

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

50th Anniversary Special Edition



dream **BIG**

« Creating prosperity and equity in the lives of the people we serve. »



DEAR FRIENDS,

"...We do this, first of all, because it is right that we should ... We do it also because helping some will increase the prosperity of all."

– Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965

Prosperity. It's a big word. It's a big dream. At Community Action Duluth, we strive to be the difference between poverty and prosperity, and for many Duluth families, we are. You're about to meet two of those families and read about how our partnership is creating prosperity in their lives.

Prosperity. It's the dream that started it all in 1965. It's our dream and the dream of the people we serve. We hope it's your dream too. Dream big with us.

Angie Miller

Executive Director



President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Economic Opportunity Act, 1964

50 YEARS *of the War on Poverty*

In 1964, Lyndon Johnson declared a "War on Poverty", signing into law the Economic Opportunity Act and subsequently creating the Office of Economic Opportunity. Community Action Agencies were named as the means by which poverty would cease. The most controversial part of the package, Community Action Agencies were a radical departure from how government had executed social reform policy up until its day.

In unprecedented fashion, Johnson designed Community Action Agencies unconventionally - to be diligently attentive and responsive to the needs brought forth by people experiencing poverty in a process coined "maximum feasible participation". And this yielded unprecedented results.

An excerpt from Johnson's War on Poverty address: "...We must also strike down all the barriers which keep many from using those exits. The war on poverty is not a struggle simply to support people, to make them dependent on the generosity of others. It is a struggle to give people a chance. It is an effort to allow them to develop and use their capacities as we have been allowed to develop and use ours, so that they can share, as others share, in the promise of this nation.

"We do this, first of all, because it is right that we should ... We do it also because helping some will increase the prosperity of all. Our fight against poverty will be an investment in the most valuable of our resources – the skills and strengths of our people ... it strikes at the causes, not just the consequences of poverty."

From Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966).



DREAMING BIG

Ms. Samantha's endured some terrifying nightmares in her life. The victim of persistent abuse at a young age, it's not hard to believe Sam struggled. She struggled providing for her family, struggled with homelessness, struggled with drugs. She often turned to the streets to find a way to provide for her children, living on sugar sandwiches if she ate at all. No one ever told Sam to dream, let alone dream big. But Sam's spirit was inexplicably unbreakable.

"You have to make that decision – the decision of what you want in life. You have to take responsibility for the mistakes you make, learn from your experiences and then and move on." And Sam did just that. She heroically packed up her family and moved away from the negative influences in her life. She took

responsibility for her decision to use drugs and got clean. She took her role as her family's provider and translated that into serving others. And that's when we met Sam – 7 years ago when she started volunteering for us despite still struggling with her own stability.

Sam's come a long way since we first met, and that's understandably taken some time. She learned to take her voice back in our leadership development class, and since graduating, joined us on trips to the capitol and City Hall to advocate for changes in public policy. Along the way she's changed the hearts and minds of many, including her own.

Today, Sam's a contracted cook with us, passionate about providing healthy meals for the families and children in our programming. Today Sam's enrolled in coaching to reach her goals. Today, we consider each other family; and together we make each other better.

Ms. Samantha is the heart and soul of our agency and today, Ms. Samantha's dreaming big.



28 GRADUATED LEADERSHIP CLASS

28 were empowered to use their experiences and voices to take action through leadership opportunities. **That's the difference between social isolation and meaningful involvement in civic life.**

456 VOLUNTEERED

456 volunteers devoted 7,177 hours of their time. 3,229 of those hours were given by people with low incomes. **That's the difference between 'doing with' and 'doing for'.**

20 WEEKS OF FARMERS MARKETS

Seeds of Success doesn't only redevelop vacant lots, provide job opportunities to the un-and-under-employed and grow great veggies - it provides access to healthy food for hundreds. **That's the difference between making a meal with fresh produce and making one from the gas station.**

27 RECEIVED TAILORED HEALTH COACHING

That's the difference between getting the support you need to manage a chronic health concern and struggling without.

85 BECAME EMPLOYED

85 people landed a job with an average wage of \$11/hour. **That's the difference between earned income and public benefits.**

Eliminating Poverty



8 PASSED THEIR GED

Our specialized tutoring program graduated 8. **That's the difference between making \$24,000 and struggling to get by on \$12,000** (according to the 2009 U.S. Census for Duluth).

136 INCREASED CREDIT SCORE

136 families increased their credit score by an average of 60 points. **That's the difference between a yes and a no from a mortgage lender.**

96 GRADUATED FINANCIAL LITERACY CLASS

96 increased their financial education. **That's the difference between an emergency savings account and a high interest payday loan.**

700 ENGAGED IN POLICY CHANGE

700 made their voices heard and mobilized for change. **That's the difference between a policy that works on behalf of its users and one that works against them.**

529 ENROLLED IN HEALTH INSURANCE.

529 families are now covered by an affordable health insurance program. **That's the difference between preventative care and the emergency room.**

1,780 FAMILIES RECEIVED FREE TAX PREPARATION

Free tax preparation saves families, on average, \$300. **That's the difference between putting dinner on the table this month and going to bed hungry.**

18 PURCHASED AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION

18 grabbed the keys to a reliable vehicle through our affordable car purchase program. **That's the difference between saying yes to a better paying job and letting another opportunity pass you by.**



REACHING PROSPERITY

Prosperity. A simple word that isn't always so simply obtained. Kelsey became pregnant at seventeen and dropped out of high school. A single mom with no positive support, she tried hard to provide stability for herself and her newborn son but couldn't make ends meet on minimum wage. Frustrated, she used alcohol to cope. It was a hard few years, but Kelsey became sober, obtained her GED and soon realized she was capable of so much more. And that's when we met her.

Today Kelsey's tireless efforts are paying off. With support and guidance from her coaches, she's debt-free, on the Dean's list at college, and putting her new skills as a graduate of our financial literacy and healthy parenting classes to work. Her partnership with our coaches also helped her land another job and increase her wage by more than \$3 an hour.

She's not only the single mom of a toddler, but has taken custody of her teenage brother and is committed to providing him with the support and guidance she didn't have. She helped provide that same guidance for many more as a volunteer in our GED program. And that type of support ... can stop the cycle of generational poverty dead in its tracks.

Prosperity. It's the future for Kelsey and her family, and it's the gift she passes on as a volunteer

TO ELIMINATE POVERTY AND CREATE PROSPERITY AND EQUITY IN THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE WE SERVE.



1999 Board and Staff of Community Action Duluth.

However, state and local funds were cut in the late 1990s, inevitably leading to staff layoffs and the resignation of the board of directors in 1998. The Duluth office was closed and energy assistance and weatherization services were transferred to Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, based in Virginia, MN.

Building on the rich history of providing for the needs of people with low incomes, DCAP was reborn as Community Action Duluth in 1999 and relocated to Lincoln Park. Community Action Duluth's new board of directors recognized that many services already existed in Duluth to address the effects of poverty, such as homelessness, hunger and a lack of clothing. The board wanted to tackle the problem in a different way, by helping individuals and families move out of poverty permanently. This innovative approach led to programs that strengthen economic security by increasing: Financial stability, employment opportunities, civic involvement and meaningful social connections. In 2011, this work was enhanced by funding from Duluth LISC; Community Action Duluth became a Financial Opportunity Center, focused on bundling services for maximum results.

*Duluth Community Action Program offices,
the Duluth Armory Building (1982-1998)*



Above Left: Our new office location in the former Lincoln Park Elementary School. The building is currently under construction to become a multi-service complex with 48 affordable apartments adjoining the already existing Boys and Girls Club, Lincoln Park Children and Families Collaborative, the Human Development Center's Harmony Club, and Community Action Duluth.

COMMUNITY ACTION DULUTH

INTEGRATED COACHING, TRAINING AND PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS THAT EMPOWER PEOPLE WITH THE FINANCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TO RAISE THEMSELVES OUT OF POVERTY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS THAT EMPOWER PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY AND THEIR ALLIES TO ADVOCATE FOR PUBLIC POLICIES THAT SUPPORT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

OUR NUMBERS FISCAL YEAR 2014: OCTOBER 1, 2013 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2014

REVENUE

Federal Grants: \$630,974
State Grants: \$312,594
Foundation Grants: \$511,945
Contributions: \$63,897
Earned Income: \$43,504
2013 Carryover: \$139,925
TOTAL: \$1,702,839

COST OF MAJOR PROGRAMS

Employment Services: \$316,759
Community Engagement: \$198,166
Financial Services: \$577,066
Green Jobs: \$147,479
Tax Site: \$102,564
Management + General: \$253,802
Development: \$25,309
TOTAL: \$1,621,145

RACE + ETHNICITY

3,161 People Served
White: 73%
Black/African American: 12%
American Indian + Alaska Native: 7%
Multi-Race (any 2 or more): 4%
Other: 3%
Asian: 0.9%
Native Hawaiian + Other Pacific Islander: 0.1%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

% of federal poverty guideline
Up to 50%: 33%
51-100%: 21%
101-200%: 30%
201% and up: 16%

GEOGRAPHIC AREA + POPULATION SERVED

Community Action Duluth serves people who live in the city of Duluth. The tax site serves people in the Greater Duluth area including residents of Wisconsin.



Board of Directors

Tim Meininger *Chair*

Mimi Stender *Vice Chair*

Leann Oehlerking-Boes *Treasurer*

Beth Wilde *Secretary*

Carl Crawford

Ginga Beleza Newton

Barb Russ

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Heidi Timm-Bijold

Daniel Fanning

Frank Jewell

Donna Ennis

Phoebe Jorgensen

Jim Hacking

Shannon RedBrook

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