COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH TOOLKIT | MAY 2019
HELPING PEOPLE, CHANGING LIVES
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Partnership Board of Directors
Welcome

Dear Community Action Colleagues:

Community Action Month is here, which means it’s time once again to celebrate the achievements of the families we serve as well as our volunteers, board members, and staff throughout this robust, expansive network of agencies. Let’s use the opportunity to share our stories of success, promote our innovative programs, and highlight the impact of our life-changing services. We hope you’ll find the Community Action Month Toolkit to be a useful resource to guide us in this coordinated effort to raise our national voice.

We're very pleased to offer you some fresh, exciting content this year — including all-new sample tweets and Community Action memes, new press release and proclamation templates, and new network talking points tailored to promote the impact of our network with the messaging and data outlined in the recently released National Impact Report.

We hope you'll join us in participating in the plethora of fun, engaging activities that we've featured in this year's Community Action Month calendar. You'll find daily themes and hashtags, such as #ImpactWednesday or #MissionMonday, as well as guidance for how and when to utilize our sample memes and social media posts.

As always, however, we encourage you to be creative! Please feel free to take advantage of our tools, tips, and resources to showcase your unique stories and impact. The Partnership commends you for your tireless work and dedication. We appreciate everything you do in your commitment to helping people and changing lives. Please join us in celebrating the power of our collective efforts.

Denise Harlow, MSW, CCAP, NCRT
Chief Executive Officer
National Community Action Partnership
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.
About the Toolkit

The purpose of the 2019 Community Action Month toolkit is to provide resources to promote your Community Action Agency and to raise awareness of Community Action Month this May. We encourage you to share your stories throughout the entire year, but Community Action Month is a great way to showcase your successes in empowering struggling families.

To those ends, this toolkit contains templates of social media posts, press releases, government proclamations, fundraising ideas, video production tips, and event and activity information that your agency can use to increase your visibility!

How to Use the Toolkit

We encourage you to use the templates, tips, and other resources in this toolkit and to customize them to fit your agency, region, and audience. When communicating with individuals in your community, especially the press and elected officials, be sure to specifically address the concerns and conditions present in the area you serve. That will help your agency receive the most attention and make people feel personally invested in your work. Statistics related to your region and stories from individuals and families that your agency has served will best engage your local supporters and stakeholders.

However, even as you customize the resources in this toolkit and add your own creativity and ideas to them, we encourage you to also be aware of the leverage that comes from associating with our national network. When we come together nationally, we amplify our message of being a voice for opportunity.
Community Action Month Activities

• **Color the Huggy Heart** — This year, we're holding Huggy Heart Day on Thursday, May 2. You can find a blank copy of the Huggy Heart on page 9 of the Toolkit. Be sure to share your Huggy Hearts on social media using the hashtags #CommunityActionWorks and #WeR1000Strong.

• **Impact Wednesday (May 8 / 22)** — Impact Wednesday is a new theme that we've added this year to promote the National Impact Report, in effort to increase the overall visibility of our network. Please feel free to use our sample tweets and #ImpactWednesday memes. We also have a host of customizable Impact Report memes available in the Impact Report Toolkit, which you can use to showcase your local data.

• **Raising Visibility with the Local News Media** — Community Action Month is an excellent opportunity to work with your local news media to garner coverage. This toolkit provides tips on interviewing, writing press releases and more.

• **Other Activities** — A calendar is available on the following page to indicate social media hashtags and special events in May that can inspire your Agency’s Community Action Month activities. Please feel free to use the meme creator on May 20 to promote your agency’s mission with the hashtag #MissionMonday. On May 30, use the meme creator to thank everyone for celebrating Community Action Month, using the hashtag #ThankfulThursday.

• **Hold a Pizza Party** — On Friday, May 17, consider holding a pizza party for your team or customers in celebration of National Pizza Party Day.

Remember to take pictures and videos of these activities and post them on social media with the hashtags #CommunityActionWorks and #WeR1000Strong.
Color the Huggy Heart

#WeR1000Strong
Community Action Social Media Outreach

Social media is a great way to get the word out about Community Action, especially during Community Action Month! Through social media, your agency can control your messages and enlist your followers as ambassadors who share your content with their own networks. Social media also helps supporters engage with your agency and helps you reach new people who may not know about the excellent work that Community Action is doing. Plus, social media lets you be creative and innovative as you experiment with different content (images, photos, articles, facts, events, videos, infographics, etc.).

In this section of the toolkit, we have sample social media posts and memes that you can use throughout Community Action Month. We encourage you to use these resources to emphasize our network and unify our national awareness efforts during Community Action Month.

We also hope that you will put your own unique spin on these resources and share your ideas with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Use our hashtag #BeCommunityAction all year round on social media to emphasize the ways that our agencies take positive action in their communities to fight poverty, and use #CommunityActionWorks and #WeR1000Strong throughout May to promote Community Action Month. Please follow the Partnership on social media.
Social Media Posts for Specific Days in May

Wednesday, May 1, Share the Community Action Promise: Share the Community Action Promise meme or share a simple video with staff reciting the Promise. #CommunityActionWorks #WeR1000Strong

Friday, May 3 and 24, Fact Friday: Share one of these factual posts.

1) Each year, 800,000 households increase their financial assets or financial capability skills with the help of #CommunityAction Agencies. #FactFriday #CommunityActionWorks

2) For every $1 of #CSBG funds, the #CommunityAction Network annually leverages $7.70 from state, local, and private sources. #FactFriday #CommunityActionWorks #WeR1000Strong

3) $459 million in tax credits, like the earned income tax credit and child tax credit, are returned to low-income families every year through #CommunityAction volunteer income tax assistance services. #FactFriday #CommunityActionWorks #EITC #VITA

4) Did you know that #CommunityAction Agencies help more than 2 million people obtain non-emergency #energy assistance such as home heating or insulation each year? #FactFriday #CommunityActionWorks

Saturday, May 4, May the 4th be with You: Share the Star Wars Day meme honoring your agency's strength and fortitude as you work diligently every day to move individuals toward self-sufficiency. #WeR1000Strong #MayThe4thBeWithYou
**Social Media Posts for Specific Days in May (Continued)**

**Wednesday, May 8 and 22, Impact Wednesday:** Share an #ImpactWednesday meme or choose from one of our many other Impact Report memes. Feel free to use any of the tweets below as well.

1) 6.1 million Americans are unemployed and many more are stuck in low-wage occupations. That’s why #CommunityAction Agencies offer skills training and job support services to help folks get ahead. Learn more: http://bit.ly/2H1OoLC #ImpactWednesday

2) Did you know that 44% of Americans cannot cover a $400 unexpected expense? More than 900 CAAs are making an impact by helping people build assets and financial skills to encourage resilience and economic stability. #ImpactWednesday Learn more: http://bit.ly/2H1OoLC

3) Nearly 50% of Americans across 22 states live in an area with a shortage of child care options. #CommunityAction Agencies are making an impact by enrolling hundreds of thousands of children in before or after school programs. http://bit.ly/2H1OoLC #ImpactWednesday

5) 1 in 6 children go hungry at some point in the year. That’s why Community Action Agencies distribute more than 24 million boxes of food a year. Find out more about the impact of #CommunityAction in @CAPartnership's National Impact Report: http://bit.ly/2H1OoLC #ImpactWednesday

4) Did you know 1000s of pre-k children have been helped by CAAs across the country? Last year, [AGENCY] served [NUMBER] kids in [SERVICE AREA]! #ImpactWednesday #CommunityActionImpact

5) Only 48% of 5-year-olds from low-income families are school ready. #CommunityAction Agencies offer #HeadStart and Early Head Start services that help 365,000 children became school ready every year. #ImpactWednesday Learn more: http://bit.ly/2H1OoLC
Social Media Posts for Specific Days in May (Continued)

Saturday, May 11, Stats Saturday: Feel free to post one of these stats today, or use one of your own.

1) Each year, #CommunityAction Agencies provide more than 8 million people with healthy food and healthcare services to increase family health and well-being. #StatsSaturday #CommunityActionWorks

2) Did you know that 339,000 people obtain safe, affordable housing every year with the help of #CommunityAction Agencies? #StatsSaturday #CommunityActionWorks

3) #CommunityAction Agencies put 5.8 million people on a path to good jobs through employment support every year. #StatsSaturday #CommunityActionWorks

4) In any given year, more than 15.6 million people and 6.3 million families participate in #CommunityAction programs. #StatsSaturday #WeR1000Strong

Tuesday, May 14, Training Tuesday: Post information on trainings.

1) 225,000 people obtain job skills training every year with the help of #CommunityAction Agencies. #TrainingTuesday #CommunityActionWorks

2) More than 900 #CommunityAction Agencies across the country provide asset-building and financial capability training programs to help low-income families increase their savings. #TrainingTuesday #CommunityActionWorks

3) Did you know that poverty is higher in rural areas? One reason: the lack of good jobs. #CommunityAction Agencies work to retrain people in rural areas, helping them find “living wage” jobs. #TrainingTuesday #CommunityActionWorks
Social Media Posts for Specific Days in May (Continued)

Wednesday, May 15, We Care Wednesday / International Day of Families:
Promote one of your family programs. Choose from any of the following posts.

1) #CommunityAction Agencies connect families to approaches that help them succeed – including high quality education programs for children, job retraining for adults, stable and affordable housing for families and more. #WeCareWednesday #InternationalDayofFamilies

2) Did you know that #CommunityAction Agencies help 4 million children and families access childcare and after school programs every year? #WeCareWednesday #InternationalDayofFamilies

3) Each year, 246,000 parents improve family functioning skills and thousands more children experience improved health and physical development with the help of #CommunityAction Agencies. #WeCareWednesday #InternationalDayofFamilies

Monday, May 20, Mission Monday: Use our Mission Monday meme template to share your agency's mission. #MissionMonday
Social Media Posts for Specific Days in May (Continued)

Tuesday, May 28, Transformation Tuesday: Promote Community Action programs that have transformed lives.

1) Millions of Americans live in economically distressed areas. That’s why #CommunityAction Agencies lead community initiatives to develop healthy communities that offer economic opportunity and actively engage people with low incomes. #TransformationTuesday #WeR1000Strong

2) Families who live in safer, more stable housing can better manage their daily lives and their children’s nutrition, health, development and academic performance. #CommunityAction transforms lives. #TransformationTuesday #CommunityActionWorks

3) Community Economic Development programs transform lives in communities suffering from disinvestment, #CommunityAction CED projects create jobs, affordable housing and business revitalization. #TransformationTuesday #CommunityActionWorks

4) [NAME OF AGENCY] provided [NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED] people with safe and affordable housing last year. #TransformationTuesday #CommunityActionWorks
**Social Media Posts for Specific Days in May (Continued)**

**Wednesday, May 29, Weatherization Wednesday:** Select any of the tweets below to promote Community Action weatherization services.

1) Community Action Agencies help families save around 123 million dollars a year through our weatherization and energy services. #WeatherizationWednesday #CommunityActionWorks

2) Each year, 116,000 housing units are weatherized, preserved, or otherwise improved with the help of #CommunityAction Agencies. #WeatherizationWednesday #WeR1000Strong

3) Did you know that more than 500 #CommunityAction Agencies operate a weatherization assistance program? #WeatherizationWednesday #CommunityActionWorks

**Thursday, May 30, Thankful Thursday:** Use our meme creator to thank everyone for participating in Community Action Month. #ThankfulThursday
Social Media Creator

You may use these sample templates to create a mission and thank-you image. Just download the word document from our website and insert your message / a picture, then share on your social media sites.

On the following pages, we have posted a series of social media images, which your agency can re-post on its social media sites. If you prefer, please feel free to download the images from our website: www.communityactionpartnership.com and share them on the appropriate days.

Don’t forget to add the following hashtags: #CommunityActionWorks, #WeR1000Strong. Also use the hashtags that are specific to each day. You will see those listed underneath each image.

If you have any problems downloading the images from our website, contact the Partnership's Communications and Branding Assistant, Johnny Eudaly, at jeudaly@communityactionpartnership.com
Sample Social Media Images

Follow the Partnership on Facebook and Twitter to share these images as we post them on the dates indicated below! You can also find them on our website at: www.communityactionpartnership.com

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.

Promise, May 1

Star Wars Day, May 4
#MayThe4thBeWithYou

National Teacher Day, May 7

Impact Wednesday, May 8
#ImpactWednesday
Sample Social Media Images (Continued)

Follow the Partnership on Facebook and Twitter to share these images as we post them on the dates indicated below! You can also find them on our website at: www.communityactionpartnership.com

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Throwback Thursday, May 9
#TBT

Mother's Day, May 12
#MothersDay

Motivation Monday, May 13
#MotivationMonday

Armed Forces Day, May 18

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The curse of poverty has no justification in our age...The time has come for us to civilize ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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#CommunityActionWorks
#WeR1000Strong

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#MOTHERSDAY #COMMUNITYACTIONWORKS

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY

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#ArmedForcesDay

THANK YOU
From the bottom of our hearts

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#MotivationMonday

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Sample Social Media Images (Continued)

Follow the Partnership on Facebook and Twitter to share these images as we post them on the dates indicated below! You can also find them on our website at: www.communityactionpartnership.com

Impact Wednesday, May 22
#ImpactWednesday

Throwback Thursday, May 25
#TBT

Memorial Day, May 27
Impact Report Memes

Follow the Partnership on Facebook and Twitter to share these images as we post them on the dates indicated below! You can also find them on our website at: www.communityactionpartnership.com

Did you know...

#COMMUNITY ACTION IMPACT

The National Need

44% of Americans cannot cover a $400 unexpected expense

36% of American households are unable to pay for basic needs for three months after the loss of a job or regular income

Our Reach

More than 900 CAAs help people build assets and financial skills

More than 400,000 people were enrolled in CAA budgeting and savings programs

More than 400 CAAs provide tax assistance services with volunteers

Learn more at communityactionpartnership.com/impactreport

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Community Action’s Reach

1000+ agencies across the country

Cover 99% of America’s counties, serving all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
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#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday
Impact Report Memes

Follow the Partnership on Facebook and Twitter to share these images as we post them on the dates indicated below! You can also find them on our website at:
www.communityactionpartnership.com

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday
Impact Report Memes

Follow the Partnership on Facebook and Twitter to share these images as we post them on the dates indicated below! You can also find them on our website at:
www.communityactionpartnership.com

DID YOU KNOW...

2.1 million people have an opioid use disorder

Learn about how a Community Action Agency in Ohio is making an impact
www.communityactionpartnership.com/impactreport

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Our Annual Impact
5.8 million people received employment support from CAAs

#CommunityActionImpact

Learn about how a Community Action Agency in Ohio is making an impact
www.communityactionpartnership.com/impactreport

44 million volunteer hours were donated to CAAs

Total volunteer hours donated were valued at just over $1 billion

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

#COMMUNITY ACTION IMPACT

“Wayne Meta [Community Action] provided the help, the boost, that I needed in order to stay in my home... It’s because of them I am able, today, to help someone else.”

~Mr. Kennedy

Learn more about Mr. Kennedy’s story at
www.communityactionpartnership.com/impactreport

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday

Impact Wednesday, May 8 / 22
#ImpactWednesday
Other Social Media Suggestions

I Love Community Action Selfies

Show your love for Community Action by taking a selfie of yourself and your staff with one of our “I Love Community Action” selfie signs. A sample selfie sign is available on the next page and features the Huggy Heart in our logo. Remember to tag #WeR1000Strong and #CommunityActionWorks when you post it.

Social Media Posts about Activities and Programs

When looking for social media content, the best place to start is your agency’s regular activities and programs. Take photos and videos of your staff and customers participating in the activities suggested in the Toolkit as well as in programs and events that your agency normally hosts. (Make sure that you get written permission from your clients and/or your clients’ legal guardians before posting any photos or videos of them.) Your work is vital to the communities that you serve, and the best way to increase your social media visibility is to show your communities how you serve them.

Be sure to tag your posts with #CommunityActionWorks and #WeR1000Strong if you’d like them to get a social media boost. Also, please tag @CAPartnership on Twitter, and e-mail Johnny Eudaly, communications and branding assistant, at jeudaly@communityactionpartnership.com so that our national office can share your success stories!
I

Community Action

#WeR1000Strong
Tips for Interviewing with the Press

Know the Facts — Have a list of facts and statistics on #CommunityAction and create opportunities in your region as part of your talking points. (See the list below.)

Tell Stories — In your talking points, also include anecdotes about individuals and families served by your agency that can illustrate your points.

Speak Clearly — In an interview, enunciate, be direct, and use words and terms that the reporter and general public can easily understand.

Practice Interviewing — Doing interviews is a learned skill, and practicing regularly can help you feel more at ease and feel more prepared.

Resources for Finding Talking Points on Creating Opportunity

- National Impact Report
- 2018 Kids Count Data Book
- How Hungry is America?
- 2018 Prosperity Now Scorecard
- 2018 Distressed Communities Index
- 2016 CSBG Annual Report
- 2017 Census Bureau Poverty Data
- Feeding America on Food Insecurity
- US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on Homelessness
- United States Dept. of Agriculture on Rural Poverty
- National Center for Children in Poverty
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics Unemployment Data
Publicizing Community Action Month in the Press

The press loves good stories. Reporters at newspapers, radio, television stations and online news sites are always looking for fresh content. In particular, local agencies are looking for compelling, emotionally driven, and useful content with a local angle. As active and integral parts of their communities, Community Action Agencies are uniquely positioned to provide these stories as well as serve as experts on poverty and related social and economic problems. Positive press coverage can show the wider community the value of Community Action's important work, encourage local engagement with your agency, and promote your events and services.

Maybe your Community Action Agency has already fostered relationships with reporters in your area or maybe you’re just getting started in your press outreach. Wherever you are in your public relations efforts, Community Action Month is a great opportunity for you to reach out to the media and strengthen your relationships with the press. This section of the toolkit will give you concrete tips and templates for publicizing your agency in the press.

Tip for Pitching Stories and Responding to Reporters

- **Be Specific**—Reach out to reporters who cover topics and areas related to your agency's geographic scope and program issues.
- **Be Creative**—Find unique hooks or angles that make your story interesting.
- **Be Responsive**—Reporters work on tight deadlines and appreciate prompt replies and follow-ups, especially for interview requests.
- **Be Knowledgeable**—Present yourself as an expert on your agency's programs and on issues of poverty in your community.
- **Be Prepared**—When suggesting a story to reporters or doing an interview, have relevant talking points, facts, and anecdotes on hand.
- **Be Personable**—Public relations is about building and maintaining ongoing, mutually beneficial, positive relationships with reporters.
Sample Talking Points

We encourage you to use local facts, statistics and success stories to promote the impact of your agency. Below are some sample talking points.

- The nation’s Community Action network – including 1,000 plus Community Action Agencies – are a robust, national, state, and local force, reaching children and families in 99% of America’s counties with life changing services that create pathways to opportunity and prosperity.

- Community Action Agencies connect individuals and families to approaches that help them succeed – including high quality education programs for children, job retraining for adults, stable and affordable housing for families, utility assistance for seniors, and so much more.

- The need for Community Action has never been greater. Neither has our resolve. We’re challenged to create solutions that don’t just help people stay afloat but build lives of stability, dignity, and, whenever possible, prosperity. And we will rise to that challenge.

- Community Action changes people’s lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. Here are some examples of our network’s annual impact:
  - According to the Community Action Partnership *National Impact Report*, each year 339,000 people obtain safe, affordable housing with the help of Community Action services
  - The *National Impact Report* also finds that 629,000 individuals obtain healthcare services for themselves or a family member every year
  - 5.8 million people receive employment support
  - 800,000 low-income households increase financial assets or skills
  - 1.7 million children receive food to assist with healthy development
  - 1.2 million people engage in activities to support themselves and the community
  - More facts and figures regarding the success of the Community Action network are available in the *National Impact Report*
Network Talking Points

The Need:
Whether our neighbors are experiencing a temporary set back or have been priced out of affordable housing – too many struggle to achieve a good quality of life. Despite America’s economic recovery, nearly 40 million of us are still living in poverty and even more are just one missed paycheck away from hardship. We believe everyone should be able to take care of their families and have an equal opportunity at success.

How the Network Addresses the Need:
The nation’s Community Action network – including 1,000 plus Community Action Agencies – are a robust, national, state, and local force, reaching children and families in 99% of America’s counties with life changing services that create pathways to opportunity and prosperity.

The Community Action network:

Connects individuals and families to approaches that help them succeed – including high quality education programs for children, job retraining for adults, stable and affordable housing for families, utility assistance for seniors, and so much more.

Promotes community-wide solutions to seemingly stubborn challenges throughout our cities, suburbs, and in rural areas – whether it’s the lack of affordable housing or the need to promote economic growth that benefits all families.

Shares expertise with national, state, and local leaders looking for evidence on what works to promote greater economic opportunity for children and families.

The Vision:
America’s Community Action Agencies connect millions of children and families to greater opportunity, transforming their lives and making our communities – and our nation – stronger. Every year, these agencies help:

- Tens of thousands of children and youth with before-and after-school programs.
- More than 165,000 unemployed people get a job.
- Almost 220,000 families find safe and affordable housing.
- About 6.5 million people, including seniors, make their homes more energy efficient and lower their utility bills.
Community Action Network Celebrates 55 years of Service, [YEARS] in [COMMUNITY/COUNTY]

For Immediate Release
Contact: [CONTACT NAME, PHONE NUMBER & E-MAIL ADDRESS]

([CITY, STATE] May 1, 2019) – 2019 marks the 55th year since the Community Action Network was established to help American families and communities overcome obstacles to poverty. Over 1000 agencies across the country are working every day to create opportunities and transform the lives of their neighbors making communities stronger and helping families across the US thrive. This year, [AGENCY], a proud member of the Community Action Network, will also commemorate [YEARS IN SERVICE] helping families throughout [SERVICE AREA].

“Each May, during Community Action Month, we reflect on the impact [AGENCY] and our network has had on families,” said [EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR] of [AGENCY]. “Last year alone, we served [TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE] in [COMMUNITY/COUNTY], and over 15 million across the country with immediately needed services such as shelter and food, and also long-term solutions like education and job placement.”

Community Action Agencies serve 99% of all American counties with life-changing services to help families achieve financial stability. All agencies are locally controlled and represented by the private, public, and low-income sectors of the community. “We are proud of our communities' participation in the development and oversight of our programs,” said [ED LAST NAME]. “Their engagement helps us to be more effective in our approach by determining what [SERVICE AREA] needs.”

To celebrate the continued success of Community Action and raise awareness throughout the [SERVICE AREA], [AGENCY] will host [INSERT DETAILS/DATE/TIME/LOCATION/WHO SHOULD COME/WHY IS IT IMPORTANT].

###

[AGENCY] is a member of the National Community Action Partnership and the Community Action Network, which was born out of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. [AGENCY OVERVIEW/MISSION STATEMENT, WEBSITE]
Video Production Tips

How to Shoot Videos

Cinematography and videography are the art of visual storytelling. Anyone can set a camera on a tripod and hit record, but the artistry of cinematography comes into play when you control what the viewer sees (or doesn’t see) and how the image is presented.

Shot sizes, angles, and movements are the heart of exceptional camerawork, and when coupled with good lighting, enhances emotions, forming the essence of cinematography. They provoke, inspire, frighten, relieve, and amaze us.

Your opening shot, often referred to as an establishing shot, is usually a long shot. It establishes the general location of where the action will follow. Video producers and editors often showcase something moving toward the camera. For example, in a movie, you often see a car driving into the scene toward the camera or a person walking toward the camera. Those are common establishing shots.

Rain can signify change in your story. If you want to change the direction of your story from happy to sad or vice versa, many videographers use a rainy shot to subliminally highlight that the story is changing.

The end / close of your story always works nicely if you provide a closing shot or sequence. Videotape something moving away from the camera to subliminally signify the end. For example, in a love story the subject of your story may walk off into the sunset holding the hand of his or her romantic love interest. You only see their backs and not their faces. This signifies the story is ending.

Bottom line: When you are videotaping a story, you need to look for opening sequences, middle transition shots and closing sequences.
Important Video Tips

1. Depending upon which social media platform you use, the length of your video will need to fit within their guidelines. For example, **Twitter supports the MP4 video format. You can upload videos up to 512MB; however, you will be prompted to keep videos to 2 minutes and 20 seconds or less in length. Facebook has different parameters. Per Facebook: Videos should be less than 45 minutes long and smaller than 1.75 GB. The longer your video, the larger its file size. This may affect the quality of the video. Keep in mind that most people don’t watch videos longer than 2:00 minutes.**

2. **Use a tripod** or other method to stabilize the camera. (Unless you’re going for a certain creative look, it is highly recommended that you stabilize your camera or video recorder.)

3. Make sure the recording **environment is quiet** and there is no background noise in your video.

4. **Use a plain background** for your video and ensure that your subject doesn’t blend into or clash with your background. (Solid walls / brick walls work well.)

5. **Avoid busy patterns in clothing and jewelry** and stay away from shirts or patterns with stripes.

6. Make sure there is **plenty of light and that the subject’s face is well-lit** in the recording.

7. **Shooting B-roll** refers to shooting video footage that sets the stage. For example, at a school play, besides shooting the play, you need to get b-roll of the outside of the school, the program, faces of audience members, cast members hiding in the wings, or costume details. These shots will be spliced into your story to help tell the story.

8. **Shoot more footage than you think you’ll need.** Include footage that enhances the story or sets the scene. You can use it for smooth transitions in your video.
Video Production Tips Continued

More Important Video Tips

Before you begin, check the lighting and sound. Say a few lines for the camera / recorder, and then review the footage. Does your lighting need to be adjusted? How does your shirt look against the background? Is your video inviting and appropriate or unflattering and amateurish? Can you be easily heard on a laptop computer with the volume at a normal level?

You might have to experiment a bit to get the lighting, the colors of your wardrobe, and the sound just right.

Placing your subject slightly off center, so there is space on the left or right side is preferred in videography and photography. Try to stay away from videotaping people in the center of your frame. If the person is on the right side, angle their body inward. If the person is on the left, also have them turn their body slightly inward. These are common videography and photography tips that even the pros follow.

Editing Tips

When choosing a video editor, it's all about control. Do you need something simple? If so, iMovie and the YouTube video editor work well. To use the YouTube editor, sign into your account, click Video Manager, click create in the menu at the left and select Video Editor. Create a new project.

If you need something more robust and polished, you should use Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro X, or Avid. Keep in mind, these take longer to learn.

Additional Resources

- The Top 10 Video Mistakes to Avoid
- Video Editing Tips & Tricks
Community Action Month Proclamation

Many elected officials may offer proclamations designating the observance of a particular day or month in their local community or state. We encourage our Community Action Agencies to reach out to local mayors, county officials, and governors to request that they designate May 2019 as Community Action Month.

The nation’s 1000-plus Community Action Agencies are a robust, state and local force—reaching children and families in 99% of America’s counties with life-changing services that create pathways to prosperity. These agencies connect individuals and families to approaches that help them succeed, promote community-wide solutions to difficult challenges, and share expertise with national, state, and local leaders looking to promote greater economic opportunity for all.

To learn how you can reach out to your elected officials and their staff to suggest a Community Action Month Proclamation, visit their websites. We also encourage you to use the template proclamation in this toolkit and adapt it with your agency’s specific information.
Sample Community Action Month Proclamation

WHEREAS, Community Action has made essential contributions to individuals and families across this Nation by creating economic opportunities and strengthening communities; and

WHEREAS, Community Action is a robust state and local force connecting people to life-changing services and creating pathways to prosperity in 99% of all American counties; and

WHEREAS, Community Action builds and promotes economic stability as an essential aspect of enabling and enhancing stronger communities and stable homes; and

WHEREAS, Community Action promotes community-wide solutions to challenges throughout our cities, suburbs, and rural areas; and

WHEREAS, Community Action delivers innovative services and supports that create greater opportunities for families and children to succeed; and

WHEREAS, Community Action insists on community participation and involvement ensuring that all sectors of the community have a voice and will be heard; and

WHEREAS, Community Action is celebrating 55 years of innovation, impact, and providing proven results for Americans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I [NAME & TITLE] of [CITY AND/OR STATE], do hereby proclaim May 2019 as Community Action Month in recognition of the hard work and dedication of all [CITY AND/OR STATE] Community Action Agencies.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of [CITY AND/OR STATE], on this day of [DAY st/th] of [MONTH], 2019.

SIGNATURE OF: [OFFICIAL SIGNATURE]

BY THE: [TITLE] OF: [CITY AND/OR STATE]

ATTEST: [NAME] [POSITION]
Suggest a Site Visit with Elected Officials

Another way to educate your elected officials about the stellar programs and excellent work that your Community Action Agency is doing is to invite them to a site visit to observe one of your programs. A site visit provides them an opportunity to see first hand how vital Community Action is to the families and constituents in their jurisdiction.

Be sure to contact the National Community Action Foundation as soon as you schedule a site visit so that they are aware of it in their advocacy efforts!

Site Visits

- Plan ahead and consider the goals of the site visit. Do you want more support from elected officials? Do you want to showcase your program's successes? All of the above? How best can you achieve those goals?

- Craft an agenda and identify key players to participate in the site visit, including staff and program customers who can best showcase the successes of the program and who are willing and eager to be involved. The agenda will also ensure that the event remains on topic and on task so that the site visit remains focused on your goals.

- Keep the event small and be respectful of everyone's time. The Weatherization Assistance Program Technical Assistance Center advises having no more than 10 guests and keeping the site visit to one hour.

- Perform a dry run or dress rehearsal of the site visit the day before the event.

- Allow time for a questions and answers session at the end of the site visit. Prepare and review talking points about the program in advance.
Fundraising During Community Action Month

You can use Community Action Month as a fundraising opportunity to reach out to your donors and other supporters and stakeholders. In your fundraising letter or e-mail, you can provide them with information about the purpose of Community Action Month and then reflect upon the positive outcomes and lives your agency has changed over the past year. Community Action Agencies give their time, energy, and passion to help people help themselves, and those who are inspired by the dedicated efforts of your agency may wish to offer their support for your programs.

A good fundraising appeal tells the story of an agency and the individuals it serves. It uses specific examples of success stories to illustrate the needs in the community and explicitly states how your Community Action Agency is meeting those needs and assisting families to achieve self-sufficiency. While fundraising can often seem intimidating, once you make your initial ask, you'll often find that there are many people in your community who are motivated and happy to contribute to your cause.

Even as you ask for funds, Community Action Month can also be a time when you thank your donors, both individuals in the community who have contributed to your work as well as foundations, businesses, and government grantmakers who support your agency and its anti-poverty programs. You can also communicate your gratitude to volunteers who give their time and talents and who may further along also be motivated to give financially. People always appreciate thank-you notes, and by showing your appreciation for your donors and volunteers, you can strengthen and affirm your relationships with them.
Fundraising Appeal Tips

Emphasize the need in your community — Inform your donors about the problems in your community that your agency is working to solve. Using specific facts and statistics about poverty in your region is helpful because it shows that there is a need that your Agency is responding to.

Emphasize individual stories — There’s a saying in fundraising that people give to people. Pick one or two customer stories that showcase how their lives have been significantly and positively changed by your work. What was their situation before they found Community Action? What programs did they participate in and what do their lives look like now that they have completed these programs? How did they feel before they found Community Action and how do they feel now? Just make sure that you have your customers’ permission to use their stories.

Emphasize your agency’s role in solving the problem — After you’ve shown the need in your community, make sure that your donors clearly understand how Community Action is addressing and meeting that need. Present data that demonstrates the difference you are making, whether it’s the number of individuals you have served in a year, the number of individuals who have successfully completed your programs, or the number of individuals who are self-sufficient because of your help.

Emphasize the ask — Don’t be shy about directly asking your donors for money. Your fundraising appeal should include a section where you ask donors to give a gift. You may even want to provide suggested donation amounts, which should be appropriate to your audience. (You probably don’t want to ask former customers for large donations, and you probably don’t want to ask wealthy philanthropists in your community for small donations.)
Sample Fundraising Letter / E-mail

Dear [NAME OF INDIVIDUAL],

We are excited to announce that May 2018 is Community Action Month, a celebration of the accomplishments of Community Action Agencies across the country who are a robust state and local force—reaching children and families in 99 percent of America's counties with life-changing services that create pathways to prosperity. As a Community Action Agency, [NAME OF AGENCY] is committed to the Promise of Community Action: to change people’s lives, embody the spirit of hope, improve communities, and make America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

In the past [MONTH/YEAR], [AGENCY] served [NUMBER] of families with low-income and transformed their lives by helping them become self-sufficient. We are particularly excited to share the story of [NAME OF CLIENT], who participated in [NAME OF PROGRAM]. [Insert brief anecdote about how the person was helped by the program and give a tangible example of how his/her life has improved.] But [CLIENT] is not the only person positively impacted by [AGENCY]. [Insert relevant facts that demonstrate your agency’s success to show how you are having a positive impact on the region.]

As [AGENCY] improves the lives of people in our community, we also need our community to help us. We request that you make a special Community Action Month gift of [INSERT SUGGESTED AMOUNT/LINK TO ONLINE DONATION FORM]. Your generosity will allow us to continue to change people’s lives in [COMMUNITY].

We very much appreciate your generous contribution!

Yours Truly,

[NAME OF BOARD PRESIDENT]
Board President

[NAME OF AGENCY]
Other Community Action Resources

The National Impact Report is designed to tell Community Action's story and impact in a way that will reach a broad audience across the country.

Looking to get press coverage around Community Action Month? Follow these “Ten Media Relations Tips for Your Nonprofit” to get your story covered in the news.

If you need help getting started on social media, check out our webinars with basics on how to use Twitter. We also have a more detailed webinar about sharing your stories online here.

Nonprofit Quarterly also has a great article about how nonprofit organizations can most effectively use social media, “Social Media Effectiveness for Public Engagement.”

Community Action Partnership branding materials, including the specific colors, high-res image files of our logo, the Huggy Heart and other elements of the Community Action brand, are available online here.

If you’re thinking about using Community Action Month as a way to boost fundraising and need some ideas to start off with, try GuideStar’s “Top Ten Fundraising Tips.”

“A Beginner’s Guide to Fundraising” also has some helpful links and resources to kick off fundraising campaigns.

If you’re looking for customized data and mapping, you can access our Community Needs Assessment Tool online.

For detailed information about the successes of CSBG funded Agencies, please consult NASCSP’s 2016 Annual Report.
Community Action Partnership's 2019 Annual Convention

The 2019 Annual Convention is being held in Chicago, Illinois, from August 28 – August 30, 2019 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile. Pre-convention training will occur August 26-27, 2019. The Annual Convention is designed to provide Community Action professionals and board members with the latest in policy and programmatic updates, as well as management and governance tools. Convention tracks will include:

- Effective Administration and Governance
- Promising Anti-Poverty Practices
- Strategies to Increase Visibility
- Research, Policy, and Action
- Performance at the Front Line
- Community Economic Development
- Energy Partnerships

Each year, hundreds of Community Action professionals attend the Partnership's Annual Convention. Registration is open!

Learn more on our website: www.communityactionpartnership.com.
2019 Annual Convention Award Nominations

Do you know any outstanding volunteers or other individuals who have advanced the work of Community Action, fought poverty in their communities, and enabled low-income families to achieve self-sufficiency? These individuals should be honored and recognized for their successful and exemplary efforts, and we invite you to nominate them for Community Action Partnership’s 2019 Annual Convention awards.

Full descriptions and nomination forms are available in the following pages. Please note that if your nominee is selected, you will be asked to provide a two minute video featuring your nominee.

Please submit nominations by June 6, 2019 via email to Jovita Tolbert, Deputy Director, at: jtolbert@communityactionpartnership.com or via snail mail at the following address:

Jovita Tolbert, Deputy Director
Community Action Partnership
1020 19th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036
History

Named in honor of Jayne Thomas, a preeminent Community Action leader in Virginia, this award was established in 1988 to recognize and honor volunteers who are devoted to changing people's lives and who have made a significant and outstanding contribution toward accomplishing the Promise of Community Action.
2019 Annual Convention Award Nominations

TO NOMINATE SUCH A PERSON, SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING BY JUNE 6, 2019

- **Official Jayne Thomas Nomination Form**

  provided on the following page.

- **Nomination Narrative**

  that chronicles the demonstrated contributions of your nominated local volunteer to include their length of service, scope of service and degree of leadership within your CAA and / or community they serve. Please note advocacy efforts to change people's lives and outstanding contributions toward giving a voice to the poor.

- **Letter of Support**

  from your CAA executive director with clear, concise, and descriptive examples of how the nominated volunteer through activities and accomplishments has met the award criteria noted above. Letters from other supporters may also be included.

- **Two-Minute Video (If Selected)**

  If your nominated volunteer is selected, you will need to provide a two-minute video featuring your nominee.

If your state or agency recognizes volunteers during National Community Action Month, or at any time during the year, please submit their names as nominees. The Partnership will provide hotel accommodations and convention registration for each award recipient.
2019 Annual Convention Award Nominations

Jayne Thomas
Grassroots Volunteer Award
Nomination Form

Name of Nominee:__________________________________________

Nominator’s Name & Title:____________________________________

Nominator’s Community Action Agency (CAA):_____________________

CAA Full Address:___________________________________________

Nominator’s Phone:___________________________________________

Nominator’s Email:___________________________________________

Awards: If your state or agency recognizes customers or volunteers during National Community Action Month, or at any time during the year, please submit their names as nominees. The Partnership will provide hotel accommodations and convention registration for each award recipient.

Deadline: Form, narrative, supporting letter (s) and / or documentation must be postmarked or mailed on or before June 6, 2019

Send to: Jovita Tolbert, Deputy Director
Community Action Partnership
1020 19th Street NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 860-1028
jtolbert@communityactionpartnership.com
2019 Annual Convention Award Nominations

Sargent Shriver Achievement Award

Named in honor of Sargent Shriver, the first Office of Economic Opportunity Director. This award was established in 1995 to recognize and honor the accomplishments of individuals who, with the assistance of a Community Action Agency, have changed their lives by achieving economic stability, self-sufficiency and independence, and then have gone on to help others turn their hopes into reality by improving their communities through advocacy, volunteerism, public service, or some other vehicle.
**2019 Annual Convention Award Nominations**

**TO NOMINATE SUCH A PERSON, SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING BY JUNE 6, 2019**

- **Official Sargent Shriver Nomination Form**
  
  provided on the following page.

- **Nomination Narrative**
  
  that chronicles the demonstrated contributions of your nominated local volunteer to include their length of service, scope of service and degree of leadership within your CAA and/or community they serve. Please note advocacy efforts to change people's lives and outstanding contributions toward giving a voice to the poor.

- **Letter of Support**
  
  from your CAA executive director with clear, concise, and descriptive examples of how the nominated volunteer through activities and accomplishments has met the award criteria noted above. Letters from other supporters may also be included.

- **Two-Minute Video (If Selected)**
  
  If your nominated volunteer is selected, you will need to provide a two-minute video featuring your nominee.

If your state or agency recognizes volunteers during National Community Action Month, or at any time during the year, please submit their names as nominees. The Partnership will provide hotel accommodations and convention registration for each award recipient.
2019 Annual Convention Award Nominations

Sargent Shriver Achievement Award Nomination Form

Name of Nominee: ____________________________________________________________

Nominator’s Name & Title: ____________________________________________________

Nominator’s Community Action Agency (CAA): ________________________________

CAA Full Address: __________________________________________________________

Nominator’s Phone: _________________________________________________________

Nominator’s Email: _________________________________________________________

Awards:
If your state or agency recognizes customers or volunteers during National Community Action Month, or at any time during the year, please submit their names as nominees. The Partnership will provide hotel accommodations and convention registration for each award recipient.

Deadline:
Form, narrative, supporting letter (s) and / or documentation must be postmarked or mailed on or before June 6, 2019

Send to:
Jovita Tolbert, Deputy Director
Community Action Partnership
1020 19th Street NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 860-1028
jtolbert@communityactionpartnership.com
The Avril Weisman Convention Scholarships honor Avril Weisman, a longtime employee of the national Community Action Partnership. For more than 28 years, Avril dedicated herself to building the capacity of Community Action Agencies. For many years, Avril's primary responsibility was the coordination of the Community Action Partnership Annual Convention. The Annual Convention brings together over 1,000 Community Action leaders, staff, volunteers and board members from across the country for four days of learning, networking and sharing best practices. These scholarships reflect Avril's passion for Community Action as well as her dedication to ongoing learning, professional enrichment, and the Community Action brand. A scholarship will be given to a Community Action Agency or State Association staff member or local agency board member each year. Staff will make recommendations to the Board of Directors, who will then select the winners.
2019 Annual Convention Scholarship Nominations

AVRIL WEISMAN SCHOLARSHIP FOR PROFESSIONAL ENRICHMENT JUNE 6, 2019

Scholarship Includes:
- Travel expenses to / from the convention, including hotel and up to $1,000 for ground / air transportation and meal per diems;
- Registration for full Annual Convention;
- Registration for pre-convention activities.

The Staff Scholarship will be given to CAA or Association staff member who meets the following criteria:
- Demonstrates passion for the mission and Promise of Community Action;
- Demonstrates an ongoing desire to enrich their professional development;
- Employed in Community Action for five or more years;
- Is not an executive director / senior management team member.

The CAA Board Scholarship will be given to a local Community Action board member who meets the following criteria:
- Demonstrates passion for the mission and Promise of Community Action;
- Demonstrates an ongoing desire to enrich their professional development.

To apply, please submit the following:
- Written statement of no more than 500 words demonstrating how the applicant meets the scholarship criteria;
- Summary of any (non-required) training attended while employed by or serving on the board of a local CAA demonstrating an ongoing desire for professional development;
- Letter of support from a supervisor or executive director documenting how this individual meets the scholarship criteria;
- Completed application form noting that the individual has permission to travel and to attend the full convention, if selected.
2019 Annual Convention Scholarship Nominations

Avril Weisman
Achievement Scholarship
Nomination Form

Name of Nominee: ___________________________________________

Nominator’s Name & Title: _______________________________________

Nominator’s Community Action Agency (CAA): ______________________

CAA Full Address: _____________________________________________

Nominator’s Phone: _____________________________________________

Nominator’s Email: _____________________________________________

Please Check One:

☐ I am applying for the CAA / State Association Staff Member scholarship

☐ I am applying for the Board Member scholarship

Deadline:
Form, narrative, supporting letter (s) and / or documentation must be
postmarked or mailed on or before June 6, 2019

Send to:
Please send the aforementioned
with “AW Scholarship” in the subject line
to jtolbert@communityactionpartnership.com
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Board of Directors</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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Statesville, NC  
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Andrew (Joe) Devany, CCAP  
Marion, OH |
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Dalitso S. Sulamoyo, CCAP  
Urbana, IL  
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