



# RPIC REGION II

NEW YORK · NEW JERSEY · PUERTO RICO · US VIRGIN ISLANDS

October 2020

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## Region II News

### ***Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers (NCRT) from Puerto Rico Convene via Zoom for Re-Certification Event***

**Sept. 11** - Nationally certified ROMA trainers, Barbara Mooney, PJ Davis, and Carey Gibson hosted a successful two-day virtual Re-Certification event with trainers from Puerto Rico.



Results Oriented Management and Accountability, or ROMA, is a performance-based management system. It is a sound management practice that integrates outcomes/results into a Community Action Agency's administration, management, operation and evaluation of programs and services.

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## ***Community Action Partnership of New Jersey***

### ***ROMA (Results Oriented Management and Accountability) Virtual Training***

CAP NJ and NJ DCA launched their training series virtually. General ROMA sessions were provided virtually and received high ratings from participants. Five Nationally Certified ROMA trainers have been involved in the development and delivery of these sessions. The trainers have also created a new virtual session that will be delivered in November- ROMA: A deeper dive: Tying the Annual Report to the Services Page. This training is specific to New Jersey to help agencies understand the ROMA cycle and how it mirrors the application and reporting in the state.



A virtual board training was also delivered with day and evening sessions. Board members from thirteen different CAA's participated. 91% rated the training as excellent or very good and the facilitators, Jen Underwood, NJ DCA, and Georjean Trinkle, CAP NJ, received a 4.9 ranking out of 5.0. Board members indicated that the history portion of the training was most interesting to them. Board members also indicated that the training directly increased their ability to be a more effective board member. The areas board members would like to see added for future trainings included Agency Fiscal Health and learning more about CSBG funding.

### ***Ocean Inc. Receives \$5,000 grant on behalf of the UWMOC COVID-19 Recovery Fund***

[O.C.E.A.N., Inc.](#) received a \$5,000 grant on behalf of the UWMOC COVID-19 Recovery Fund in order to address unmet food needs and barriers to employment by providing food and gas vouchers to eligible residents!



Group Photo - Pictured left to right: Tom Hayes, New Jersey Natural Gas Director of Customer and Community Relations; Bob Rosone, UWMOC Chairman; Channell Wilkins, O.C.E.A.N., Inc. President & CEO; Connie Fahim, O.C.E.A.N., Inc. Grantwriter/Public Relations; Lori McLane, UWMOC President & CEO; Sharonda Shepherd, O.C.E.A.N., Inc. Director of Direct Services; Heather Barberi, Grunin Foundation Executive Director; Brian Massey, UWMOC Volunteer.

### ***NY Community Action Agencies Shine Light During Dark Times***

As we all continue to work through the COVID-19 Pandemic and respond to community needs, NYSCAA has documented the effort and work of Community Action Agencies across the state. NYSCAA compiled stories and accounts of the support Community Action Agencies have been providing to their communities. To read more about the work being done across

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NY, visit the [Community Action Agencies Shine Light During Dark Times](#) webpage. NYSCAA created a short video to highlight the work of CAAs in NY. You can view the video [here](#).

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources for Region II**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we want to provide you with resources for the ongoing efforts to assist the Community Action Network and stress protecting the health and safety of staff and customers. NYSCAA has compiled a number of [state and federal resources](#), as well as [tech resources](#) to support the increase in employees working remotely.

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## **Monthly Myth Series**

***MYTH: Benefits and assistance programs are available to too many people and are too generous.***

***FACT: Qualifications to receive services are exceedingly narrow, and exclude many in need.***

The current Federal Government's proposed budget reflects an all-to-common talking point, that the poor take advantage of generous public assistance, and thus should be the targets of further restrictions and regulations. Testimony at the truth commission consistently demonstrated the opposite. Speakers frequently addressed the challenges of navigating various social service systems and highlighted the insufficiency of these systems at meeting their needs. Qualifications to receive services are exceedingly narrow, and exclude many in need. People working in social services and those receiving services expressed concerns about the inadequacy of available assistance.



In Schenectady, New York, Juliana Obie, a caseworker for Children's Services of Schenectady County talked about seeing her clients struggle. "I see how the system - and I say system very generally - is set up for a lot of our families to fail. You do what they tell you to do to move ahead but then it's not quite enough, and then you don't get the help that you need."

Navigating the hurdles to receiving one form of assistance can result in losing other benefits. Elizabeth James, a fast-food worker in Schenectady, had to stop working when she was put on bed-rest during a pregnancy. After going to DSS for help with rent, she said, "They're paying part of our rent, but they cut our food stamps way down. So now, instead of being okay for the month with food stamps, we're like pinching food with our kids."

[Click here](#) to read more about this and other common poverty myths that are present around the country.

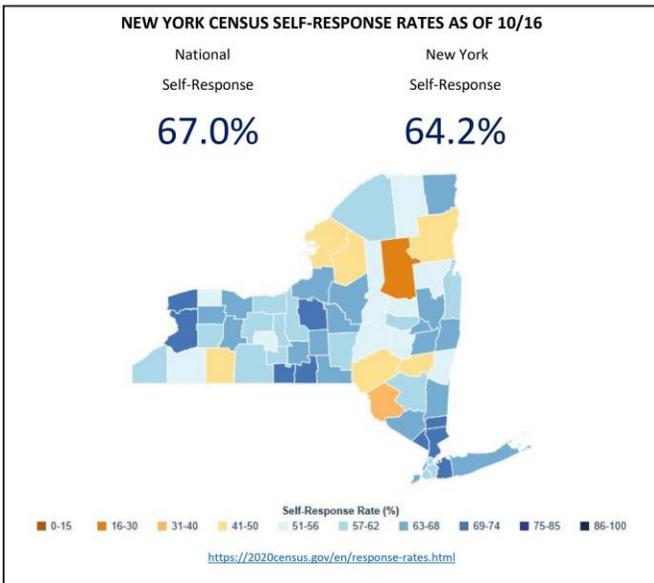
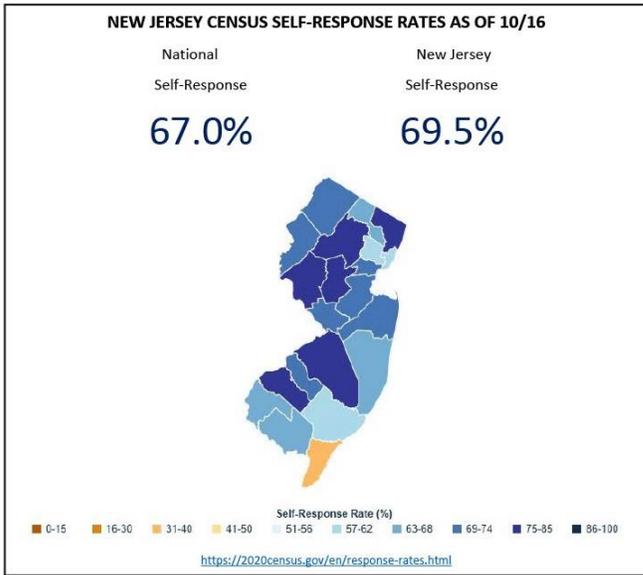
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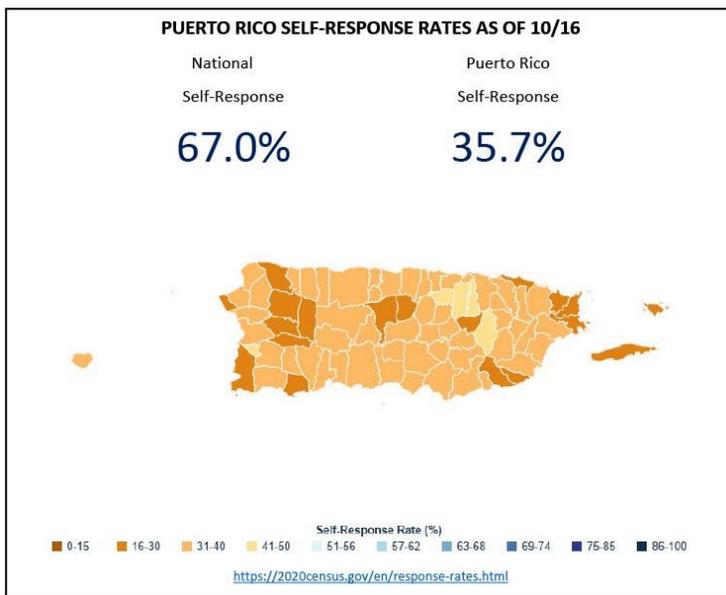
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## Census 2020

### ***2020 Census Response Rate Map***

As people responded to the 2020 Census online, by phone or by mail, the Census Bureau updated the map daily to reflect the percentage of households that self-respond online, by phone or by mail after being invited to do so. (The rate reflects the three response modes combined and for online alone.) Here are the final response rates in our region:





## National Partner Information

### ***National Partner Resources on Covid-19***

In light of increasing concerns about a broader coronavirus outbreak and the impacts on normal business operations, the national partners have compiled resources that are available to the Community Action network.

- [CDC's COVID-19 Site](#)
- [CAP's Coronavirus Resource Page](#)
- [CAPLAW's Coronavirus Resource Page](#)
- [NASCSPP's Coronavirus Resource Page](#)

### ***Community Action Partnership - Social Media Graphics For Energy Awareness Month***

The National Community Action Partnership have developed graphics and messaging for you to share about the need your customers are facing, as well as actions you are taking to address the need. This includes content on energy burden, energy equity and clean energy, COVID-19 and the energy sector, the Weatherization Assistance Program the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Energy Efficiency Day (October 7), and Weatherization Day (October 30).



To view and personalize social media graphics for Energy Awareness Month, [click here!](#)

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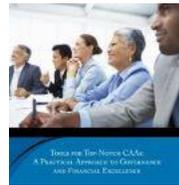
## ***CAPLAW - New Case Studies: Leadership During Crisis: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic***

CAPLAW and the National Community Action Partnership have developed two case studies focused on the ability of CAAs to respond to unique challenges and effectively govern themselves during difficult times. These case studies highlight the examples of two CAAs, and how each relied on good governance practices and communication to navigate complex challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- [Pro Action of Steuben and Yates](#)
- [Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission](#)

## ***New Section 4 of Tools for Top-Notch CAAs: A Practical Approach to Governance and Financial Excellence***

In light of the new FASB accounting standards for nonprofit organizations, CAPLAW has issued a newly updated Section 4 of our popular guide, Tools for Top-Notch CAAs, focusing on financial statements for board members and management for nonprofit Community Action Agencies (CAAs). Also check out the sample financial statements in the Appendix to Section 4.



For more information, and access to the Toolkit, [click here](#).

***CAPLAW has released three new videos exploring fiduciary duties, strategies for keeping board members engaged, and how to make the most out of the board's time together.***

For more information, and to view the videos "All Aboard! The Purpose, People, and Process of CAA Boards", click [here](#).

## ***CAPLAW Survey: Low-Income Sector Recruitment and Elections During COVID-19***

One of the many questions CAAs are grappling with right now is how to conduct recruitment and elections for the low-income sector of their tripartite boards during the COVID-19 pandemic. CAPLAW is developing a resource that will highlight some of the ways that boards across the network have adapted to facilitate the participation of their community during this difficult time.

CAPLAW wants to hear from you about what has worked well and what changes you have made to your recruitment and election procedures during the pandemic. Please fill out the quick survey to share a brief description of the changes you have made, and CAPLAW may follow up with additional questions. **Responses must be submitted by Wednesday, November 4.**

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

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## ***New FAQ: Understanding the New Public Charge Rule and its Implications for CAA Clients***

After a lengthy comment process and the litigation of several preliminary injunctions attempting to block its implementation, the Department of Homeland Security's new "public charge rule" is currently in effect in all states other than Illinois, New York, Connecticut, and Vermont. With the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying economic downturn resulting in increased demand for services offered by Community Action Agencies (CAAs), CAPLAW has developed the following FAQ to inform CAAs and their clients about how a client's receipt of certain public benefits under the rule may impact their future immigration status. This resource addresses who is covered by the rule, how officials determine whether an individual is likely to become a public charge, and what effect a public charge determination may have on an individual's green card application.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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## **Additional Resources**

### ***Covid ActNow - America's COVID Warning System***

Covid ActNow is a tiny non-profit that has been working relentlessly since March to bring you trustworthy COVID information. They use 5 key indicators, Daily News Cases, Infection Rates, Positive Test Rate, ICU Headroom Used, and Tracers Hired, to determine risk levels for all 50 states and over 3,000 counties. You can share real-time, local COVID data with your neighbors, friends, and family.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

### ***Census Releases Updated Household Pulse Survey***

The Household Pulse Survey is designed to deploy quickly and efficiently, collecting data on a range of ways in which people's lives have been impacted by the pandemic. Data will be disseminated in near real-time to inform federal and state response and recovery planning.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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## **National Professional Development Opportunities**

### **National Community Action Foundation (NCAF)**

2020 Annual Conference - Virtual Registration Only

October 29-30 & November 5, 16-19, 2020

Click [here](#) for more information.

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

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