



# Network Connection

Our mission is to advocate for low-income Missourians and strengthen the Community Action Network. We envision a state where all people and communities thrive.

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## ADVOCACY – A voice for low-income Missourians

### Advocacy Update

by Kurt Brewer, Executive Director, [kbrewer@communityaction.org](mailto:kbrewer@communityaction.org)

Webster’s dictionary defines advocacy as the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal. That simple definition of advocacy can take many forms. From providing testimony at hearings to conversations at the local coffee shop to writing letters (or email) to elected officials and other policy decision-makers, the goal is to show support for a cause.

Staying informed is important for effective advocacy. I invite each of you to join the National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) at [www.ncaf.org/membership](http://www.ncaf.org/membership). Membership is free, yet it must be confirmed annually. As a member, you get access to updates from Washington DC on legislative and policy changes and have opportunity to for your voice be heard. Members of NCAF can also join the Community Action Program—Political Action Committee (CAP-PAC) at <http://www.ncaf.org/cap-pac/>.

How powerful would it be if all Missouri CAN members joined NCAF and weighed in on the important poverty issues of the day? What if we all contacted our legislators on one unified topic? Maybe we should find out.

Try these easy-to-navigate websites to contact your legislators:

- [How to contact your U.S. and state legislators](#)
- [Discover state legislators, bills, and voting records](#)
- [Find your legislators with your physical address](#)

**Kurt Brewer, Missouri CAN Executive Director**  
December 12, 2017

**Let’s be social! Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.**

[facebook.com/MoCommunityAction](https://www.facebook.com/MoCommunityAction) [@Missouri\\_CAN](https://twitter.com/Missouri_CAN)

**Save the Date! Advocacy Week 2018**

*by Jessica Hoey, Outreach Director, jhoey@communityaction.org*

In lieu of the Annual Advocacy Day the Network has traditionally held at the State Capitol during each legislative session, Missouri CAN will assist agencies with conducting in-district meetings for state senators and representatives during the 2018 legislative spring break, which is scheduled for the week of March 19. Executive Directors and Advocacy Points of Contact at each agency will receive information after the new year about best practices in organizing an in-district meeting, but mark your calendars now for this important week of action! If your agency has not yet designated its 2018 Advocacy Point(s) of Contact, please contact Jessica Hoey.

## **Missouri Community Action Network Advocacy Plan 2018**

*by Jessica Hoey, Outreach Director, jhoey@communityaction.org*

At its November 2017 meeting, the Missouri CAN Board of Directors approved the Network's Advocacy Plan for the upcoming legislative session. The plan continues to place emphasis on the five elements of poverty—Economic & Family Security, Education, Food & Nutrition, Health, and Housing & Energy—with public policy priorities and areas of focus defined for each element based upon results of the Community Needs Assessments recently conducted by each of your agencies. Many thanks for your involvement in helping us design a robust Advocacy Plan for our full Network for the upcoming legislative session. If you would like to receive a copy of the plan, contact Jessica Hoey.

## **NETWORK CAPACITY – Helping you help others**

### **Missouri Academy for Leadership & Community Action**

*by Brian Valentine, Program Director, bvalentine@communityaction.org*

Are you looking for an opportunity to sharpen your leadership skills? Missouri Academy for Leadership and Community Action is a five-month program designed to provide you with critical leadership and management skills. This is done through a collaborative learning process that incorporates development, mentoring, and networking opportunities.

The Community Action framework, planning, advocacy, community project plan, and professional development are just a few of the benefits of this academy. To enroll, [download the application here](#), or speak with your direct supervisor about this awesome opportunity.

### **Family Development Credential (FDC)**

*by Dr. Chris Small, Training Manager, csmall@communityaction.org*

Several exciting professional development opportunities are on the horizon for 2018. On February 1, we will hold the first of two One-Day Update meetings for current FDC instructors here in Missouri. The second One-Day Update meeting will be September 17. Both meetings will be held at the Missouri CAN offices in Jefferson City. To keep FDC instructor credentials current, individuals must attend a One-Day Update meeting every three-years.

The Missouri FDC Instructor's Training Institute will be held September 18-19, 2018 at Missouri CAN. This training is for anyone wishing to lead FDC classes at their agency. Mark your calendars now for these exciting learning opportunities coming in 2018. Contact Dr. Chris Small at (573) 634-2969 ext. 35 with your questions about these two events.

### **MIS Onboarding Team Update**

*by James Rogers, Information Systems Manager, jrogers@communityaction.org*

We are continuing our work on MIS Version 6 to address issues you are experiencing. The Monthly Reporting, Exhibit B, Vendor Payments and Exhibit C Reporting functions are released. The CSBG Annual Reporting is next. We are testing all reports as they finish development before publishing. You will see the Billing and Payments processes are being tweaked to run smoothly. Several systems bugs have been identified, and we are working with our vendor to resolve all issues. Our continued goal is to have version 6 working as reliably as version 5.

## **New Health-Energy-Housing Pilot Project**

*by Jessica Hoey, Outreach Director, jhoey@communityaction.org*

Missouri CAN was recently awarded a one-year grant from the Energy Foundation that will allow us to hire a full-time, temporary professional to help design a pilot project for improving health and energy outcomes in multi-family affordable housing. This work will be done in close partnership with Northeast Community Action Corporation (NECAC) and Community Action Agency of Greater Kansas City (CAAGKC) as potential pilot agencies, along with an advisory council of housing, health, and energy experts from within and outside the Network. The long-term goal is to use the pilot to secure funding for implementation in housing complexes across the state, through our agencies and other partners. The grant begins in January 2018, and Missouri CAN plans to recruit candidates for the new position in the coming weeks.

## **WE'RE HIRING**

*Are you or someone you know interested in the Health-Energy-Housing Project Coordinator Position? We are accepting applications for this pilot project. [Click here to download the application.](#) We can't wait to hear from you!*

## Missouri CAN CAPACITY – Helping us help you

### **Agency Visits**

Agency visits help Missouri CAN staff learn more about the great work you're doing and discover how to better serve you. Please let us know about upcoming events! Here's where we went in November:

- Brian Valentine and Chris Small visited South Central Missouri Community Action Agency (SCMCAA) in Winona on November 8 as co-facilitators for the Case Management 201 training event. More than 40 individuals received this training to best serve clients seeking a variety of services through our agencies.
- Mary Bifulco toured CAASTLC's main office in Overland, MO on November 15. After seeing many smiling faces and working hands on a busy day, she visited the Bel-Ridge Community Gardens and Spanish Lake Seeds of Hope Farm to learn all about CAASTLC's innovative income-tiered Community Supported Agriculture program.
- Chris Small and Mary Bifulco visited People's Community Action Corporation (PCAC) on November 16 for the Outreach Personnel Professional Alliance meeting. PCAC graciously hosted this meeting on-site. Chris and Mary toured PCAC's health care facilities, including the new Children's Center coming this fall.

### **Membership Matters**

*by Jennifer Perkins, Administrative Assistant and Membership Coordinator, jperkins@communityaction.org*

You receive several benefits from businesses as a member of Missouri Community Action Network. But have you actually used them? I would like to share with you a positive first-hand experience to show you the difference your benefits can make.

My husband and I have been married four years. We did not take a honeymoon; it just wasn't in the budget at the time. And until recently, we had never taken a trip together without our son. We had never traveled just the two of us. When Southwest Airlines offered a \$49-flight special, we decided to randomly pick a location that was applicable and go for it—that honeymoon we never took, a trip just the two of us.

After deciding on Minneapolis, I immediately visited Hotel Storm, a hotel booking website where MCAN members received benefits, to look for deals and book our hotel. I'm a thrifty shopper, and I try to be budget conscious. To my delight, I was able to make a reservation at Radisson Blu—a stylish, 4-star hotel in downtown Minneapolis—and save almost \$500 for our stay. Being the thrifty gal I am, I called the hotel directly to ask if they could beat the price. Even the booking representative at Radisson Blu was surprised by my discount and said there was no way to beat the rate we received through Hotel Storm. (He then asked how to get into the program for himself, which I found quite comical!)

When we arrived, our room was upgraded, and we had daily VIP access to a special dining room with free drinks, appetizers, snacks, and a gourmet breakfast. Now, I'm not certain if Hotel Storm played a part in this or not, but it was a treat. I thought the hotel had made a mistake and was afraid we would be charged more than we had planned, but the hotel confirmed it was a part of our reservation. And how wonderful it was!

We are grateful to have the benefit of Hotel Storm discounts for being a member of Missouri Community Action Network. It allowed us to take a trip that we otherwise would not have taken.

If you haven't taken the time to investigate how you can use your benefits yet, I encourage you to do so. If you have any questions about your benefits, please ask me. We all work hard in Community Action, and these perks are a way we say thank you. If you have a fun story about your benefits to share, please email me to share your positive experience.

## Nominate an MVP

Who at your agency has made a super-awesome totally-stellar impact on your community or an individual served by your agency? [Fill out this form](#) to nominate that person to be recognized in our Network Quarterly and at our annual conference.

### ON THE CALENDAR

#### **MCADA Meeting**

December 13...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Christmas**

December 25–26...*Missouri CAN Office Closed*

#### **New Year's Day**

January 1...*Missouri CAN Office Closed*

#### **Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP)**

**Class #3** January 3...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **MCADA Meeting**

January 10...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Missouri CAN Board Meeting**

January 11...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Martin Luther King, Jr Day**

January 15...*Missouri CAN Office Closed*

#### **Resource Development Professional Alliance (RDPA)**

January 16...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Energy and Housing Professional Alliance (EHPA)**

January 17...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Committee to Keep Missourians Warm (CKMW)**

January 18...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Outreach Managers Professional Alliance (OMPA)**

January 24-25...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Family Development Credential Update**

February 1...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP)**

**Class #4** February 7...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **MCADA Meeting**

February 14...*Missouri CAN Office*

#### **President's Day**

February 19...*Missouri CAN Office Closed*

#### **Outreach Personnel Professional Alliance (OPPA)**

February 22...*Missouri CAN Office*

**View additional details and register for events at [MissouriCAN.org/calendar](http://MissouriCAN.org/calendar).**