted in the addition of sixteen new Certified ROMA Trainers and Implementers at CAAs in NY.

The annual Emerging Leaders Institute (ELI) also welcomed a new cohort of talented Community Action professionals. In September 2019, twenty three ELI 1.0 and 2.0 members graduated from this year's cohort.

We congratulate them for their hard work and commitment to Community Action.

For a full look at NYSCAA's work in 2019, please [check out our annual report](#).

CAAs Receiving Funding

New York State Census Equity Fund Awards \$1.4 Million to Community Organizations for 2020 Census Outreach

This month, the New York State Census Equity Fund announced its second round of grants, totaling \$1,437,000, to 56 organizations to support efforts across the state to reach hard-to-count communities in the 2020 Census. Historically, some populations—including communities of color, low-income households, immigrants, rural households, and young children—have been under-counted in the census. Nonpartisan experts agree that getting an accurate count in 2020 will be especially difficult.

Several Community Action Agencies are among the organizations to receive the grant funds to ensure the hard-to-count populations in their communities are accurately represented in April's 2020 Census. [Pro Action of Steuben & Yates](#), [Cattaraugus Community Action](#), [Opportunities for Otsego](#), and [Westchester Community Opportunity Program](#) will receive funds in this round of grants. Congratulations to these Community Action Agencies on their award and their work to ensure hard-to-count populations are represented in New York State. [Click here](#) to read more.

Census 2020

How Do I Take the 2020 Census?

By April 1, 2020, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. You will have three options for responding: online, by phone, or by mail.

[Watch this Public Service Announcement](#) by the U.S. Census Bureau to learn more about the different ways to respond to the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau has also released a PSA Toolkit which enables partners and stakeholders to access produced PSAs or create their own using pre-approved messages. PSAs are an effective way to educate the public about the importance of the 2020 Census and why participation matters.



Is My 2020 Census Data Safe?

The U.S. Census Bureau is bound by law to protect your 2020 Census responses and keep them strictly confidential. In fact, every employee takes an oath to protect your personal information for life.

[Watch this Public Service Announcement](#) by the U.S. Census Bureau to learn more about how census data is private, protected by law, and stored securely.



Community Action Partnership (CAP) - Census 2020

Make sure to visit the Community Action Partnership's [Census 2020 webpage](#) to stay up-to-date on the latest news and information about the upcoming 2020 Census. This once in a decade event is critical for Community Action and the families and



communities we serve across the country, and it is essential that all people are counted.

Please nominate one staff member from your agency to serve on the Community Action Partnership's Complete Count Committee. This person will be your key contact on Census news, outreach, and information. CAP will be offering a range of free training tools to make your participation easy and effective. To nominate, fill out this [2 minute form](#), or email your agency's nominee name and email address to lmash@communityactionpartnerhsip.com.

CSBG National Partner Resources

CAPLAW - It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like...Bonus Season? Managing Disallowance Risk in Incentive Compensation Policies and Practices

Community Action Agencies (CAAs) considering [one-time incentive compensation or bonus payments](#) to their employees must pay attention to both the content and the implementation of incentive compensation policies. While federal tax and grant rules permit CAAs to pay incentive compensation, improper practices have led to significant disallowances, penalties, and even the revocation of tax-exempt status.



CAPLAW has provided a review of the incentive compensation rules applicable to CAAs, discusses issues to consider when drafting a policy, and describes how to implement a policy to mitigate the risk of disallowance.

CAPLAW - Complying with the New Overtime Rule Under the Fair Labor Standards Act

A new federal overtime rule that will increase the number of employees eligible for overtime pay goes into effect on January 1, 2020. To help CAAs understand the changes and potential workplace impacts, CAPLAW is issuing the FAQ, [Complying with the New Overtime Rule Under the FLSA](#).



In light of the complexity of issues arising under the federal FLSA, and as a refresher for CAAs, CAPLAW has updated its [Overview of FLSA Principles FAQ](#) covering the requirements of the FLSA and its applicability to CAAs. Together, these resources can help CAAs navigate the new overtime rule and maintain compliance with the FLSA.

Additional Resources

Fiscal Policy Institute - The Unequal State of New York

The Fiscal Policy Institute reports that New York State has the most unequal income distribution in the nation, with the fewest people capturing the greatest share. Not since the “Gilded Age” of the 1920s has our state seen such a vast divide between the highest- and lowest-income New Yorkers; and without intervention, that gap is expected to continue growing.



New York is a particularly extreme example, but rising inequality is a problem across all areas of the nation. Now is our chance to reverse the trend and lead the country by adopting sound economic and social policies that promote growth and development for the many rather than the few so that all New Yorkers have an equal chance at opportunity. [Click here](#) to read the full report.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation - Children Living in High-Poverty, Low-Opportunity Neighborhoods

Living in areas of concentrated poverty — and missing out on safe and healthy opportunities to learn, play and grow — is a reality for more than 8.5 million kids in America today. Policy makers, businesses, and philanthropic leaders must act now to boost housing options and spur economic growth for the families who call these communities home.



This snapshot shares the latest data — for the nation and each state — on children growing up in high-poverty areas. It also singles out two important factors, geographic location and race and ethnicity, that shape a child’s risk of living in concentrated poverty. The document ends by outlining recommended moves that leaders can take to help families in these communities thrive. [Click here](#) for more information.

Head Start, Public Schools Partnership to Strengthen Transition to Kindergarten

A new effort to support America’s earliest learners was launched this month. The Office of Head Start (OHS) at HHS’ Administration for Children and Families formalized partnerships with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the School Superintendents Association (AASA) to improve the transition of Head Start children as they enter elementary school. These partnerships were formalized with a memorandum of understanding with [NAESP](#) and [AASA](#), and were signed at Higher Horizons Head Start & Early Head Start in Falls Church, Va.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Early Head Start and Head Start.

Bloomberg Opinion - LBJ's Great Society Won the War on Poverty

"In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson called for the U.S. to become a “great society.” That term came to be synonymous with the Johnson administration's War on Poverty. The Great Society initiative led to the creation of Medicare and Medicaid, the modern version of food stamps, Head Start, various jobs programs, expansion of many kinds of Social Security benefits, urban-renewal spending and a vast array of other social programs.



Many now believe this War on Poverty was a failure. Among conservatives, it’s almost an article of faith that LBJ's welfare state fostered a culture of dependence that trapped people in the very poverty it was meant to eliminate.

Meanwhile, many also feel a sense of frustration that poverty is still with us, stubbornly stuck at about a seventh of the population." [Click here](#) to keep reading.

National Professional Development Opportunities

Community Action Partnership

2020 Annual Training Conference
January 8th-10th, 2020 - San Juan, Puerto Rico
[Click here](#) for more information.

National Association for State Community Services Programs

2020 Winter Training Conference
February 26th-28th, 2020 - Arlington, Virginia
[Click here](#) for more information.

National Community Action Foundation

2020 Annual Conference March 17th-20th, 2020
www.ncaf.org

CAPLAW National Training Conference

June 30th - July 2nd, 2020 - Chicago, Illinois
www.caplaw.org

The Promise of Community Action:

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.



Our Agencies:

Click on Name of Agency to Visit Website: [Action for a Better Community, Inc.](#) * [Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc.](#) * [Albany Community Action Partnership](#) * [ACCORD Corporation](#) * [CAPC of Jefferson County](#) * [Cattaraugus Community Action, Inc.](#) [Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.](#) * [Chautauqua Opportunities Inc.](#) * [Columbia Opportunities, Inc.](#) * [Commission on Economic Opportunity for the Capital District Region, Inc.](#) * [Community Action Organization of Erie County, Inc.](#) * [Community Action of Greene County, Inc.](#) [Community Action of Orleans & Genesee](#) * [Community Action Partnership for Madison County, Inc.](#) [Cortland Community Action Program, Inc. \(CAPCO\)](#)* [Delaware Opportunities](#) * [Dutchess County Community Action Agency, Inc.](#) * [Economic Opportunity Program Inc. of Chemung County](#) [EOC of Nassau County - Hempstead](#) * [EOC of Suffolk - Patchogue](#) * [Fulmont Community](#)

Action Agency, Inc. * JCEO of Clinton & Franklin Counties * Lewis County Opportunities, Inc. * Livingston County Planning Department * Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc. * NYC Department of Youth and Community Development * Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. * Opportunities for Broome, Inc. * Opportunities for Chenango, Inc. * Opportunities for Otsego, Inc. * Oswego County Opportunities, Inc. * Path Stone PEACE, Inc. * Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc. * RECAP * Saratoga County EOC, Inc. * Schenectady Community Action, Inc. * Schoharie County Community Action Program, Inc. * St. Lawrence County Community Development Program, Inc. * Tioga Opportunities, Inc. * Tompkins Community Action, Inc. * Ulster County Community Action Committee, Inc. * Warren/Hamilton Counties ACEO, Inc. * L.E.A.P. * WestCOP * Wayne County Community Action Program, Inc. * Wyoming County Community Action, Inc. * Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.

[New York State Community Action Association, Inc.](#)

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