

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency



Higher Ground

Strategic Plan 2010

Table of Contents

Mission Statement.....	3
Vision Statement.....	3
Code of Ethics.....	4
Organizational Profile and History.....	5
Planning Assumptions and Process.....	6 - 7
Strategic Goals and Outcomes.....	8 - 10
Indicators.....	11
Overall Agency Strategies.....	12
Community Action Promise.....	12

Mission Statement

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.

What the mission means to us...

We try to give (people) hope that things can change for them too.

The difference between the needy having services that change their lives permanently or remaining entrenched in need.

I am empowered to speak for children and families...I have a responsibility to speak up in my community and also in my government.

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES

To make life easier and more significant for ALL members of our community

Empowerment says it all! If you buy someone a fish, you feed them for a day. If you teach them to fish, you feed them for life...

I have an opportunity to make a difference for someone...the one key to making positive change is hope.

Vision Statement

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency wants to be recognized in the community as a strong and united agency, a respected leader and partner in the community dedicated to empowering people to improve the quality of their lives.

Values

WE CARE shared principles

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency

Ethical – doing what is right - Committed to the Community Action Code of Ethics

Customer centered – we succeed when they succeed

Accountable – taking personal responsibility

Respect – treating people with dignity

Excellence – insisting on quality.

Code of Ethics

We, as Community Action Professionals, dedicate ourselves to eliminating poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training; the opportunity for work; and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity; and with respect for cultural diversity, commit ourselves to:

- Recognize that the chief function of the Community Action movement at all times is to serve the best interests of the poor, thereby serving the best interests of all people.
- Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to conduct ourselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Respect the structure and responsibilities of the board of directors, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for their making policy decisions, and uphold and implement policies adopted by the board of directors.
 - Keep the community informed about issues affecting the poor; facilitate communication by the poor with locally elected public officials and the private sector.
 - Conduct our organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
 - Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under the law to promote the interests of the poor.
 - Lead the Community Action movement with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness, recognizing that service to the poor is beyond service to oneself.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all our Community Action activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in the Community Action movement.
 - Serve in such a way that we do not realize undue personal gain from the performance of our professional duties.
- Avoid any interest or activity that is in conflict with the conduct of official duties.
 - Respect and protect privileged information to which we have access in the course of official duties.
- Strive for professional excellence and encourage the professional development of our associates, including those seeking to become certified Community Action professionals.

Organization Profile and History

The chief function of the Community Action movement at all times is to serve the best interests of the poor, thereby serving the best interests of all people.

In the early 1960's, a group of citizens representing all strata of society came together to form a nonprofit corporation for the purpose of providing services to better the lives of people in their community. Their shared belief was that the community could best serve its own citizens.

In 1964, President Johnson signed into law the Economic Opportunity Act. The overall purpose of the statute was to eliminate the causes and results of poverty in the United States. Under the Act, a federal Office of Economic Opportunity was established, state Economic Opportunity offices were formed, and new community-based organizations called Community Action Agencies evolved.

In July of 1965, West Central Missouri Rural Development Corporation was designated by the Office of Economic Opportunity as a Community Action Agency (CAA) pursuant to enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

In 1990, the decision was made by the Board of Directors to change the agency's name from West Central Missouri Rural Development Corporation to include the Community Action designation to more closely identify with the state and national Community Action image and goals. Today, the Agency is known as West Central Missouri Community Action Agency (WCMCAA).

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency is governed by a twenty-seven member tripartite Board of Directors. One-third of the board members are elected public officials or their representatives. One-third are representatives of business, industry, labor, religious, law enforcement, education, or other major groups and interests in the community served. One-third are individuals who represent the low-income individuals and families in the area served.

The WCMCAA service area includes Bates, Benton, Cass, Cedar, Henry, Hickory, Morgan, St. Clair and Vernon counties. In recent years, limited services have been provided in Barton, Camden Carroll, Chariton, Jackson, Dallas, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, Ray and Saline counties.

WCMCAA employs approximately over 400 full and part time employees with approximately 70 employees located in the Central Office in Appleton City. In the beginning, WCMCAA operated one contract with a total annual budget of \$50,389. Today, the Agency has an annual budget in excess of 24 million dollars.

Typical services provided by WCMCAA are Job Training, Housing Assistance, Energy Assistance, Food Distribution, Emergency Assistance, In-Home Services, Family Planning, Counseling, Home Weatherization, Early Head Start and Head Start. All individuals/families must meet the eligibility requirements as stated by each funding source. WCMCAA contracts with federal, state and local governments and businesses to provide opportunities for the disadvantaged.

Planning Assumptions and Process

Strategic Planning provides WCMCAA with the opportunity to explicitly state principles that bind the Agency to a sense of purpose, reflect on accomplishments, address challenges, and highlight areas of focus to carry the agency towards future success.

In January 2009, began a process of self-assessment, reorganization and strategic planning. WCMCAA determined that the ultimate goal of this process was **to improve agency efficiency and effectiveness in delivering services.**

The first major task identified to this end was to re-organize the established units of the agency and the services provided by each. The first re-organization took place in early 2009. In September 2009, the management staff agreed that additional re-organization was needed. With these steps complete, units, services and staff are currently organized as follows:

Community Services: Family Intake / Assessment / Referral, Energy Assistance, Homeless Program, Family Support, Emergency Funds and Community Outreach.

Health Services: Women's Health Services and In-Home Health Services

Energy Conservation: Weatherization, Housing Repair and Rehabilitation

Employment & Training: Youth, Adult and Displaced Workers (CAP and WIA)

Early Childhood Education: Head Start and Early Head Start

Housing: Housing Choice Voucher Program, Family Self-Sufficiency and Home Ownership Program, Multifamily Housing, Housing Counseling.

Administration: President and Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Development and Communications Director, Executive Assistant, Fiscal Staff, Human Resources Staff, Information Technology Director, Receptionist and Secretary.

On February 2, 2009, all central office staff members met to discuss ideas for future activities to improve agency efficiency and effectiveness to deliver services. The overall results of these discussions focused on becoming more integrated in agency operations and service delivery. On March 10, 2009, the discussion continued as staff divided tasks into several committees: *Communication, Operations, Developing Training, Employee Wellness, and Mentoring Program.*

Over the past year, the established committees have met regularly to evaluate agency processes and develop goals, outcomes and strategies as well as implement these strategies towards better efficient and effective service delivery. In addition, meetings have been held in each of the core nine counties served to give staff working in each county time to learn about all of the services offered by WCMCAA and provide their input for improving agency efficiency and effectiveness in delivering services. Strategies continue to develop and evolve from the established committees and the county staff and are an integral part of agency wide plans.

In the spring of 2010, the Higher Ground Committee, along with agency Senior Staff, developed a strategic planning survey which was distributed to all WCMCAA Governing Board Members and all staff. The purpose of the survey was to identify: action needed in regard to agency programs, services and systems; agency challenges and opportunities; and methods for furthering the agency mission.

The planning process has and will continue to be informed by the work of the established committees; the recently completed Community Needs Assessment; the results of the Strategic Planning Survey; awareness of West Central Missouri families, communities and staff; and by examining and understanding both agency strengths and challenges.

As a result of this process, WCMCAA has developed the strategic plan to guide the agency for the next three to five years. The Community Action plan and all other necessary action plans for implementing programs and services within established timelines and budgets will be built upon the strategic plan.

The completion of a written plan, though, is only the first step in a process of continuous improvement that must be dynamic. Those who developed the plan cannot forecast with confidence all the factors that will influence decision making over the planning period. Therefore, agency leaders must regularly assess those factors, prepare action plans, and share with the community how their decisions relate to the items targeted in the strategic plan.

Goals included in the plan were developed to position the agency for every advantage to help people and change lives. Though the agency may not be able to accomplish all it wants to, we can focus our efforts on what can be done particularly well for the greatest impact in our communities.

Great Minds have purposes, others have wishes.

Washington Irving

A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery, French novelist.

The best way to predict the future is to create it.

Peter Drucker

Strategic Goals / Outcomes

Goal 1: Low income people become more self-sufficient

- **Desired Outcomes 1: Employment:** Low income participants in community action employment initiatives will get a job or become self-employed.
- **Desired Outcomes 2: Employment Supports:** Barriers to initial or continuous employment are reduced or eliminated for low income participants through assistance from community action.
- **Desired Outcomes 3: Economic Asset Enhancement and Utilization:** Low-income households achieve an increase in financial assets and /or financial skills as a result of community action assistance.

Goal 2: The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.

- **Desired Outcomes 1: Community Improvement and Revitalization:** Increase in, or safeguard of, threatened opportunities and community resources or services for low-income people in the community as a result of community action projects/initiatives or advocacy with other public and private agencies.
- **Desired Outcomes 2: Community Quality of Life Assets:** The quality of life assets in low-income neighborhoods are improved by community action initiative or advocacy.
- **Desired Outcomes 3: Community Engagement:** Community members are working with community action to improve conditions in the community.
- **Desired Outcomes 4: Employment Growth:** Jobs are created or saved in the community.

Goal 3: Low-income people own a stake in their community.

- **Desired Outcomes 1: Civic Investment:** Volunteers are encouraged, supported and a vital part of agency and program operations.
- **Desired Outcomes 2: Community Empowerment through Maximum Feasible Participation:** Low-income people mobilized as a direct result of community action initiatives to engage in activities that support and promote their own well-being and that of their community.

Goal 4: Partnerships among supports and providers of services to low-income people are achieved.

- **Desired Outcomes 1: Expanding Opportunities through Community-Wide Partnerships:** Community Action actively works with organizations, both public and private, to expand resources and opportunities in order to achieve family and community outcomes.

Goal 5: WCMCAA increases our capacity to achieve results.

- **Desired Outcomes 1: Agency Development:** Human capital resources are available to Community Action that increase agency capacity to achieve family and community outcomes.
- **Desired Outcomes 2: Agency Development:** Agency programs achieved accreditation, demonstrating that programs meet or exceed nationally recognized standards.
- **Desired Outcomes 3: **Agency Defined.* External Communications:** WCMCAA will be recognized in the service area as the "go to" Poverty Fighting Resource, for administering and coordinating resources to improve the lives of people in the community.
- **Desired Outcomes 4: **Agency Defined.* Internal Communications:** WCMCAA staff and Governing Board Members are well informed and can articulate the Community Action mission, agency mission, agency goals and information regarding services, programs and events.
- **Desired Outcomes 5: **Agency Defined.* Employee Wellness:** Staff are mentally and physically healthy and are therefore able to perform job duties at optimal levels.
- **Desired Outcomes 6: **Agency Defined.* Employee Development:** Create a positive work environment that offers competitive compensation, appropriate feedback and recognition, and opportunities for support and professional development.
- **Desired Outcomes 7: **Agency Defined.* Agency Administration:** WCMCAA will ensure continuous improvement in **Fiscal Services, Human Resource Development, Information Technology and Resource Development** based on the changing needs of developed agency programs and services.

Goal 6: Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

- **Desired Outcomes 1: Independent Living:** Vulnerable individuals receiving services from community action maintain an independent living situations as a result.
- **Desired Outcomes 2: Emergency Assistance:** When necessary, low-income individuals and families served by community action are provided emergency assistance.
- **Desired Outcomes 3: Infants, children, youth and parents** and other adults participate in developmental or enrichment programs that achieve program goals.
- **Desired Outcomes 4: Barriers:** Low-income people who are unable to work, especially seniors, adults with disabilities and caregivers, for whom barriers to family stability are reduced or eliminated.
- **Desired Outcomes 5: Service Counts:** Low income individuals are provided supportive services.
- **Desired Outcomes 6: Housing:** Low-income families obtain safe and stable housing as a result of community action assistance.
- **Desired Outcomes 7: Health:** Low-income participants obtain health services from community action agencies.
- **Desired Outcomes 8: Referrals:** Services are provided to low-income families and/or individuals as a result of referrals made by community action.
- **Desired Outcomes 9: **Agency Defined.* Service Integration:** Delivery of services provided by WCMCAA or by other providers in the community will be integrated to the maximum extent possible.

Indicators

WCMCAA will use the following indicators to measure achievement of the established goals and desired outcomes and adjust action plans as needed:

- Monitoring reports completed and provided to each unit / program by various funding sources
- Annual fiscal audit
- The Missouri Outcome of Efforts report with targets compared to actual performance, including agency defined indicators such as: decreased staff turnover, participation in agency and community events, etc...
- Internal Program Monitoring will be based on completion of established benchmarks within developed timelines and budgets.

Internal monitoring will include:

- Periodic review and discussion of progress through Central Office Staff Meetings, County Staff Meetings, Unit Staff Meetings, Unit In-Services, and All Agency Staff Meetings
- Regular Senior Staff Meetings to analyze results
- Relating each topic presented to the Governing Board for consideration back to the goals and outcomes of the agency Strategic Plan and the progress made or adjustments needed to achieve those goals.

Overall Agency Strategies

Provide the following programs and services while implementing actions to grow, strengthen or analyze each as indicated from the 2010 Strategic Planning survey results:

- Community Services
- Family Intake / Assessment / Referral
- Family Support
- Emergency Assistance
- Early Childhood Education (Head Start and Early Head Start)
- Employment and Training
- Energy Conservation (Weatherization and Housing Rehabilitation)
- In-Home Health Services
- Women's Health Services
- Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Family Self-Sufficiency and Home Ownership Programs
- Multifamily Housing
- Housing Counseling

Continue to develop the following systems based on the needs of the programs and services provided while implementing actions for continuous improvement as indicated by the 2010 Strategic Planning survey results:

- Governance / Board Oversight
- Agency Planning and Development
- Program Monitoring
- Communications
- Technology
- Human Resources
- Staff Training
- Financial Procedures.

Community Action 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.

**This Strategic Plan was adopted by the
West Central Missouri Community Action Agency
Governing Board on April 22, 2010.**