As Community Action defines its future — which often seems perilous. A critical lifeline for Community Action is the Community Service Block Grant. CSBG allows the Network the flexibility to tailor programs to fit the unique needs of their communities and customers. CSBG allows Community Action to be a central source for citizens who require essential services: food, housing, transportation, utilities, medicine, job training, daycare, senior outreach. Often, CSBG’s future is threatened with zero funding and sweeping administrative changes which would, ultimately, have a negative impact on those who need assistance the most. Securing CSBG is an integral part of Community Action’s future.

ABOUT THE COVER

The cover is an original computer generated design created by up-and-coming artist Dwight Lucas II. Dwight Lucas II is an art student at Illinois State University. This image represents the multifaceted layers of the future of Community Action.

DEFINING THE FUTURE

Community Action works for individuals and families to secure their futures. This journey can be arduous, frustrating, time-consuming and fulfilling. At times, we become so consumed with our work and mission, we neglect thinking about and, ultimately, designing our future.

Indeed, the Community Action Network faces multiple challenges - funding, changing needs of our customer base, technology, economics, politics, reporting changes, population shifts, legislative initiatives - the list is endless and the work is complicated and intense. Despite our efforts, the War on Poverty continues and it is imperative that Community Action remains on the front lines to advocate, represent, and speak for the voiceless.

The Statewide Dialogue on Poverty helps us chart the course for the future. Defining the Future is how we stay in the fight and how we transform ourselves to meet the needs of our customers. We must continue to listen, define and address the conditions of poverty that impact our citizens. Defining the Future is our mandate.

The question is not whether we can afford to invest in every child; it is whether we can afford not to.

--Marian Wright Edelman

In Memoriam:

Jane Poertner
Executive Director
Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation
Lincoln, Illinois
28 years of service to Community Action

Community Action
MISSION STATEMENT

The Illinois Community Action Association is a membership organization which serves as the network for Illinois’ not-for-profit corporations and units of government which strive to raise the health, education and economic standards of Illinois’ low-income population. The Illinois Community Action Association serves the collective interests of its members by:

- Aggressively and pro-actively advocating the public policies that serve its members and the low-income population of Illinois.
- Actively promoting the value of the Association, its member network services and programs to stakeholders and the general public.
- Building member capacity and effectiveness through training, technical assistance and other value-added services.
- Providing timely and reliable information on core issues important to members and stakeholders.
- Educating and informing the membership and general public on issues that impact the low-income population of Illinois.
- Building partnerships that advance the Community Action network and stakeholder interests.

VISION STATEMENT

By the year 2005, the Illinois Community Action Association will be widely known and recognized as:

- The leadership organization providing a unifying voice for its members and the low-income populations of Illinois.
- Visible and highly respected by policy-setting and legislative groups.
- Responsive to members and stakeholders.
- Highly influential in areas of advocacy and institutional change.
- The authority on issues affecting members in Illinois.
- The clearinghouse for information and perspectives on poverty.
- A well-directed and professional organization.
- A highly effective capacity building resource for members and stakeholders.
- A highly regarded source for training and technological advancement services.
Dear Members:

This year marks the final chapter of my term as the chairperson of the Illinois Community Action Association. I have been honored and privileged to serve this organization through a stable and successful transitional period to new leadership at the staff level. My fellow board members and the staff should be highly commended for their dedication and hard work not only in building a strong association for the Illinois network but, most importantly, building a giant among a few in our national movement.

As we reflect upon this year's theme of "Defining the Future," I believe that it is befitting that we consider some of our major accomplishments which have positioned us as a strong and vibrant network—working steadfastly to eliminate the root causes of poverty. I, along with the ICAA board of directors, continue to believe that a strong association that is responsive to its membership translates into a strong network responsive to the needs of the poor on the ground. There are four major accomplishments I would like to highlight which I believe have defined a path to the future for ICAA:

**Regional Board Trainings**

Our Board envisioned, four years ago, a plan for ICAA to provide more training opportunities to the membership through regional quarterly meetings. This approach was intended to aid ICAA in maintaining cohesiveness within its network by involving some of the less active agencies in hosting these meetings. ICAA has held special training sessions around the state which have addressed growing trends within the community action movement and the not-for-profit sector.

**Board Meetings**

Formerly, ICAA Board meetings were primarily held in Springfield. Now, these meetings have been held regionally throughout the state and at times in conjunction with a special training session. Minutes from Association board meetings will continue to be shared with the entire membership. We believe this approach to meetings will keep the whole ICAA membership active in the organization with the goal of building a stronger voice for people with low-income in Illinois.

**Community Action Tour**

With the purpose of wanting to build visibility for the association throughout the state and the need to heighten the visibility of Community Action Agencies and the work they do at the local level, ICAA embarked on a tour of its member agencies in 2003. These Community Action tours have been carefully orchestrated with press conferences with the goal of bringing the awareness of poverty and Community Action to the public at the local level. At the end of my term, ICAA will have completed a tour of all its member agencies with press conferences. These tours have provided visiting agencies with the opportunity to learn how other Community Action Agencies operate their programs in other parts of the state. Most importantly, these tours have helped to build a stronger unified voice for the community action network in Illinois.

**Corporate Stability**

One of ICAA's enhanced activities is "Corporate Stability." This program has enabled this organization to serve its membership through technical assistance in a very meaningful way. Through the utilization of peers from the network, ICAA has facilitated agency wide assessments, program assessments and individualized systems analysis for member agencies. I believe that this activity has helped to build stronger agencies in Illinois.

For those that have been involved on the peer teams, their experience has been so enriching that their agencies have become better as a result. Indeed, ICAA has already set out on the course to Defining the Future for Community Action in Illinois.

I would like to thank the membership and my fellow board members for entrusting me with this leadership challenge of steering this organization into the future. I would also like to thank the staff for their commitment to the Community Action mission, values and promise. And finally, I look forward to serving you during the last year of my term.

Dwight A. Lucas, CCAP
East Central Illinois Community Action Agency
Danville, Illinois

Board Chair
Dear Members:

Let me begin by sharing a favorite quote from one of my African heroes, Captain Thomas Sankara. Thomas Sankara was a revolutionary from Burkina Faso who was president for a very short time in that country. He embarked on a mission to fight poverty by empowering the very poor and women who had historically and culturally been oppressed:

“I would like to leave behind me the conviction that if we maintain a certain amount of caution and organization we deserve victory... You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness. In this case, it comes from nonconformity, the courage to turn your back on the old formulas, the courage to invent the future. It took the madmen of yesterday for us to be able to act with extreme clarity today. I want to be one of those madmen. We must dare to invent the future.” Captain Thomas Sankara.

Last year, we pledged to renew our commitment to the War on Poverty as we celebrated our 40th Anniversary. This year we make good on the commitment and pledge to “Define the Future” for Community Action. If we don’t, then others will do the defining for us.

Accomplishments

- **Family and Community Development Training**
  ICAA collaborated with the University of Illinois - Springfield to develop a custom, flexible curriculum for the Family and Community Development certification program. Peers from the Illinois Network formed a focus group and collaborated with the University of Illinois – Springfield faculty to design this new and dynamic curriculum.

- **Energy Affordability**
  ICAA responded aggressively to energy affordability for people with low income by proactively working with the Affordable Energy Coalition to explore the opportunity to redesign the LIHEAP to respond to this issue. A series of planning meetings over the last two years culminated into the Affordable Energy Plan, which was translated into legislation introduced in the 2005 General Assembly. This legislation contains a package of the components of the Affordable Energy Plan which should chart a new course for LIHEAP in Illinois.

- **Individual Development Accounts**
  One strategy embraced by ICAA has been asset building through the federally funded Individual Development Accounts program. In 2005, ICAA has witnessed the graduation of many CAA customers enrolled in this program into self-sufficiency through asset accumulation. ICAA continues to be involved at a policy making level on designing the future of asset building as a long lasting and widely utilized strategy for creating self-sufficiency permanency.

- **Information Technology**
  ICAA received funding from the Federal Office of Community Services to conduct a pilot program with five of its members on a system that has allowed these agencies to conduct a centralized intake process for their customers. This system has also provided these agencies with the ability to track outcomes for their customers in a more efficient manner. The findings of this pilot have resulted in the convening of a task force involving the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and local Community Action Agencies to explore the need for a new statewide system that addresses the challenges of human service delivery in the 21st century.

- **Public Relations and Advocacy**
  The ICAA’s website was redeveloped in 2004 to be more functional for the members. One highlight is the advocacy tab which has allowed the members to access the Capwiz tool for better communication with legislators on issues of interest to Community Action. The Capwiz tool has generated more participation at the agency level on advocacy issues. ICAA will continue to use its website for effective communication and public relations on Community Action issues.

- **Community Action Tour**
  ICAA held two Community Action tours and press conferences in 2004 where the focus was on community action programs and the Dialogue on Poverty. These press conferences have been effective in generating awareness of poverty issues in local communities but they have also heightened the visibility of Community Action Agencies and the work they do.

- **Dialogue on Poverty**
social and economic dynamics that lead to poverty, the impact of poverty on individuals, families, and communities, and actions to alleviate the contributing issues of poverty. The Dialogue on Poverty is one of the best ways to capture a community’s position, reaction and response to current economic and social conditions. Community Action Agencies throughout the state have been conducting local dialogues. ICAA is planning a poverty symposium in the summer of 2005 where the information gathered from these local dialogues will culminate into a state report on poverty. Stakeholders on anti-poverty issues will be invited to participate in that symposium. ICAA will also publish local reports for the agencies.

■ Economic Development

Economic development activities continue to be a prominent strategy for moving people from poverty to self sufficiency through the work of local agencies and ICAA’s Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP) and the Illinois Community Action Development Corporation (ICADC). RCAP has built a strong presence in Illinois by assisting 36 communities with water and waste water issues. These efforts have resulted in the facilitation of economic development in those respective communities. In 2004, RCAP assisted in leveraging $8,428,331 from the USDA/RD and the IEPA. ICADC began construction of a 42 multi family housing unit in Beardstown, Illinois. ICADC is working on other potential projects in collaboration with local agencies.

Challenges

The year 2004 brought many challenges to the Community Action movement. The Community Services Block Grant funding had been cut in the President’s budget by $155 million for FY 2005. The justification was that CSBG supported organizations that were static and had no tangible outcomes. These cuts and language justification had been consistent with the administration’s budget in the four years of its first term despite of the tremendous work that has been done by community action to tell its remarkable story of changing people’s lives. The Community Action movement rallied the troops and worked hard to have the funding cuts restored with great success.

On the State level we saw the budget woes adversely affecting human services funding including our own Family and Community Development program (FCD). In the Governor’s budget for 2004, FCD funding was zeroed out. ICAA, through its contractual lobbyist, Michael Mannion, along with ICAA’s legislative team successfully had FCD funding restored to its level of $325,000 in very difficult budget environment.

Community Action in Illinois was dealt another challenge when the Governor announced in his budget address the transfer of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Weatherization program from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to the Illinois Department of Public Aid (IDPA). This announcement was followed with an Executive Order which formalized the transfer by July 2004. Community Action, with ICAA’s leadership, saw an opportunity in developing a new partnership with IDPA for LIHEAP and Weatherization and perhaps other programs administered by IDPA. ICAA worked with IDPA, DCEO and the Community Action Agencies to ensure that the transition was smooth and a success. This partnership was tested early due to system challenges associated with the LIHEAP program. However, due to the Community Action network’s commitment, along with other partners involved in the program, this challenge was overcome with a successful delivery of the services at the local level.

The Future

I believe that in spite of the challenges and obstacles we have to overcome as a movement of change, Community Action in Illinois has already embarked on a journey of defining its future by being more proactive in many areas. I believe that by positioning ourselves on the cutting edge of progressiveness, we will not only design our future – we will direct our future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ICAA Board of Directors whose leadership and guidance has enabled this organization to be one of the leaders in the field. I would like to thank the membership for its continued support of ICAA. I would also like to thank the staff who work tirelessly on behalf of the membership and the low income citizens of Illinois. Finally, I would like to thank the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois Department of Public Aid, the Illinois Department of Human Services and other state agencies we work with directly for their continued support of community action in Illinois. Let us be bold and define the future together where poverty will become an enemy we can permanently defeat together. As Captain Sankara said, “...(we have) the courage to invent the future.”
ICAA 2004-2005 Officers

Board Chair
Dwight A. Lucas, CCAP
East Central Illinois Community Action Agency
Danville, Illinois

Board Vice-Chair
McFarland A. Bragg II
Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity
Peoria, Illinois

Board Treasurer
Frank Schwab
Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation
Gillespie, Illinois

Board Secretary
Mary Lockhart-White, CCAP
Community Action Partnership of Lake County
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2004-2005 Board of Directors

John Burrill
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Bloomington, Illinois

Vincent Clark
Kankakee County Community Services, Inc.
Kankakee, Illinois

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Rockford Department of Human Services
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Judy Eikstadt
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Freeport, Illinois

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Robert Wharton
Community and Economic Development Assn. of Cook County
Chicago, Illinois

Kris White
Will County Center for Community Concerns
Joliet, Illinois

Ex-Officio
Dalitso Sulamoyo, CCAP - President & CEO
Illinois Community Action Association
Springfield, Illinois

Management Team

Dalitso Sulamoyo, CCAP
President/CEO
sulamoyo@caanet.org

John Colgan
Director of Public Policy
jtcoglan@caanet.org

Mary Collier
Director of Finance
mcollier@caanet.org

Don Harris
Director of Housing Development
dharris@caanet.org

Michelle Pulce
Director of Programs
mpulce@caanet.org

Support Team

John Bowersmith
Rural Community Assistance Program
State Coordinator
jbowersmith@caanet.org

Linda Braner
Business Services Coordinator
lbraner@caanet.org

Kim Colgan
Program Services Coordinator
kcolgan@caanet.org

Holly Copeland-Lasley
Food Security Specialist
hcopeland@caanet.org

Art Gatemann
Rural Community Assistance Program
Rural Development Specialist
agatemann@caanet.org

Tammy Greco
Rural Community Assistance Program
Rural Development Specialist
tgreco@caanet.org

Sheila Powell
Secretary/Receptionist
spowell@caanet.org

Sara Ratcliffe
Membership Services Coordinator
sratcliffe@caanet.org

Allan Timke
Manager, Housing and Homeless Programs
atimke@caanet.org

Christine Westerlund
Training Specialist
cwesterlund@caanet.org
Community Action Tour

In 2004 the Illinois Community Action Association, accompanied by members from different agencies around the state, embarked on two Community Action tours. The first tour in March highlighted C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation, BCMW Community Services, Inc., Wabash Area Development, Inc., Shawnee Development Council, Crosswalk Community Action Agency, Western Egyptian Economic Opportunity Council and Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation. The tour press conferences focused on the 40th Anniversary of Community Action, as well as the importance of FCD, CSBG, LIHEAP and Head Start funding.

The second tour in October visited Mid Central Illinois Community Action Agency, Kankakee County Community Services, East Central Illinois Community Action, Embarras River Basin Agency, MCS Community Services, and Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation. This second leg of the 2004 tour season launched the Dialogue on Poverty: Finding Perspectives & Creating Solutions and called attention to the need to reevaluate the services needed and provided to the low-income population in Illinois.
Dialogue on Poverty
In an effort to engage communities across Illinois in a meaningful discussion about poverty, ICAA organized a Dialogue on Poverty 2004: Finding Perspectives & Creating Solutions. ICAA called on its membership of community action agencies to hold local dialogues in their communities involving policymakers, business, community activists and clients for a two-fold purpose: to raise the awareness of poverty related issues and the need to address them with effective policies, strategies, and actions; and to identify local, state, and national strategies, resources, and policies that will help low-income individuals, families, and communities to become permanently self-sufficient.

Advocacy
Most of the dialogues are scheduled for early spring 2005. In each community the dialogues will lead to community forums, action plans, and resolutions with the aim of effecting change on both the smaller regions and on the state of Illinois as a whole.

Reports from these local dialogues will be compiled into a statewide report on poverty issues and solutions. The Final Report will be presented in the fall of 2005. In this report, ICAA will provide a statewide analysis of poverty in Illinois not only through statistical analysis, but also by portraying the diverse nature of poverty and its impact on the most fragile of our citizens.

Advocacy Day
The original intent of Community Action when created in 1964, was to provide direct services for low-income families, while also serving as an advocate for those same families. The funding stream and backbone of Community Action is the Community Services Block Grant. Each year the ICAA uses CSBG funds to host an Advocacy Day where state and federal legislation relevant to Community Action is discussed. The intent of Advocacy Day is to educate the ICAA membership and to gain their input in developing a unified message that can be used when advocating for or against issues that impact Community Action and the low-income families it serves.

Grass Roots Organizing
ICAA aggressively implemented the Grassroots Organizing Strategic Plan during 2004. This process included the development of a Grassroots Club that is composed of 124 active Community Action Agency staff. The Grassroots Club members receive an electronic monthly newsletter from ICAA staff and are requested to participate in periodic advocacy related activities. As part of the Grassroots Organizing Strategic Plan, ICAA also purchased the CapWiz software which is currently integrated into the organization’s website. This software will enable ICAA to greatly enhance its advocacy capacity. Although the original intent of Community Action was to serve as both a direct service provider and an advocate for low-income families, the network has gradually placed a stronger emphasis on providing direct services. The development and implementation of this Strategic Plan is to assist the Illinois Community Action network proactively to advocate on behalf of the families and individuals it serves.

What is ICAF?
The Illinois Community Action Fund (ICAF) and the ICAF Political Action Committee (ICAF-PAC) are ICAA’s sub-entities that enable the Community Action Network to collectively support those candidates for the legislature and executive offices who share their interests in the success of Community Action.

ICAF-PAC contributes to candidates’ campaigns based on several considerations including a candidates’ stated position, voting records, issues of concerns to Community Action, seniority, committee assignments and other positions of influence. The ICAF and ICAF-PAC work collectively to provide a strong voice for the entire Illinois Community Action Network.
“Through the IDA program, 18 homes have been purchased, 11 small businesses have been started or expanded and 17 post secondary education purchases have been made to date.”
Asset Building

Individual Development Account (IDA) Program

“Asset building is an anti-poverty strategy that helps low-income people move toward greater self-sufficiency by accumulating savings and purchasing long-term assets. The theory behind this approach is that helping people purchase an asset, as opposed to simply increasing their income, provides stability that may allow them to escape the cycle of poverty permanently." The term as well as the idea of "asset building" has become quite popular. Asset building programs can refer to anything from home purchase programs to special children’s savings accounts. Certainly one of the asset building programs that is becoming very well known is the IDA program.

2004 marked the beginning of the fifth year for the 2000 ICAA IDA program and the beginning of the third year for the 2002 ICAA IDA program. As an AFIA (Asset For Independence Act) IDA grantee, ICAA IDA participants can save for a home purchase, start up or expansion of a small business or post secondary education.

Two important components essential to a successful IDA program are the Family and Community Development (FCD) program and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program. The FCD program provides the necessary case management to the participants of the program to help ensure their success. The CSBG program helps fund the general financial education component of the program. During the required 10 hours of this training, participants learn life skills such as savings patterns and budgeting know-how that they will carry with them long after they have graduated from the IDA program.

2004 was a very busy year for IDAs as savers began reaching their savings goals, graduating from the program, and purchasing their chosen asset. 2005 promises to be even busier as more successful savers reach their goals!

Outcomes Achieved at the end of 2004:

- 124 active savers
- 14 homes purchased
- 10 small business start up or expansion
- 13 post secondary education withdrawals
- $41,919.44 participants saved
- $80,310.30 match distributed
- $122,229.74 total

In 2004 alone, there were:

- 13 homes purchased
- 9 small business start up or expansion
- 8 post secondary education withdrawals
- $35,050.32 participants saved
- $66,138.06 in match
- $101,188.38 total

For additional information on IDAs, please visit:

1http://www.acf.hhs.gov/assetbuilding/about.html#background

Success Story

When Laura & Danny English started the English Prawn Farm in 2002, they hadn’t even heard of the IDA program. They had a small freshwater prawn (shrimp) business for which they had constructed a 4-acre rainwater retention lake, 2 1-acre production ponds and a small storage shed which they used for storing supplies. They entered the IDA program in January 2003 and saved regularly every month. By May of 2004 they had fulfilled all the program requirements and were ready to graduate from the program. The money they saved in their IDA account combined with the 2:1 match that the program provides allowed them to purchase the new storage building pictured above. Their first harvest was in September 2003. Since graduating from the program, they have already had 3 harvests and their business continues to grow. In 3 years, they plan to have 2 more production ponds completed and in use. This will allow for the production of an estimated 800 to 1000 pounds of freshwater prawn per pond. Great Job! 
"The construction of Welch Woods will enable 42 low-income families to acquire safe, affordable housing."
ICADC Description
The Illinois Community Action Development Corporation (ICADC) is a statewide affordable housing development organization formed to partner with community action agencies to develop affordable housing. ICADC is interested in the full range of affordable housing including for-sale housing, preservation of existing affordable housing, supportive housing and housing for senior citizens.

ICADC also provides training and technical assistance to build the capacity of Community Action Agencies and their non-profit partners to develop and manage affordable housing.

Welch Woods
The Illinois Community Action Development Corporation, secured over $5 million dollars in financing to construct a second 42-unit new construction affordable rental housing, named Welch Woods, in Cass County. Welch Woods is one of Illinois’ first “Live near Work,” initiated and developed, multi-family housing development. Construction is nearly 50% complete and all units should be fully rented by the end of 2005. Without CSBG funding this project would not be possible.

In addition to the Welch Woods project, ICADC is currently working with other Community Action Partners to develop home ownership properties in Carbondale, senior citizen apartments in Chester and Greenup, as well as migrant housing in Rantoul. ICADC also secured HUD financing to provide direct technical assistance to Community Action Agencies to develop affordable housing.

Strawberry Meadows
The Strawberry Meadows 42 unit affordable housing project in West Frankfort is complete, fully leased and operating within projected revenues and expenses.

ICADC Future
The addition of a full time Director of Housing Development in early 2002 enabled ICADC to begin implementing the capacity building portion of its purpose. ICADC continued to co-sponsor a series of training workshops to train others organizations across the state, in affordable housing development with the State-wide Housing Action Coalition (SHAC).
“The average American pays 4-6 percent of their income for energy, while low-income people pay between 21-31 percent.”
LIHEAP
The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) continues to be an important lifeline for low-income Illinoisans. More often than not, heating expenses for these citizens are a significant portion of their meager incomes. LIHEAP is crucial for the economic self-sufficiency of utility customers.

At the Federal Level
While LIHEAP reauthorization continued to be debated in Congress during 2004, no final decisions were made. As the year ended, LIHEAP had not been reauthorized by Congress but continued to run on a Continuing Resolution.

At the State Level
In Illinois there were several changes made during 2004. In the spring, Governor Blagojevich moved the LIHEAP and the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP) from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DECO) to the Illinois Department of Public Aid (IDPA). At the same time, IDPA announced that it intended to implement a new computerized system for the programs in the fall of 2004. While there have been many challenges associated with these two significant changes, ICAA has worked closely with its member CAA’s and IDPA to adjust to the new computer system and to work in close cooperation with the new leadership at IDPA. The changes made should be helpful as the program starts up for 2005.

Future
At the same time, ICAA was busy responding to the issue of energy affordability and worked closely with other groups to redesign the LIHEAP program. This process culminated with the introduction of the Affordable Energy Act in the Spring Session of the 2005 General Assembly. The new program design will have several components including: (1) A Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) where low income customers can agree to make monthly PIPP payment of 10% of their income for their energy bill; (2) Energy efficiency measures designed to reduce program costs by lowering participant heating bills by using weatherization services and low-cost efficiency strategies for all participants; (3) Hedging of Natural Gas prices to stabilize the natural gas costs and avoid the volatility of market fluctuations in cold winters; and (4) An Automatic Reconnection Rule to codify an affordable reconnection plan for the lesser of $250 payment or a payment of 20% of the bill.

“I ask you, what am I going to do when my winter gas bill comes in? Will I not be able to eat, go to the doctor or even be able to pay for those other necessities in life, nothing extra, just necessities.”

-- Lucinda Ware 88, is a resident of the Austin community on the West Side of Chicago.
ICAA’s Family and Community Development Certification Program

In 2004, the Family and Community Development Specialist Training has a new look, a new university affiliation and a new curriculum. These changes are in response to the national effort to incorporate ROMA into Community Action trainings and outreach plus the ongoing efforts, by ICAA, to reinvigorate the FCD program for the Illinois Network and, most importantly, continue to deliver cost-effective training.

Beginning in 2003, ICAA staff sought and received proposals from Illinois Higher Education institutions and selected the University of Illinois-Springfield to help develop and present the FCD training. ICAA convened a focus group of recent FCD graduates and asked for input and insight. The end result is a new curriculum geared for the Illinois Network, and owned by ICAA.

The 12 day course is team taught by UIS faculty members and ICAA staff. This development of the curriculum has been a joint effort, involving many hours of meetings, coordination of materials and countless e-mails. The focus of the training remains on family-strengths case management, with several areas being enhanced. Coaching and mentoring skills, interviewing techniques, dealing with professional fatigue, advocacy, outcome based performance and management, along with the history of poverty and community action are included. The Family Self Sufficiency Scale also remains an integral part of the training, with ROMA being woven in throughout the course of the training. Homework consists of 11 reflection papers, completed during the training weeks, and a final exam taken in class.

The Fall 2004 FCD class served as the inaugural group for the new curriculum and was enthusiastically received. Group work, modeling, discussion, lecture, multimedia presentations, a guest lecture and a field trip made up the 12 days of classroom time. Instructors are Vincent Flammini, Gloria Johnson, Dr. Sandra Mills, Dr. Martin Marsch, Martha LeMay and Christine Westerlund.

The FCD training will be offered at least twice a year in Springfield, in addition to agency hosted training. The cost, per student in Springfield, will remain at $950 and outside of Springfield, $1050.

FCD refresher training is under development and will be offered at the Annual Meeting in May. This training is designed for the certified FCD specialists, who desire an update on interviewing techniques, the Illinois Family Self-Sufficiency Scale, ROMA, client privacy and other areas of importance.

ICAA Family and Community Development Grant Program

Despite state budget cuts, ICAA was able to retain the grant from the Department of Human Services (DHS) to support case management activities throughout the state. The ICAA Family and Community Development Grant offers funds via an RFP process to member agencies to provide intensive case management following the principles taught in the ICAA FCD Certification Program. In 2004, eleven agencies were awarded grants, averaging $23,000. The total amount requested in the RFP was $371,556 yet the total funds available were $253,500. The funds are used for a variety of activities including support case management staff, savings matching funds, training to participants to improve employment prospects, credit counseling, emergency assistance and other incentive programs designed to encourage clients to achieve their goals.

A total of 187 families participated in the FCD Program for 2003-2004. 34 participants graduated from the program. Graduation means that they achieved the goals that they set out to accomplish including permanent housing, stable employment, obtaining reliable transportation, resolving credit issues and other counseling needs.
ICAA is considering other ways to maximize the return on investment with the DHS funding including devoting grant funds for FCD training, Individual Development Account (IDA) matching funds, or increasing the size of grant awards that would be granted to those agencies that could serve the most households.

**Families of Distinction**

The Illinois Families of Distinction continues to honor and celebrate the success of Community Action in helping people and changing lives. Each year, the Illinois Network of Community Action Agencies are invited to nominate a deserving family or individual that has made progress toward independence. Annually, ICAA honors these families in a fun-filled celebratory evening replete with entertainment, good food and lots of fun as a kick off for the Annual Meeting. This national award winning program has honored over 125 distinguished families and individuals since its inception in 1998.

Typically, the award winning family is enrolled in case management at their local community action agency. Their progress is monitored by a case manager, who will be able to see the family/individual through the process and has firsthand knowledge of the family/individual’s achievements. Once chosen, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) provides funding to the agency to help with expenses of bringing the honored family to Springfield. More often than not, this is the first opportunity for the family to spend the night at a great hotel and be honored guests. And in the process, the community action network has the opportunity to meet some remarkable, compelling people whose personal success stories have inspired and motivated staff to continue their work.

This event demonstrates the remarkable strength of Community Action and is an excellent opportunity for agencies to publicly showcase to their communities, funders, and partners that Community Action programs work remarkably well. In the future, ICAA will look for new ways to enhance this event, including increased publicity, lively entertainment and more inspiring stories to share about overcoming their obstacles.
Among households with incomes under 30 percent of the area median, 78 percent have housing problems and 61 percent spend more than half the household income on housing.”
National Picture
The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) reports that, “...the cost of rental housing in the United States is out of reach of the vast majority of low wage earners and people who are elderly or disabled with public income benefits.” (Out of Reach, 2004). In Illinois, an extremely low-income household (earning $19,637 or 30 percent of the Area Median Income of $65,457) can afford monthly rent of no more than $491 (30 percent of their monthly income). HUD’s Fair Market Rent for a two bedroom unit is $803.

ICAA Coalition Building
ICAA is a leader in advocacy, training, technical assistance and housing development, making major contributions to addressing the crisis in affordable, accessible housing. ICAA’s work with the Statewide Housing Action Coalition (SHAC) and the It Takes a Home to Raise a Child Campaign (ITH) contributed to the creation of two things, a Housing and Community Affairs Committee in the Senate chamber of the Illinois General Assembly and the Housing Task Force, created by an executive order of Governor Blagojevich. ICAA members and staff are represented on the Task Force and several key Task Force working groups. The Task Force provided a report to the Governor and the General Assembly that analyzes housing resources in Illinois and the performance of housing programs in the state and lays out a strategy to address the need for affordable housing and related services. Officials from the Governor’s Office, the Illinois Housing Development Authority, and the Task Force gave a pre-release presentation on the report at ICAA’s September 2004 HUD Peer-to-Peer Homeless Provider Conference in Rockford.

ICAA Housing and Homelessness Specialist Al Timke was named Chair of the Advocacy Committee of SHAC’s Board of Directors. This is expected to reinforce the long-standing relationship between SHAC and ICAA and leverage resources that address key ICAA goals. Locally ICAA established a liaison with the Springfield Continuum of Care and the Mayor’s Task Force on Homelessness. ICAA is able to contribute knowledge and expertise and gains a perspective on homelessness issues from outside the Community Action network.

ICAA partnerships with government include the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Food and Shelter Program.

Technical Assistance
ICAA has become a leading provider of training and technical assistance to providers of services and housing to homeless and other low-income Illinois residents. The assistance includes the publication of Homeless Headlines newsletter and Homeless Hotline bulletin, with a distribution of 1100 copies each month. ICAA also organized the Sixth Annual Peer-to-Peer Homeless Providers Conference. The conference has grown to approximately 300 attendees. The 2004 event included presenters and participants from Missouri and Wisconsin.

Future of ICAA Housing Programs
ICAA’s Homeless Headlines and other publications will be distributed by email, building on their current availability in print and on the ICAA web site. This will increase the readership and the timeliness of the information.

ICAA will be diversifying technical assistance provided to homeless service providers to include case management and program evaluation. Principles taught in the ICAA’s Family and Community Development (FCD) program, and Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) training will be incorporated into housing training.
How CSBG supports RCAP
A portion of the CSBG money received by the state is allocated to the Community Development and Assistance Program (CDAP). Many RCAP communities cannot afford to fund the high cost of a sewer or water system on their own, and they use the CDAP money in conjunction with other sources of leverage to help pay for a project. If these monies get cut there will be fewer improvements in infrastructure for the rural poor of Illinois.

Future Projections
RCAP is coordinating Board Training for the small rural water or wastewater board members that may need a refresher or for the new board members just getting started. This training will be available in the summer of 2005.

“Illinois RCAP in this last program year has directly and indirectly helped 36 communities apply for CDAP funds totaling $10,436,503. In addition, to the CDAP money RCAP has helped leverage $8,428,331 from the USDA/RD and the IEPA.”
A Gold Star for Cooperation

Roodhouse is a community on State Route 267 in Greene County Illinois. For years Roodhouse and the five communities of Alsey, Barrow, Glasgow, Manchester and Patterson whom all buy water from Roodhouse, have suffered with diesel tainted water from the wells at Roodhouse Springs. Seventy years ago when the wells were first put into operation they were run by Diesel pumps. Overtime the underground diesel fuel storage tanks began to leak and the fuel leached into the water source; this contaminated the water and their filters could not remove the fuel taste from the water. As a result, the communities have a permanent “Boil Order” metal signs posted at each end of their towns.

RCAP was requested by West Central Planning Commission in Carlinville to do an LMI survey and help with a CDAP, IEPA, and RD construction grant applications. All six communities were surveyed by RCAP, and RCAP had to map four of the towns. A public hearing was held to announce the survey results and discuss continuing the grant application. It was noted that the Roodhouse water plight had made TV news and the Post Dispatch Newspaper in St. Louis, Missouri as well as Channel 20 TV in Springfield, Illinois.

RCAP provided the catalyst for cooperation between the City Governments. RCAP assisted WCPC with completion of the CDAP, IEPA, and RD loan and grant applications. The plan is to run a ten inch line, west to the Illinois River, and build a new treatment plant to service all six communities.

All six communities deserve a gold star for cooperation and recognizing the need to unite. At times it’s difficult to get one community to provide the necessary cooperation, let alone six. Residents from all communities were extremely supportive and patient.

Roodhouse was awarded $350,000 from CDAP and leveraged $834,200 from IEPA and received a loan of $4,430,000 from RD.

Lake City... Leveraging Dollars to Improve Water Supply!

Citizens of Lake City and Dalton City, neighboring communities in Central Illinois, banded together to conquer a similar problem. Both communities were without a safe and reliable supply of drinking water for many years. RCAP assisted with well testing showing that 80% of their wells were unsafe, testing positive for coliform bacteria and nitrate. An income survey undertaken by RCAP and Lake City citizens determined that 73% of households in the community were low to moderate income.

Through the efforts of both communities’ citizens, the groups were able to leverage $500,000 to complete the Dalton City project and assist with the Lake City project. The funding was provided by Frank Watson (R), Illinois State Senator, and Julie Curry (D), Illinois State Representative, through the Illinois First Program. Citizens from Lake City then assisted RCAP with a successful $400,000 grant application to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP).

This program is designed to provide Federal Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funds to low-income communities with severe water and wastewater problems threatening the health and safety of communities. Without this assistance, many low income Illinois communities could not finance these essential projects. Just in time for the holiday season of 2004, both Dalton City and Lake City citizens were elated to have a safe and reliable supply of water running from their tap.
Hunger Calendar

The ICAA utilized CFNP funds to develop a 2005 calendar. Students from across central Illinois drew pictures that depicted how they perceived hunger during each calendar month. Some children chose to illustrate how they felt when their tummies were empty, while others illustrated their desire to help others who are hungry. The ICAA intends to use the calendar as an educational piece to convey the vital necessity of the Child Nutrition Programs to the general public, local officials, and federally elected officials.
The Community Food & Nutrition Program (CFNP) was originally created in conjunction with what is now referred to as the Community Services Block Grant. This funding is primarily distributed among the Community Action Network. CFNP was originally proposed as a solution to the growing problems of hunger and malnutrition across the country. CFNP continues to be the primary source of federal funding for Community Action Agencies and anti-hunger and nutrition advocacy groups at the state, local and national levels to actively promote the existence, importance, and participation in the federal Child Nutrition Programs. These programs include the Food Stamp Program, the Women, Infants and Children Program, the School Breakfast and School Lunch Programs, the Summer Food Program, and the Child & Adult Care Food Program.

Summer Food Program
ICAA utilized CFNP funds to initiate 5 new Summer Food Program feeding sites in areas where service gaps existed. The need for additional summer feeding sites was evident, considering in the 2002-2003 school year 5,536 public and non-public schools and residential child care institutions in Illinois that provided lunch to children while there were only 1,148 Summer Food Service Program feeding sites. The 5 new SFSP feeding sites will begin providing meals to children during the summer of 2005.

Break Bread
ICAA utilizes CFNP funds to publish a quarterly newsletter titled break bread. The newsletter highlights food security and state, national & international advocacy news. The newsletter is distributed nationally to more than 300 recipients, including elected officials.

Food Stamp Outreach
A portion of the Community Food & Nutrition Program funds were used to fund four (4) food stamp outreach projects and various collaborative efforts that improved the accessibility of food for low-income Illinois families in 2004. 1,693 individuals were pre-screened for Food Stamp Program (FSP) eligibility. Of those, 1,405 individuals were found to be potentially eligible for the FSP. Of those found to be potentially eligible for the FSP, 600 are now receiving food stamps. The 600 new FSP participants will bring an additional $1,411,200 in new federal dollars into the state’s economy on an annual basis. The food stamp outreach grantees continue to collaborate with 216 community partner organizations in getting accurate FSP eligibility information into the community, pre-screening their clients for the FSP and referring clients to the local Community Action Agency for additional information.

School Breakfast Program
The ICAA continued to collaborate with the Dairy Council, the Illinois Hunger Coalition and the Illinois State Board of Education to encourage schools in Illinois with the highest percentages of students eligible for free and reduced price meals to begin operating the School Breakfast Program (SBP). The ICAA has contacted numerous schools and informed them of the availability of a state and federal start-up grant that can be utilized to begin the SBP, provided general information about the federal reimbursements that are available, and distributed a packet of information to each of the schools. The outreach efforts have successfully convinced 63 schools to begin operating the SBP.
Statement of Activities

Expenses

- Community Action Agency Subcontracts 41%
- Remaining 20%
- Meetings/Trainings 5%
- Space 5%
- Contract Services 5%
- Salaries/Benefits 24%

Revenue

- Grants 82%
- Contributions 2%
- Lease 6%
- Meeting 4%
- Dues 1%
- Other 2%
### Revenue and Other Support

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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td>Registration Fees</td>
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<td>Membership Dues</td>
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### Program Service Expenses

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<td>CEDA</td>
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<td>Family &amp; Community Development</td>
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<td>Community Food &amp; Nutrition Program</td>
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<td>Illinois Department of Human Services</td>
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<td>Rural Community Assistance Program</td>
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<td>Illinois Weatherization Assistance Program</td>
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<td><strong>Total Program Services</strong></td>
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### Support Services

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<td>Building</td>
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<td><strong>Total Support Services</strong></td>
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### Total Expenses

**2,979,083**

### Change in Net Assets

32,590

### Net Assets, Beginning of Year

1,112,450

### Net Assets, End of Year

$1,145,040
Agency Directory

BCMW Community Services, Inc.
909 E. Rexford, P.O. Box 729
Centralia, IL 62801-0729
Keith O. Brown, Executive Director
Telephone: (618) 532-7388
Fax: (618) 532-0204
www.bcmw.info
Service Area: Bond, Clinton, Marion, Washington Counties

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission
1776 E. Washington, P.O. Box 17760
Urbana, IL 61803
John Dimit, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 328-3313
Fax: (217) 328-2426
www.ccrpc.org
Service Area: Champaign County

Carver Community Action Agency
P.O. Box 28, 235 E. Main St.
Galesburg, IL 61402
Jeannie Shelton, Chief Executive Officer
Telephone: (309) 342-0158
Fax: (309) 342-8179
Service Area: Knox County

C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation
1805 S. Banker, P.O. Box 928
Effingham, IL 62401-0928
Paul White, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 342-2193
TDD: (217) 342-2212
Fax: (217) 342-4701
Web: www.cefseoc.org
Service Area: Christian, Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Montgomery, Moultrie and Shelby Counties

Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation
1800 W. Fifth St. Road
Lincoln, IL 62656
Mary Elston, Interim Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 735-1753
Fax: (217) 732-2159
Service Area: DeWitt, Fulton, Logan, Mason, Menard and Piatt Counties

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission
1776 E. Washington, P.O. Box 17760
Urbana, IL 61803
John Dimit, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 328-3313
Fax: (217) 328-2426
www.ccrpc.org
Service Area: Champaign County

Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois
300 E. Monroe, Suite 100
Springfield, IL 62701
Vicky Wilson, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 522-7016
(800) 433-8848
Fax: (217) 522-7024
www.ccdionline.org
Service Area: City of Chicago

Community Action Partnership of Lake County
Box 9059
Waukegan, IL 60079
Mary Lockhart-White, Executive Director
Telephone: (847) 249-4330
Fax: (847) 249-4393
Service Area: Lake County

Community Contacts, Inc.
100 S. Hawthorne St.
Elgin, IL 60123
Susan Wohl, Executive Director
Telephone: (847) 697-8800
Fax: (630) 232-1467
Web: www.ccci-hci.org
Service Area: DeKalb and Kane counties

Community & Economic Development Association of Cook County, Inc.
208 S. LaSalle St., Suite 1900
Chicago, IL 60604
Robert L. Wharton, President/CEO
Telephone: (312) 795-8844
Fax: (312) 795-1034
Web: www.cedaorg.net
Service Area: Suburban Cook County, City of Chicago

Crosswalk Community Action Agency
410 W. Main
West Frankfort, IL 62896
Debra Jackanicz, Executive Director
Telephone: (618) 937-3581
Fax: (618) 937-3583
Service Area: Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson & Williamson Counties

Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation
1122 E. Marietta St.
Decatur, IL 62521
Gail Evans, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 428-0155
Fax: (217) 428-0169
Service Area: Macon County

DeKalb County Community Services Department
2550 N. Annie Glidden Road
DeKalb, IL 60115
Mary Olson, Executive Director
Telephone: (815) 758-3910
Fax: (815) 758-3407
www.dekalbcounty.org
Service Area: DeKalb County
DuPage County Human Services
421 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187
Philip R. Smith, Administrator
Telephone: (630) 682-7000 or (800) 942-9412
Fax: (630) 682-7382
www.dupageco.org
Service Area: DuPage County

Kankakee County Community Services, Inc.
657 East Court Street, Suite 207
Kankakee, IL 60901
Vincent Clark, Executive Director
Telephone: (815) 933-7883
Fax: (815) 933-0635
www.kccsi-cap.org
Service Area: Kankakee County

Kendall-Grundy Community Action
(A Unit of Kendall County Department of Health and Human Services)
500A Countryside Center
Yorkville, IL 60560
Cheryl Johnson, Executive Director
Telephone: (630) 553-9100
Fax: (630) 553-0167
Email: kcchhs@co.kendall.il.us
CJohnson@co.kendall.il.us
Service Area: Grundy and Kendall Counties

Embarras River Basin Agency
115 S. Kentucky, P.O. Box 307
Greenup, IL 62428-0307
Marsha Roll, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 923-3113
Fax: (217) 923-5155
www.ernoaction.org
Service Area: Ford, Iroquois and Vermilion Counties

Mid Central Community Action, Inc.
923 E. Grove
Bloomington, IL 61701
John Burrill, Executive Director
Telephone: (309) 829-0691
Fax: (309) 828-8811
www.mccainc.org
Service Area: McLean and Livingston Counties

East Central Illinois Community Action Agency
56 N. Vermillion
Danville, IL 61834
Dwight A. Lucas, CEO
Telephone: (217) 443-2705
Fax: (217) 431-0725
www.cmaaction.org
Service Area: Ford, Iroquois and Vermillion Counties

Northwestern Illinois Community Action Agency
103-109 N. Chicago Ave.
Freeport, IL 61032
Judith Eikstadt, Executive Director
Telephone: (815) 232-3141
Fax: (815) 232-3143
Service Area: Jo Daviess and Stephenson Counties

Embarra River Basin Agency
115 S. Kentucky, P.O. Box 307
Greenup, IL 62428-0307
Marsha Roll, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 923-3113
Fax: (217) 923-5155
www.ernoaction.org
Service Area: Ford, Iroquois and Vermilion Counties

Illinois Migrant Council
28 E. Jackson Blvd., Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60604
Eloy Salazar, Executive Director
Telephone: (312) 663-1522
Fax: (312) 663-1522
www.illinoismigrant.org
Service Area: Statewide

Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation (A Community Action Agency)
223 S. Macoupin St., P.O. Box 88
Gillespie, IL 62033-0088
Frank J. Schwaab, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 839-9341
Fax: (217) 839-3647
Service Area: Calhoun, Greene, Jersey, and Macoupin Counties

McHenry County Housing Authority
1108 N. Seminary Ave., P.O. Box 1109
Woodstock, IL 60098-1109
Ellen Sonntag, Executive Director
Telephone: (815) 338-7752
Fax: (815) 338-1217
Service Area: McHenry County

Project NOW Community Action Agency, Inc.
418 19th St.
Rock Island, IL 61201
Maureen Hart, Interim Executive Director
Telephone: (309) 793-6391
Fax: (309) 793-6352
www.projectnow.org
Service Area: Rock Island, Henry and Mercer Counties

Project NOW Community Action Agency, Inc.
418 19th St.
Rock Island, IL 61201
Maureen Hart, Interim Executive Director
Telephone: (309) 793-6391
Fax: (309) 793-6352
www.projectnow.org
Service Area: Rock Island, Henry and Mercer Counties
Agency Directory

Rockford Human Services Department
612 North Church
Rockford, IL 61103
George Davis, Executive Director
Telephone: (815) 987-5782
Fax: (815) 987-5762
http://ci.rockford.il.us/government/human
Service Area: Boone and Winnebago Counties

Sangamon County Department of Community Resources
200 S. Ninth St., Room 311
Springfield, IL 62702
Sharmin Doering, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 535-3120
Fax: (217) 535-3119
http://www.co.sangamon.il.us
Service Area: Sangamon County

Shawnee Development Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 298
Karnak, IL 62956
Cheryl Vanderford, Executive Director
Telephone: (618) 634-2201
Fax: (618) 634-9551
www.co.sangamon.il.us
Service Area: Sangamon County

St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department/Community Action Agency
No. 19 Public Square, Suite 200
Belleville, IL 62220-1624
Thelma Chalmers, Executive Director
Telephone: (618) 277-6790
Fax: (618) 236-1190
http://www.co.stclair-il.us
Service Area: St. Clair County

Tazwood Community Services, Inc.
2005 S. Main St.
Morton, IL 61550
Cindy Bergstrand, Executive Director
Telephone: (309) 266-9941
Fax: (309) 266-9174
Service Area: Tazwell and Woodford Counties

Tri-County Opportunities Council
405 Emmons Ave., Box 610
Rock Falls, IL 61071-0610
Sandra J ulfis, President/CEO
Telephone: (815) 625-7830
Fax: (815) 625-7302
www.tcohelps.com
Service Area: Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark and Whiteside Counties

Two Rivers Head Start Agency
222 E. Wilson St.
Batavia, IL 60510
Jane Whitaker, Executive Director
Telephone: (630) 406-1444
Fax: (630) 406-1519
www.trhsa.org
Service Area: Kane County (CSBG and Head Start programs) Kendall, DeKalb, Grundy & Boone (Head Start program only)

Two Rivers Regional Council of Public Officials
1125 Hampshire, Suite 100
Quincy, IL 62301-3000
Larry Markway, Executive Director
Telephone: (217) 224-8171
Fax: (217) 224-9145
Service Area: Adams, Brown, Pike and Schuyler Counties

Urban League of Champaign County
314 Neil St
Champaign, IL 61820
Tracy Parsons, President/CEO
Telephone: (217) 363-3333
Fax: (217) 356-1310
www.urbanleague.net
Service Area: Champaign County

Wabash Area Development, Inc.
110 Latham St.
Enfield, IL 62835
Ken Pettijohn, Executive Director
Telephone: (618) 963-2387
Fax: (618) 963-2525
Service Area: Edwards, Gallatin, Hamilton, Saline, Wabash, Wayne and White Counties

Western Egyptian Economic Opportunity Council
No. 1 Industrial Park, P.O. Box 7
Steeleville, IL 62288-0007
Paulette Hamlin, Executive Director
Telephone: (618) 965-3458
Fax: (618) 965-9733
www.weeoc.org
Service Area: Jackson, Monroe, Perry and Randolph Counties

Western Illinois Regional Council – Community Action Agency
223 S. Randolph
Macomb, IL 61455
Suzan Nash, Executive Director
Telephone: (309) 836-3640
Fax: (309) 836-3640
www.wirpc.org/3.html
Service Area: Hancock, Henderson, McDonough and Warren Counties

Will County Center for Community Concerns
304 N. Scott St.
Joliet, IL 60432
Kris White, Executive Director
Telephone: (815) 722-0722
Fax: (815) 722-6344
www.wccc.net
Service Area: Will County
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