

The Action

The newsletter of The Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association

June 2014

Conference Speaker Mark Shriver Sees Father's Legacy Echoed in Community Action

Sargent Shriver—the man considered the architect of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty—"would have been proud of all of Arkansas's community action agencies," said his son Mark Shriver, speaking at the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association's 2014 annual awards luncheon on May 22. "He would have loved the fight that you are engaged in every day—that work is the work of faith in action."

Shriver, Senior Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Senior Advisor to the CEO at Save the Children, discussed the legacy of his late father, Sargent Shriver, the first director of the nation's Office of Economic Opportunity, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of that office's creation. "It's good to be around people who care about community action," he said, "people who know how hard the fight is and persevere nonetheless."

Shriver offered special praise to the conference's lineup of "amazing workshops" and commended ACAA executive director Rose Adams in particular for her work both with the association and as a poverty educator with UALR.

See Shriver, p. 6



Special 2014 annual ACAA awards luncheon guest speaker Mark Shriver and ACAA executive director Rose Adams.

Association, Agencies Salute ACAA's 40th Anniversary, 50 Years of Community Action

Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association Holds 2014 Annual Conference, Welcomes Highest Turnout in a Decade

The Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association (ACAAA) held its 2014 annual conference at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel in North Little Rock from May 21 to 23, recognizing not only the 40th anniversary of the association itself, but also 50 years passage since the creation of the nation's community action program, begun in 1964 as part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty.

Representatives from all of Arkansas's 16 community action agencies from around the state attended the three-day symposium for a lineup of workshops, speakers, presentations, and awards ceremonies. Special guests included David Bradley, executive director of the National Community Action Foundation; Lisbeth Schorr, Senior Fellow with the Center for the Study of Social Policy; and Mark Shriver, Senior Advisor to the CEO, Save the Children. (See articles, left, pages 5 & 6.)

Awards presentations included the Charles F. Cunningham Leadership Award, given this year to Delia Anderson, Assistant Director for the Division of County Operations, Office of Commu-

'You are like the cavalry.'

—Joni Jones, DHS DCO Director, saluting the heroic efforts of the state's community action agencies

nity Services, at the Department of Human Services. Also recognized were various recipients of ACAA's Client Action Awards, celebrating outstanding progress towards self-sufficiency, and its Supporter Action Awards, honoring outstanding advocacy for community action. As well, the association presented its annual CAPPY Awards to Evelyn Bryant, Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC), for "Best Performance in a Supporting Role," Deborah Gilmer, Community Action Program for Central Arkansas (CAPCA), for "Best Performance in a Leading Role," and to CADC's VITA Tax Program for "Best Production." (See articles, pages 3, 4 & 5.)

The conference's theme was "Looking Back...Moving Forward" and reflected the event's multidirectional focus, simultaneously honoring the legacy of 50 years' effort spent battling the forces of poverty, while also girding for the battle still to come with renewed enthusiasm and fresh perspective. The days' activities would see a balance between commemoration and innovation, ranging from a salute to retirees and a recognition of ACAA's own anniversary—four decades since its creation—to workshops on the newest approaches to data collection, and awards presented in honor of the state's most successful current programs. Participants gave the proceedings high marks: "The information and interaction were great," enthused Lisa Johnson, a Finance Clerk with the Mississippi County Arkansas Economic Opportunity Commission (MCAEOC).

"You should take the opportunity to enjoy your accomplishments," said Joni Jones, Director of the Department of Human Services' Division of County Operations, addressing the attendees of Wednesday's opening luncheon.

"This anniversary is a big deal," she continued,



ACAAA's Adams



DHS DCO's Jones



OOI's Atkinson

See Conference, p. 8

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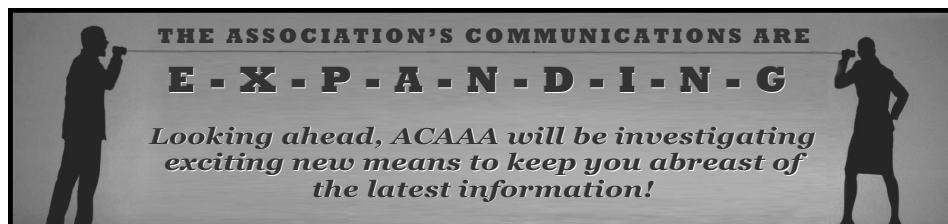
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"The nonprofit organization must be information-based"—so says no less an authority than Peter Drucker, the man sometimes referred to as "the world's most recognized management consultant." (Or—to move from the sublime to the ridiculous—consider the words of another legendary figure in the workplace, a character with his own certain brand of notoriety: "Information is power"—Dwight Schrute.)

There can be no disputing the wisdom—whichever the source—that information is a key weapon in the community action fight against the intractable problem that is poverty. With that in mind, the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association is currently in the process of expanding its range of communications to both its membership and the general public.

Chief among the developments being pursued is the addition of an electronic newsletter to supplement the print publication of *The Action*. While maintaining the *Action* as a vehicle for in-depth examinations of matters of concern within the community action realm, the association will also be employing an "e-newsletter" to provide briefer, more frequent updates on the latest developments of interest.

In deference to the near-universal dislike of the sort of unwanted e-mail inbox clutter known as "spam," this e-newsletter version of *The Action* will be available upon request: Those interested are en-

couraged to submit their e-mail address to new ACAA communications director John Moran at jmoran@acaaa.org. Or they may request the electronic *Action* online at the association's website (www.acaaa.org) or at its newly-created Facebook page, another branch outwards in the association's move to broaden its communications reach.

Facebook visitors are invited to check out ACAA at the address www.facebook.com/arcommunityaction or search for "Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association." In creating a Facebook presence, the association is following the lead of seven of the state's community action agencies, all of whom were already on the scene to greet ACAA upon its arrival—those who haven't already might want to give a look to the Facebook pages of the [Arkansas River Valley Area Council \(ARVAC\)](#), the [Central Arkansas Development Council \(CADC\)](#), the [Community Action Program for](#)



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See Communications, p. 6

The Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association represents the 16 private, nonprofit community action agencies in the state, providing them with information, training, technical assistance, and other support. The agencies are among more than 1,000 throughout the county established under the national landmark legislation approved by Congress in 1964 to eliminate "the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty." The newsletter is funded, in part, with a grant from the state Office of Community Services of the Arkansas Department of Human Services. The Association office is at 300 South Spring, Suite 1020, Little Rock, AR 72201. Telephone: (501) 372-0807; FAX: (501) 372-0891; e-mail: info@acaaa.org.

Annual Conference CAPPY Awards Honor State's Finest Community Action Programs, Top Staffers

The Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association recognized two exemplary agency staff persons and one notably innovative program at its special CAPPY Awards presentation, held during the Friday closing session of the association's 2014 three-day annual conference, which took place from May 21 to 23 in North Little Rock at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel.

The awards—created to honor both personal and program-wide achievements among the state's community action programs (the CAPs that give the "CAPPYs" their name)—are modeled after the Oscars, recognizing "Best Performance in a Supporting Role," "Best Performance in a Lead Role," and—a *la* Best Picture—"Best Production."

Evelyn Bryant, a Community Development Specialist for 14 years in Lonoke County with the Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC), was named 2014's "Best Supporting Performer," the designation specifically



CADC's Bryant

created to acknowledge the efforts of program and front-line staff. Announcing the award, Michael Lanier—executive director of the Economic Opportunity Agency of Washington County



CADC's Freeman (left) accepts "Best Production" CAPPY from ACAA president Atkinson.

and a USDA commodities distribution network.

Other nominees for the Supporting Role CAPPY Award were *LaSonya Bibbs*, Transportation Department Dispatcher/Bookkeeping Clerk, Mid-Delta Community Services (MDCS); *Sandra Brown*, Family Service Worker, Southeast Arkansas Community Action Corp. (SEACAC); *Rhonda Holder*, Family Support Advocate of Franklin County, Arkansas River Valley Area Council (ARVAC); and *Charlsie Stine*, Cleburne County Community Services Assistant, Community Action Program for Central Arkansas (CAPCA).

Deborah Gilmer, Cleburne County Community Services Coordinator with CAPCA, was named the year's "Best Lead Performer," the category specially tailored to recognize the achievements of program managers and coordinators, center directors, supervisors, and senior administrative staff. Presenting her award, ACAA vice president Lanier lauded Gilmer's leadership in maximizing volunteer resources and community partnerships to feed hundreds of families as part of a greatly successful holiday food distribution effort.



CAPCA's Gilmer

Also nominated for the Leading Role CAPPY award were *Alethea Dallas*, Finance and Administration Director, SEACAC; *Jennifer Pinkston*, Family Development Coordinator, CADC; *Shirley Richesin*, Fiscal Officer, Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (OOI); *Rhonda Wade*, Community Programs Coordinator, ARVAC; and *Annie Willis*, Transit Dispatcher/Bookkeeping Clerk, MDCS.

Claiming the CAPPY award for 2014's "Best Production"—which honors program innovation and achievement—was the **Central Arkansas Development Council's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program**. The VITA program, which provides free electronic filing of federal and state tax returns, served almost 3,000 low income taxpayers in the past year, saving them a combined amount of almost \$450,000 in tax

William 'Bill' Green, ACAA Communications Director, Newsletter Editor, Retires

William Green—likely better known as "Bill" to all those with whom he interacted during his nearly 15 years with the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association (ACAAA)—retired at the end of 2013 from his position as the association's communications director and editor of its newsletter, *The Action*. His retirement, said ACAA executive director Rose Adams, is a "much deserved" one.



William Green

Green, who began with the association in April of 1999, entered the position already with a highly regarded journalistic reputation, having spent over a decade as a reporter and feature writer with the once-*Arkansas Gazette*, as well as being a regular contributor to United Press International (UPI), *The Commercial Appeal* in Memphis, and *USA Today*. "He always utilized the utmost integrity as a journalist to ensure stories and articles were accurate," said Adams, "but he also always tried to weave in the more human, personal side of a story in among the sterile facts."

Green will be remembered not just for the skills of his reporting and the constancy of his stewardship of the association's signature publication, *The Action*, but also for his genuine commitment to the mission of community action. "Not only did his writing for ACAA demonstrate a deep passion for helping those with low incomes," continued Adams, "but he regularly went out of his way, beyond any requirement, to assist those in need who would contact him as their last hope. We wish him well in his much-deserved retirement."

John Moran, former media coordinator with the Arkansas State Employees Association, is now handling ACAA's communications.

See CAPPYs, p. 7



*Attendees of the Wednesday, May 21, luncheon of the 2014 ACAA annual conference took a moment to recognize the following **recent retirees** for their 20-plus years of service to their communities.*

Helen Barnes

*Dispatch/Booking Clerk
MDCS • 26 Years*

Darla Clouse

*Administrative Assistant
NADC • 36 ½ Years*

Geta Davis

*Early Literacy Specialist
NADC • 28 ½ Years*

Doris English

*Malvern Senior Adult
Center Manager
CADC • 36 ½ Years*

Thomas E. Green

*Assistant Director
Arkansas DHS OCS • 30 Years*

Isabell Griswold

*Head Start Director
SEACAC • 37 Years*

Leland Jackson

*Compliance Reviewer
NADC • 39 Years*

Jon Rea

*Migrant Head Start Supervisor
CAPCA • 32 Years*

Cathy Rowe

*LIHEAP Manager
Arkansas DHS OCS • 41 Years*

Carol Staley

*Human Resource Manager
CADC • 31 Years*

Brenda Webb

*Assistant Teacher
NADC • 25 ½ Years*

Client Action & Supporter Action Awards Salute Year's Success Stories, Volunteer Contributions

In a series of Client Action and Supporter Action Awards given during a special luncheon on May 22, the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association (ACAAA) celebrated the year's most inspiring client success stories and also tipped its hat to the very best of the local volunteers who lend their assistance to the community action cause. The luncheon was part of the association's 2014 annual conference, held this year in North Little Rock.

Michael Lanier, executive director of the Economic Opportunity Agency of Washington County (EOAWC) and also vice president of the ACAA board of directors, made the presentations, offering words of praise for both the Client Action Award winners—"those who do what it takes to move toward self-sufficiency"—and those receiving the Supporter Action Awards—"the people and partners who help us do our job." He noted in particular the contributions of the Department of Human Service's Office of Community Services, which he deemed "truly a partner."

Recipients of the Client Action Awards were *Erica Nixon*, a client of Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (OOI), who is working towards becoming a registered nurse with the assistance of the agency's SUCCESS Program; *Adam Rial*, a client of the Community Action Program for Central Arkansas (CAPCA), who coordinated his own efforts with the contributions of the agency's LIHEAP and IDA savings programs to renovate a home in desperate need; *Leah Sturm-Jewell*, a client of the Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC), who eventually became a staff member herself so that she could share with others the assistance from which she had also benefited;

and *Wendy Thompson*, a client of the Arkansas River Valley Area Council (ARVAC), who labored mightily to leverage the help she was given to a current status of near-self-sufficiency and her own spot as resident board member of a local facilities board.

Recipients of the Supporter Action Awards were *Bob and Lisa Denny*, a married couple who have been volunteering with the Northcentral Arkansas Development Council (NADC) for over a decade, "paying forward" to other clients the sort of benevolence they once enjoyed; *Stacey Ford*, an honor student and 2014 Barton High School graduate who volunteered for a year with Mid-Delta Community Services (MDCS) and has continued to stay on and lend her aid as needed; *Roger Hooper*, a Van Buren County Judge also on the board of directors with Ozark Opportunities, Inc., who provided no-cost office space and utilities to the agency in a time of dire need; and *Taniel Woolsey*, who is known by those at the Arkansas River Valley Area Council as "the go-to person for community resources" and "ARVAC's #1 cheerleader."

See Awards, p. 5



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CONFERENCE SHOTS**

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- jmoran@acaaa.org •



2014 Supporter Action Award winners Bob and Lisa Denny accept their certificate from ACAA president Toby Atkinson (left).

Delia Anderson, Office of Community Services, Given 2014's Charles F. Cunningham Leadership Award during Conference

Delia Anderson, Assistant Director for the Division of County Operations, Office of Community Services (OCS), at the Department of Human Services, was the recipient of the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association's 2014 Charles F. Cunningham Leadership Award, presented at a luncheon held May 21 at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel in North Little Rock as part of the association's annual conference.

Charles Cunningham himself, former executive director of the Central Arkan-

sas Development Council (CADC) and the well-respected figure for whom the award was named, was on hand to make the presentation, citing not only Anderson's impressive credentials—over 20 years of experience in nonprofit administration, program development, and grants management—but also her commitment to work in tandem with the state's community action agencies for the good of its citizens.

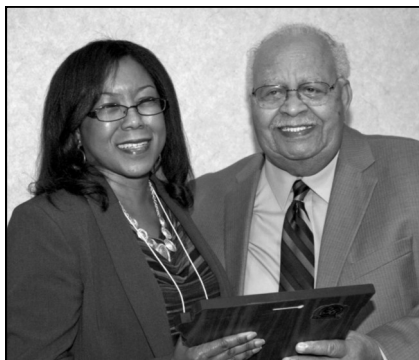
"I'm completely shocked," said Anderson as she accepted the award, "I had no earthly idea; this is the thrill of my life." Describing herself as "truly honored," Anderson thanked her staff "without whom this would not have been possible" and cited the example of her predecessor, retired OCS assistant director Thomas Green, as the standard by which she measured her own successes: "Those are huge shoes to fill."

Anderson would receive further commendations later in the conference when, during his own presentation, David Bradley, executive director of the National Community Action Foundation (see article, page 6), singled out her contributions, saying that he "deeply admired" the relationship between the Office of Community Services and the state's community action agencies and commenting humorously that the relationship would be the envy of many of the nation's other 49 state agency associations.

Awards

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Also recognized at the awards ceremony was the *College of the Ouachitas*, a long-standing supporter of the Central Arkansas Development Council that has provided a multitude of assistances to the agency over the years; its efforts were described as "a model for a collaborative partnership with community action." College of the Ouachitas president Dr. Stephen Schoonmaker accepted the award on behalf of the institution.



Delia Anderson, Office of Community Services, accepts the 2014 ACAA Leadership Award from Charles Cunningham



Attendees of the Wednesday, May 21, luncheon of the 2014 ACAA annual conference took a moment to recognize the outstanding dedication and service provided by these valued members of the Arkansas community action network.

Linda Burns

CSO • ERSEA & Non-Federal Share Coordinator

Linda Cooper

NADC • Head Start Program Director

Gennive Farris

NADC • Stone County Coordinator

Connie Jackson

NADC • WIA Program Director

Joann Pinkney

ARVAC • Administrative Director of Freedom House

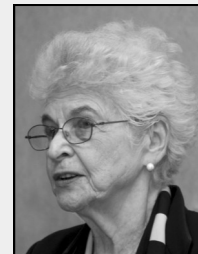
E A C H W I T H

40 Years of Service

Keynote Speaker Lisbeth Schorr Embodies 'Looking Back...Moving Forward'

"Citizen participation was nurtured in the cradle of community action," said Lisbeth Schorr, keynote speaker at the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association's 2014 annual conference opening luncheon held May 21 in North Little Rock. "And community action still doesn't get the credit it deserves."

Schorr, a Senior Fellow of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, addressed attendees not only in her role as a national authority on the concept of "what works"—i.e., the



Lisbeth Schorr

very most current and effective practices to aid children, families, and neighborhoods—but also as a critical player in the formative years of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity, the very organization whose 50th anniversary was being celebrated as part of the conference's program. Said ACAA executive director Rose Adams in her introduction—noting the conference's twin themes of memory and progress—"We wanted speakers who could talk about 'looking back' and speakers who could talk about 'moving forward'...well, in Lisbeth Schorr, we got a 'two-fer.'"

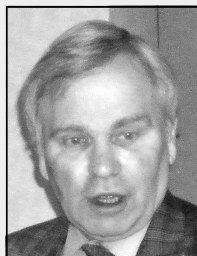
In her talk, Schorr discussed the inherent difficulties in community action efforts: Complex problems demand complex solutions, and no single program can ever fully address any given set of needs. "Community action agencies have always known this," she said. "Policymakers are only just learning it." She also addressed the challenges of measurement and documentation when human beings—and all the rich nuances of human nature—are the subjects: "We are not dealing in widgets."

In the face of such obstacles, Schorr offered rousing words of encouragement for the future: "We must innovate so past successes are the starting point, not the final destination," she said. Those who dismiss community action agencies as "rusty and no longer relevant" are "missing great opportunities," she argued, because "new solutions aren't always in new organizations."

See Schorr, p. 6

National Advocate Describes Community Action in Arkansas As 'How It's Supposed to Be'

"In terms of states where things go right," said David Bradley, executive director of the National Community Action Foundation, Inc., and special guest speaker at the May 23 closing session of the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association's annual conference, "Arkansas is near the top." Surveying the relative effectiveness of community action agencies across the nation, Bradley concluded that the accomplishments of those in the Natural State were "how it's supposed to be."



David Bradley

Bradley, one of Washington's leading advocates for low-income programs, was in attendance to provide a legislative update to those convened, a visit he was more than happy to make: "Arkansas is one of my favorite trips of the year," he said, citing in particular his appreciation for the dedication and work ethic of ACAA executive director Rose Adams and the leadership skills of association president Toby Atkinson.

In his update, Bradley noted some disheartening hindrances—an administration that has been less than supportive, a congress whose inter-party relationships are notoriously contentious, and attempts being made by a wide range of players to gain access to monies previously slated for community action programs—but he remained optimistic nonetheless: "We will weather these challenges. These challenges will become opportunities."

Working foremost in favor of community action, said Bradley, are the community action agencies themselves. Time and again, he reported, national legislators—some who might otherwise have ideological objections to the concept of community action—would recount being so impressed by the work of the agencies in their own areas that they felt strongly compelled to lend their support. They do this, said Bradley, "because they've seen what the agencies are doing."

See Bradley, p. 7

Communications

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[Central Arkansas \(CAPCA\)](#), the [Crawford-Sebastian Community Development Council \(C-SCDC\)](#), the [Economic Opportunity Agency of Washington County \(EOAWC\)](#), [Ozark Opportunities, Inc. \(OOI\)](#), and the [Pine Bluff-Jefferson County Economic Opportunities Commission \(PBJCEOC\)](#).

ACAAA also maintains a Twitter account: The association, whose handle is [@AR_CAA](#), enthusiastically welcomes new followers. The so-called "Twitter-sphere" has proven to be a richly informational and multifaceted forum on such topics as community action, nonprofit organization, and social justice; ACAA feels that it can only benefit from being a participant.

"This association has always been about spreading the good word of what Arkansas's community action agencies do for the people of this state," said ACAA executive director Rose Adams. "If there are new ways to spread that word to a wider audience, then those are avenues that we definitely want to explore."

Shriver

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In his address to the conference attendees, Shriver shared his fondness for visiting Arkansas—a state, he said, where his agency, Save the Children, an international organization that promotes children's rights, does a lot of work. Shriver also expressed his appreciation for the luncheon's award winners, the recipients of ACAA's Client Action and Supporter Action recognitions (see article, page 4). Of the recipients, Shriver said, "Dad would have loved meeting them"—their inspiring work "would have fired him up."

In a speech that was alternately funny and warmhearted, Shriver reminisced about the virtues of faith, hope, and love that guided his father—the subject of his recent memoir, *A Good Man: Rediscovering My Father, Sargent Shriver*—and speculated on how history would remember him. "More so than any building that could be named after a person," he said, "the work that you people do every day"—referring to the audience and the work of community action—"that is my father's legacy."

in memoriam



The Opening General Session of the 2014 ACAA annual conference provided an opportunity to recognize the passing of the following community action servants:

Marvie Davis

MDCS Head Start Teacher

Michael Dilks

MDCS Van Driver – Dialysis Route

Christine Fonzie

MDCS Van Driver • Substitute Teacher • Food Service Worker

Rowena Garner

ARVAC Board Member

Nancy Greer

ARVAC Volunteer and Client

Donald Guy

CADC Bus Driver

Mary Wyrick

CADC Family Development Specialist

Leading the memorial service, Stephanie Ellis, executive director of the Arkansas River Valley Area Council (ARVAC) and ACAA secretary-treasurer, spoke movingly of the spirit that unites those committed to the cause of community action—"we are truly a family"—and the poignant reminder of this bond that the loss of a community member brings.

Schorr

continued from page 5

Together, she believed, mature wisdom and youthful energy could unite "under a larger tent" and "work strategically for breakthroughs and impacts that are so needed." She urged the audience to "share your learning" and "let others benefit from the wealth of what you know."



Taking a humorous look at a serious problem

Rose Adams is—in addition to being the executive director of the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association—an educator who has, with Professor Emeritus David Sink, been team-teaching a class in the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Poverty Studies Program for the past three years. Recently, she assigned her students the task of writing a hypothetical guest editorial in response to a charge made frequently in newspaper features and letters to the editor that terms like "poor" and "poverty" are inapplicable to those in possession of items such as cellular phones or basic household appliances. One submission—from student Kraig Butler—struck an unconventional note and approached the subject from a darkly humorous angle (one might even say that its modest proposal is "Swiftian"). We hope you will be as impressed as we were by its use of satire to make a necessary point—please know that no offense is intended.

A Reminder: You Can't Spell "Poor" without "PR"

By Kraig Butler

The poor people in America have a real problem on their hands. I'm not talking about massive governmental spending cuts to social service programs or the lack of equal access to education, employment, safe housing, affordable child care, transportation, nutritious food, or healthcare, all during the course of one of the worst economic downturns in recent history. No, they have an image problem. Poor people in America just don't *look* poor. This is creating a lot of confusion for the rest of us.

Poor people, you have to protect the brand. How are we supposed to know you're poor if we see you driving a car or talking on your own cell phone or if we see you heating up your Cup o' Noodles in your very own microwave? (By the way, you probably shouldn't be eating name brand ramen noodles. Surely there is a cheaper generic brand available. You have to be frugal if you're ever going to pull yourself up by your bootstraps.) The word "poor" conjures up certain classic

images, like those delightful streeturchins in those Charles Dickens novels. (Of course, they probably didn't teach Dickens in your school. I would suggest that you look him up on the Internet, but you shouldn't have Internet in the first place, so see if you can catch a ride to the

'Poor people, you have to protect the brand.'

nearest public library.) That's the look you should be going for. That's what we're comfortable with. If you don't look the part then we're all likely to assume that there is no poverty in America and we'll be forced to put up those silly air quotes whenever we refer to "poor" people. So dress for success, or whatever the opposite of that is.

Now, speaking to the rest of us non-poor people, we know that poverty in America still exists, right? We know that a subsistence measure of poverty doesn't really apply to the wealthiest country in the world. That sort of thing is really more relevant to third world countries that just don't have the means to care for their poor. Here, we have to measure poverty in a more comparative way. We have a social safety net that over the years has been successful in raising the overall standard of living for everyone, including those in poverty. Poverty in America is no longer a matter of mere *survival*. As the standard of living has improved, we've elevated the stakes to the point where we can now look at poverty as a matter of *thriving*. This is a good thing. So, are poor people thriving? How are the poorest in our society doing compared to you? Viewed under this light, these can become tough questions. We at least stop looking at things like cars, cell phones, and microwaves as luxury items. When we ask these questions and really think about the answers

honestly, we can see that there really are some serious issues with inequality in our country, that there is needless suffering and it's all around us. It all becomes very real. Perhaps this is why we might be so inclined to trick ourselves into reframing the question altogether. Sure, our poor people are surviving, so there's really no problem, right?

So, poor people, the rest of us really aren't such jerks. In fact, it's quite the opposite. You see, our apathy and indifference to your struggles have left us kind of complicit in them. As a result, we're kind of experiencing a little cognitive dissonance. Please be patient as we work through this. And in the meantime, can you do us a favor? As you make your grueling uphill journey towards social equality, happiness, and self actualization, could you do it on foot? Oh yeah, and keep your cell phone in your pocket.

CAPPYs

continued from page 3

preparation fees. CADC's Planning and Development Director, Robin Freeman, accepted the award on behalf of the agency.

Other nominees for the Best Production CAPPY award were the Community Action Program for Central Arkansas's *Cleburne County Holiday Food Box Distribution*, Mid-Delta Community Services' *Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program*, and Ozark Opportunities, Inc.'s *SUCCESS (Case Management Initiative)*.

Awards presenter Lanier closed the proceedings by praising all of the day's nominees and sharing his own personal enthusiasm for "seeing co-workers side-by-side, doing the hard work" and the infectious effects of such witness: "The dedication is truly invigorating."

Bradley

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Bradley's comments resounded loudly with the conference's theme of "Looking Back...Moving Forward." "We celebrate the past," he said, "but we also embrace and accept the responsibilities of the future." Continuing, he added, "This is an exciting time to be involved in the War on Poverty. In 32 years, I've never seen community action agencies more effective." Bradley also acknowledged the lineage descending from the program's originators, President Lyndon Johnson and Sargent Shriver, to those in the audience: "Everyone in this room is a direct inheritor of Johnson and Shriver; I thank you for your service."



Taking a look at our new logo!

The sharp-eyed among you will likely have noticed that this issue of The Action sports a new logo in its masthead. In the spirit of our annual conference theme, "Looking Back...Moving Forward," we decided that our anniversary would be an opportune occasion to reinvigorate our look. The new logo simultaneously recognizes ACAA's membership in the national Community Action Partnership while also emphasizing our focus on the citizens of Arkansas. Let us know what you think—send your emails to jmoran@acaaa.org.

Conference

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emphasizing what she described as "a tremendous partnership" between Human Services and the state's community action agencies. "We are kindred spirits," she said, "with a shared mission." Jones expressed also her gratitude at the many occasions when agencies had "rescued" Department clients: "We can only get them so far," she explained. "You," she said, indicating the audience, "are like the cavalry."

Toby Atkinson, executive director of Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (OOI), and president of the ACAA board of directors, returned the compliment to the Division of County Operations and its Office of Community Services: "We couldn't have done it without them," he said as he provided introductions in his role as the conference's master of ceremonies. "They are a major supporter—Joni has always been there when I needed help."

In her own words to those gathered, ACAA executive director Rose Adams reiterated the conference's theme of venerating the past while still pressing forward boldly; she praised the diversity of the crowd, including as it did not only "the generation that was in the trenches at the start of the War on Poverty," but "the generation after that—and the new generation after *that*." She noted also that 2014's attendance reflected the largest such group gathered in almost 15 years, yet another encouraging sign of healthy new blood pulsing in the organization's body. Adams' introduction of guest speaker Lisbeth Schorr, an instrumental figure in the formative stages of community action—"it is difficult to imagine that someone who was there from the start is still this vital, relevant, and vibrant"—could be said to be equally applicable to the cause of community action itself.

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