



# 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.

## October 2017

Advocacy.....	1
• Advocacy Update	
Network Capacity.....	2
• ROMA, FDC, Poverty Simulation Facilitator Training, MIS Update	
Missouri CAN Capacity.....	3
• Staff Updates, Agency Visits, Membership Benefits	
Calendar.....	4

## ADVOCACY – A voice for low-income Missourians

### Advocacy Update

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

The poverty rate declined to 12.7 percent in 2016, down from 13.5 percent in 2015 and from 14.8 percent in 2014, according to new U.S. Census data released in September. That is the largest two-year decline since 1969. More than 6 million *fewer* people are living in poverty than in 2014.

Improved employment opportunities get some of the credit, but ongoing support programs, including Social Security, tax credits, SNAP/food stamps, housing subsidies, and Supplemental Security Income, keep millions out of poverty. What we do collectively is working, and what each of you do every day is making a difference!

But there is still much to do. The poverty numbers for racial and ethnic minorities have improved but remain nearly double the overall rates. African American and Latino children make up about 43 percent of all children, but two-thirds of all poor children.

Additionally, recent successes that involve the combination of programs from a broad spectrum of resources are threatened by uncertain federal funding, health care concerns, and increasing partisan politics. We must continue to tell our story and find new audiences to engage in dialogue of Helping People, Changing Lives!

Thanks for all you do every day, but don't keep it a secret. Keep sharing your stories. Join us on social media and invite your friends to join the conversation as well.

**Kurt Brewer, Missouri CAN Executive Director**  
**October 4, 2017**

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

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

## **Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Next Generation (NG)**

*by Brian Valentine, Program Director, [bvalentine@communityaction.org](mailto:bvalentine@communityaction.org)*

When was the last time you visited the [Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers website](#)? If it's been a while, I encourage you to spend some time there.

We'd like to direct you to two locations on the website. Under the "Events" tab, you will find information on ROMA update meetings across the country as well as the process of becoming a Nationally Certified ROMA Trainer or Implementer. And under the "Resources" tab, posters of the ROMA cycle, ROMA checklists and planning guides are available for your agency events.

If you are new to ROMA and ROMA NG, the [National Association for State Community Service Programs \(NASCSPP\)](#) website is an excellent tool as well. Both websites are great resources for continual learning.  
[www.roma-nptp.org](http://www.roma-nptp.org) • [www.nascsp.org](http://www.nascsp.org)

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

*by Chris Small, Training Manager, [csmall@communityaction.org](mailto:csmall@communityaction.org)*

As the new FDC state coordinator here in Missouri, I am excited to begin my work and grow the Family Development Credential program across our state. The Family Development Credential (FDC) is recognized nationally as the gold standard that demonstrates skills and competencies for those with daily work directly focusing on families and children. We have two new classes for this credential beginning in late October here in Missouri. Please be sure to check out the [national FDC website](#) for information about the FDC credential and how it can help your staff in daily work with children, families and the larger community it serves. Contact Chris Small, MCAN Training Manager, at (573) 634-2969 ext. 35 with your questions.

## **Poverty Simulation Facilitator Training**

*by Mary Bifulco, Poverty Simulation Manager, [mbifulco@communityaction.org](mailto:mbifulco@communityaction.org)*

Registration for our Poverty Simulation Facilitator Training in St. Louis on November 13-14 is full. We are accepting wait-list registrations in the event a participant cancels; however, we cannot guarantee an opening.

The next two-day training will be in Kansas City on March 19-20, 2018. Look for registration to open in early 2018. Be sure to register for your spot early! If you have any questions about Community Action Poverty Simulation, contact Mary Bifulco.

## **MIS Onboarding Team Update**

*by James Rogers, Information Systems Manager, [jrogers@communityaction.org](mailto:jrogers@communityaction.org)*

We have been working diligently during the past few months to get MIS Version 6 ready for the new fiscal year. We appreciate everyone's efforts in getting us to this point. While the system is ready for set-up, we found parts of the program were not complete and needed to be reconfigured to function appropriately for our Network. We have addressed and continue to address these issues, so we are delaying the go-live until all concerns have been resolved and program integrity is intact. We have come a long way to get to this point. Starting off the 2018 fiscal year with a clean system that meets all of our requirements is imperative for Community Action success.

## **GREAT NEWS!**

*Missouri CAN has been granted a no-cost extension for the Assets For Independence grant allowing our Network one more year to complete this program.*

### ***What does this mean?***

*Agencies that run an IDA program and have clients working towards one of the three goals have additional time to complete working with current clients or enroll new clients into the program.*

*For more information, please contact Brian Valentine, Missouri CAN Program Director, at 573-634-2969 ext. 27.*

### Missouri CAN Staff Update

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

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Chris Small, Training Manager, has joined the Missouri CAN team. Please introduce yourself to Chris and other newer staff the next time you are in our office!

### 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 August and September:

- On August 11, Mary Bifulco co-facilitated a Poverty Simulation for a group of elementary school teachers in Gladstone, MO with Community Action Agency of Greater Kansas City.
- Aubrey Schrader and Mary Bifulco worked as resource station volunteers at Versailles, MO public schools on August 14. Two simulations ran simultaneously by West Central Community Action Agency in order for all public school staff to participate.
- Missouri Valley Community Action Agency collaborated with United Way in Smithton, MO on August 18 to provide a Poverty Simulation to public school teachers. United Way collected volunteers from several local service providers. After role-playing as service providers in the simulation, they had an opportunity to talk about the services they provide in real-life during a resource fair. Mary Bifulco had the privilege of attending and observing throughout.
- Strategic Communications Manager Sarah Hackman attended a poverty simulation in Mexico, MO on August 22. Central Missouri Community Action Network facilitated the simulation at McMillan Elementary School. Staff and faculty from the school district as well as members from the community participated in the learning experience.
- Mary Bifulco had the opportunity to observe and work as the Realville employer at Ozark Area Community Action Corporation Poverty Simulation for the Council of Churches in Springfield, MO on August 22.
- Mary Bifulco and Sarah Hackman visited Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation September 13 for the Operation Healthy Delta kick-off event in Caruthersville. During the 9-day event, individuals received free medical, dental, and vision care by medical professionals with the Air National Guard as part of Innovative Readiness Training.

### Membership Matters

by Jennifer Perkins, Administrative Assistant and Membership Coordinator, [jperkins@communityaction.org](mailto:jperkins@communityaction.org)

Thank you for being part of Missouri Community Action Network! Your support strengthens our network, increases our advocacy for low-income families, and raises awareness of poverty. As a thank you, we offer you several benefits as part of your membership. Here is a reminder of benefits you receive as a member:

- 10% tuition discount at Columbia College
- Discounts on tickets to Silver Dollar City, Showboat Branson Belle, and White Water
- Discounts on tickets to Worlds of Fun
- Discounts on tickets to Six Flags St. Louis
- Discounts on hotels nationwide with HotelStorm
- Discounts on Choice Hotels nationwide

Details for accessing your discount codes are included in your membership packet. If you have questions regarding your membership or member benefits, contact Jennifer Perkins at [jperkins@communityaction.org](mailto:jperkins@communityaction.org).

**Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP)**

**Class #1** October 10...*Missouri CAN Office*

**MCADA Retreat**

October 11-12...*Old Kinderhook*

**Finance Professional Alliance (FPA)**

October 11...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Resource Development Professional Alliance (RDPA)**

October 17...*Missouri CAN Office*

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

October 18...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Information Technology Professional Alliance (ITPA)**

October 18-19...OACAC | Springfield

**Committee to Keep Missourians Warm Meeting**

October 19...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Missouri CAN Staff Team Building Day**

October 20...*Missouri CAN Office Closed*

**Outreach Managers Professional Alliance (OMPA)**

October 25-26...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP)**

**Class #2** November 1...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Internal ROMA Consultants Professional Alliance (IRCPA)**

November 2...*Missouri CAN Office*

**MCADA Meeting**

November 8...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Missouri CAN Board Meeting**

November 9...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Veteran's Day**

November 10... *Missouri CAN Office Closed*

**Poverty Simulation Facilitator's Training**

November 13-14...St Louis

**Outreach Personnel Professional Alliance (OPPA)**

November 16...PCAC | St Louis

**Thanksgiving**

November 23-24...*Missouri CAN Office Closed*

**Missourians to End Poverty (MEP) Quarterly Meeting**

November 29...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Human Resource Professional Alliance (HRPA)**

December 7...*Missouri CAN Office*

**MCADA Meeting**

December 13...*Missouri CAN Office*

**Christmas**

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

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