

# ANNUAL REPORT

October 2022 - September 2023



## NEW YORK STATE COMMUNITY ACTION ASSOCIATION



New York State Community Action Association  
Helping People. Changing Lives.



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# NEW YORK STATE COMMUNITY ACTION ASSOCIATION

## ABOUT NYSCAA

NYSCAA was created in 1987 to provide New York State Community Action Agencies with information, professional development, and technical assistance to enhance the capacity of agencies to serve as effective, responsive community resources.

## OUR MISSION

The New York State Community Action Association (NYSCAA) strengthens the capacity of the Community Action network to address the causes and conditions of poverty.

## OUR VALUES

- NYSCAA supports a network that promotes and values inclusion, diversity, equity, and justice.
- NYSCAA works with all people with respect and sensitivity and fosters a community of safety and trust.
- NYSCAA believes in the power of compassion, collaboration, advocacy, agitation, and the power of systemic change to overcome poverty.
- NYSCAA believes all individuals need hope and opportunity to succeed.
- NYSCAA is committed to excellence, accountability, and innovation in all that it does.

## 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.*



# NEW YORK STATE COMMUNITY ACTION ASSOCIATION

## OUR TEAM

**Jackie Orr**, CEO

**Charles Barbay**, Program Director

**Heidi Barcomb**, Program and Communications Director

**Phoebe Schimpf**, Program and Technology Director

## NYSCAA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

**President:** Maureen Abbott, *Tioga Opportunities, Inc.*

**Vice President:** Diane Hewitt-Johnson, *Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.*

**Secretary:** Dan Maskin, *Opportunities for Otsego, Inc.*

**Treasurer:** Diane Cooper-Currier, *Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.*

### AT LARGE

Shelly Bartow, *Delaware Opportunities, Inc.*

Neenah Bland, *Albany Community Action Partnership*

Mike Bobbitt, *NYC Department of Youth and Community Development*

Lesley Gooch Christman, *ACCORD Corporation*

Renee Hungerford, *Community Action of Orleans & Genesee*

Eric Poulson, *Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc.*

Charles Quinn, *Regional Economic Community Action Program*

Greg Richards, *Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc.*

Laura Rossman, *Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc.*

Tina Sharpe, *Columbia Opportunities, Inc.*

Elizabeth Spira, *Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County*

Amy Turner, *Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc.*

Nancy Turo, *PEACE, Inc.*

Jerome Underwood, *Action for Better Community, Inc.*

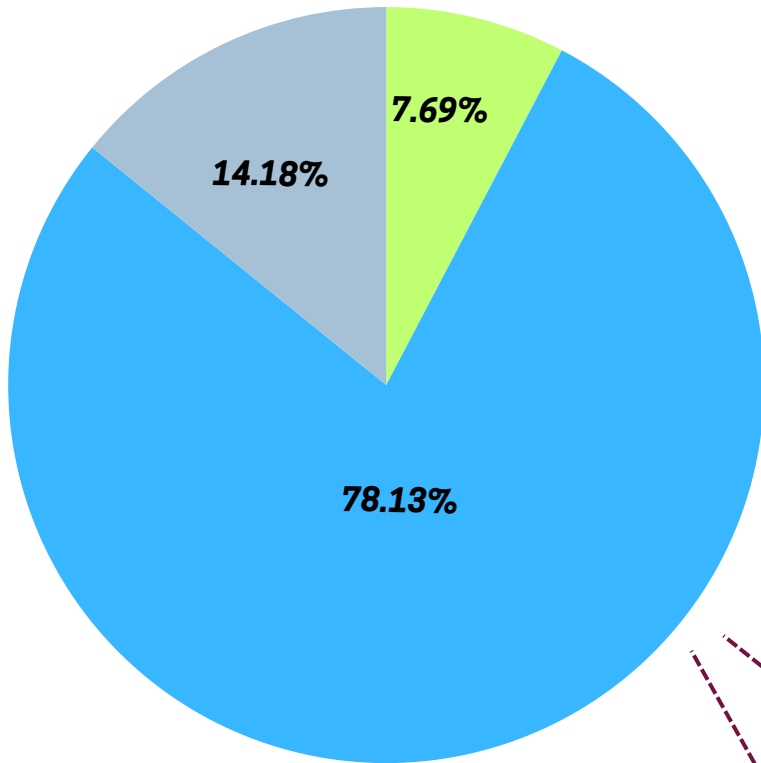
Denis Wilson, *Fulmont Community Action Agency, Inc.*

Tina Zerbian, *Connecting Communities in Action*



# NYSCAA FINANCES

■ Association Dues ■ Grant Income ■ Other

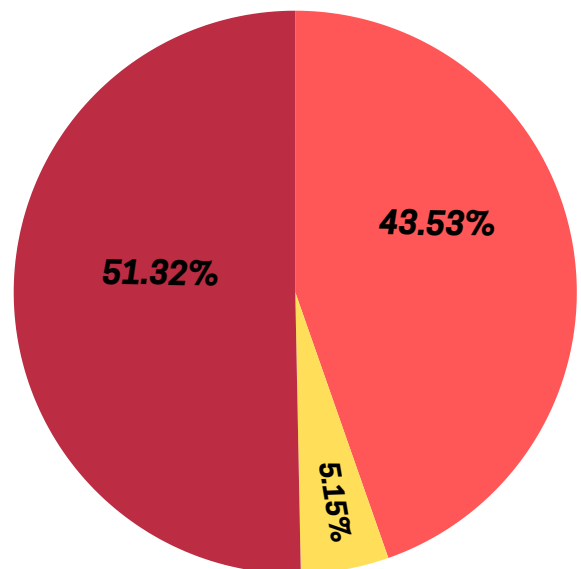


## GRANT FUNDING SOURCES

- Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (RPIC & DDDRP)
- Federal Communications Commission (ACP)
- New York State Department of State, Division of Community Services (CSBG)

## “OTHER” BREAKDOWN

■ Events/Conferences ■ Sponsor/Vendor Income ■ Miscellaneous



*These graphs represent all revenue that was generated beginning October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023*

# THE NEW YORK COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY NETWORK



With a network of 47 organizations located throughout the Empire State that can reach every New Yorker, Community Action Agencies form a statewide service delivery system that connects individuals and families to the services they need to achieve economic security. When it comes to moving folks from poverty to self-sufficiency, Community Action Agencies know what works. Community Action Agencies achieve positive results that change lives and strengthen communities.

## CAPITAL DISTRICT REGION

- Albany Community Action Partnership
- CEO
- Columbia Opportunities
- Community Action of Greene County, Inc.
- Fulmont Community Action Agency, Inc.
- LEAP
- LifeWorks Community Action
- Opportunities for Otsego, Inc.
- Schenectady Community Action Program, Inc.
- Schoharie County Community Action Program, Inc.

## CENTRAL & SOUTHERN TIER REGION

- Community Action Program for Madison County, Inc.
- Community Action Programs Cayuga/ Seneca (CAP)
- Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO)
- Delaware Opportunities, Inc.
- Economic Opportunity Program of Chemung & Schuyler Counties
- Finger Lakes Community Action
- Greater Opportunities
- Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency
- Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.
- PEACE, Inc.
- Pro Action of Steuben & Yates, Inc.
- Tioga Opportunities, Inc.
- Tompkins Community Action, Inc.

## NORTH COUNTRY REGION

- Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc.
- Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County, Inc.
- JCEO of Clinton & Franklin Counties, Inc.
- Lewis County Opportunities, Inc.
- St. Lawrence County Community Development Program, Inc.
- Warren-Hamilton Counties Community Action Agency

## NYC, LI, & MID-HUDSON REGION

- Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County
- EOC of Nassau County
- EOC of Suffolk County
- New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
- Regional Economic Community Action Program (RECAP)
- Ulster County Community Action Committee, Inc.
- Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc.
- Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.

## WESTERN REGION

- ACCORD Corporation
- Action for a Better Community, Inc.
- Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.
- Community Action for Wyoming County
- Community Action of Orleans & Genesee, Inc.
- Community Action Organization of Western New York
- Connecting Communities in Action
- Livingston County Office of Workforce Development
- Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.
- PathStone



# NEW INITIATIVES

## DIAPER DISTRIBUTION DEMONSTRATION & RESEARCH PILOT PROGRAM

NYSCAA was awarded a grant from the Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services for 1.2 million dollars to participate in the Diaper Distribution Demonstration and Research Pilot Program (DDDRP) for two years. NYSCAA partnered with two regional diaper banks and four Community Action Agencies: Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc. (MVCAA), Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc. (CAPCO), Community Action for Wyoming County (WCCA), and Community Action Programs Cayuga/Seneca (CAP) to facilitate monthly diaper distribution and other services to improve financial sustainability. The DDDR program is about more than providing diapers; it's a holistic approach to supporting families, understanding the broader impacts of diaper needs on financial stability, and overall well-being.



## AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

In June 2023, NYSCAA was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). NYSCAA is collaborating with three Community Action Agencies: Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc. (CAPCO), Connecting Communities in Action (CCA) serving Cattaraugus County, and Community Action Program for Madison County, Inc. The ACP funds outreach and education to support families signing up for the Affordable Connectivity Benefit. The ACP enables families to receive a monthly discount on internet bills, seeking to decrease the inequities related to the digital divide.



# ENGAGING THE NETWORK

NYSCAA supports collective learning, sharing best practices, and resource identification for New York’s CAA staff through **Communities of Practice (CoP)**, **Affinity Groups**, and the **ROMA Alliance**. Sharing promising practices and discussing current issues with colleagues strengthens the Community Action Network to change lives and transform communities.

## AFFINITY GROUPS

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- CAPTAIN & CAP60
- Executive Assistants
- Finance
- Human Resources (HR)
- Information Technology (IT)

## COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

- Data Management
- Trauma-Informed Care Agency

## 2023 REGIONAL MEETINGS

The 2023 Regional Meetings brought together staff from NYSCAA, the NYS Department of State (DOS), and the CAAs to network with peers and hear about innovative solutions to common needs across the state. CAAs were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the CSBG State Plan, and participate in round table discussions focused on evidence-based programs in CAAs!



# ENGAGING THE NETWORK

## LIGHTS, CAMERA, COMMUNITY ACTION PODCAST

The Lights, Camera, Community Action podcast provides in-depth conversations with Community Action professionals about transforming communities and alleviating poverty in New York State. Join us to hear about innovative programs and services, stories of success and challenges, and the Association's role in strengthening the New York Community Action Network.

### Available Episodes:

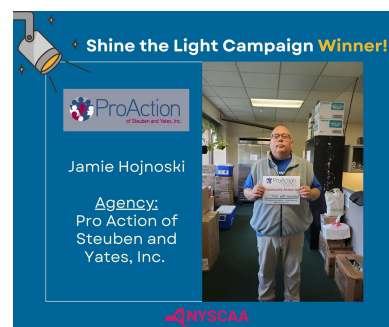
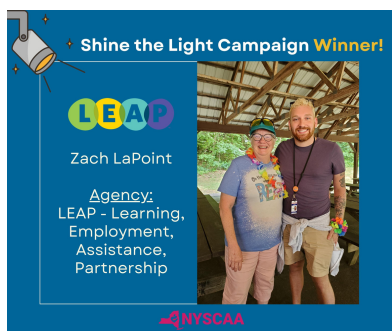
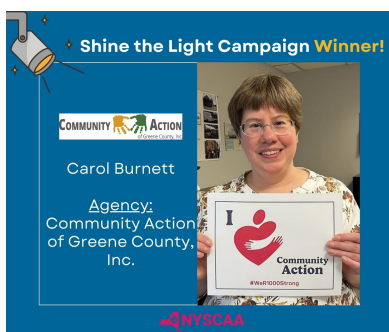
- Getting to Know Community Action
- Housing Programs & Solutions
- NYSCAA's Emerging Leaders Institute
- Addressing Food Insecurity
- Affirming Fatherhood



[nyscaa.podbean.com](http://nyscaa.podbean.com)

## COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH'S SHINE THE LIGHT CAMPAIGN

NYSCAA's "Shine the Light" campaign was established as part of Community Action Month to highlight the fantastic CAA staff and their stories about their work in Community Action.



# TOOLS & RESOURCES



## NYSCAA LEARN

Community Action's Online Learning Portal

NYSCAA Learn is an innovative online learning hub created by NYSCAA to provide free courses and resources tailored to Community Action professionals. With Over 70 courses and 85 hours of training - covering critical topics like poverty, technology, and diversity, NYSCAA Learn empowers Community Action staff, board members, and volunteers in New York to boost their skills and knowledge. **There are 2,433 users on NYSCAA Learn.**

### NEW COURSES IN 2023

#### CyberSecurity

This course provides a comprehensive overview of common cybersecurity threats and best practices for individuals and organizations.

#### NY Perspectives on Community Action

Discover the indispensable role of Community Action's principles as the backbone of New York's vibrant Community Action agencies.

#### Economic Opportunity Act

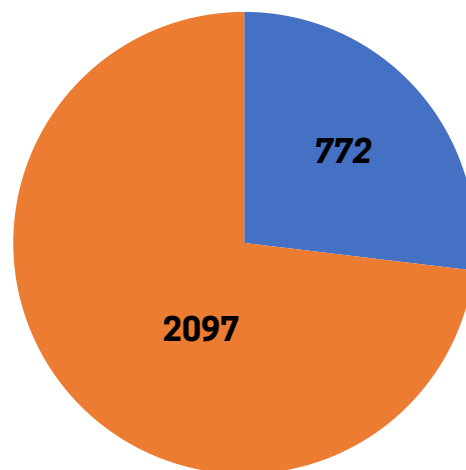
Understand the War on Poverty's crown jewel. Study how the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 created programs like Head Start, VISTA, and Community Action. Complete this short course and receive your certificate of knowledge about this anti-poverty legislation.

**Additionally, over 58 webinar recordings have been added to NYSCAA Learn in 2023!**

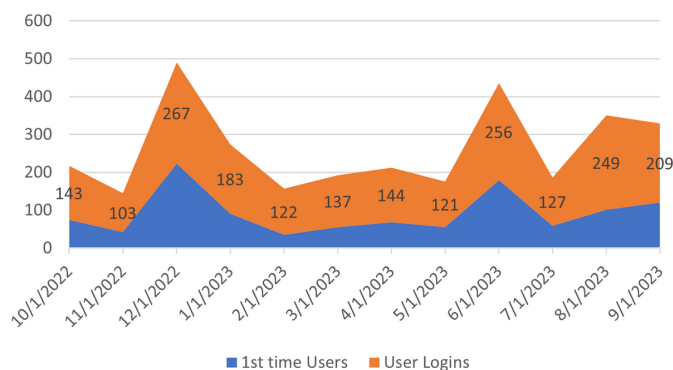
### BY THE NUMBERS

**2,869 Total Enrollments 10.1.22 - 9.30.23**

■ Enrollments (Recordings) ■ Enrollments (eLearning)



### User Access by Month 10.1.22 - 9.30.23



# TOOLS & RESOURCES



## NYS POVERTY REPORT

The New York State Poverty Report provides a statewide look at poverty and is designed to be a comprehensive resource for New York's Community Action Agencies, community-based organizations, policymakers, advocates, community coalitions, and the general public.

### What's available in the report:

- New York State Poverty Profile
- New York Counties Poverty Profiles
- Key City Profiles
- A Comparative Look at New York's County Poverty Levels
- Expanded ALICE Data
- Data Trends for Median Household Income by Race & Ethnicity and Child Poverty Rates

## NYSCAA'S DATA HUB



The NYSCAA Data Hub houses information from a variety of State and Federal sources and compiles it into a single downloadable and editable report which includes all NYSCAA member agency service areas and New York counties. The Data Hub includes:

- Community Needs Assessment Data
- Poverty Reports
- COVID-19 Dashboard
- Community Action Resource Guide



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## NYSCAA'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE



The annual conference brings together representatives from Community Action and Weatherization Agencies to learn, be inspired, inspire others, and discuss strategies for meeting new challenges. Conference guests gain insights from a wide variety of speakers – from Community Action and Weatherization staff, academicians, policymakers, practitioners, and more!

**250+** Individuals participated in the 2023 Annual Conference: Building Capacity, Impacting Communities



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## 2023 COMMUNITY ACTION AWARDS



### Community Action Vision & Values

**2023 Recipient: Jessica Lowell, NYS Dept. of State**

This award recognizes an individual and/or group who has/have contributed significantly to the Community Action Network, helping to impact the mission, programs, or activities, exemplifying the true meaning of Community Action.



### Innovation

**2023 Recipient: Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc.**

This award is given to a Community Action Agency's current project, program, or initiative that demonstrates an innovative and effective response to a community challenge, addressing a need in the community.



### Leadership

**2023 Recipients: Sandy Sheridan, Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. (left); Tina Zerbian, Connecting Communities in Action (right)**

This award recognizes an employee of the Community Action Network who has positively impacted their community or the Network at large, and who has taken a leadership role in issues affecting low-income persons.



### Personal Achievement

**2023 Recipient: Michael Lockett, Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.**

This award recognizes a current participant or customer in Community Action who has achieved significant personal accomplishments.



### Service

**2023 Recipients: Wayne Snyder, Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. (left); Loriann Spatola-Davis, Tioga Opportunities, Inc. (right)**

This award recognizes a Community Action employee who demonstrates professionalism, a "just do it" attitude, the willingness to go the extra mile to help someone in need, respect for all people, and positively impacts individuals and families through their day-to-day work.



### Social Justice

**2023 Recipient: Brianna Milon, Action for a Better Community, Inc.**

This award recognizes the exceptional and innovative contributions of Community Action Agencies, their staff, and programs in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) throughout New York's Community Action Network.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



## TRAININGS & EVENTS

NYSCAA provided training to all New York State Community Action Agencies. We partnered with a number of resource providers, state and federal agencies, and private organizations to provide high-quality trainings on relevant topics for the network.

**995** Individuals participated in NYSCAA Webinars & Trainings

## EMERGING LEADERS INSTITUTE (ELI)

ELI is a year-long leadership development program designed to build the capacity of future leaders within New York's Community Action Network. Graduates from the first year (1.0) are able to continue their work with ELI for an additional year as part of ELI 2.0.

**40** New ELI Graduates in 2023



# COMMUNITY ACTION WORKS!

## DELIVERING SUCCESS

Life changing assistance was available at Pro Action's Hornell Family Resource Center (FRC) for Jessica Stephens and her two-year old son, Ben, and they didn't even know it!

Jessica was referred to the Hornell Family Resource Center for their Get Ready to GROW health and developmental screening event after noticing some concerns with Ben's speech and behavior. The staff helped Jessica register for the event and explained what to expect. While Ben didn't finish the entire screening, Jessica shared that the staff were very patient, reassuring, and understanding throughout. After the screening, Jessica made an appointment with her son's pediatrician to seek more help. Ultimately, Ben was diagnosed with high-functioning autism and was provided medical resources and support.

Following the GROW screening, a staff coordinator at Hornell FRC approached Jessica with more information about upcoming "What You Do Matters" classes and encouraged her to attend. Jessica credits the classes with helping her understand what was happening with Ben's brain and they helped her build coping skills within herself and Ben. What she learned in the workshops helped her rid herself of the self-doubt she was carrying, and build confidence in her skills as a parent. She also learned ways to better manage her emotions, and help Ben manage his. The staff at Hornell FRC made recommendations to incorporate small changes to their reading and bedtime routine which made story time more enjoyable, and helped Ben begin sleeping in his own bed. Jessica credits the Hornell FRC staff with providing great advice, helpful recommendations, and being there to validate her as a parent.

Jessica says: "Overall, my experience with the Hornell Family Resource Center honestly has been life changing. My family runs smoother day-to-day, we have more coping mechanisms for my son, I am a calmer, more understanding mother now, and my family is significantly happier overall"



**ProAction**  
of Steuben and Yates, Inc.  
*helping people. changing lives.*

# COMMUNITY ACTION WORKS!

## DELIVERING SUCCESS

Cody Abbato came to Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc. (CAPCO) looking for volunteer work. He was recovering from a drug addiction and working on his sobriety in a local halfway house where volunteerism was a mandatory part of the program. Cody started out giving a few hours a week in the Family Essentials clothing closet sorting donations and helping customers find what they needed. Cody enjoyed helping others and found his volunteer work gave him hope and inspired him to complete his program and look to a future helping others. Cody quickly came out of his shell and became a valued member of the CAPCO team. Cody expanded from Family Essentials to helping in the maintenance department and lending a hand whenever someone in the office needed it

While volunteering at CAPCO Cody re-enrolled in the Adult Education Program and began working toward getting his High School Diploma. Cody was a dedicated student who met with his instructor and studied for the test in his spare time. Cody's dedication paid off as he received his High School Diploma in the summer of 2023. In addition, Cody finished his recovery program and has moved into independent living. Since completing the program Cody continues to help others struggling with addiction and was instrumental in building the first ever recovery awareness day picnic in a local park. In addition, Cody has taken his love for the outdoors and founded a waterway clean-up project with others who are dedicated to keeping local waterways clean. Cody is just beginning to build the life he has dreamed of. CAPCO is very proud to be a part of Cody's story and eager to see the next chapter for him!



SERVING THE CORTLAND NEW YORK  
COMMUNITY SINCE 1974

# COMMUNITY ACTION WORKS!

## DELIVERING SUCCESS

Everyone deserves a safe place to call home. For Patricia, the struggles of living in an older manufactured home in need of health and safety repairs and helping raise her grandchildren was overwhelming. “Before this program, I was struggling financially. I didn’t have enough to fix my home and struggled with utilities and heat.” Patricia said.

The preservation of affordable housing options is absolutely critical in the fight against poverty. In rural areas like Tioga County, where manufactured homes make up 15% of residential structures, it offers a unique option for homeownership. Manufactured housing today looks and functions differently than the trailer-style homes of the past due to the 1976 law that put national building codes in place for the construction of manufactured housing.

Today, high standards for safety, energy efficiency and durability make manufactured housing an asset to confront the housing affordability gap. This often-undervalued form of housing is once again coming to the forefront of unsubsidized, affordable homeownership. Tioga Opportunities, Inc. proudly plays a part in bringing this option to the community by administrating the Mobile & Manufactured Home Replacement program (MMHR) funded by New York State Homes & Community Renewal.

TOI has worked with three families in Tioga County during the months-long process of replacing their older mobile homes with brand-new, energy-efficient, manufactured housing. As part of the building process, each family underwent permitting, environmental review and testing, demolition and removal, site preparation, and installation of their new manufactured homes. Among the site work that supported the new houses were installing septic systems, enhanced water services, and brand-new electrical systems. As the keys were handed over to the homeowners, they said they felt like they had won the lottery and were being given a second chance.

“I feel great about everything, and I’m very lucky to have been able to participate in this program. My grandchildren and I can enjoy the comfort and safety of my new home. It is a wonderful program; I have told so many people about it. I would be willing to give advice to anyone looking to go through the program themselves”, Patricia added.



# COMMUNITY ACTION WORKS!

## DELIVERING SUCCESS

Imagine one-day living life in a confined space where time is not your own, and your days have few personal opportunities and choices. Then, you are told that you are free to make choices on your own, and those around you will scrutinize each choice. Your knowledge of life and society also lacks ten years of vital information.

This is how I met Paul (name changed for privacy). My first interaction with Paul was assisting him with creating a resume, filling out applications, and then determining how to live where vehicles drive fast past sidewalks (no cars in prison), and your apartment has fewer creature comforts than the cell you lived in for the past ten years. Each day Paul and I interacted, we focused on one piece of the puzzle and discussed other areas needing attention. In time, Paul could navigate the computer employment application process on his own, and we were able to obtain a seasonal job picking potatoes. Here, Paul learned to teach others through on-the-job training, and after the season ended, he was back to looking for a job to foster his career goals.

During this downtime, Wyoming County Community Action (WCCA) assisted Paul with preparing and filing his first-ever NYS and Federal Tax Returns. He was delighted to be a part of the workforce and support his community, state, and nation – something he could not do for a long time. His skills landed him a new job with Applebee's, where he still works. WCCA assisted him in purchasing the needed clothing and footwear for this job and navigating the process of working towards his driver's license to open even more opportunities.

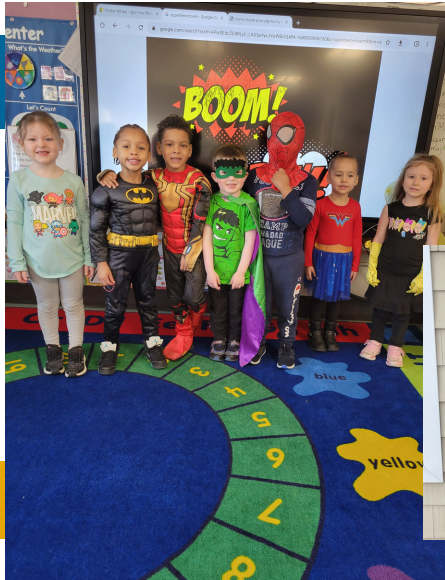
Paul continues to check in with WCCA to share his progress and show appreciation. He has become self-sufficient and no longer requires our watchful eye and diligent guidance to navigate life. He has been a free man for over a year and has conquered the odds of recidivism. Each day provides Paul with new opportunities to test his skills, and he continues to meet each one with his infectious giggle and toothy smile, knowing that we at WCCA are with him on his journey.



# COMMUNITY ACTION WORKS!



# COMMUNITY ACTION WORKS!



# PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

“

I look forward to the conference every year! I get so many ideas, and it's such a morale booster for me. Every year, I feel like I just attended the peppiest of rallies, and it shows in the work I complete afterward.

*-2023 Annual Conference Guest*

”

“

I loved having the chance to network with peers around the state!

*-2023 ELI Graduate*

”

“

The relevant information about terms I didn't realize are offensive to others. I have heard these terms my whole life and didn't know they are offensive. It's very helpful to know that I now have the correct information and can work on doing my part to make our agency more equitable for everyone.

*-Enhancing Services for LGBTQ+ Individuals and Families Training Participant*

“

I learned many things, but my favorite was how to best move forward after making a mistake.

*-Intro to ROMA Training Participant*

”

“

It was so nice to hear how wonderful everyone felt about their peers. The last award was my favorite, someone that needed help is now helping others!

*-2023 Annual Conference Guest*

”

“

After attending this training I am going to completely alter my approach to problem solving and also make it my mission to encourage improvisation and innovation. Changing how I phrase things when speaking with clients and coworkers to better support them.

*-“Yes, And!” Two Powerful Words to Embrace Change, Increase Innovation, and Break Plateaus Training Participant*

”

”

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*NYSCAA's activities in 2022-2023 were partially funded by the NYS Department of State/Division of Community Service and the Administration for Children & Families/Office of Community Services*



*NYSCAA is a proud member of  
the National Community Action  
Partnership (NCAP)*