



2012-2013

Report to the Community



Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

A Message from the Executive Director & Chairman of the Board




Tom Hughes, Metro President
Chairman of the Board

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

In spite of good economic news, it is sobering to realize that the poverty rate in Washington County grew by 114% since 2000, taking an unacceptable toll on local residents. Throughout the year, all of our programs operated at full capacity with a high demand for the range of services we provide. For example, we received nearly 209,000 calls from households needing energy assistance to keep electricity and heat in their homes or rent assistance to prevent eviction. While we were able to assist nearly 28,000 households, we had to turn away far too many people. And we continue to have waiting lists for families seeking to enroll their child in Head Start or families who are experiencing homelessness.

Community Action entered fiscal year 2012-13 determined to do more to eliminate conditions of poverty. Guided by our strategic plan and motivated to increase our impact, we moved quickly to adapt our business model so we can better serve the many families who are being left behind in the economic recovery.

A re-tooling of our fund raising program led to a 100% increase in private unrestricted and capacity building funds and 310% increase in net funds. In addition, we received over \$800,000 in restricted private gifts. In particular, Kaiser Permanente continued their partnership with us by finding innovative ways to invest in our success (see story inside). We are privileged to have a strong base of support in our community and we never take it for granted.



We implemented several new high-impact programs addressing the needs of a range of clients. Veterans experiencing homelessness now have access to a range of critical services thanks to a partnership with the Community Action Agency in Columbia County. Families are building and saving assets while increasing their financial literacy as part of our new financial education initiative. Head Start families and our Child Care Resource and Referral providers are saving for home ownership, education and business ventures through the Individual Development Account (IDA) program, and doubling their nest eggs along the way with our match.

Our community collaborations have been highly successful as we work with key partners to address issues of poverty. We continue to provide leadership support to Washington County's Anti-Poverty Strategies and Washington County Thrives. Our First Lady Cylvia Hayes is leading a statewide effort to promote prosperity for all Oregonians and it has been an honor for Jerralynn to be a part of her planning team. This past year we also became a partner in the Beaverton Community Health Collaboration, which is planning a highly integrated community health and education center focused on the needs of the underinsured and those living in poverty.

As a non-profit organization, our board, staff, community partners and donors create our success. And our success is critical to the thousands of families struggling to achieve economic security and a better life for their families. Thank you for being there for us in this important work.

Warmly,

Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

Board Chair Tom Hughes
Metro President



Community



52 at-risk pregnant women received comprehensive support services to help them set and achieve goals for a healthy birth and stable life for their new child and 96% gave birth to babies at a healthy birth weight.

957 parents were able to go work because they could access quality, affordable child care.



1,041 pre-school children gained a solid education foundation by participating in Community Action's Head Start program.

72 at risk families received long-term comprehensive parenting support and in-home education to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Impact



By dialing 211, **15,078** callers were connected with vital health and social services because of community Actions efforts to maintain comprehensive, current and accurate information about programs and services available to Washington County residents.

140 families had lower heating costs and warmer, safer homes because Community Action provided comprehensive weatherization services.



205 families received the tools and information needed to reduce their energy costs and improve their home safety and energy efficiency because they received energy education and conservation services.

Our Newest

7,737 families
stayed warm and safe in their
homes with and electricity bill pay-
ment assistance from
Community Action

Serving Veterans

This marked the first year of our involvement in an important new program serving veterans in our community. A four county collaboration lead by Community Action Team in Columbia County, the Support Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) program provides housing assistance and support services to assist veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

As a result of this new addition to the suite of services provided within our Housing and Homeless Services Department, the program has lead to the development of new relationships with veteran serving agencies throughout the Portland Metro area. Since the program began in October of 2012, 41 veteran households comprised of 81 individuals, including 20 children, have been assisted to stabilize in permanent housing.



Programs

Community Transformation Grant

At Community Action we understand that we are all better able to help our clients when we are mindful of our own well-being. A recent Community Transformation Grant from ???? funded a new Wellness Coordinator to help guide us in our efforts.

Our long-held annual Wellness Day has now become an ongoing wellness program. We have renewed our efforts to assure we serve healthy food at all of our meetings. We provide opportunities and encouragement for staff seeking fun, physical activities, such as on our walking challenge and coordinated sports teams.

We have increased our support for employees and clients who want to quit smoking. And we have helped improve both clients and staff's financial wellness through the financial stability programs described below.

18 families began the process of saving funds to increase their education or start a business through Community Action Individual development Account program

58 individuals learned skills to take control of their financial future through Community Action's financial education classes.

Creating Financial Stability

Individual Development Accounts help low-income families increase their assets by providing a matched savings account, financial education and support services. Community Action began offering Individual Development Accounts, or IDA's, as an additional support to assist families in reaching their long-term goals.

Currently, participating families can save for education expenses or funds to start or expand a childcare business. When participants reach their savings goal and complete their financial literacy and asset specific training, they receive a 3 to 1 match.

Since the program began in November of 2012, 18 of individuals have enrolled in the IDA program and begun making deposits. Currently 100% are current on all their monthly deposits and have a combined savings of \$4,525 earning a combined savings match of \$13,576.

Partnerships &

Anti-poverty: Community Action leads the Anti-poverty Strategies workgroup. With representation from Washington County Office of Community Development, Washington County Department of Human Services, the Department of Human Services, local non-profit service providers, Pacific University, and the Faith Community, the workgroup has been tasked with guiding the implementation of the Anti-Poverty strategies included in the 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan and monitoring the progress of identified activities, addressing barriers and responding to changing conditions. In 2011-12, in partnership with Pacific University and Professor Don Schweitzer, PhD. the workgroup completed a series of interviews and focus groups with low-income Washington County Residents to better understand their perspective on the social service delivery system and the post recession economy. The study identified several recommended improvements to the social services system. Efforts to implement some of these improvements are currently underway.



Washington County Thrives: Community Action, in collaboration with the Vision Action Network leads the Washington County Thrives coalition. Public, private, non-profit and faith-based leaders have come together to create healthy and prosperous communities where everyone is engaged in their community and has opportunities to

access living-wage jobs, quality education, nutritious food, stable homes and services that promote health and wellness. Recognizing that the greatest barriers to expanding access to these basic building blocks of a thriving community is the persistent lack of resources and community engagement, Washington County Thrives seeks to change the way we talk about these issues to expand the circle of people engaged in addressing them.

Volunteer Involvement: One of the most important partners in this project are the volunteers that work with the clients. By involving our community in a very direct way, we are allowing the community to heal itself.

Collaborations

Benefits Enrollment Center: We recently discovered that approximately 60% of veterans, seniors and persons with disabilities in our community are not receiving the benefits to which they are entitled. Through a series of interviews in 2009 and 2011, low-income people described their struggles accessing benefits, highlighting some of the major barriers.

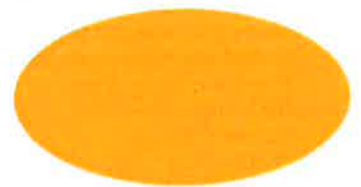
To address this issue, Community Action Energy and Emergency Rent partnered with Washington County Disability, Aging and Veterans Services, the State of Oregon Department of Human Services Aging and People with Disabilities, Asian Health and Services Center, the Social Security Administration, Washington County Assessment and Taxation and Loaves and Fishes to establish the Benefits Enrollment Center a mobile, volunteer run outreach effort to identify and enroll underserved households.



Since the inception of the program, the Benefits Enrollment Center has screened nearly 1000 individuals and submitted applications for 75% of those individuals. The estimated value of benefits for that period of time is approximately \$2 million. While the individual economic benefit cannot be overlooked, the most powerful benefit comes to the community as a whole. This comes in three prongs.

Economic: The benefits received by clients go back into the community to grocery stores, doctors, small business owners and more. It is estimated that each benefit dollar received becomes \$1.50 when spent in the community.

Health and Welfare: When one segment of the community is in danger, the entire community suffers. By accessing services the health and wellness of this vulnerable population is improved.



Thank you to our Wonderful Donors!

Thank you for your gifts between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013

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Community Spirit Gala

May 8, 2013

More than 250 guests celebrated the contributions of these dedicated community partners at our annual gala. The evening generated over \$92,000 to support Community Action's efforts to help families transition out of poverty.



2013 Community Spirit Award
Outstanding Philanthropists

Bob & Vi Metzler



2013 Community Spirit Award
Outstanding Community Partner

Lifeworks NW



2013 Community Spirit Award
Outstanding Organization

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2012-2013

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“Heart of Washington County Award”

From the Washington County Museum

Executive Director, Jerralynn Ness, was honored this year with the Washington County Museum’s highest honor — the “Heart of Washington County Award.”

Jerralynn is a fierce advocate for Washington County residents needing support. She has an exceptional ability to bring the community together and facilitate positive change for those less fortunate. She has dedicated her life to eradicating poverty, with the mission of helping struggling families achieve economic security.



Community Action

Jerralynn Ness, CCAP, Executive Director

1001 SW Baseline Street

Hillsboro, OR 97123

503.648.6646

www.caowash.org