

Fresh Finds

The Collaborative on Economic Mobility Newsletter

June 2026

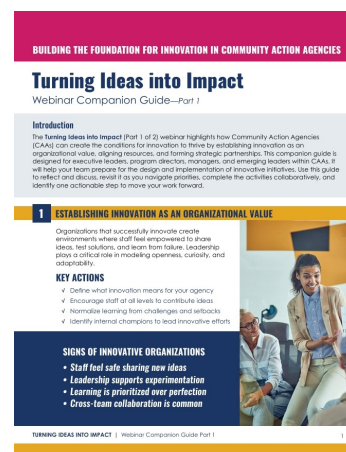
Lessons Learned

Watch the Collaborative on Economic Mobility's recent webinar training and uncover any insights you may have missed!

Turning Ideas into Impact: Implementing Innovative Approaches to Advance Economic Mobility

This webinar explores how Community Action Agencies (CAAs) can create the conditions for innovation to thrive by establishing innovation as an organizational value, aligning resources, and forming strategic partnerships. Designed for executive leaders, program directors, managers, and emerging leaders, this webinar helps prepare teams to design and implement innovative initiatives.

[Click here](#) to access the webinar.



We Want to Hear From You!

Evaluation



Are these newsletters helpful for you? Please take the time to complete this brief evaluation survey to let us know your feedback. We value your opinion and will use the insight to help make improvements moving forward.

[Share Your Feedback!](#)

Workforce Development

Article: Youth Employment

This article from Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI) explores the employment landscape for those between the ages of 16 and 24. It highlights factors contributing to youth employment challenges, best practices for effective youth employment programs, and funding opportunities that are available to support investment in

youth employment programs. Community Action Agencies are well-positioned to implement innovative youth employment initiatives such as summer programs, internships, and/or pre-apprenticeships.



[Click here](#) to read the full article.

New Funding Opportunity: *BlackRock Future Builders*
Proposals due July 10, 2026 at 11:59PM PT



BlackRock Future Builders is a competitive funding opportunity supporting non-profit led efforts to expand economic opportunity for the next generation of American workers in skilled trades. Funded by the BlackRock Foundation and administered by Jobs for the Future, this initiative will award **two-year grants of \$500,000 to \$1 million** for projects that strengthen career pathways in **infrastructure-related occupations** such as electricians, HVAC technicians, plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters, iron workers, insulation workers, and construction equipment operators. Proposals may include **direct service training programs** such as pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, career navigation, and wraparound support services or **capacity-building efforts** to help enhance or expand systems through research, demonstration projects, and technology or tool adoptions.

[Click here](#) to learn more and access the full Request for Proposals (RFP).

Scaling Work-Based Learning: *A Framework for Effective Employer Intermediaries*

Gain insight into how employer intermediaries connect employers and education systems to expand internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities. This brief provides a framework of three levels of effectiveness across five key functions intermediaries can perform including engaging employers, designing solutions, connecting employers with education and training partners, implementation support, and administrative support. This resource is designed to help intermediaries address barriers, bridge gaps, and enable learners to build valuable skills through hands-on work experience.

Framework for Effective Employer Intermediaries
The Framework outlines three levels of effectiveness across the five key functions that employer intermediaries perform. Policymakers, funders, and intermediaries themselves can use this tool to guide their efforts to expand high-quality work-based learning opportunities.

Function	Emerging Innovators Engagement efforts, rudimentary solutions, limited impact	Program Builders Consistent practice, repeated program, limited innovation	Trusted Partners Proven practice, consistent results, significant innovation
Employer Engagement Building relationships with employers to understand their needs and build buy-in for WBL as a viable career pathway	Active conversations with employers and begins identifying talent needs without clear program models or outcomes	Uses on-site visits, needs assessment and consistent program or service models to respond to employer needs	Active as trusted partner on employer's site and they call the shots in building buy-in to share understanding of employer pain-points and begin initiatives to build the value for WBL
Solutions Design Designing and developing a program that addresses employer needs and talent opportunities for learners	Engages employers in needs design conversation and helps them pilot small WBL activities	Consults employers to structured design processes, such as addition of related technical modules, to design and implement proven program models to address talent shortages	Co-designs new WBL solutions that are timely, adaptable, responsive to changing labor needs, and leverages employer capabilities, planning across non-traditional partners (e.g., industry WBL, apprenticeship)
Solutions Brokering Connecting employers with the right partners to provide talent pipeline	Connects employers with education and training partners through personal relationships to understand talent needs	Customizes and gives a reliable roster of education and training partners with evidence-based results and clear career tracks at entry-level status	Strategically matches employer goals with education institution and support partner capabilities, providing a clear, reliable talent pipeline (e.g., student readiness for WBL, strong connections)
Implementation Support Helping employers adapt and deliver WBL programming that meets learning impact	Provides hands-on support to employers piloting WBL programs, with some effort to simplify processes	Offers standardized technical assistance, tools and troubleshooting to troubleshoot program delivery and WBL activities	Facilitates building WBL implementation for employers through creation of job descriptions, support with candidate recruitment and onboarding, development of career maps, timing of supervisor, development of training program, identifying resources to improve WBL, engagement with stakeholders, and ongoing communication of progress, feedback and learning and monitoring tools to scale impact
Administrative Support Emplying processes for activities related to WBL administration and funding	Assists employers with initial paperwork, compliance, and funding processes	Uses tools and shared services to streamline administration and improve efficiency	Manages administrative activities such as payroll, compliance, recruitment plan, recruitment, apprenticeship registration, employee development, and data reporting
Sample Indicators of Effectiveness as Intermediaries Move Along Continuum	+ heightened employer awareness of WBL as a solution and increased volume of WBL opportunities + documented employer interest in WBL (e.g., employer visits, requests for information and pilot programs) + tangible return on investment demonstrated for employers, such as reduced time to hire, increased retention, and productivity of new hires + employer-led program development (e.g., industry-led apprenticeships, industry-led training and technical education programs)		

[Click here](#) to access the framework.

Report: *Maximizing the Value of Internships*

This report draws on insights from 40 employers who have internship programs and use them as a talent pool to draw from. These helpful insights are intended to assist intermediaries, colleges and universities, and workforce development partners understand how internships create long-term value for employers but also how they can be strengthened and sustained.

[Click here](#) to access the resource.



Case Study: *Using Outcomes-Based Payments to Increase Pathways to Good Jobs*

Explore on how workforce leaders in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, Pennsylvania used outcomes-based payments to better align workforce training with employer demand and expand pathways to high quality jobs. This case study highlights how performance-based funding, employer partnerships, and industry focused training programs improved program participant outcomes in high demand sectors such as healthcare, technology, and manufacturing.



[Click here](#) to learn more.

Paid EMT Training and Career Pathways for Young Adults

Learn about the California EMS Corp, which provides 5-month Emergency Medical (EMS) Technician training program to young people who have faced barriers to employment by creating pathways to careers in healthcare while also addressing the shortage of EMS workers.

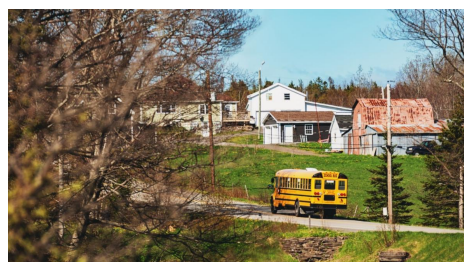


[Click here](#) to learn more.

High-Quality Education

Rural Learning Systems

Through a partnership with [CivicLab](#) and funding from [Ascendium Education Group](#) and [ECMC Foundation](#), [ten rural communities](#) are building cross-sector partnerships to strengthen education-to-employment pathways. Learn more about the systems-level strategies these collaborative partnerships are implementing in Arkansas, California, Florida, Indiana, Montana, North Carolina, Ohio, and South Carolina.



[Click here](#) to learn more.

Framework: *Cradle to Career Outcomes*

StriveTogether is a national network of place-based partnerships working together to build a better future where youth can thrive in their communities. This work is based on four key pillars: shared community vision, evidence-based decision-making, collaborative action, investment and sustainability. Success is measured by key milestones such as kindergarten readiness, early grade reading, middle grade math, high school graduation, postsecondary enrollment, postsecondary completion, and employment.

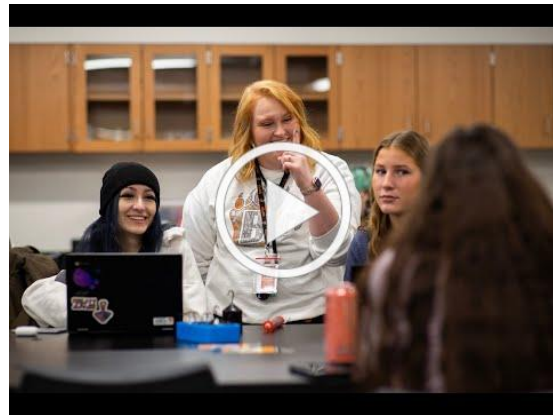
[Click here](#) to learn more.



BARR Model: *Building Assets, Reducing Risks*

The **BARR Model** (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) is a strengths-based education approach that [improves student outcomes](#) by building stronger student-teacher relationships and using collaborative teacher teams to address barriers to success. Backed by more than 20 years of research, the model is now [used in 26 states](#) and nearly 500 schools nationwide.

[Click here](#) to learn more.



Community-Asset Building

Case Study: *Financial Empowerment Centers* **Louisville Metro Office of Community Services** Louisville, Kentucky

This case study highlights how a public Community Action Agency implemented a Financial Empowerment Center through its Community Asset-Building work. By integrating financial empowerment services across programs, the agency helps families plan ahead, build stability, and better withstand financial crises. The case study also explores the resources, partnerships, and funding that supported implementation, along with key successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

[Click here](#) to learn more.



Agency Context

Organizational Capacity

Louisville Metro Government's Office of Social Services is a public Community Action Agency in Louisville, Kentucky that serves all the Louisville-Jefferson County Metro area. The agency's annual budget is approximately \$45.1 million with primary funding sources including Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Metro Government Fund, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Capital Project Fund, AmeriCorps, and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). Additional grants and donations are provided by financial support institutes such as banks and credit union partners. The agency has approximately 150 staff and 200 volunteers. It is structured into eight branches which include:

Advocacy and Outreach, Administration, Homeless Services, Neighborhood Places, Financial Empowerment, Housing and Support, Senior Nutrition, and Planning and Compliance.

This case study will focus on the Office of Financial Empowerment, a branch of the Office of Social Services, which is led by a team of six including a Social Service Policy and Advocacy Manager, a Policy and Advocacy Supervisor, a Social Service Supervisor, and three Financial Counselors. The Social Service Policy and Advocacy Manager and the Policy and Advocacy Supervisor are both Certified Community Action Professionals (CCAP) with additional training and certifications in Financial Counseling, Financial Social Work, and Economic Mobility Coaching. The Social Service Supervisor and all three Financial Counselors are certified through the National Association of Certified Credit Counselors.

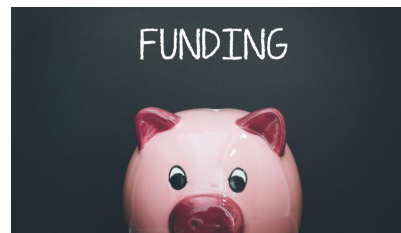
LOUISVILLE METRO OFFICE OF SOCIAL SERVICES

COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP | 1

Two-Generation & Whole Family Approaches

Database: *Federal Funding Streams for Children and Youth Services*

This comprehensive database from the Children's Funding Project was recently updated with fiscal year 2025 funding data and now includes over 400 federal funding streams that support children and youth services across the country. The database identifies available funding opportunities, outlines eligibility requirements, and tracks funding and policy changes. Explore the tool to learn more about how your community or organization can expand funding opportunities to strengthen programs and services for children and youth.



[Click here](#) to access the database.

Newsletter: *Whole Family Approach Quarterly Digest*

This quarterly newsletter highlights tools and resources to help support the Community Action network in implementing a Whole Family Approach. Each edition features a rotating selection of toolkits, case studies, funding opportunities, and more. Resources are available for every phase of the journey - whether you are interested in learning more about the Whole Family Approach framework, exploring the process of designing and implementing a Whole Family Approach, or seeking to strengthen and improve your existing Whole Family Approach.



[Click here](#) to sign up.

Cross-Cutting Opportunities

Toolkit: *Rural Health Transformation Program*

This toolkit from the [Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility Technical Assistance Center](#) (CCAM-TAC) offers transit providers guidance and strategic recommendations to better align with the [Rural Health Transformation \(RHT\) program](#). Transportation is becoming a more important part of rural health infrastructure. This toolkit includes an interactive state map and strategy resource guide, partnership strategies, mobile health strategies, a funding guide, and more. These resources are designed to help services providers and community partners understand emerging funding priorities and how states are approaching implementation.



[Click here](#) to access the toolkit.

Video Series: *These Roads We Share*

This video highlights the transportation services of [Hopelink](#), a Community Action Agency in King County, Washington. In partnership with the [King County Mobility Coalition](#) and with support from the Federal Transit Administration's [Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility](#) (ICAM) program, Hopelink developed a platform to help community members navigate available transportation resources. Through this effort, [Find a Ride](#) connects community members with service providers and helps them access essential destinations, including school, work, and medical appointments.



[Click here](#) to learn more.

Upcoming Learning Opportunities

Don't miss out on this upcoming learning opportunity from the Collaborative on Economic Mobility!

Collaborative on Economic Mobility Listening Session

Wednesday, July 15, 2026 at 2pm ET | 1pm CT | 12pm MT | 11am PT

We want to hear from you! Join the Collaborative on Economic Mobility for an interactive listening session to share your needs and ideas and provide insight on tools and resources. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with peers across the Community Action network and gain insight into what is most needed to advance economic mobility, how current tools and resources are being applied to local initiatives, and what feedback can help improve and shape future resources moving forward.

The key areas of focus will include Workforce Development, High-Quality Education, Community-Asset Building, Whole Family Approaches, and Innovative Community Programs and Organizations.



[Click here](#) to register.

If you have any questions, contact us at:
cem@communityactionpartnership.com.

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National Community Action Partnership | 919 18th Street NW Suite 600 | Washington, DC 20006 US

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