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Agency Mission

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency is dedicated to empowering people to make a positive change by coordinating and administering resources.

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency strives to be the voice in our communities and our governments for those most in need.

More Families Living in Poverty, but Action at Community Level Lessening Impact

New poverty statistics are out, and the news – as expected – is NOT good. Recently, the U.S. Census Bureau delivered stark evidence of the lagging economy's mounting toll on children and families. In its annual accounting of poverty in the United States, the agency reported the federal poverty rate rose to 14.3 percent in 2009, meaning that 8.8 million families in our country are trying to exist on an annual income of less than \$22,050 for a family of four.

In addition, the median income in the Midwest suffered a decrease of 2.1 percent overall and nationally the number of uninsured Americans topped 50 million.

*New Census Figures:
1 in 7 American's
live in Poverty.*

In Missouri, the situation is even worse. Over 926,000 people were reportedly living in poverty in 2009, representing 15.5 percent of our state's population. The most distressing news is that our poverty level rose by 146,000 people in only one year. More than one third of the people living in poverty are children under the age of 18 who have no control over their situation.

"With job losses throughout the state, thousands of Missourians are finding it difficult to pay for food, utilities or child care; keep up with household repairs and costs; or find a new job to replace lost income," said Elaine West, Executive Director of the Missouri Association for Community Action which educates and advocates for Missouri citizens who are living in poverty. "Individuals, many for the first time, feel that their economic stability is threatened."

So where's the silver lining?



The Grishow Family (pictured from left to right: Matthew, Hannah and Grace) received Weatherization and Housing Rehabilitation services from WCMCAA. These services removed existing lead based paint from the home, installed a new furnace and provided other weatherization measures, which made their home more energy efficient and therefore reduced the cost of utilities.

In 2009, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to create and save jobs as well as encourage economic activity and investment in long term growth.

"Missouri's Community Action Network has developed initiatives utilizing stimulus funds that address employment, education, housing, income, nutrition, emergency services, energy conservation, transportation and health, said West. "Our agencies have worked to ensure these innovative projects are sustainable, so investments made in communities will have an impact long past the expiration of ARRA."

Congressman Ike Skelton Visits WCMCAA Central Offices

On Thursday, September 3rd, Congressman Ike Skelton visited WCMCAA Central Offices in Appleton City.

The Congressman visited with staff at a small informal gathering in the afternoon. During his remarks, Congressman Skelton discussed his years of service in Congress; his many visits to WCMCAA; and he noted the two most important issues facing our nation as the economy, which affects the work of Community Action, and national security, "which is a real threat".

After his remarks to the gathered staff, the Congressman visited with each of the staff members present and discussed the many programs and services offered through WCMCAA.



Pictured Above: Congressman Skelton with Energy Conservation staff Cathy Grishow and Dean Jones

Missouri State Auditor Susan Montee Visits with WCMCAA Staff and Tours Central Office Building



Pictured from left to right: Julie Engeman, WCMCAA Executive Assistant; Susan Montee, Missouri State Auditor; Fred R. Bunch, WCMCAA Board Chair

On Thursday, August 12th, Missouri State Auditor, Susan Montee visited WCMCAA Central Offices in Appleton City.

The purpose of the Auditor's visit was not an official auditing capacity, but to learn about West Central Missouri Community Action Agency.

The Auditor toured the building and visited with WCMCAA about the various programs provided through the agency.

Senior Fair held at Maplewood Estates and Korth Senior Center

The senior citizens of Maplewood Estates had a serious concern of how to best get to the Korth Senior Center located directly behind their facility. There has never been a sidewalk to allow access back and forth. With West Central Missouri Community Action Agency's assistance, a new sidewalk was built to connect the two locations. Seniors can now travel back and forth for their meals and activities and do not have to cross on the street.

A senior fair and ribbon cutting for the new sidewalk was held September 17th to promote both the Korth Senior Center and WCMCAA's Maplewood Estates as well as other resources available to seniors in the area.



Could You Use an Extra \$90 a Month?

Check Out these Energy Saving, Cost Saving Tips

PLUMBING/WATER

- Install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads.
- Repair leaky faucets promptly. A leaky faucet wastes gallons of water in a short period of time.
- Lower the thermostat on your water heater. Water heaters sometimes come from the factory with high temperature settings, but a setting of 120°F provides comfortable hot water for most uses. (If you have little or no experience with electricity or electric water heaters, ask someone knowledgeable or hire a professional to do this.)
- Take short showers instead of baths.
- Wash your clothes in cold water.

LIGHTING/ELECTRICAL/APPLIANCES

- Be sure to buy ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs (**COMPACT FLOURESCENT LIGHTS**). They will save you about \$30 or more in electricity costs over each bulb's lifetime. Producing about 75% less heat, they are safer to operate and can cut home cooling costs. Visit www.energystar.gov to find the right light bulbs for your fixtures. They are available in sizes and shapes to fit in almost any fixture. They provide the greatest savings in fixtures that are on for a long time each day. The best fixtures to use qualified CFLs in are usually found in your family and living rooms, kitchen, dining room, bedrooms, and outdoors.
- Turn your lights off when you leave a room. Standard, incandescent light bulbs should be turned off whenever they are not needed. Fluorescent lights should be turned off whenever you'll be away for 15 minutes or more.
- To maximize savings with a laptop, put the AC adapter on a power strip that can be turned off (or will turn off automatically); the transformer in the AC adapter draws power continuously, even when the laptop is not plugged into the adapter.
- Install foam gaskets behind outlet and switch plates on walls.
- Clean the lint filter in the dryer after every load to improve air circulation.
- Consider air-drying clothes on clothes lines or drying racks.
- When you need to purchase, Buy Energy Star Appliances and Electronics.
- Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using rigid venting material, not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages.
- Plug home electronics, such as TVs and DVD players, into power strips; turn the power strips off when the equipment is not in use (TVs and DVDs in standby mode still use several watts of power).

- Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use.
- Wash and dry full loads. If you are washing a small load, use the appropriate water-level setting.

AUTOMOBILE/TRANSPORTATION

67% of U.S. oil imported is used for Transportation—mainly in the form of gasoline. Luckily, there are plenty of ways to improve gas mileage.

- Idling gets you 0 miles per gallon. **The best way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it. No more than 30 – 60 seconds of idling on winter days is needed. Anything more simply wastes fuel.**
- Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration, and hard braking) wastes gas. It can lower your highway gas mileage 33% and city mileage 5%.
- Keep tires properly inflated and aligned to improve your gasoline mileage by around 3.3%.
- Replace clogged air filters to improve gas mileage by as much as 10% and protect your engine.
- Combine errands into one trip. Several short trips, each one taken from a cold start, can use twice as much fuel as one trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm.

YOUR HOME – WAYS TO CONSERVE

- First, test your home for air tightness. On a windy day, carefully hold a lit incense stick or a smoke pen next to your windows, doors, electrical boxes, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, ceiling fixtures, attic hatches, and other locations where there is a possible air path to the outside. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have located an air leak that may need caulking, sealing, or weather-stripping. (Call WCMCAA and we may be able to do a Home Energy Evaluation for you at no charge)!!
- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows that leak air.
- Caulk and seal air leaks where plumbing, ducting, or electrical wiring penetrates through walls, floors, ceilings, and soffits over cabinets.
- Utilize Draft Stoppers in front of door thresholds
- Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month or as needed.
- Install a programmable thermostat that can have the temperature adjusted according to your schedule.
- **Planting trees or shrubs to shade air conditioning units will help on your energy bill.** Place your room air conditioner on the north side of the house. A unit operating in the shade uses much as 10% less electricity than the same one operating in the sun.
- Close your curtains and shades at night; open them during the day.

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Continued from Front... More Families Living in Poverty, but Action at Community Level Lessening Impact

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act also made funds available to help communities form collaborative groups to reduce poverty at the local level. Community Action Agencies convened collaborative groups which identified and implemented projects they believed would make the most significant impact on their local community.

Much has been reported—pro and con—about stimulus funds and the use of them, but Community Action Agencies believe that the severity of poverty has been lessened because of collaborative initiatives implemented on a local level as well as increased funding for programs that help support the most vulnerable of our citizens.

"We have a long way to go to overcome the high level of poverty in our state and our nation," West said, " but there is evidence that progress IS being made. On behalf of the 926,000 Missourians living in poverty today, we must continue to improve and strengthen partnerships within our communities to ensure that all of our families and communities will thrive."

Article provided by the Missouri Association for Community Action.

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency Projects / Programs funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Weatherization: Increased funding for Weatherization services. Income guidelines for eligibility also increased.

HEAD START: Increased Head Start / Early Head Start slots.

EMPLOYMENT and TRAINING: Provided youth mentoring and job training and placement programs.

Community Empowerment Collaboration (CEC): Local groups are addressing poverty related issues specific to each area.

Community Improvement: In collaboration with WCMCAA, Drury University, Hammons School of Architectures', city mayors, business owners and residents are working towards revitalizing communities and developing long term plans for future success.

Community Employment / Education Network: Establish incubator businesses located in the Community Association of Regional Enterprises (CARE) new Community Development Center in Clinton, Missouri.

Nutrition Back Packs: Provides additional food to preschool and elementary students to be sure they have something to eat on the weekend.

RRR Project - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle: Educate children on recycling, and finding ways to reduce waste and reuse what is available to us.

Step Up to Leadership: Helps low-income individuals build self-confidence along with the skills and knowledge to serve on boards and committees in their community.

Connecting Seniors: Developed a plan to help seniors with issues they face in rural communities.

Family Development: Life Skills Classes, Back to School Fairs, Energy Conservation Education and Financial Counseling.

Emergency Food and Shelter Program: Increased services.



These projects/programs were funded in whole/or part with federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds received from the U.S. Department of Health Human Service (HHS) provided by the Missouri Department of Social Services, Family Support Division. The funds received from the Family Support Division are all federally funded. Funds are also made possible through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Transform Missouri initiative and administered by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

For more information about any of these programs, please visit our website at:
www.wcmcaa.org

Community Improvement

The Community Improvement Project, developed to help rural communities revitalize, began as an ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) project, but has been so successful and had so much community interest and support that it will continue for the next three years through WCMCAA's regular Community Services Block Grant funding.

The project is a partnership between Drury University Hammons School of Architecture, University of Missouri Extension office, local communities and West Central Missouri Community Action Agency.

On August 25th, Vision Teams from Windsor, Urich, and Osceola traveled to Springfield to present information to the Drury Architecture students about their unique communities and their vision for the next 20 years. After a process that includes town hall meetings and Drury students exploring each community, each town will receive a Visioning Plan that can be used to write for future grants and to lead their town to a better future.

Appleton City, Hermitage and Montrose have received their completed Vision Plans. Windsor, Urich and Osceola Vision Plans will be completed this year. Rich Hill and Stockton will complete their plan in fiscal year 2011.



Windsor Vision Team attending: (from left to right) Greg Frencken, Patricia Puttonen, Bryan Puttonen, Darrel Bryant, BJ Friedly, Sandra Underwood, and Wes Wiley.



Urich Vision Team attending: (from left to right) Brecklyn Emick-Conner, Frankie Charles, Merle Puckett, Barbara Puckett, Jacob Lory, Darla Conner and Ronnie Wehmeyer



Osceola Vision Team attending: (from left to right) Margaret Hogan, Cindy Youngblood

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Could You Use an Extra \$90 a Month?

Why Should You Worry About How Much Energy You Use?

- Saving Energy Equals Saving Money
- Saving Energy Is Just The Smart Thing To Do
- Everyone can save energy and save money.

So How Much Can I Save A Year Doing This Stuff?

Drive Smart =	\$ 150.00
Fluorescent Bulbs or CFL's =	\$ 120.00
Service Furnace/Change Filters =	\$ 150.00
Up or Down 3 degrees on Thermostat =	\$ 100.00
Wash Clothes in Cold Water =	\$ 60.00
Lower temp on Water Heater =	\$ 75.00
Low Flow Shower Heads =	\$ 90.00
Sealing up air leaks in the home =	\$ 150.00
Air Drying Clothes in Summer =	\$ 125.00
Turning off TV's, Laptops, Lights =	\$ 80.00

\$1,100.00 per year Or \$91.67 per month

Check out more tips for saving energy and
"Going Green"
 on our website: www.wcmcaa.org

WCMCAA Health Service Director Retires

After 11 years of dedicated service to West Central Missouri Community Action Agency, Roseann Knowles, Health Services Director has retired. On July 27th, WCMCAA staff attended a reception in her honor to thank her for all she has meant to us and to wish her well in her future adventures. In his remarks, Amos Jackson, President and Chief Executive Officer, expressed his gratitude to Roseann for her contribution and dedication to the agency and the mission of Community Action.

Knowles has been a very strong advocate for Community Action over the years. Her connection to Community Action began as a Head Start mom when her children were young. As Roseann recalled her experience, she stated, "They asked me what I wanted to do. I wanted to go to school." With the support of the Head Start program and her family, that's just what she did. Knowles holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with endorsements in Business, Special Education and Behavior Disorder as well as completing her Master's work.



Pictured: Roseann Knowles pictured with Amos Jackson, WCMCAA President and Chief Executive Officer.

Knowles took time to specifically thank members of her staff and other WCMCAA staff and to reminisce over the challenges and triumphs of the last 11 years. She recalled the elderly couple found in desperate conditions that Knowles and her In-Home Health staff supported by finding resources to move them into a safe, sanitary home along with services to allow them an independent living situation. Knowles' unmatched passion for Women's Health Services was fueled by her own family's experience. Knowles' daughter Michelle lost her 10 year battle with breast cancer in 2007.

The investment Community Action made in Roseann Knowles certainly paid off. Her contribution back has made an immeasurable impact in the lives of so many. As anyone who knows Roseann Knowles can testify, she will use every opportunity she has to remain actively and passionately involved in her community.

It's Back To School for Head Start!

Although some WCMCAA Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms operate year round, on Thursday, September 16th, WCMCAA half day Head Start classes began for the 2010-11 program year.



In August all Family Advocates were on staff to meet with parents for completing the enrollment process including making sure the children had received all age appropriate medical and developmental screenings.

All Head Start staff participated in several days of in-service training at WCMCAA Central Office's to prepare for a wonderful and exciting school year.

Training included: Program Updates, Child Abuse and Neglect Mandated Reporting, Meth Awareness, Program Monitoring policies and procedures, Classroom / Curriculum planning, Nutrition, Health, Team Building.



For more information regarding the WCMCAA Head Start program, please visit our website at: www.wcmcaa.org/early_childhood_ed.php.

*Thanks to
Henry County*

**United
Way**



For the 2010–11 budget year, United Way of Henry County will contribute \$12,000 to WCMCAA for the following programs / services:

Community Services / Emergency Services:

food vouchers, rent, security deposits, temporary lodging, utilities, and utility deposits, medical needs, transportation costs, fuel costs and work related items.

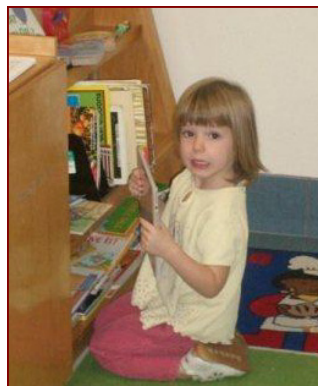
Early Childhood Education / Head Start:

classroom computers, computer programs, child size computer stations, computer and small desk for parents to use at the center for continuing education or job searches, CD players / systems for EHS classrooms as well as infant / toddler appropriate CDs.

Health Services

In-Home Services: 2 low-income seniors to be seen 2 hours every other week, for one year, by an in-home aide.

Women's Health Services: rent for a mobile clinic in the Christian Church and to purchase medical and contraceptive supplies allowing for additional Women's Health clinics to prevent unwanted pregnancy and decrease the length of time women need to wait for life saving cancer screenings.



The Promise

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.



Calendar of Events:

October 1st—Hickory County Outreach Open House

Effective October 1st this office will move to [320 N Main Street, Wheatland, Missouri 65779](#). Please join us for our Grand Opening to be held from 10am to 2pm complete with Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting, refreshments and information regarding all the services provided by WCMCAA!

October 9th—45th Anniversary Celebration, Appleton City Park, 4pm to 8:30pm.

December 10th—Offices closed for Employee Appreciation Luncheon.

WCMCAA Governing Board Meetings—*Fourth Thursday of each month.*

WCMCAA Head Start Policy Council Meetings—*Third Tuesday of each month.*

WCMCAA Featured on 95.3 KDKD Speak Out - *Second Monday of each Month.*

Community Empowerment Meetings in each of the nine county service area are held monthly. Please see the WCMCAA calendar of events on our website for more information regarding these and other WCMCAA activities. www.wcmcaa.org.



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If you or someone you know, would like to be added to the WCMCAA Newsletter mailing list or e-list, please contact Malia Mount, Development and Communications Director, at 660-476-2185 ext. 1106 or e-mail mmount@wcmcaa.org.



West Central Missouri Community Action Agency

1965 - 2010

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE

www.wcmcaa.org

We have completely remodeled our website from top to bottom.
You'll find updated information and a whole new look.
Check back often for current WCMCAA news and events!

45 Years of Helping People...Changing Lives.

Serving: **Bates, Benton, Cass, Cedar, Henry, Hickory, Morgan, St. Clair and Vernon Counties**
Limited Services Also Available in: Barton, Camden, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, and Saline

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PO Box 125
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45 Years
of community
Action
1965 - 2010

WCMCAA is a member of the National Community Action Partnership
and Missouri Association for Community Action.

