

2026 Executive Director and Board Chair Symposium East Coast

June 25 – 26, 2026

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Washington DC – Crystal City
 300 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA 22202



Agenda

June 25, 2026 8:30am - 5:30pm	
Time	Topic
8:00am – 9:00am	Registration
9:00am – 9:30am	<p>Welcome, Introduction of Facilitators, Sponsors, and Attendees</p> <p><i>Denise Harlow, CCAP, Chief Executive Officer, National Community Action Partnership</i></p> <p><i>Jeannie Chaffin, CCAP, NCAP Senior Advisor and Principal, Jeannie Chaffin, LLC</i></p> <p>Thank you to our sponsor, Wipfli!</p>
9:30am – 10:15am	<p>The Power and Potential of Community Action</p> <p><i>In this session, we will discuss Community Action’s unique attributes and assets that boards can maximize as they pursue the organization’s vision and purpose.</i></p> <p><i>Jeannie Chaffin, CCAP, NCAP Senior Advisor and Principal, Jeannie Chaffin, LLC</i></p>
10:15am – 10:30am	Break
10:30am – 11:45am	<p>The Power and Potential of the Board Chair and Executive Director in Building a High Functioning Board</p> <p><i>In this session, we will define how the Executive Director and Board Chair operate as a leadership pair with clear, supportive roles, shared responsibility, and aligned expectations. It is this relationship and healthy functioning that contributes to a successful board, positioned to fulfill the purpose of the Community Action Agency.</i></p> <p><i>Denise Harlow, CCAP, Chief Executive Officer, National Community Action Partnership (NCAP)</i></p>
11:45am – 12:45pm	<p>Lunch (provided)</p> <p><i>Sponsor remarks from Wipfli</i></p>

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June 25, 2026 8:30am - 5:30pm	
Time	Topic
1:00pm – 2:15pm	Providing Strong Financial Oversight <i>This session will focus on the Board's role in financial oversight and practices and procedures that support strong financial stewardship.</i> Katherine Eilers, CPA, Senior Manager, Wipfli LLP
2:15pm – 3:15pm	Going Beyond the Basics: Using Agency Purpose and Priorities to Drive the Work of the Board <i>During this session, attendees will have an opportunity to consider the benefits of balancing the board's work between the regulative, strategic, and generative modes.</i> Denise Harlow, CCAP, Chief Executive Officer, National Community Action Partnership Jeannie Chaffin, CCAP, NCAP Senior Advisor and Principal, Jeannie Chaffin, LLC
3:15pm – 3:30pm	Break
3:30pm – 4:45pm	Executive Director and Board Chair Affinity Group Conversations <i>During this time, Board Chairs and Executive Directors affinity groups will convene for peer sharing and discussion. These conversations will be facilitated and structured for maximum impact.</i>
4:45pm – 5:30pm	Executive Director and Board Chair Action Planning-Part 1 <i>During this session, attendees will have time to make meaning of what they have heard so far, identify questions they may have, and begin to prioritize what they want to focus on back home together.</i> <i>Facilitators will rove around the room and help teams begin crafting their plans.</i>

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June 26, 2026 8:30am -12:30pm	
Time	Topic
8:30am – 8:45 am	<p>Welcome Back and Temperature Check</p> <p><i>Jeannie Chaffin, CCAP, NCAP Senior Advisor and Consultant, Jeannie Chaffin, LLC</i></p>
8:45am – 9:30am	<p>The Work of the Board- Part 1 Community Engagement, Relationship Building, and Fundraising, Examples from the Field</p> <p><i>Community Engagement takes many forms and is central to many responsibilities of the Board. During this session we will discuss the Board’s role in building relationships out in the community that lay a foundation for fund development to diversify funding and strengthen the organization. We will look at a CAA best practices and discuss attendee challenges and successes.</i></p> <p><i>Jeannie Chaffin, CCAP, NCAP Senior Advisor and Consultant, Jeannie Chaffin, LLC</i></p>
9:30am – 10:15am	<p>The Work of the Board- Part 2 Advocacy</p> <p><i>Continuing the discussion on community engagement, we will focus on the role of the Board Chair and Executive Director in representing the agency and building support for its mission. By establishing shared priorities and a common vision, these leaders can strengthen the agency’s voice, foster productive relationships, and help create positive outcomes for the organization, its customers, and the broader community.</i></p> <p><i>Ryan Gelman, Esq., CCAP, Director, Public Policy & Advocacy, National Community Action Partnership</i></p> <p><i>Denise Harlow, CCAP, Chief Executive Officer, National Community Action Partnership</i></p>
10:15am – 10:30am	Break

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June 26, 2026 8:30am -12:30pm	
Time	Topic
10:30am – 11:30am	<p>Leading Through Complexity and Challenging Times</p> <p><i>During this final session we will follow up on any lingering topics and discuss how leaders are using scenario planning to prepare for the future. We will also discuss what to do if your agency hits a rough patch and how to use strategic and generative thinking to better position the organization for growth and success.</i></p> <p>Denise Harlow, CCAP, Chief Executive Officer, National Community Action Partnership</p> <p>Jeannie Chaffin, CCAP, NCAP Senior Advisor and Consultant, Jeannie Chaffin, LLC</p>
11:30am – 12:00pm	<p>Executive Director and Board Chair Action Planning- Part 2</p> <p><i>During this session attendees will have time to make meaning of what they have heard, identify questions they may have, and begin to prioritize what they want to focus on back home together.</i></p> <p><i>Facilitators will rove around the room and help teams begin crafting their plans.</i></p>
12:00pm – 12:30pm	<p>Final Reflections & Adjourn</p>

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