

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



**“ CREATING OPPORTUNITIES, FIGHTING POVERTY,
CHANGING LIVES”**

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Since 1967, Community Action of Greene County, Inc. has been providing quality services and programs to low income and other vulnerable populations in Greene and surrounding counties. We are one of over 1,000 public, private and nonprofit Community Action Agencies serving 96% of the counties in the United States, more than 16.2 million individuals and 3 million families each year. While the programs offered in each agency may vary, and are as different as the communities where they are found, we share the same purpose, vision and values. Some commonly found services within our network, and our agency, are in the areas of emergency services (utility payments, diapers, toiletries) , education (TASC/GED), food and nutrition, case management, budget counseling, transportation, employment training and housing (rental assistance, homelessness prevention, Weatherization), and domestic violence.

In October of 2012, the senior staff and Board of Directors of Community Action of Greene County developed a three year Strategic Plan. This comprehensive plan addresses the goals for the agency in the areas of governance, management, program, revenue development and infrastructure and technology. We've identified our core values as advocacy, partnership, stewardship and accountability. The Strategic Planning Committee of the Board meets on a regular basis with Senior Staff to review the plan, and to measure activities against our goals. We consistently strive to meet the needs of those we serve; to give people the support and skill necessary for them to obtain or maintain independence, and to be able to meet the needs of their families while maintaining contractual compliance with our funders.

We have experienced some setbacks this past year, primarily due to funding restrictions. After over thirteen years of service, our Partners Catch A Ride program ended in February of 2014. Despite the need in the community, grant opportunities did not exist to allow us to continue the vanpool transportation program that provided low income wage earners rides to and from their places of employment. We are hopeful that new opportunities will emerge in the community in the near future to fill this void. In late 2014 we were notified that we would no longer benefit from a grant through the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, STOP, which had supported our non residential domestic violence program for over ten years, increasing access to services for those living in remote areas of the county, as well as increasing awareness of our services.

Our STEHP (Solutions to End Homelessness Program) program, which helps homeless families and individuals move into permanent housing, and those on the brink of eviction to remain in permanent housing, took a huge hit financially. Based on the prior grant activity, we had applied for funding of approximately \$300,000 for our community, and were granted 64,000. We've already expended, in the first six months of the grant, all that was granted for rental assistance. We are hopeful that in the new State budget this area will experience a funding increase so that we might better be able to address the needs in our community.

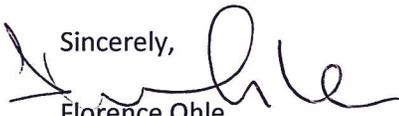
Successes in 2014 include obtaining funding to begin the process of our "re-branding". Recognizing the need to present professionally in the community and maintain relevance in the field, we sought out assistance in obtaining a new logo, website and outreach materials. Due to a Management Assistance Program (MAP) grant through the Dyson Foundation, we were able to contract with Kathode Ray Media and are thrilled with the results!

Although it was relatively short lived, Catskill/Cairo Magazine, a free magazine distributed through HIBU corporation to those in the Cairo and Catskill zip codes, proved a wonderful resource for our agency. We were able to reach upwards of 10,000 households with articles published on our agency and

network, our thrift store, as well as various program areas! It is often believed that we serve Catskill residents only, so we welcomed the opportunity to educate a wider audience on the services that we provide.

Moving forward into 2015, we will continue to reach out to the community; to educate on the needs that exist, as well as the services available to those in need. We will continue to explore funding opportunities that will aid us in helping our consumers to gain the skills they need in order to be able to earn a living wage, maintain safe, affordable housing, and put food on the table for their families. We are committed to partnerships, with governments, businesses, other service providers and the general community, in order to reduce duplication of services and to maximize limited resources. We will enlist volunteers from the community to assist us in providing services and improving the communities in which we live. We are grateful for the support we receive from the Greene County Legislature and other community partners, and look forward to continued service to Greene County residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Florence Ohle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "F" and "O".

Florence Ohle
Executive Director

FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND VICTIM SERVICES

Family Development – based on a strength based form of case management developed by Cornell University, our Resource Specialists utilize the Family Development model of case management, working with consumers, recognizing and building on existing strengths, and working towards individual goals. Programs within this division are funded through Greene County Department of Social Services, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Emergency Food and Shelter National Board, the NYS Department of State Division of Community Services, as well as private donations.

Emergency Food Pantry- We maintain partnerships with, and distribute food and cash donations to: Cairo Food Pantry, Coxsackie Food Pantry, God's Storehouse, Mathew 25, Greenville Food Pantry, Jewett Food Pantry, Athens Food Pantry and the High Hill Food Pantry in Leeds

In 2014 we provided **1,541** households food, serving **2,263 adults** and **1,437 children**, or **13,869 meals** at our Emergency Pantry

Through a partnership with the Regional Food bank of Northeast NY and the local Wal-Mart Store, the **Feeding America** program provided us 109 separate food pickups at the store, and 72,732 pounds of food donated!!

Healthy Homes provided case management, education and resources to 9 households who either were at risk for, or were experiencing Child Protective Services interventions due to unhealthy living conditions in the home. Bed bug infestations, head lice, lack of resources for laundry were some of the situations experienced by program participants. Services also include family budgeting and accessing community resources.

Partners Catch A Ride, before its termination in February, provided 18 individuals rides to and from their places of employment

GED/Resource Room – our GED program, serving adults aged 21 and over, provided Saturday morning individualized instruction to 14 individuals. 33 individuals accessed our Resource Room, which provides free internet, telephone and facsimile service for the purpose of finding employment.

Wheels for Work- we have just begun a campaign to promote this program through PSA's on the radio to boost awareness and activity. With the highly publicized and accessible predatory lenders, and their "buy here, pay here" loans, many of our consumers who lack the understanding of basic consumer economics choose the higher interest, quick fix rather than the lengthy process that comes with our program. As a result, of the 46 inquiries into this program, and two loans approved, neither followed through with the loan. Case management, budget counseling as well as education on credit repair are major components of our program, and we maintain contact through the duration of the loan.

STEHP (Solutions to End Homelessness)- for the calendar year 2014, we provided Rapid Rehousing services to 27 households and 51 individuals, and Prevention services to 46 households and 94 persons, assisting with security deposits, utilities and or rental assistance.

HUD Supportive Housing (for Chronically Homeless Individuals)- two chronically homeless individuals receive assistance with rent and supportive services in order to maintain permanent housing

COLUMBIA GREENE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, and with funding from Federal Family Violence Prevention, NYS Office of Victim Services, Greene and Columbia County Department of Social Services, shelter per diems and the NYS Department of State Division of Community Services, we operate a 15 bed shelter in Columbia County, a 10 bed shelter in Greene County, a 4 unit transitional apartment building in Columbia County, and non residential offices in both counties.

In 2014 59 survivors of domestic violence and their children were **sheltered** in Greene County and 120 were sheltered in Columbia County.

143 persons received **Orders of Protection** with assistance from our advocates

41 **educational presentations** were given by our Community Educator to fellow service providers, law enforcement and civic groups

401 **youth** received vital information on domestic and dating violence and healthy relationships from our staff

HUD Supportive Housing (for individuals and families affected by domestic violence)- two individuals affected by domestic violence leaving our shelter, and three women and their children leaving shelter, received assistance with rent and supportive services in order to maintain safe, permanent housing

Columbia Greene Crime Victims' Advocacy Program

Funded through NYS Office of Victim services, our advocate provided assistance to 90 individuals in Greene and Columbia County who were innocent victims of crime.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Funded through New York State Homes and Community Renewal and NYSERDA, audits are performed on the homes of low income homeowners and renters, and then energy savings measures are performed. The average cost per unit is \$6,500. Community Action of Greene County, Inc. is a BPI (Building Performance Institute) accredited business, and two of our staff received BPI certification this year.

In 2014 41 households received Weatherization Services

26 households received electricity reduction measures through EmpowerNY

PAY IT FORWARD COMMUNITY THRIFT STORE

In addition to paying a significant portion of our overhead costs and providing a service to our community, our thrift store serves as a vehicle for people to donate used, unwanted clothing, furniture and house wares, keeping these items out of our landfills, and providing the donor with a tax write off. In addition, CWEP (Community Work Experience Program) participants from the Department of Social Services learn valuable job and soft skills while volunteering in our store. Volunteers also include senior citizens, people with disabilities, students, and those performing community service hours.

In 2014 **48 volunteers** performed over **2,800 hours of service**

895 donations; value of donated goods **\$194,666**

Gross income generated **\$59,165**

SEASONAL PROGRAMS

VITA – 164 Income tax returns prepared resulting in \$ 222,578 in refunds, and Earned Income Tax Credits of \$98,202

Back to School – 161 children received backpacks and school supplies to start their school year off right!

Coat Drive – 53 residents received warm winter coats in the Fall of 2014

Here Comes Christmas – 529 Greene County children from low income households received gifts either through our Adopt A Family or Here Comes Christmas programs.

Community Action
of Greene County, Inc.

Annual Report, January, 2014 through December, 2014

Funding Source	STATE	FEDERAL	LOCAL	PRIVATE
NYS Dept of State - Community Services Block Grant		\$221,332.81		
Greene County Dept. of Social Services			\$87,297.97	
Regional Food Bank of Northeast New York				\$5,848.00
Columbia County Dept of Social Services			\$41,668.65	
Foundation Grants				\$56,500.00
NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services	\$22,243.52			
NYS Office of Victims Services	\$138,626.31			
Fee for Service & Program Income				\$12,492.18
Federal Family Violence Prevention		\$41,837.64		
LDSS (Domestic Violence Per Diems)			\$610,546.75	
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development		\$67,752.30		
Greene County Legislature			\$36,765.00	
Donations				\$18,859.84
Emergency Food & Shelter		\$5,958.00		
NYS Office of Temp/Disab Assist (STEHP)	\$289,101.09			
Transitional Housing Income			\$5,416.25	
NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal	\$309,887.00			
NYS Empower	\$19,991.30			
Interest Income				\$925.89
Legal Aid Society				\$3,030.75
Pay it Forward Thrift Store Income				\$61,276.99
IN KIND Services, Non Monetary Donations and Services				\$224,683.03
Totals	\$779,849.22	\$336,880.75	\$781,694.62	\$383,616.68
TOTAL AGENCY INCOME:	\$2,282,041.27			

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