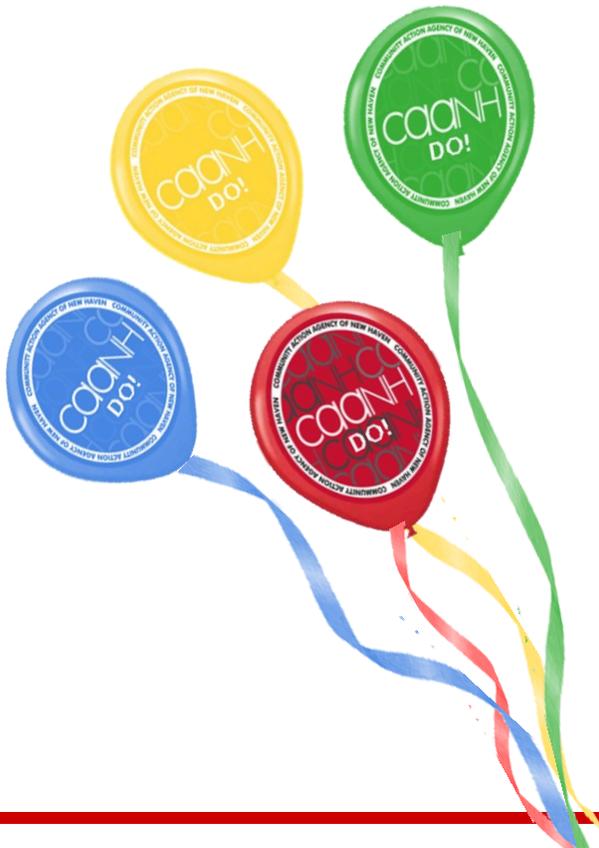


COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY'S

Passport to Prosperity Walk & Activity Day

*Walking to Transform our Community
One Step at a Time*



**SATURDAY
APRIL 23, 2016**

(RAIN DATE APRIL 30, 2016)

We encourage each person to get as many supporters as possible. Any person who collects \$30 or more in pledges receives a free t-shirt.

For more information, please email walk@caanh.net or call 203-387-7700, ext. 114.

Registration for Walk Starts at 8:30am

Kick-off starts at 9:30am

Walk Starts at 10:00am

(3 mile walk—Whalley/Ellsworth to Derby Avenue, Norton Street/Derby Avenue to Crescent Street, back to 419 Whalley Avenue) with shorter walk optional.

Activity Day from 10:00am—4:00pm

419 Whalley Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511

FOR MORE REGISTRATION INFORMATION,
CALL 203-387-7700, Ext 114

PROCEEDS GO TOWARD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
THAT PROMOTE SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR FAMILIES
AT COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY OF NEW HAVEN.

WALK  **THON**
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY OF NEW HAVEN

Community Action Makes The Long Walk Back

BY CRYSTAL EMERY | OCT 7, 2014 11:03 AM |



What could convince over 150 New Haveners to walk through the city in the pouring rain? An overwhelming desire to inspire change.

The walkers gathered Saturday to take part in a “Passport to Prosperity Walk-a-thon and Activity Day,” hosted by the Community Action Agency of New Haven (CAANH). The purpose of the event was “to galvanize our community and protect the interests of the young people growing up in our community. Passport to Prosperity is designed to ensure that all elements that are able to contribute to our community’s well-being can participate in generating a new belief system about this community,” said Amos Smith, president and CEO of CAANH.

The day started with a welcome from Mayor Toni Harp, who expressed to the crowd that “it is inspiring to see so many people eager to walk the neighborhood and share the story of real empowerment that Community Action Agency

of New Haven represents.” And it was inspiring, at least for this New Havener, to watch people walk through the city, from the corner of Ellsworth/Whalley Avenue to Derby Avenue, and circling back to Norton Parkway. On and on they traversed the streets, until the torrential rain became unbearable.

There were many tents set up in the parking lot of CAANH for participants to visit. Several local colleges — including Gateway Community College, Albertus Magnus College and Central State University — were distributing educational materials to community members. NAACP had a voter registration booth set up. Walgreens was providing much needed flu shots, considering the weather.

There were a number of guest speakers throughout the day, including State Rep. Toni Walker, as well as State Sen. Gary Holder-Winfield, who eloquently noted that “the number of young people involved and their energy is important to what this walk-a-thon is. It represents symbolically the substance of the work Community Action Agency is doing in creating a passport to prosperity.”

Throughout history, the youth population has helped to usher in monumental changes, from the civil rights era, to environmental education, or even during the Vietnam peace movement. It will take that same youthful energy and new thought to break the barriers of old belief systems that have perpetuated stagnation for the city of New Haven.

Passport to Prosperity allows community members to become the architects of their own path to prosperity, by connecting them to the necessary resources to achieve their goals. One component of the Passport to Prosperity service is the 5x5 Initiative, which is designed to tackle the needs of our immediate community with the hope of transforming that community, just as the metaphorical pebble in the pond creates a ripple effect of empowerment leading to prosperity.

Amos Smith became the executive director of CAANH in 2006. When he took the helm, the agency was plagued with a 20-year legacy debt of \$6.5 million, stemming from poor leadership, a severely unqualified staff (of which approximately 25 percent lacked basic literacy skills), misappropriation of funds, and even outright embezzlement. The 2006 audit uncovered that every department within CAANH was fraught with inefficiency and dysfunction.

Since taking over, Smith has brought CAANH back on track. The agency has reduced its legacy debt by \$4.4 million, and the Department of Social Services recently acknowledged them as being an organization that met best practices.

CAANH’s commitment to being an integral force in the community was fully established upon relocating to its current offices on 419 Whalley Ave. This street is known in the community as a high crime area, with the New Haven Crime Log citing 250 incidents occurring last month alone.

Through initiatives like the Passport to Prosperity and the 5x5 Initiative, CAANH is showing that they truly are working to make this city a better place. Larry Stewart, of Tri-Con Construction Managers, LLC and Board President of CAANH, summed up Saturday’s event succinctly, stating that “there is a significant amount of youth here today and people really want to see change. They really want to see things better, and they realize that they have to take it upon themselves to make that happen.”

