

Equipping the Journey: Exploring the Resources from the Collaborative on Economic Mobility

National Community Action Partnership

December 11, 2025

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Disclaimer

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Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Collaborative on Economic Mobility Project Overview
- Promising Practices
- Tools and Resources

Project Overview

Purpose

“The Collaborative on Economic Mobility is intended to highlight emerging and promising practices in economic mobility for low-income communities and to expand the capacity of the Community Action network to deliver services that promote economic mobility.”

What is Economic Mobility?

“The measure of how an individual or family’s economic well-being changes over time. The movement of an individual from a lower economic level to a higher economic level refers to upward mobility. The movement from a higher economic level to a lower economic level refers to downward mobility.”

Key Focus Areas

Community
Asset Building

Innovative
Community
Programs and
Organizations

High-Quality
Education

Two-Generation
and Whole
Family
Approaches

Workforce
Development

Tools and Resources



FRESH FINDS

DISCOVER THIS RESOURCE!

LEARN

EXPAND

IMPLEMENT

The “Fresh Finds” Newsletter is offered quarterly through the Collaborative on Economic Mobility (CEM). Sign up and be the first to know about new tools, resources, and training opportunities!

Are you interested in expanding the capacity of your organization to implement innovative programs and services?

Are you interested in improving outcomes for the individuals, families, and communities in your service area?

Are you interested in learning from the experiences of other community leaders across the country?



TINYURL.COM/FRESHFINDS25

Collaborative on Economic Mobility

NEW NCAP WEBPAGE!!!

Explore the new Collaborative on Economic Mobility (CEM) Webpage!

You can find tools and resources related to CEM key focus areas and sign up for our Fresh Finds Newsletter here!

CEM Key Focus Areas:

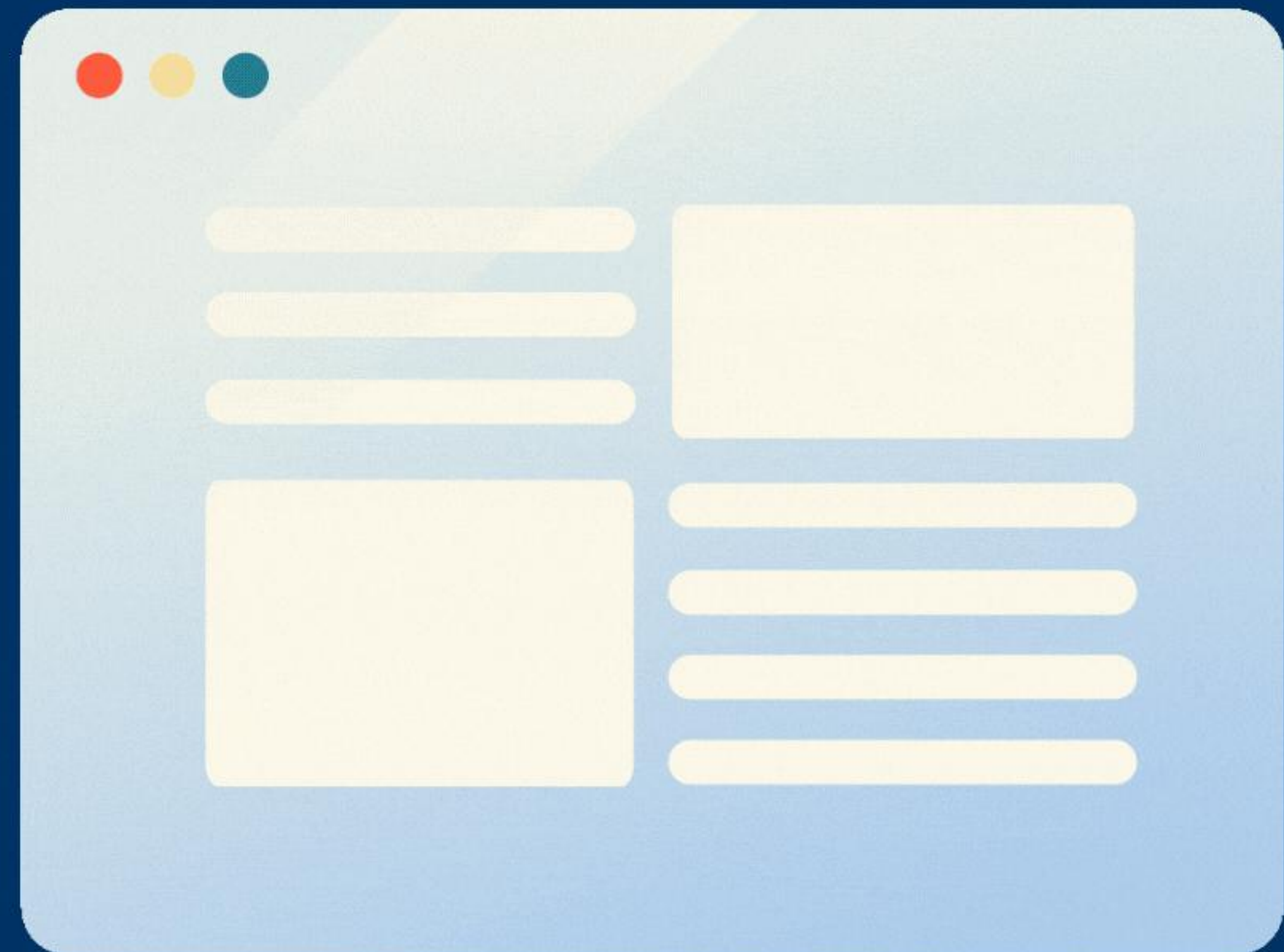
WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH

HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

COMMUNITY ASSET BUILDING

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
& ORGANIZATIONS



tinyurl.com/lookatCEM





NEW RESOURCE!

COLLABORATIVE ON ECONOMIC MOBILITY TOOLKIT FOR STATE ASSOCIATIONS



THE ELEVATE & INNOVATE TOOLKIT

A Collaborative on Economic
Mobility (CEM) Resource for
State Associations



State Associations can access quick and ready-to-share resources from the Collaborative on Economic Mobility with the Elevate and Innovate Toolkit.

Join the Collaborative on Economic Mobility in amplifying emerging and promising practices to advance economic mobility by sharing these transformative resources with your local network!



FRESH FINDS NEWSLETTER



WEBINAR SERIES & COMPANION GUIDES



READY-TO-SHARE SOCIAL MEDIA &
NEWSLETTER TEMPLATES



PRE-MADE GRAPHICS FOR INSTANT USE

**DISCOVER THE
TOOLKIT TODAY!**



[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/CEM-INNOVATE](https://tinyurl.com/CEM-INNOVATE)

Resource Dissemination & Evaluation

(as of September 29, 2025)

- **Fresh Finds Newsletter Subscriptions**
 - *Over 160 organizations, across 49 states, and in all 11 regions*
- **Website**
 - *Over 1,500 page views and 1,000 engaged sessions*
- **Webinar Registrations**
 - *Over 170 organizations, across 44 states, and all 11 regions*
- **MLTC Session**
 - *24 organizations, across 16 states, and 10 regions*
- **Annual Convention**
 - *4 sessions with attendance ranging from 24 to 104 individuals (average of 55 per session), across multiple organizations, and at least 8 regions.*



Promising Practices

Workforce Development

- Sector-based approaches that align training programs with the specific needs of key industries experiencing growth
- Employer engagement and demand-driven strategies
- Hands-on experience and mentorship opportunities
- Integration of technology and digital literacy initiatives
- Entrepreneurship and small business development

PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE



This guide is designed to accompany the webinar Workforce Development focusing on Pre-Apprenticeships as pathways to economic mobility shaping a brighter future not only for individuals but

In today's rapidly evolving job market, workforce development is essential for building strong, resilient families and fostering long-term economic growth. It's about creating meaningful jobs, not just filling vacancies. By investing in workforce development, employers can empower individuals to:

- **Increase Earning Potential:** Skilled workers can improve financial stability.
- **Enhance Job Security:** In-demand skills prove job market.
- **Contribute to Community Prosperity:** A skill driving growth and strengthening local economy.
- **Break Cycles of Poverty:** Access to quality training upward mobility.

APPRENTICESHIP WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE



This guide is designed to accompany the webinar Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development focusing on Registered Apprenticeships as pathways to economic mobility. This resource is designed to deepen your understanding of Registered Apprenticeships and provide you with additional resources to support your next steps, whether you're launching a program, expanding an existing program, or exploring how Registered Apprenticeships can strengthen your Workforce Development program goals.

What is a Registered Apprenticeship?
 A Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-vetted, structured, work-based learning model that combines on-the-job training (OJT) with related instruction (RI). These programs are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) or a State Apprenticeship Agency, ensuring they meet specific quality standards.

Feature	Registered Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship	Pre-Apprenticeship
Registration	Registered with DOL or State Apprenticeship Agency and abides by 23 established standards	Any apprenticeship that is not formally registered with DOL	Not necessarily registered
Wage	Paid employment	May be paid a stipend, starting hourly wage, or unpaid	May be paid a stipend, starting hourly wage, or unpaid
Credential	Nationally recognized credential upon completion	May or may not lead to credential, but not always nationally recognized	May or may not lead to credential, but not always nationally recognized
Duration	Typically 1-5 years depending on chosen industry	Typically 1-5 years depending on chosen industry	Shorter term, often a few weeks to months
Purpose	Provides industry-vetted, paid job training that leads to full occupational proficiency while earning a portable, nationally recognized credential	Offers structured, paid or unpaid job training to prepare individuals for skilled careers, potentially leading to industry-recognized credentials	Foundational program designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in Registered Apprenticeships

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WEBINAR SERIES

Dive deeper into apprenticeship pathways with the Workforce Development webinar series!

Explore action steps, strategies, and resources to strengthen your understanding and implementation of Pre-Apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships through this two-part webinar series and accompanying companion guides from the Collaborative on Economic Mobility.

EXPLORE MORE HERE!



<https://tinyurl.com/WORKFORCE-DEVELOPMENT1>



NORTH EAST COMMUNITY ACTION CORPORATION

Bowling Green, MO

necac.org



Agency Context

Organizational Capacity

North East Community Action Corporation (NECAC) is a Community Action Agency, a Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation (Rural LISC) grantee, and a NeighborWorks chartered agency located in Bowling Green, Missouri. The service area spans across 12 counties in Northeast Missouri, including three counties that are part of the metropolitan statistical area adjacent to St. Louis, as well as nine rural counties. The agency's annual budget is approximately \$26 million. This includes over 30 different funding sources, including a mix of both state and federal funding. NECAC is governed by a 36-person volunteer Board of Directors which includes three representatives from each of the 12 counties in the service area. The representatives from each county

include an Elected Official Representative, a Civic Interest Representative, and a Low-Income Representative. The agency has approximately 95 full-time staff and 100 part-time staff. The management team is comprised of 10 individuals including the President/CEO, Deputy Director of Housing Development Programs, Finance Operations Director, Personnel Officer and Assistant Deputy Director, Executive Secretary and Office Manager, Public Relations Officer, Information Technology (IT) Operations Director, Rent Assistance Programs Director, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Operations Director, and Weatherization Director.

Service Delivery

NECAC operates over 60 different programs across the areas of Community Service, Housing Development, and Community Health. Programs within the area of Community

<https://tinyurl.com/CEM-WRKFRCDDEV>

Spotlight On: Workforce Development

North East Community Action Corporation (NECAC) Case Study

Discover how NECAC enhanced its Workforce Development programming through organizational change and strong partnerships. This case study highlights how improved program structure and mission alignment created a stronger, more streamlined path to economic mobility.



EXPLORE THE CASE
STUDY TODAY



High-Quality Education

- Personalized learning and competency-based education
- Investments in job supports for families including in early childhood education
- Career and technical education (CTE)
- Collaborations with educational institutions
- Initiatives that support the transition from high school to college or the workforce
- The integration of technology and digital literacy initiatives

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WEBINAR SERIES



Discover how Community Action Agencies can reimagine and strengthen strategic partnerships to deepen trust and align goals for lasting community impact.

Unlock your potential and advance economic mobility by exploring this two-part webinar series with supplemental companion guides from the Collaborative on Economic Mobility.

EXPLORE HERE!
bit.ly/STRATEGIC-PARTNERSHIPS



Promising Practices for Building & Sustaining Strategic Partnerships 1

BUILDING & REIMAGINING ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIPS

Re-imagining What Partnerships Can Be

Partnerships can extend far beyond the familiar when we broaden the circle of who we consider as potential partners and reframe partnerships as relationships that contribute to building a connected community of support. This network can be fostered with diverse partnerships such as community colleges, hospitals, public health departments, small and large businesses, trade unions, cultural organizations, and alumni associations to actively support and amplify each other's shared community goals. These partnerships can bring valuable resources like funding, support, job training opportunities, and spark program innovation. Re-imagining your existing and future partnerships encourages both partners to think beyond their own scope and work towards change that will benefit the entire community.

Building on Established Partnerships

Don't start from scratch! Your Community Action Agency (CAA) likely has a network of existing partnerships. The key is to strategically expand and deepen these connections to pursue innovative economic mobility initiatives.

Introduction

Whether formed across sectors, within the community, or among other mission driven organizations, strategic partnerships are built on shared values, trust, and commitment to collective impact.

But building these partnerships is just the first step. Sustaining these partnerships requires you to go deeper in your relationship with your partners and build a shared sense of purpose that drives you to adapt and innovate. This ongoing effort is what transforms simple connections to collaborations that are capable of driving impact.

It is through nurturing and strengthening these relationships that partnerships can unlock their full potential and create lasting change.

BUCKS COUNTY OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL



Doylestown, PA

bcoc.org

Agency Context

Organizational Capacity

Bucks County Opportunity Council (BCOC) is a local Community Action Agency located in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. They serve over 56,000 people annually through five program areas including: Housing, Weatherization, Food, Income Tax Preparation, and Economic Self-Sufficiency. The annual budget is approximately \$15 million which consists of 67% public funding and 33% from private and other funding sources. The work is led by a 21-person tripartite Board of Directors and a 17-person leadership team including a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), three Directors (Development, Compliance, and Client Services), six Housing Site Supervisors, and six Managers (Human Resources, Volunteer and Community Connections, Self-Sufficiency Program, Food Program,

Communications and Development, and Weatherization Program). Additionally, there are 60 employees on staff and over 1,700 volunteers who contribute over 100,000 hours of volunteer service per year.

Service Delivery

Bucks County is a suburb of Philadelphia, with a population of approximately 650,000. The county's population has grown by 3.4% since 2010 and the current poverty rate is 5.9%. This includes nearly 17% of children under the age of 18, and 5% of senior citizens over the age of 65. The community's needs vary depending on which part of the county they reside in. For example, in the Lower Bucks County area, income tends to be lower and four of the school districts have free or reduced lunch rates for over 50% of their student body.

Spotlight On: High Quality Education

Bucks County Opportunity Council Case Study

Explore how Bucks County Opportunity Council partnered with their local Community College to break down barriers for low-income students. Through personalized coaching and support services, this case study highlights a proven pathway to lasting economic mobility and student success.

<https://tinyurl.com/CEM-HIGHQUALITYED>



EXPLORE THE CASE STUDY TODAY



Community-Asset Building

- Adoption of asset-based community development (ABCD) strategies
- Public-Private collaborative partnerships that align resources and priorities toward shared goals
- Locally-controlled, place-based approaches
- Revitalization of neighborhoods
- Promoting financial capability and economic empowerment



FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE

This webinar companion guide highlights best practices for Community Action Agencies to further develop innovative financial empowerment programs and integrate them into other human service programs.

This companion guide outlines strategies that both public and private Community Action Agencies can take advantage of to help individuals and families achieve financial success!

CHECK OUT THE GUIDE TODAY!



<https://tinyurl.com/FINANCIAL-EMPOWER1>

ADVANCING ECONOMIC MOBILITY THROUGH FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

i Introduction

A stable financial foundation is fundamental for upward economic mobility. Financial stability allows individuals and families to fully benefit from programs that support employment, education, housing, health, and overall well-being. Financial stability is more than simply getting by day to day; it is about being able to sustain a household for months and years to come. Long term financial stability depends on both financial knowledge and access to affordable financial products and services. These services can help individuals and families to plan and prepare for financial emergencies and setbacks to ensure that financial goals and outcomes are not only achieved but also maintained.

Financial empowerment strategies are designed to help individuals and families build the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions. These strategies include financial education and coaching,



supportive policies and practices, and improved access to safe and affordable financial products such as affordable banking, credit unions, and savings accounts. By reimagining the approach to financial empowerment, Community Action Agencies can implement integrated services to help individuals and families manage finances, reduce debt, improve credit scores, build

Two-Generational and Whole Family Approach

- Supports for working parents, including early childhood education and development
- Focus on outcomes for working families and their children
- Training and technical assistance to help agencies understand and implement service integration
- Technology solutions that aid staff in integrating data
- Highlighting promising practices

WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH DESIGN BRIEF SERIES

LAKES & PRAIRIES COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP (CAPLP)
Moorhead, Minnesota

Program Design

CAPLP began its Whole Family Approach (WFA) journey in 2016, sparked by a leadership transition that opened the door for agency-wide transformation. What started as a pilot initiative evolved into a comprehensive approach to serving families more holistically. CAPLP's early milestones included dismantling internal silos, establishing shared case management, and improving communication across systems and teams. These efforts marked a key shift from operating as multiple divisions to functioning as one integrated agency.

The approach was originally called the "Whole Family Program," and later rebranded as Flourishing Families, reflecting a more intentional focus on supporting entire families in achieving stability and success. In 2020, CAPLP joined the NCAP Regional Community of Practice (COP), which became another turning point in refining and expanding the approach. Being part of the Community of Practice helped deepen learning and implementation through peer exchange and collaboration.

Over time, CAPLP's WFA has evolved from a programmatic pilot to a foundational framework that now informs the agency's overall culture, training, partnerships, and service delivery. This evolution reflects a sustained investment in learning, systems change, and family-centered practices.

Guiding Coalition

CAPLP's guiding coalition has played a central role in the development and ongoing implementation of WFA. Internally, the coalition began with the Executive Director, Whole Family Approach Coordinator, Housing Director, Operations Director, and Learning Director. This leadership-driven group was tasked with breaking down internal silos, building shared case management, and fostering a culture of collaboration and learning across the agency.

In 2023, the guiding coalition expanded to include direct service staff—those working most closely with families and often serving as the "cheerleaders and champions" of customer success. Their inclusion helped bridge the gap between leadership decisions and on-the-ground experience, ensuring that policies and practices are informed by the realities families face.

While the guiding coalition currently consists of CAPLP staff only, the agency recognizes the importance of expanding it to include voices outside the organization. External collaborations so far include key partners such as the Clay County School District—CAPLP's primary referral source.

WFA Timeline

Year	Phase	Key Milestones
2016	Foundations of Change	- Leadership transition sparks a shift in organizational vision - Began dismantling silos and fostering interdepartmental collaboration
2016-2019	Laying the Foundation	- Developed the initial Whole Family Program - Introduced shared case management and cross-team communication - Created the Guiding Coalition: ED, WFA coordinator, housing director, operations director, and learning director
2020	Transformation and Peer Learning	- CAPLP joins the NCAP Regional Community of Practice (COP) - Begins refining the program into Flourishing Families - Investment in professional development around trauma-informed care, family-centered coaching, etc.
2021-2022	Deepening the Work	- Inclusion of direct service staff in training and planning - Expanded tools for tracking family outcomes (e.g., Wheel of Life, well-being matrix) - No Wrong Door intake and integrated case management solidified - "Eat, Play, Learn" staff engagement model launched
2023	Scaling and Strengthening	- Expanded guiding coalition to include direct service "champions" - Stronger ties with Head Start, blending funding streams - Measurable outcomes celebrated: family milestones, increased social capital - Enhanced partnerships with Clay County schools and local funders

Cross-Cutting Opportunities

- Opportunities in Housing
- Opportunities in Transportation
- Opportunities in Health



Upcoming Learning Opportunities

2026 Management & Leadership Training Conference

Orlando, FL | January 28–30 (Pre-Con: January 27)

NCAP's MLTC is designed for both current and aspiring leaders in Community Action and human services. This special event will offer immersive training sessions, dynamic roundtable discussions, and meaningful networking opportunities. Whether you're a seasoned leader or preparing to take that next step into management, MLTC will equip you with the tools and insights to lead with confidence and impact.



COLLABORATIVE ON ECONOMIC MOBILITY LISTENING SESSION

Thursday, February 18, 2026

2pm ET | 1pm CT | 12pm MT | 11am PT

Join the Collaborative on Economic Mobility for an interactive session to share your needs and ideas for advancing economic mobility!

Participants will have the opportunity to:

- Engage with peers across the Community Action network
- Gain insight into what is most needed to advance economic mobility
- Learn how tools and resources are being applied to local initiatives
- Provide feedback to help improve and shape future resources



**WE WANT YOUR
FEEDBACK!**

Register Here!

tinyurl.com/CEMListening2025



We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear about your experience in today's conference training. Please take a moment to complete the survey.



tinyurl.com/EquiptheJourney