



The Action

THE A C A A A NEWSLETTER

November 2015

Many of you have been asked this question.

Some of you may have even asked it before, yourself.

Some of you who are receiving this newsletter for the first time may be asking it right now:

“What is Community Action?”

Community Action is the only congressionally-established network of agencies given the mandate of addressing the causes and conditions of poverty in the United States.

“What is Community Action?” people ask. Or—two common variations on that same question that also we hear a lot—“So, what are Community Action Agencies? What do they do?”

And here’s the funny thing: There are sixteen Community Action Agencies in Arkansas, and if you asked each of them that second question—*So what is it that you do?*—you’d probably get sixteen different answers. And why is that? Well, that brings us back to the first question.

You will find that most Community Action Agencies in Arkansas provide food assistance—and most provide utility assistance. Many agencies administer the Head Start centers in their communities, and many operate senior centers. Weatherization assistance? Also Community Action.

Inside this issue, we include brief snapshot profiles of all of those services. And, no doubt, they are what you might think of as Community Action’s “greatest hits”—but, as important and critical as these programs are, they are far from the full picture of Community Action in Arkansas.

Because Community Action is also substance abuse clinics. And dental care. And housing assistance. And employment services. It’s Meals on Wheels and tax preparation consultation, the Single Parent Scholarship Fund and emergency food and shelter. The answer to the question “What are Community Action Agencies?” is—*whatever each community needs.*

The very essence of Community Action is that one size does not fit all. Community Action Agencies were conceived to be changeable and adaptable and unbound by rigid definitions.

When President Lyndon Johnson conceived the idea of a “War on Poverty” and tapped the aptly-named Sargent Shriver to command his effort, he intuited that a top-down approach would never work. Johnson and Shriver both knew that, inevitably, the very best soldiers in the war on poverty would be those most familiar with the front lines. (See also “A Brief History of Community Action” on page 3.)

The nuts and bolts of what makes Community Action tick begin with its funding, which is largely through federal grants known as Community Service Block Grants (ask anyone who works in this field, and you will find he or she is intimately familiar with the initials “CSBG”). For every federal dollar, however, Arkansas’s state agencies are able to leverage \$4.50 more from state, local, private, and volunteer sources—this according to a report from a recent CSBG Information System Survey conducted by the National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP). This leveraging offers testimony to the ingenuity and dedication of the state’s agencies to making the most of their resources in the service of providing for those in need.

These grant monies are overseen and administered through Arkansas’s Office of Community Services, which is an office within the Department of Human Services’ Division of County Operations. Working together with the state’s agencies, OCS

COMMUNITY ACTION IS

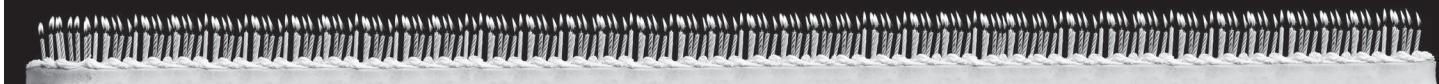


**DEDICATED TO
ELIMINATING
THE PARADOX OF
POVERTY IN THE
MIDST OF PLENTY**

**WHAT IS COMMUNITY ACTION?
FOR MORE, SEE PAGES 4 & 5**

See What is..., p. 5

HEAD START CELEBRATES ITS 50TH BIRTHDAY! • SEE PAGE 4



ACAAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The ACAA Board of Directors is composed of the Executive Directors of the state's 16 Community Action Agencies.

Officers of the Board

Richard T. "Toby" Atkinson
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Washington County
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James McPhaul
Southwest AR Development Council



NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking Ahead During a Time of Great Change

Defining our presence in time allows opportunity for redefinition altogether. ACAA and Community Action as a whole are approaching a time of great change. With multiple transitions in leadership in CAP agencies, the State Association and DHS, we are charged with the opportunity to add a new approach to the war on poverty.

Defining what that approach is will take time, dedication and evaluation by all involved in the system delivery process from policy to direct service. Throughout my career I have had the privilege to work with many different human service agencies that promote human dignity through their mission and the passion of those individuals that deliver the direct service to those in need; Community Action is no exception.

I have been committed to visiting all sixteen of the Community Action Agencies in Arkansas within my first year of employment, and one thing I have consistently learned from my visits

is the approach of each agency is always centered on the needs and resources of the community.

I am humbled by the great work the sixteen CAP agencies in Arkansas provide, and I am proud to represent Arkansas in both regional and national activities within our network. We already have the structure and system in place within Community Action that has been cultivated by years of passion and hard

*Development is the creation
and/or the enhancement of an
already established foundation.
We ARE Community Action.*

work in Community Action Agencies across the nation.

Our future is bright and our opportunity is clear now more than ever, to continue elevating poverty in the state of Arkansas and in our nation as a whole. Be sure your voice is intentional in the process and you are adding value to the mission at hand. As Gandhi said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

ARKANSAS COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES ASSOCIATION

Terry Bearden
ROMA Coordinator

Rebecca Reynolds
Executive Director

John Moran
Communications Director

The Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association represents 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 country established under the national landmark legislation approved by Congress in 1964 to eliminate "the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty." This newsletter is funded, in part, with a grant from the state Office of Community Services of the Arkansas Department of Human Services.

THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION • Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

ANOTHER BURNING QUESTION:

● “So, what is ACAAAA?” ●

The mission of the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association is to provide education, advocacy, and a unified voice to Community Action Agencies to reduce poverty and promote thriving communities in Arkansas.

If you were to give this issue of *The Action* to someone who was otherwise completely unfamiliar with Community Action, he or she might finish reading it and say, “Okay, now I’ve got some idea what the state’s agencies do—but what is the state agency association?”

Well, that’s us.

We are the association with the mouthful of a spelled-out name and an acronym that sounds like it was coined by *Bloom County’s Bill the Cat* (ACAAA, pronounced as in “ACK-uh”).

One of ACAAAA’s functions is—and this will be of little surprise to anyone now reading this very sentence in this newsletter that he or she is holding—communication. A lot of that communication

is external: We want to tell the world about the wonderful work being done by the Community Action agencies across the state. And a lot of that communication is internal: inside-baseball-type stuff having do with information that the *agencies* need to know (developments in federal regulations and that sort of thing).

As for what makes up that first type of communication, there is, of course, this quarterly newsletter. And there is also our companion *electronic* newsletter, which comes out monthly—you can check out the notice on page 8 for our “pitch” to get you to subscribe—just as you will find elsewhere in this issue our encouragements that you follow us on Facebook and Twitter. (Thus is our attempt to embrace the newest forms of social interaction while still maintaining what we see are the charms and benefits of the printed word.)

ACAAA has a critical educational component, as well; the association has been charged with orchestrating training for the state’s agency personnel across an assortment of disciplines, including human resources, financial administration, frontline services, and information technology. This is training that occurs year-round as well as figuring centrally in ACAAAA’s annual conference, which

also offers the opportunity to recognize and salute the year’s achievements in Community Action programs, staff, and volunteers.

One of ACAAAA’s most essential roles could be said to exist in answer to another frequently-asked question, i.e., “What does Community Action have to *show* for all these efforts?” Accountability is integral to the modern design of Community Action, so much so that it includes a comprehensive performance-based management system known as “ROMA”—a.k.a. Results-Oriented Management and Accountability. ACAAAA

We are the agency whose acronym sounds like it was coined by Bloom County’s Bill the Cat: ACAAAA, pronounced as in “ACK-uh.”

not only has a full-time ROMA Coordinator, Terry Bearden, among its staff, but she is furthermore a Nationally Certified ROMA Trainer (she is, in fact, an NCRT Master Trainer: in effect, a trainer who teaches other people how to be trainers), allowing for an ever-expanding network of accountability education across the state—an area, in fact, that has garnered Arkansas national recognition for its achievements and innovation.

ACAAA’s newest frontier is in pursuing an expanded role in the field of advocacy. The beauty of Community Action is that no two agencies are exactly alike because each has been tailored to the specific needs of its community, but there are inevitably common causes that reflect all of the agencies’ shared values—and these are the issues for which ACAAAA seeks to serve as the agencies’ collective voice, particularly in the lawmaking arena. Looking ahead to future legislative sessions, the association intends to act as an advocate both for the agencies themselves and for the clients that they serve—as well as serving as an information source for legislative developments of interest to those who support the mission of Community Action.

To those who may be receiving this newsletter for the first time, we are very happy to be making your acquaintance!



Community Action might have turned 50 last year, but it remains as spry and nimble as ever—thanks to its creators’ original design that instilled the program with the flexibility to grow and adapt over time and in changing circumstances.

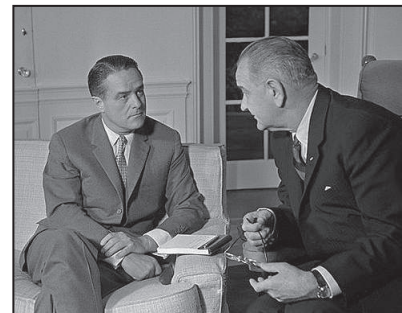
On January 8, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson announced to the people of America that he was, on that day, declaring a “War on Poverty.”

The opening salvo of this campaign—just one of many such ambitious undertakings envisioned by the President as building blocks for his proposed “Great Society”—would be the Economic Opportunity Act of that same year. From that act would be born the Community Action Program, and, from that program, the Community Action Agencies that would eventually number over 1,000 across the country.

Seeking insight into how to tackle a problem as persuasive and intractable as poverty, LBJ would call upon the expertise of Sargent Shriver—the man who had served as the Peace Corps’ inaugural director after its creation by Johnson’s predecessor, President John F. Kennedy (who also happened to be Shriver’s brother-in-law). Shriver would become known as the “architect” of Johnson’s War on Poverty.

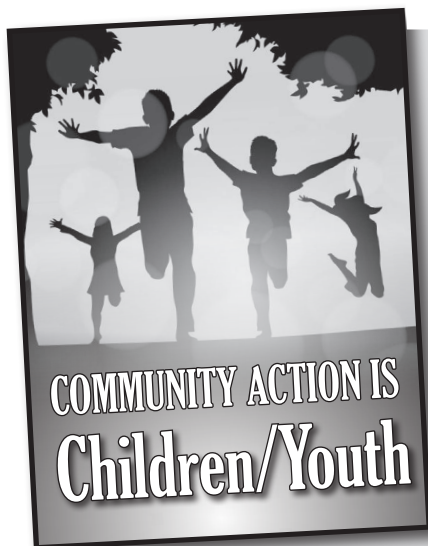
Among the Act’s creations would be programs for job training, adult

See History, p. 5



President Lyndon B. Johnson and the “architect of the War on Poverty,” Sargent Shriver

“What is Community Action?”



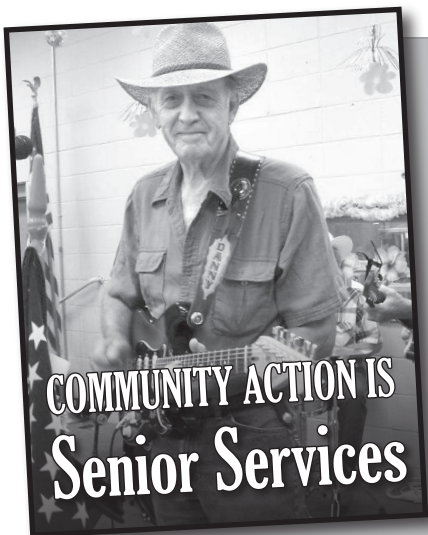
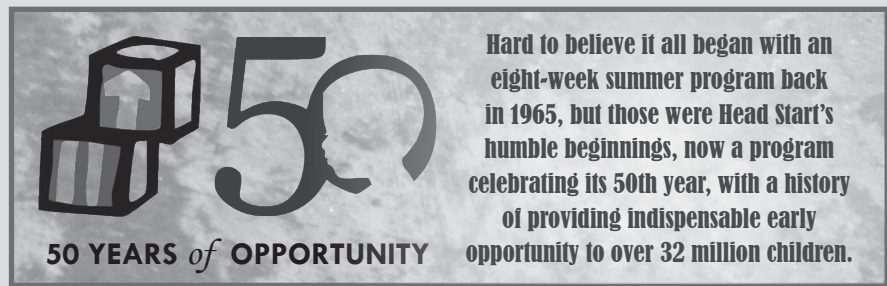
Head Start may be the most readily-identifiable program associated with Community Action. (In fact, the two are so closely related in many people's minds that some express surprise when they learn that the state's agencies do many other things *besides* Head Start.)

Of course, ACAA wants everyone to know about *all* of the worthwhile endeavors that constitute the mission of Community Action, but if you were going to be identified with any one undertaking, you certainly could do a lot worse than a program as vital to the well-being and development of society's most vulnerable citizens as Head Start.

Currently, eleven of the state's sixteen agencies operate Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant Head Start programs across the state, overseeing over 125 such centers in Arkansas, providing a range of services—including not only high-quality early education, but, in many cases, much-needed

nutrition—to more than 4,500 youth from low-income families.

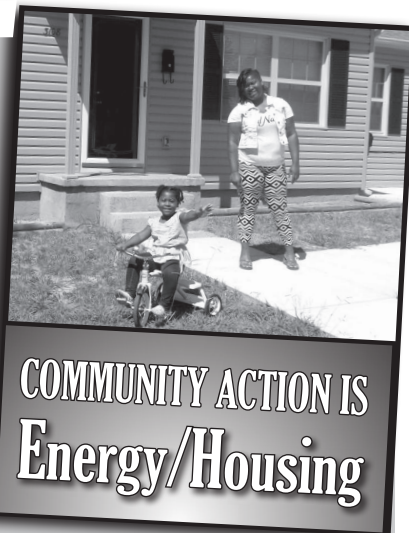
Other Community Action youth services outside of Head Start include child care food programs, prevention resources centers for drug awareness education, and home instruction for parents of preschoolers. Children's House in Springdale, administered by the Economic Opportunity Agency of Washington County (EOAWC), is the nation's largest long-term center for early childhood abuse prevention and treatment and the only center of its kind in Arkansas.



That “Senior Services” would appear directly below “Children & Youth” is the perfect symbol to illustrate that Community Action exists to provide assistance not only wherever it is needed, but *whenever*—at any and every stage in life when an Arkansan finds him- or herself in need, there is almost assuredly a program designed to lend guidance, encouragement, and aid.

Community Action operates 40 senior activity and wellness centers across the state, offering Arkansans who are over 60 much-needed recreation, fellowship, congregate meals, transportation, field trips, shopping assistance, computer training, book clubs, and motivational speakers—not to mention serving as a focal point for other senior services in the community with an emphasis on health &

wellness issues. In addition, home-delivered meals and Elder Choices programs focus on keeping seniors independent and living in their own homes whenever possible.



One of the best-known Community Action programs is the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (which is probably more familiar to most people as “LIHEAP”).

The program—which will be celebrating its 35th birthday next year—was created to assist low- and moderate-income individuals and families pay home electric bills. All sixteen of the state's Community Action Agencies offer LIHEAP, providing this much-needed assistance during the summer and winter seasons, when weather conditions can make being without electricity not just inconvenient, but potentially dangerous.

In the past year, Community Action has provided LIHEAP services to over 130,000 Arkansans, directing over \$20 million in funding assistance to the state's electric utilities on behalf of those in need of aid.

Of course, home heating and cooling are a non-issue if you have no home to heat and cool, which is why Community Action also provides an array of housing-related services and assistance, as well.

Assistance varies across the agencies according to need and community circumstances, but the variety of available services encompasses a wide spectrum of guidance that provides help along every step of a homeowner's journey—from pre-purchase education and credit counseling to downpayment assistance and closing cost loans; from individual development accounts and home rehabilitation to house reconstruction and do-it-yourself self-help home construction.

The Community Action mission to seek shelter for those with impaired capacity to provide it for themselves includes, as well, low-income rental housing, special needs housing for the handicapped and developmentally disabled, and rental housing specifically for seniors.



Hunger in Arkansas: The statistics are deeply sobering. On almost every national scale—overall food insecurity, senior hunger, child hunger—Arkansas is near, or *at*, the top of the list. Gold medalists in contests no one would ever want to win.

In the face, however, of a problem so overwhelming and an outlook so despairing, Community Action responds, undaunted, with resolution and passion, common sense and inspiration.

Food programs are myriad; in keeping with the spirit of Community Action, the approach varies according to the specifics of each situation's needs. Many of the state's agencies provide pantries within their service areas, while Community Action also administers major food banks such as the River Valley Food Bank, which supplies multiple such outlets for food distribution.

As well, most of the state's agencies serve a critical role in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Emergency Food Assistance Program (known as TEFAP), acting as distributors of surplus commodities purchased by the USDA from American farmers.

Of course, Community Action helps to feed Arkansans young and old through the various meals that are served at both its Head Start centers and senior centers—as well as through meals home delivered to older housebound residents and summer programs for children who otherwise rely on their schools' food programs for regular meals.

Within a year, Community Action agencies distribute over eight million pounds of food to local organizations to help reduce hunger.

What is...

continued from page 3

assists in maximizing the “bang for the buck” return on CSBG dollars with an eye towards ensuring that the state's low-income residents are reaping the most possible benefits from the assistance being offered. Or, in the words of the Economic Opportunity Act that started it all, working tirelessly to eliminate “the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty.”

History

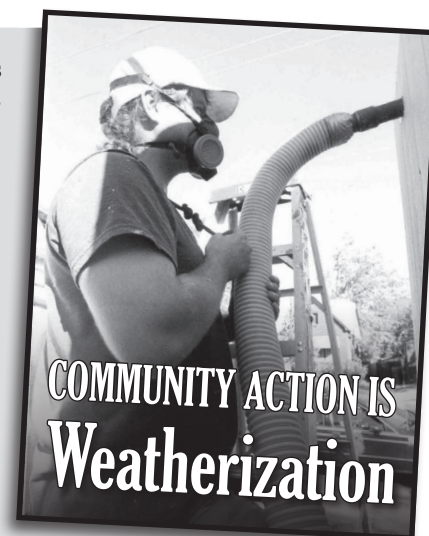
continued from page 3

education, loans for rural families, the Volunteers in Service to America program (a.k.a. “VISTA”), Head Start, and, of course, the lasting legacy of Community Action, which continues to this day, five decades hence, to encourage its participants towards greater self-sufficiency and fulfillment of their inborn promise.

The Weatherization Assistance Program has served low-income families for over 35 years, offering a range of home improvements—including insulation of walls, floors and attics; caulking and sealing of cracks and holes; retrofitting furnaces; weather-stripping and, when necessary, replacing doors and windows; repairing or replacing heating and cooling systems; and installing low-flow showerheads and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors—in order to help make for more energy-efficient households with lower electric bills.

This program—currently operated by six of Arkansas's agencies, which divide the state among them (BRAD, CADC, CAPCA, CRDC, C-SCDC, and PBJCEOC; see next page for full agency names)—has injected more than \$170 million into communities throughout the state to improve more than 74,500 homes, affecting the lives of thousands of people, including many elderly, disabled, and families with children.

The program was established nationally by the federal Department of Energy in 1976 to help those of low and moderate income have homes that were more energy efficient—and



safer and more healthy. Currently, the state's agencies work in conjunction with the Arkansas Energy Office—an office of the state's Department of Economic Development—to oversee and administer the program.

PHOTO CREDITS

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upcoming events /

For more information, visit the [Calendar page at www.acaaa.org](http://www.acaaa.org)

November 17-18, 2015 • ACAA Board Meeting / Human Resources Training • Arkansas Public Transit Safety & Resource Center • 620 W. Broadway • North Little Rock

December 1, 2015 • Fiscal Training: “Developing Strategies for Uniform Guidance Compliance” • (Intermediate- to advanced-level training) • Cox Creative Center • 120 River Market Ave. • Little Rock

January 6-8, 2016 • Community Action Partnership (CAP) Management and Leading Training Conference • New Orleans, Louisiana

February 22-26 • National Association of State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP) Mid-Winter Training Conference • Alexandria, Virginia

Get to know your local Community Action Agency!

Arkansas River Valley Area Council, Inc. (ARVAC)

613 N. 5th St. / Dardanelle, AR 72834 / Phone: (479) 229-4861 / www.arvacinc.org

Black River Area Development Corp. (BRAD)

1403 Hospital Drive / Pocahontas, AR 72455 / (870) 892-4547

www.blackriverareadevelopment.com

Central Arkansas Development Council, Inc. (CADC)

321 Edison Avenue / Benton, AR 72018 / (501) 315-1121 / www.cadc.com

Community Action Program for Central Arkansas, Inc. (CAPCA)

707 Robins Street / Conway, AR 72034 / (501) 329-3891 / www.capcainc.org

Community Services Office, Inc. (CSO)

P.O. Box 1175 / Hot Springs, AR 71902 / (501) 624-5724

Crawford-Sebastian Community Development Council, Inc. (C-SCDC)

4381 Armour Avenue / Fort Smith, AR 72904 / (479) 785-2303 / www.cscdcaa.org

Crowley's Ridge Development Council, Inc. (CRDC)

2401 Fox Meadow Lane / Jonesboro, AR 72403 / (870) 802-7100 / www.crdcnea.com

Economic Opportunity Agency of Washington County (EOAWC)

614 Emma St., Ste. M401 / Springdale, AR 72764 / (479) 872-7479 / www.eoawc.org

Mid-Delta Community Services, Inc. (M-DCS)

610 South Biscoe Street / Helena, AR 72342 / (870) 338-6406

www.middeltacommunityservices.org

Mississippi County Arkansas Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc. (MCAEOC)

1400 North Division / Blytheville, AR 72315 / (870) 776-1054 / www.mcaeoc.com

Northcentral Arkansas Development Council, Inc. (NADC)

550 Ninth Street / Batesville, AR 72501 / (870) 793-5765 / www.nadcinc.org

Office of Human Concern, Inc. (OHC)

506 E. Spruce St. / Rogers, AR 72757 / (479) 636-7301 / www.eohc.org

Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (OOI)

701 E. Prospect Ave. / Harrison, AR 72602 / (870) 741-9406 / www.ozarkopp.org

Pine Bluff Jefferson County Economic Opportunities Commission, Inc. (PBJCEOC)

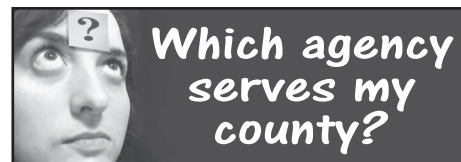
1201 W. Pullen St. / Pine Bluff, AR 71611 / (870) 536-0046 x 117 / www.pbjceoc.org

Southeast Arkansas Community Action Corp. (SEACAC)

1208 North Myrtle Street / Warren, AR 71671 / (870) 226-5512 / www.seacac.com

Southwest Arkansas Development Council, Inc. (SWADC)

3902 Sanderson Lane / Texarkana, AR 71854 / (870) 773-5504 / www.swadc.org



Arkansas	PBJCEOC
Ashley.....	SEACAC
Baxter.....	OOI
Benton.....	OHC
Boone.....	OOI
Bradley.....	SEACAC
Calhoun.....	CADC
Carroll.....	OHC
Chicot.....	SEACAC
Clark.....	CADC
Clay.....	BRAD
Cleburne.....	CAPCA
Cleveland.....	PBJCEOC
Columbia.....	CADC
Conway.....	ARVAC
Craighead.....	CRDC
Crawford.....	C-SCDC
Crittenden.....	CRDC
Cross.....	CRDC
Dallas.....	CADC
Desha.....	SEACAC
Drew.....	SEACAC
Faulkner.....	CAPCA
Franklin.....	ARVAC
Fulton.....	NADC
Garland.....	CSO
Grant.....	PBJCEOC
Greene.....	CRDC
Hempstead.....	SWADC
Hot Spring.....	CADC
Howard.....	SWADC
Independence.....	NADC
Izard.....	NADC
Jackson.....	CRDC
Jefferson.....	PBJCEOC
Johnson.....	ARVAC
Lafayette.....	SWADC
Lawrence.....	BRAD
Lee.....	M-DCS
Lincoln.....	PBJCEOC
Little River.....	SWADC
Logan.....	ARVAC
Lonoke.....	CADC
Madison.....	OHC
Marion.....	OOI
Miller.....	SWADC
Mississippi.....	MCAEOC
Monroe.....	M-DCS
Montgomery.....	CADC
Nevada.....	SWADC
Newton.....	OOI
Ouachita.....	CADC
Perry.....	ARVAC
Phillips.....	M-DCS
Pike.....	CADC
Poinsett.....	CRDC
Polk.....	ARVAC
Pope.....	ARVAC
Prairie.....	M-DCS
Pulaski.....	CADC
Randolph.....	BRAD
Saline.....	CADC
Scott.....	ARVAC
Searcy.....	OOI
Sebastian.....	C-SCDC
Sevier.....	SWADC
Sharp.....	NADC
St. Francis.....	CRDC
Stone.....	NADC
Union.....	CADC
Van Buren.....	OOI
Washington.....	EOAWC
White.....	CAPCA
Woodruff.....	CRDC
Yell.....	ARVAC

“THREE GREAT *Action*” VERBS:

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Have you liked



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AR CAA](https://twitter.com/ARCAA)

We've got plenty
more to share about
Community Action if
you'd like to follow!

COMING SOON:

Keep your eyes out for exciting
news about an all-new ACAA
website with a fresh look and
lots of great new features!

www.acaaa.org

TRANSITIONS

James “Jim” McPhaul is the newly named Executive Director for Southwest Arkansas Development Council (SWADC). With a degree in Business Administration from North Carolina State University, McPhaul comes to SWADC with twenty-five years of senior level management experience in the private sector, particularly in the aviation field.

A resident of Texarkana for the past twenty years, he and his wife, Cheryl, have five children. In his spare time, McPhaul is, in his own words, “an avid fisherman, an awful golfer, and an antique car enthusiast.”



SWADC's
Jim McPhaul



CRDC's Tim
Wooldridge

Tim Wooldridge was recently named Executive Director of Crowley's Ridge Development Council, Inc. (CRDC).

Wooldridge, a native of Paragould, is a former legislator, having served 16 years in the Arkansas House of Representatives and Arkansas Senate. His professional career includes serving as Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Crowley's Ridge College, Vice President of Advancement for Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, and Executive Director of the Arkansas Association of Public Universities.

Wooldridge and his wife Lisa, have two grown children, and three grandchildren.

ACAAA 2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Awards & Accolades

ACAAA would like to congratulate its award recipients from the association's recent 2015 Annual Conference. These were truly “firsts among equals”—the best of the best of the year's finest examples of community action programs, staff, volunteers, and clients!

CAPPY AWARD WINNER

BEST PROGRAM

EOA Children's House

Economic Opportunity Agency of
Washington County • EOAWC

CAPPY AWARD WINNER

BEST PERFORMANCE

IN A LEADING ROLE

Sue Hyles

Community Action Program for
Central Arkansas • CAPCA

CAPPY AWARD WINNER

BEST PERFORMANCE

IN A SUPPORTING ROLE

Linda F. Smith

Central Arkansas Development
Council • CADC

CLIENT ACTION AWARDS

Lesa Ford • ARVAC

Kay Stone • NADC

Keleen Surray • SWADC

SUPPORTER ACTION AWARDS

Sandra Cheffer • ARVAC

Austin Bollen • CADC

Ruth Voss • CAPCA

Clara Ramsey • NADC

Pam Pounders • NADC

Dee Anna Griswold • SWADC



The 2015 ACAA conference provided a great opportunity to salute former association executive director **Rose Adams**, pictured above, center, receiving a certificate of recognition from new ACAA executive director **Rebecca Reynolds** and association president **Toby Atkinson**.

BATMAN & F
SMITH & WE
HALL & OATE
RIZZOLI & IS
ABBOT & CO
SISKEL & EBE
MARTIN & LEV
TANGO & CAS
LAVERNE & S
ERIC B. & RAKI
CHICO & THE A
SIMON & GARF

Some things just work better as a team.

For example: the “Action” newsletter that you’re holding **and** the “e-Action” electronic newsletter that *could* be arriving in your inbox every month!

Sign up for regular updates on meetings & conferences of interest, new webinars, benefits, and the latest news & notes from the state’s community action agencies!

IT’S EASY TO SIGN UP!

- visit the ACAA website at www.acaaa.org
- or visit us & sign up on Facebook at www.facebook.com/arcommunityaction
- or send your email address to jmoran@acaaa.org

eAction
ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

OR JUST SCAN HERE!



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