

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY ACTION

TENNESSEE TOGETHER

ANNUAL REPORT  
2016

*Tennessee Association  
of Community Action*





## The Promise of Community Action

Community Action

changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope,  
improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community,  
and we are dedicated to helping people  
help themselves and each other.

In 2014 - 2015, **Tennessee's Community Action Agencies** with their network of partners produced significant positive outcomes for people and communities in need. All 20 agencies provided programs and services in 100 percent of Tennessee's counties.

- **373,104** Low-income individuals were served.
- **75%** of families served lived below 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
- **30%** of families served lived in severe poverty (below 50% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines).
- Vulnerable populations served included **113,737** children, **103,995** seniors, **119,748** people with disabilities, and **61,753** people who lacked health insurance.

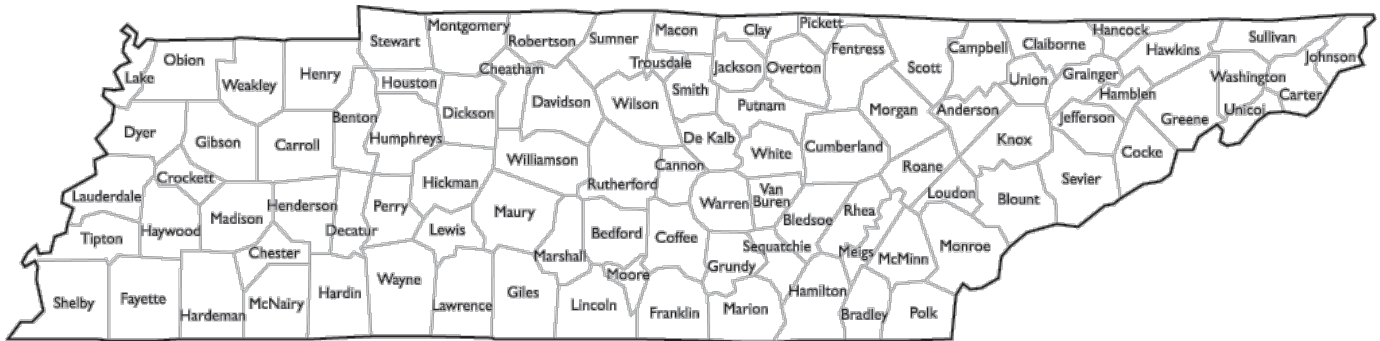
**743,196**  
**Outcomes**

## THE STATE OF POVERTY IN TENNESSEE

- **POVERTY RATE** - Over 16 percent of people in Tennessee had incomes below the poverty line (\$24,250 for a family of four) in 2015. Tennessee ranked 41st in the nation. Only nine states had more people living in poverty.
- **CHILD POVERTY RATE** - Over 23 percent of children under age 18 in Tennessee had incomes below the poverty line in 2015.
- **POVERTY RATE FOR WORKING-AGE WOMEN** - Almost 17.5 percent of working-age women (ages 18 to 64) had incomes below the poverty line in 2015.
- **INCOME INEQUALITY** - The share of income going to the top 20 percent of households in Tennessee was 16 times that going to the bottom 20 percent of households in 2015.
- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING** - There were 66 apartments or other units that were affordable and available for every 100 renter households with very low incomes in 2015; ranking Tennessee 21st in this category. Very low-income households are those with incomes at or below half of median income in the metropolitan or other area where they live.
- **HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY** - 15.1% of households in Tennessee were food insecure from 2013 to 2015, meaning at some point during the year, they experienced difficulty providing enough food due to lack of money or resources.
- **UNEMPLOYMENT** - The unemployment rate for 2015 was 5.8%.
- **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION** - Tennessee ranked 11th with 87.2% of students graduating on time at the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

Data compiled by U.S. Census Bureau, National Low Income Housing Coalition and Feeding America.

MAP OF AGENCIES



**Anderson County Community Action Commission**  
 Serving Anderson County  
 149 N. Main Street  
 Clinton, TN 37716  
 865.457.5500  
 Susan T. Bowling, Executive Director

**Bradley-Cleveland Community Services Agency**  
 Serving Bradley County  
 155 Sixth Street SE  
 Cleveland, TN 37311  
 423.479.4111  
 Demetrius Ramsey, Executive Director

**Clarksville-Montgomery County Community Action Agency**  
 Serving Montgomery County  
 150 Lafayette Road  
 Clarksville, TN 37042  
 931.896.1800  
 www.cmcaa.com  
 Leslie Chiodini, Executive Director

**Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority**  
 Serving: Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Monroe, Sevier  
 534 East 1st North St.  
 Morristown, TN 37814  
 423.587.4500  
 www.douglascherokee.org  
 Kay Hale, Executive Director

**Highland Rim Economic Authority**  
 Serving: Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Stewart  
 213 College Street  
 Erin, TN 37061  
 931.289.4101  
 www.highlandrim.org  
 Jill Ortago, Executive Director

**Blount County Community Action Agency**  
 Serving Blount County  
 3509 Tuckaleechee Pike  
 Maryville, TN 37803  
 865.983.8411  
 www.blountcaa.org  
 David Buchanan, Executive Director

**City of Chattanooga Department of Youth and Family Development**  
 Serving Hamilton County  
 501 West 12th Street  
 Chattanooga, TN 37402  
 www.chattanooga.gov/youthandfamily  
 423.643.6400  
 Donna Stone, Deputy Administrator

**Delta Human Resource Agency**  
 Serving: Lauderdale, Tipton, Fayette  
 915 Highway 51 South  
 Covington, TN 38019  
 901.476.5226  
 www.deltahra.org  
 Adrienne M. McGarity

**East Tennessee Human Resource Agency/Mountain Valley**  
 Serving: Campbell, Claiborne, Morgan, Scott, Union  
 9111 Cross Park Drive #D-100  
 Knoxville, TN 37923  
 865.691.2551  
 www.ethra.org  
 Gary Holway, Executive Director

**Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Agency**  
 Serving Knox County  
 2247 Western Avenue  
 Knoxville, TN 37921  
 865.546.3500  
 www.knoxcac.org  
 Barbara Kelly, Executive Director

**Metropolitan Action Commission**  
 Serving Davidson County  
 800 2nd Avenue North  
 Nashville, TN 37219  
 615.862.8860  
 www.nashville.gov  
 Dr. Cynthia Croom, Executive Director

**Mid-East Community Action Agency**  
 Serving: Roane, Loudon  
 315 East Race Street  
 Kingston, TN 37763  
 865.248.8661  
 www.mecaa.net  
 Jerry Johnson, Executive Director

**Shelby County Community Services Agency**  
 Serving Shelby County  
 2670 Union Extended, Suite 500  
 Memphis, TN 38112  
 901.222.4200  
 www.shelbycountytg.gov  
 Louise Smith, Administrator

**Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency**  
 Serving: Bledsoe, Grundy, Marion, Meigs, McMinn, Polk, Rhea, Sequatchie  
 312 Resource Road  
 Dunlap, TN 37327  
 423.949.2191  
 www.sethra.us  
 Nancy Sutherland, Executive Director

**Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency**  
 Serving: Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, White  
 500 South Jefferson Street #8  
 Cookeville, TN 38501  
 931.528.1127  
 www.uchra.com  
 Luke Collins, Executive Director

**Mid-Cumberland Community Action Agency**  
 Serving: Cheatham, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Trousdale, Williamson, Wilson  
 233 Legends Drive, Suite 103  
 Lebanon, TN 37087  
 615.742.1113  
 www.midcumberland.org  
 Kevin Davenport, Executive Director

**Northwest Tennessee Economic Development Council**  
 Serving: Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Obion, Weakley  
 231 South Wilson Street  
 Dresden, TN 38225  
 731.364.3228  
 www.nwcommunityaction.org  
 L. Don Ridgeway, Executive Director

**South Central Human Resource Agency**  
 Serving: Bedford, Coffee, Franklin, Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Perry, Wayne  
 1437 Winchester Highway  
 Fayetteville, TN 37334  
 931.433.7182  
 www.schra.us  
 Paul T. Rosson, Executive Director

**Southwest Human Resource Agency**  
 Serving: Chester, Decatur, Haywood, Hardeman, Hardin, Henderson, Madison, McNairy  
 1527 White Avenue  
 Henderson, TN 38340  
 731.989.5111  
 www.swhra.org  
 Mike Smith, Executive Director

**Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency**  
 Serving: Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, Washington  
 301 Louis Street  
 Kingsport, TN 37662  
 423.230.3705  
 www.uehda.org  
 Tim Jaynes, Executive Director

## Tennessee Association of Community Action Mission Statement

TACA strives to empower the statewide  
Community Action Network  
through advocacy, training, and technical assistance  
to promote self-sufficiency among the poor,  
especially vulnerable populations.

### Officers

President	-	Tim Jaynes
1st Vice President	-	David Buchanan
2nd Vice President	-	Don Ridgeway
Secretary	-	Leslie Chiodini
Treasurer	-	Barbara Kelly

## TACA TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Tennessee Association of Community Action builds capacity for all Community Action staff from the front-line staff to program directors, board members, across a wide range of job functions. The premier training event is the Annual Training Conference. In 2015 the conference was held November 2 - 4, in Knoxville, Tennessee. With the theme, *Breakthrough to Excellence During the Next 50 Years*, the 18 breakout sessions challenged agencies to go beyond compliance to that of a standard of excellence as they move forward in this next half of the century of Community Action.

In the opening session, national, state and local partners and the community joined conference participants to congratulate Thomas “Tank” Strickland on receiving the Jayne Thomas Grassroots Volunteer Award from the Community Action Partnership. This national award honors volunteers who have shown outstanding dedication and made extraordinary contributions to a Community Action Agency. Mr. Strickland, a Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee Board Member, is known for living his life with deep faith, unshaking perseverance and a never ending passion for uplifting others, particularly at-risk youth. Barbara Kelly, Executive Director of Knoxville-Knox County CAC says, “Tank is true blue. He has a heart and backbone for Community Action and lives the Promise of Community Action every day!”



Thomas “Tank” Strickland  
Community Action Partnership  
Jayne Thomas Grassroots Volunteer  
Award Winner



Thomas “Tank” Strickland, Barbara Kelly,  
Knoxville-Knox County CAC staff  
and board members.

### TACA Conference Scenes





## TACA TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Training for Tennessee's Community Action Agencies is supported in part by the Tennessee Department of Human Services, the Office of Community Services and includes ROMA (Results Oriented Management Accountability) Training and Organizational Standards.

### About ROMA (Results Oriented Management Accountability)

ROMA is a full management and accountability process designed to help agencies improve their ability to achieve results. The phases of the ROMA Cycle: Assessment, Planning, Implementation, Achievement of Results, and Evaluation, provide a framework for continuous quality improvement of services, strategies and outcomes. In 2014 - 2015, Tennessee's Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers delivered training on the principles and practices of ROMA to 247 Community Action staff, board members and partners. Seven Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers received ongoing training during in-service in the fall.

### About Organizational Standards

Community Action has also implemented the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Organizational Standards as part of the performance management and accountability system. These 58 standards ensure the capacity of agencies to provide high-quality services to low-income families and communities. Training occurs during statewide quarterly meetings and on regional and national levels.

### TACA Training Scenes





## METRO ACTION COMMISSION GIVES DEGREES, HELP FOR LIFE

*“Breaking the cycle of poverty begins with eliminating barriers that prohibit individuals from being able to provide for their families. Often not having a high school diploma or specialized trainings have kept families from increasing their earning potential,”* said Dr. Cynthia Croom, Metro Action Executive Director.

One Friday afternoon, Xavier Henderson sat in his blue robe and graduation cap and reflected on the ninth grade, his last year of formal school. He had come a long way since then. It took him 18 years, several jobs and multiple GED programs — including one in prison — but he now had a degree and a job as a truck driver with steady hours. The answer to his success: Metro Action Commission’s Adult Education Program. Henderson said he could not have gone to (truck driving) school without his GED, so it helped him out a lot. He finished school and got a job with the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

In 2016 in addition to celebrating the graduates that returned to receive their high school equivalency diploma, the agency recognized students from its first workforce development cohort that earned nationally recognized credentials in information technology and child care. Yousef Ibrahim was one of Metro Action’s first COMPTIAA+ graduates, a nationally recognized credential necessary for entry-level IT positions. His wife, Nansy Barsom, graduated with her Child Development Associate (CDA), an entry level credential that enables the holder to apply for teaching positions within the child care industry.

In addition to instruction, Metro Action provides a weekly stipend and funds for transportation assistance, support in covering costs for books and exams, and free child care through the agency’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The staff also helps students with resumes, getting internships, planning for college and getting jobs.

John Hennings was the class Valedictorian, scoring the highest on the High School Equivalency exam. Hennings’ ADHD made it very difficult for him to concentrate in school so he dropped out. Hennings credits the program for helping him rebuild his confidence which he believes lead to his successful completion. “I never would’ve been able to find out how smart I am if it weren’t for them,” Hennings said of the instructors.

Metro Action provides workforce development and education services to individuals living in Davidson County that are enrolled in the Adult Education program and to parents with children enrolled in the Head Start/Early Head Start program.



Xavier Henderson



Yousef Ibrahim and Nansy Barsom



John Hennings and Metro Action

## DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE SUCCESSFUL TUESDAYS

*Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority shared client success stories on Tuesdays.  
#SuccessfulTuesday*

In January 2015, a client walked in to the local Douglas-Cherokee Neighborhood Service Center seeking help. He had lost his job, and his wife was recently laid off. They had a small son who had been really sick. The family had a huge amount of medical bills and did not have medical insurance. The client had a utility disconnect notice and did not know where to turn for help. He expressed to the Douglas-Cherokee Community Services Advocate that he had hit rock bottom and did not see a way out of his current situation.

The Community Services Advocate assisted the client in completing an application for agency services and together they assessed the family's needs. The client was eligible for assistance with the utility bill through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The client also qualified for the Case Management program.

Coming to his local Community Action Agency was the client's first step to success. While in the Case Management program, the client continued to work towards improving his family's situation. He completed six appointments with the Neighborhood Service Center Community Services Advocate in which he was able to set goals, work on a budget, receive rental assistance, look for affordable housing and even start his own business. The client stated the help of the Neighborhood Service Center was just the "hand up" he needed to get things going in a different direction in his life, and that he and his family are so thankful for all the assistance the staff was able to provide.

#SuccessfulTuesday

# CommunityAction

#DCEA

#TACA



## SOUTHWEST HUMAN RESOURCE AGENCY CENTRAL KITCHEN



The concept of serving meals to senior citizens and school-aged children is nothing new to Southwest Human Resource Agency. But what has changed is the address for preparing the food. Last year SWHRA opened its new 7,000-square foot Central Kitchen at the SWHRA Nutrition Services Building at 992 West Main Street in Henderson. The building was rehabbed with the benefit of a benefactor, H and H Construction.

According to SWHRA Executive Director Mike Smith, the new kitchen helps consolidate numerous programs. The Central Kitchen prepares meals for the Agency's Summer Food Service, Meals on Wheels, Head Start and After School Programs. SWHRA serves 11 counties in Tennessee.

The staff at the Central Kitchen includes Gary Smith, serving as kitchen manager, Susan McCain, as the head cook, and Jordan McEarl coordinating the routes. Smith has 30 years in the food industry, McClain comes to the program from the local school system and McEarl coordinates 300 routes. In 2015 the agency served approximately 100,000 meals.



## MAXIMIZING OUTCOMES

Community Action Agencies move beyond focusing on one single area of need such as housing, job training or health care to reaching out to low-income and vulnerable people in communities to address their multiple needs through a comprehensive approach, developing partnerships with other community organizations, involving low-income clients in the agency's operations, and administering a full a full range of coordinated programs designed to have a measurable impact on poverty. Local agencies provide a unique combination of programming to meet locally determined objectives. Some of these programs include the following:

- ◆ Workforce Connections
- ◆ Adult Education
- ◆ Second Chance Program
- ◆ Rent/Mortgage/Utility Assistance
- ◆ Head Start/Early Head Start
- ◆ Rental Management
- ◆ Workforce and Education
- ◆ HOME
- ◆ Transportation Services
- ◆ CAC Americorps
- ◆ Project Succeed
- ◆ Homebuyer's Education
- ◆ Learning Academy
- ◆ Educational Opportunity Center
- ◆ USDA Commodities
- ◆ Income Management/Financial Ed.
- ◆ Comprehensive Emergency Assistance
- ◆ DUI School
- ◆ Neighborhood Stabilization
- ◆ Medical Support
- ◆ GED Support
- ◆ Knoxville Extreme Energy Makeover

- ◆ Low-Income Home Energy Assistance
- ◆ HOUSE Rehabilitation
- ◆ WIA Youth Program
- ◆ Summer Food Service Program
- ◆ Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- ◆ Access to Jobs
- ◆ Upward Bound
- ◆ Community Leadership
- ◆ 121 Personal Development
- ◆ HUD Housing Assistance
- ◆ Juvenile Community Intervention
- ◆ Rental Housing Program
- ◆ Family Crisis Services
- ◆ Information and Referral
- ◆ Chore Services, In-Home Care
- ◆ Home Delivered Meals
- ◆ MAC 4 Jobs
- ◆ Weatherization
- ◆ Foster Grandparent Program
- ◆ Case Management
- ◆ SMiles (Senior Miles)
- ◆ Clothing and Household Rooms

## EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

<i>The number of low-income participants who obtained a job or became self-employed, or for whom barriers to initial or continuous employment were reduced or eliminated as a result of Tennessee Community Action Agencies' Assistance, as measured by one or more of the following:</i>	# of Individuals
Unemployed and obtained a job	3,162
Employed and maintained a job for at least 90 days	3,643
Employed and obtained an increased in employment income and/or benefits	1,849
Achieved "living wage" employment and/or benefits	1,542
Obtained skills/competencies required for employment	2,431
Completed ABE/GED and received certificate or diploma	766
Completed post-secondary education program and obtained certificate or diploma	913
Enrolled children in before or after school programs	1,747
Obtained care for child or other dependent	6,025
Obtained access to reliable transportation and/or driver's license	2,503
Obtained health care services for self and/or family member	5,236
Obtained and/or maintained safe and affordable housing	5,242
Obtained food assistance	26,827
Obtained non-emergency LIHEAP energy assistance	72,236
Obtained non-emergency WX energy assistance	51
Obtained other non-emergency energy assistance (state/local/private energy programs)	3,337
<b>Total</b>	<b>137,510</b>



## ECONOMIC ASSET ENHANCEMENT AND UTILIZATION

<i>Low-income households achieved an increase in financial assets and/or financial skills as a result of Community Action assistance as measured by one or more of the following:</i>	<b># of Participants</b>
Participants demonstrated ability to complete and maintain a budget for over 90 days	1,178
Participants opened an Individual Development Account (IDA) or other savings account and the number who increased savings	493
Participants purchased home or other asset with an IDA or savings, pursued post-secondary education or capitalized on a small business	33
Individuals participated in tax preparation programs, qualifying for a tax credit; court order child support payments; those enrolled in telephone lifeline	3,617
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,321</b>

## CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

<i>Infants, children, youth, parents, and other adults participated in developmental or enrichment programs; achieving program goals, as measured by one or more of the following:</i>	<b># of Participants</b>
Infants and children obtained age appropriate immunizations, medical, and dental care	11,144
Infant and child health and physical development were improved as a result of adequate nutrition	14,645
Children participated in school readiness activities to develop school readiness	10,566
Children who participated in school readiness were ready to enter Kindergarten or 1st Grade	6,024
Youth improved health and physical development and social and emotional development	23,601
Youth avoided risk-taking behaviors and reduced involvement with the criminal justice system	4,588
Youth increased academic, athletic, and social skills for school success	19,905
Adults improved parenting skills	8,598
Adults improved family functioning	8,367
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,438</b>



## FAMILY STABILITY

<i>Low-income people who were unable to work, especially seniors, adults with disabilities, and caregivers, for whom barriers to family stability were reduced or eliminated, as measured by one or more of the following:</i>	<b># of Individuals</b>
Obtained access to reliable transportation and/or driver's license	9,158
Obtained and/or maintained safe and affordable housing	6,454
Obtained health care services for themselves or family member	1,873
Obtained food assistance	45,387
Obtained care for child or other dependent	591
Enrolled children in before or after school programs	793
Obtained non-emergency LIHEAP energy assistance	76,283
Obtained other non-emergency energy assistance (State/local/private energy programs)	1,845
Obtained non-emergency Weatherization energy assistance	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>142,427</b>

## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

<i>Emergency Assistance provided to low-income individuals included such services as follows:</i>	<b># of Individuals</b>
Rent or Mortgage Assistance	5,553
Temporary Shelter	2,154
Fuel or utility payments funded by LIHEAP or other public and private funding sources	54,468
Transportation	1,570
Food	28,572
Medical Care	940
Car or Home Repair	145
Protection from Violence	400
Legal Assistance	51
Clothing	1,854
Disaster Relief	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>95,771</b>

## COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

<i>Community Action projects/initiatives or advocacy with other public and private agencies increased or community resources or services and opportunities were safeguarded as measured by one or more of the following:</i>	Number
Safe and affordable housing units were created, improved or preserved through construction, weatherization or rehabilitation by agency activity or advocacy	1,004
Transportation resources for low-income people were created, expanded, or saved from elimination	3,735
Educational and training placement opportunities created, expanded, or saved from elimination (including vocational, literacy, and life skill training, ABE/GED, and post secondary education)	2,511
Child care or child development placement opportunities for low-income children were created or saved from reduction or elimination	1,368
Before and after-school program placement opportunities for low-income children were created or saved from reduction or elimination	1,167
Jobs were created, or saved, from reduction or elimination in the community	182
Accessible safe and affordable health care services/facilities for low-income people were created, or saved from reduction or elimination	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,976</b>

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

<i>Community members and low-income people mobilized to engage in activities that supported and promoted their own well-being and that of their community as a direct result of CSBG Network initiatives through maximum feasible participation as measured by one of more of the following:</i>	Number
Individuals participated in community revitalization and anti-poverty initiatives	46,400
Low-income people participated in formal community organizations, government, boards or councils that provided input to decision-making and policy-setting	592
Low-income people purchased their own home or business as a result of Community Action assistance	88
Low-income people engaged in non-governance community activities or groups created or supported by Community Action	10,924
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,004</b>

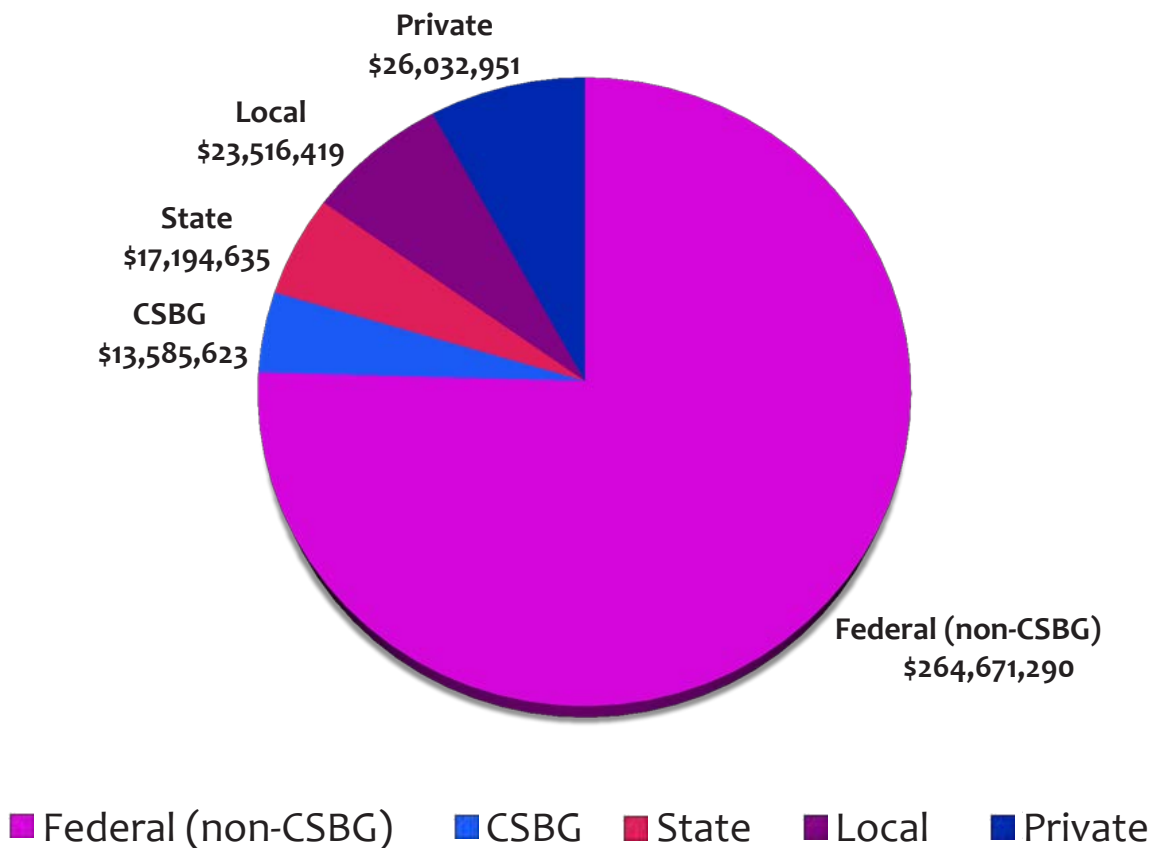
## INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR LOW-INCOME VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

<i>Low-income vulnerable individuals received services from Community Action Agencies and secured or maintained an independent living situation as a result.</i>	# of Individuals										
Seniors Citizens (seniors can be reported twice, once under Seniors Citizens and again if they are disabled under individuals with disabilities, ages 55-over)	88,803										
Individuals with Disabilities <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tbody> <tr> <td>0 -17</td> <td>11,538</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-54</td> <td>29,100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-over</td> <td>37,112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Age Unknown</td> <td>20,196</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>97,946</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	0 -17	11,538	18-54	29,100	55-over	37,112	Age Unknown	20,196	<b>Total</b>	<b>97,946</b>	
0 -17	11,538										
18-54	29,100										
55-over	37,112										
Age Unknown	20,196										
<b>Total</b>	<b>97,946</b>										
<b>Total</b>	<b>186,749</b>										

The core operational funding for Tennessee’s CAAs is the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). In FY 2015 these funds totaled \$13,585,623. Tennessee CAAs leveraged additional private, state and federal funds totaling \$313,415,294. For each dollar of CSBG received agencies leveraged \$23.82.

In collaboration with partners, agencies invested these funds in people and communities to produce 743,196 results to move individuals and families forward to self-sufficiency, combat the causes and effects of poverty, and bring changes to communities.

### FUNDING SOURCES



*Data provided by the Tennessee Department of Human Services,  
Office of Community and Social Services.*



*Tennessee Association  
of Community Action*



[www.tncommunityaction.org](http://www.tncommunityaction.org)