The Promise 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.”

EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

MEET THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Governing Board of Directors

Randy P. Berger
Chairperson

Robert Boyd
Vice Mayor Brenda Brown
Jeffrey Burgoyne
Jacquelyn A. Collins
Dr. Alicia Geddis
Michael Goodyear
Mayor Robert Harwood
Sarah Hornback
Ana Nasser
Mike Marron
Jennifer Modest
Elder Tyson Parks
Alderman Thomas Stone

(Time, Talent, and Treasure are the three elements a committed Board Member contributes to ensure that an organization is highly functioning and progressive!)

(Not pictured are Chairperson Randy P. Berger, Jacquelyn Collins, and Honorable Mayor Robert Harwood.)
Message From the Chief Executive Officer

Greeting From the Chief Executive Officer

Community Action’s sole purpose is to support people in their goals of climbing out of poverty and achieving self-sufficiency. Community Action must remain steadfast in providing a multi-faceted approach to assisting fellow citizens in moving up and out of situational or generational poverty. This work is complex and does not happen overnight. Each person’s needs are unique and require a customized approach.

This Agency has been successful in helping people acquire self-sufficiency because of strong partnerships with other not-for-profit organizations, local businesses, public-elected officials, and private citizen partners. Each time a family becomes economically self-sufficient, our entire community is strengthened. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Warmest Regards,

Angéle

Angéle Thibodeaux Burns, Ph.D., CCAP
Chief Executive Officer

Professional Development Leads to Ongoing Organizational Growth

Congratulation goes out to three members of the Agency’s Executive Leadership Team: Dr. Angéle Thibodeaux Burns, Chief Executive Officer, Delia Anderson Farmer, Chief Operating Officer, and Odette Hyatt-Watson, Chief Academic Officer. Each of these dynamic leaders recently attained the Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) accreditation.

This noteworthy certification is a nationally recognized standard of professionalism in Community Action. CCAP recipients are committed to the mission, vision, and values of the Community Action Movement, aspired to enhance their managerial and leadership competencies, and are motivated to increase the marketability and competitiveness of the Agency.

Dr. Burns, Mrs. Anderson Farmer, and Mrs. Hyatt-Watson will be recognized – with several of their Community Action peers – during the CCAP Awards Ceremony at the Community Action Partnership’s 2017 Annual Convention in Philadelphia, PA in August.
ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER HUGE SUCCESS

The 52nd Annual Dinner and Business Meeting held on Friday, March 10, 2017 was a magical evening where the Agency shared its past year’s accomplishments with over 275 honored guests; comprised of community and business partners, elected officials, local dignitaries, and Agency staff.

The Agency recognized a number of dynamic citizens from its Tri-County service area who have played an integral role in moving families forward. Also honored were team members for their dedicated years of service. Mayor Scott Eisenhauer served as the evening’s Master of Ceremony and Vu Le, a Seattle, Washington nonprofit leader and renowned motivational speaker, provided the keynote address. In addition to telling the Agency’s noteworthy story, the Annual Dinner also functioned as a fundraiser; funds generated will go towards educational initiatives.
COMMUNITY ACTION…
MOVEMENT AWARDS

COMMUNITY ACTION’S
52ND ANNUAL DINNER

Vicki Haugen, President/CEO
Vermilion Advantage
Leadership

Richard “Dick” Brazda,
Retired City of Danville Mass Transit
Economic Empowerment

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Tina Todd,
Orland Park Dental Service

Ellen Luhman,
U of I Cooperative Extension

Peter Blackmon,
David S. Palmer Arena

Neil Porter and Nancy Gallion
Trinity United Methodist Church in Westville

Helping People Move Forward!
Special Recognition to Our Committed and Generous Community Partners

Without your ongoing and unwavering support of Community Action, its 52nd Annual Dinner and Business Meeting would not have been as successful!

We appreciate and salute you!
The Hoskins Family of Danville, Illinois has been named East Central Illinois Community Action Agency’s 2017 Family of Distinction through the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies (IACAA) for the significant strides the family has made in the areas of Education, Employment, Civic Engagement and Community Involvement which have led to self-sufficiency.

On Sunday, May 6th, the Hoskins family – along with 19 other families representing various Community Action Agencies throughout the State of Illinois – were honored during IACAA’s Annual Conference at the Wyndham Hotel in Springfield, IL. In addition to the Family of Distinction honor, IACAA has recognized KeñNiesha with its Education Stability Award for the significant strides she has made in her pursuit to achieve higher education!

As a teen parent, a resilient KeñNiesha passed the GED exam on her first attempt. She continued pursuing her education at Danville Area Community College where she graduated with an Associate Degree in Applied Science. In 2015, she earned an LPN certification from Parkland College in Champaign, IL; and she is currently on pace to become a Registered Nurse in December 2017.

Brandon and KeñNiesha are the parents to three children; all of whom were enrolled in the Agency’s Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Their children – TaKavion, D’Jameia, and Nathaniel – are now teenagers. They are active participants in the Agency’s Educational Talent Search (ETS) Program and are all high-academic achieving students. Their first and second born children were recently inducted into the Danville High School’s Honor Society and the Junior National Honor Society, and their third child was a recipient of academic and sports honors at North Ridge Middle School.

KeñNiesha Hoskins and her family are an exemplary example of what hard work, perseverance, and a little assistance can achieve.
SCHOOL READINESS…
IS OUR PRIORITY!

Each year, the Agency’s Head Start program celebrates the transitioning of emerging five year olds into their local school districts. Before the celebration can begin, the Agency develops School Readiness Goals which are defined as the expectations of children’s progress in the domains of language and literacy development, cognition, physical health, motor development, and social and emotional development. Head Start classroom teachers and Agency supervisors have the vital task of monitoring each child’s academic outcomes, school readiness skills attainment, and attendance rates to ensure that each child will be ready for Kindergarten. In the program year 2016-2017, ECICAA served 221 four year old students. Among the 221 four year old students, **170 students ended the school year with proficient school readiness scores** in all kindergarten readiness skills and 51 four year olds are on the verge of attaining all their school readiness skills.

Head Start designs its lesson plans and classroom activities to increase children’s skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in elementary school and beyond. The transition ceremonies celebrate that our students are ready for school and their families are ready to support their children’s continued learning. The Agency’s Head Start Student will attend elementary schools in the following districts: **Danville School District 118, Georgetown-Ridge Farm Community Unit School District 4, Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley Community Unite School District 5, Hoopeston Area Community Unit School District 11, Iroquois County Community Unit School District 9, and Iroquois West Community Unit School District 10.**
COMMUNITY ACTION...
A NEW GENERATION

This summer, Community Action has the pleasure of adding two new interns to its team; Tierra Brown and Chelsea Thomas. Both young ladies are Danville natives and they have a mutual drive and passion for furthering their education and giving back to their community. The Agency is honored to have these two intelligent young ladies become a part of the team and serve as a conduit of their continued success by giving them the necessary tools and resources needed to further their careers.

**Tierra Brown** is the Agency’s new Communications and Marketing Graduate Intern. Tierra is a recent graduate of Clark Atlanta University where she received her Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Finance. After graduating, Tierra decided to continue furthering her education by enrolling at Full Sail University where she will be receiving her Master’s Degree in Entertainment Business in the fall of 2017. As the Communications and Marketing Graduate Intern, she is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to strengthen the Agency’s communication and marketing efforts.

“By the end of my internship, the plan is to develop a competitive marketing and social media strategy that will continually be utilized throughout Community Action over the next few years. Once this is complete, I will feel accomplished because it will benefit the Agency move forward, and it’ll benefit me as an upcoming artist manager in the future.”

**Chelsea Thomas** is the new CSBG Intern. Chelsea is currently enrolled at Eastern Illinois University where she will be receiving her Bachelor’s Degree in Community Health in the spring of 2018. After graduation, Chelsea plans to go forward with her education by pursuing a Master’s Degree specializing in Epidemiology. Throughout the internship, Chelsea will be exposed to all facets of the Community Action Movement and lend her expertise in all Agency departments; she has begun her journey in the Agency’s Fiscal Department. “By the end of the summer, I will expand my accounting prowess by being able to reconcile checks and know how to write and complete the purchase orders process. These new skill-sets will lend the Agency an extra pair of helping hands and it’ll be beneficial towards my personal and professional goals in the future.”
HELPING PEOPLE...SPURRING ECONOMY

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) experienced another stellar year of providing tax return preparations services to eligible households in Ford, Champaign, Iroquois, and Vermilion counties in Illinois as well as Fountain County in Indiana. Due to extremely hard work, the committed and diligent VITA Team, collectively, prepared over 1,300 returns; despite a limited numbers of volunteers and a reduction in tax preparation site locations.

The filed federal income tax returns yielded over $881,000 of economic growth in the communities VITA reached.

While Community Action spearheaded the VITA program, it would not have been as nearly effective without dedicated community partners. This year’s valued community partners included Danville Area Community College, Salt and Light Ministries (Champaign), Georgetown Ridge Farm High School (Georgetown) and Community Action Partnership of Western Indiana (Covington, IN).

The 2017 tax season is months away but the Agency is actively recruiting VITA volunteers! If you are interested, please contact Chantal Savage Bryant, CSBG and Development Coordinator at 217-554-9128 or via email at cbryant@comaction.org.

EXPANDING DAYS...EXPANDING YOUNG MINDS

Recently, the East Central Illinois Community Action Agency was awarded a Head Start Duration Grant which allows the Head Start Program to expand its Head Start services.

Through the Head Start Duration Grant, ECICAA will increase its annual hours of planned classroom instruction to 1,020 for 161 children at the following five Head Start Centers: Hoopeston, Fair Oaks, Trinity, Family and Community Development Center, and Watseka Head Start centers. Each center will operate nine months per program year. Early learning academic instruction and support will be provided five days per week and 6 hours each day for over 170 school days.

The Agency has partnered with property owners and has acquired additional classrooms at the Fair Oaks (public housing site), Trinity United Methodist Church and Hoopeston Head Start centers. These centers are located in communities with multiple socio-economic barriers where working, low-income families are in need of full-day early learning educational services. Through the Head Start Duration Funds, the Agency will have increased the instructional day by 40% for 161 Head Start Students.

The Agency anticipates great benefits to the economies of surrounding communities. By providing more full day educational services, Head Start families will be able to enter full-day training programs, enroll in educational institutions for degree attainment and/or enter employment to contribute positively to the economies in their local communities. Head Start’s primary goal is to support working families in its communities.
CSBG SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Community Action awards scholarships, through its CSBG Grant, for graduating high school seniors and adult learners who desire to pursue post-secondary educational goals or vocational careers at an institution of higher learning in Illinois. Whether you want to complete an Associates, Bachelor’s Degree, or study to become a Phlebotomist or Certified Medical Assistant, Community Action can help make your dreams come true.

Danville High School Seniors, Jaelyn Broadie and Yaman Wilson, were awarded scholarships in the amount of $2,000 each. Ms. Broadie will be attending Western Illinois University in the fall; where she plans to major in Graphic Design. Eastern Illinois University is the next stop on Ms. Wilson’s educational journey. Yaman will be studying Elementary Education. Both young ladies were actively involved in many extra-curricular activities throughout their respective high school careers. They were also participants in the Agency’s Educational Talent Search Program.

Scholarship applications can be downloaded from the Agency’s website at www.comaction.org or picked up at the Administrative Office or any Agency sites. Finalists must meet program and income guidelines, are currently or planning to attend a college/university/vocational school in Illinois, and reside in Ford, Iroquois, or Vermilion Counties. For more information about the Pathways to Self-Sufficiency or any other CSBG service, please contact Tori Brigham, CSBG Family Advocate, at 217-554-9114 or via email at tbrigham@comaction.org.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS AT WORK!

On June 13, 2017, Ameren Illinois Cares donated 50 window air conditioner units to Community Action during a press event at Temple Plaza. Units were distributed to the community’s most vulnerable residents to help mitigate the negative effects of the summer heat. Households without central air and with members who were senior citizens, had a documented disability, a child under 6, or were veterans were eligible.

On hand to provide remarks at this noteworthy event were the Honorable Scott Eisenhauer, Mayor – City of Danville, Mike Marron, Chairperson – Vermilion County Board, Dr. Angèle Thibodeaux Burns, CEO – Community Action, and George Justice, of Ameren Illinois Cares. Vice Mayor, Brenda Brown, Alderman Thomas Stone and other Agency Board Members were in attendance. Four families were also onsite to offer words of appreciation and to discuss the impact the AC units would have on the lives of their families.

“We recognize our mission and vision cannot be accomplished alone. We rely on strong collaborations with community partners, like Ameren Illinois, that lend their generous support through donations and volunteerism. It is our hope that these AC units will provide a cooling relief to the recipients and will result in a safer and more enjoyable summer for their families,” stated Dr. Burns.
ETS SENIOR SCHOLARS RECOGNITION RECEPTION

On Tuesday, May 16th, the Community Action’s Educational Talent Search held its 2nd Annual ETS Senior Scholars Recognition Reception; the event honored the ETS Graduating Class of 2017. The 2017 was comprised of 99 seniors; 98 of whom will be pursuing their post-secondary goals at a college or university this fall and one student will be honorably serving our country by enlisting in the military.

Dr. Alicia Geddis, Superintendent – Danville District #118 Schools, provided words of inspirations to the young adults. She conveyed heartfelt words regarding her journey to achieve higher education and she offered meaningful, real-life strategies for a smooth transition into life as a college student. The group hung on her every word.

Congratulations, ETS Class of 2017!

ETS TEAM MEMBERS LEND SUPPORT TO LOCAL INITIATIVES

The Educational Talent Search Team is demonstrating that “Team Work Makes the Dream Work” by diligently working with community partners by adding their rich knowledge and expertise to their respective summer program.

Team members, Lisa Adams and Heather McMasters, have increased service delivery and capacity with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Vermilion County’s Young Women Aware Program and the Hoopeston Multi-Agency’s Teen Program. Shane Huerta, Educational Specialist, has been engaged with Danville District #118 students who have committed their summer to credit recovery activities. Shane is helping the students to get back on track and refocus prior to the upcoming school year.

For additional information on the Educational Talent Search services, please contact Lisa Adams, Supervisor of ETS, at 217-544-9144 or via email at ladams@comaction.org.
Employment Opportunities

- Chief Finance Officer
- Facilities / Transportation Coordinator
- Finance Accounting Specialist I
- Head Start Teachers
- Health Services Coordinator
- Maintenance Worker

All vacancies are posted on the Agency’s Website. To apply, please download an employment application, submit the application, a Letter of Interest, and resume to Audrey Randle, Human Resources Specialist I, via postal or email to arandle@comaction.org.

Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 15, 2017</td>
<td>Executive Committee Meeting Administrative Office – 12:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 18, 2017</td>
<td>Finance Committee Meeting Administrative Office – 12:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 21, 2017</td>
<td>Educational Talent Search Team resumes services in local middle and high schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 22, 2017</td>
<td>Governing Board of Director’s Meeting Administrative Office – 12:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29, 2017</td>
<td>Head Start Parent Orientations Begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 4, 2017</td>
<td>Agency Closed in Observance of Labor Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 5, 2017</td>
<td>First Day of Head Start Classes in Ford, Iroquois and Vermilion counties</td>
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*Please visit our website for updates on upcoming events.*

DON’T FORGET!!!

Visit us, send a “Friend Request” and like us at:

Facebook.com/eastcentralIllinoiscommunityactionagency

Mission

To provide information, training, education, and other services that engage and empower families and communities to become self sufficient.