



# Partnering With People

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Community **Action**



Dear Friends:

2016 proved to be another impactful year for Community Action. We are proud to share with you this annual report, which includes some of the success stories as we continue to partner with people to overcome poverty.

Throughout the year, in successfully meeting our benchmarks, Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties worked with more than 60,000 people across the agency and partnered over 194 times with organizations to support low-income individuals and families. This work includes:

- Providing 1,919 low-income children with comprehensive early childhood education, and appropriate health and nutritional services promoting school readiness and future academic success through Head Start.
- Averting utility shut off for 21,000 households through our emergency energy assistance services.
- Helping 8,845 senior citizens maintain an independent living situation.
- Preventing homelessness for 366 individuals with emergency rent or mortgage assistance.
- Providing a total of 1,065 pounds of food to Community Action participants.
- Improving conditions in which low-income residents live by weatherizing 116 homes and providing emergency home repair services to 462 households.

At Community Action, we work alongside our program participants, allies, and partners to create a future in which all people can achieve their potential. We provide a foundation that strengthens stability and success through programs that **serve** low-income individuals and families. We amplify the voices of those living in poverty, helping to **educate** the broader community about the support and assistance that is needed. We build alliances that **transform** systems, removing barriers that perpetuate poverty.

**In this annual report, we share with you stories that bring these principles – Serve, Educate, Transform – to life.**

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clarence Hightower".

Clarence Hightower, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Blake Huffman".

Blake Huffman  
Board President



## Philanthropy in Action – Car Ownership Program

Reliable transportation is a critical element of a low-income person's ability to find and maintain suitable employment and promote economic stability. For nearly three decades Community Action's Car Ownership Program has helped hundreds of low-income individuals and families acquire transportation through low-interest auto loans. In 2016, the Program received a tremendous boost through a \$72,000 grant from the Otto Bremer Trust, enabling Community Action to increase its maximum low-interest loan amount from \$4,000 to \$6,000 per household. This generous philanthropic investment ensures that the Program keeps pace with rising costs and provides participants with the most reliable transportation possible. Established through an initial philanthropic investment from The McKnight Foundation, our Car Ownership Program has been a significant mainstay in helping the agency to partner with people to overcome poverty.

**"We are pleased that our grant helps provide reliable transportation to low-income households in the community, leading to increased economic independence."**

— Daniel C. Reardon  
Co-CEO and Trustee, Otto Bremer Trust

## SERVICE IN PARTNERSHIP

LeAndra Estis' partnership with Community Action began over a decade ago when she enrolled her son in Head Start. Although she did some volunteering, the young mother didn't fully engage with all the agency had to offer until five years later when she enrolled her second child in the same program. She then came to realize that Community Action was not only a place that could meet her childcare needs, it was also a place that could support her life journey. In addition to Head Start, LeAndra applied for and received energy assistance reducing financial burdens and fulfilled a lifelong dream of purchasing her own vehicle through our Car Ownership Program. But the LeAndra/Community Action story doesn't end there. LeAndra has become a leader in our community, raising her voice as an active member of the Head Start Parent Advisory Board, participating in civic engagement initiatives, and serving on our Board of Directors. LeAndra proves that service and support is foundational to addressing deep economic disparities and it takes partnership to make significant steps to overcome poverty.

**"Community Action made me who I am today and has given me the tools to become the person I am striving to be."**

— LeAndra Estis  
Past participant and Community Action Board Member



## EDUCATION IN PARTNERSHIP

In 2016, Community Action introduced a new program called Getting Ahead, providing low-income residents the means to thoroughly investigate the impact that poverty has on themselves, their families, and the larger community. In fact, participants are called 'co-investigators' to highlight the importance of understanding circumstances, systemic barriers and other factors that keep people in poverty. Consisting of sixteen intense sessions and more than 50 hours of classroom time, Getting Ahead co-investigators partner on a journey of empowerment beginning with a self-assessment and concluding with an action plan. People come into the program trying not only to escape poverty, but also homelessness, domestic abuse, addiction, mental illness, and a multitude of other obstacles that are not only related to poverty, but can be life-threatening. At the core of Getting Ahead, the group dispels myths and deeply held beliefs about poverty, seeing, in some cases for the the very first time, strength in themselves and in each other.



“Getting Ahead shatters one of the prevailing myths of poverty, which is that people choose to be poor.”

— Damon Drake  
Getting Ahead Program Coordinator



“It’s by design that we build strategic and far-reaching partnerships, which better position our agency to transform communities and strive toward equity.”

— Dr. Clarence Hightower  
Executive Director, Community Action

## TRANSFORMATION IN PARTNERSHIP

Community Action made the tactical decision to conduct our 2016 Community Needs Assessment in concert with our strategic planning process. The goal was to ensure that our strategic agenda is relevant to the needs of individuals and families across the region. We are not only trying to improve how we serve and educate low-income people, but also focus on how we can transform systems that perpetuate poverty. It takes partnership to do this.

By applying what we have learned to over one hundred alliances across the community, together we are able to identify barriers that impede success, improve how public systems and supports work, and ensure equal access to opportunity. Sometimes this takes the form of small but meaningful actions like working with our local utility on how to better serve low-income individuals. In other cases, it’s about amplifying the voices of people living in poverty and ensuring that our statewide leaders know and understand what is at stake.

Led by our Executive Director, Dr. Clarence Hightower, our senior leadership and staff collectively serve on dozens of boards, committees, work groups, and in professional associations where they can influence and educate others through their insight, expertise, and institutional memory.

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

Year Ended September 30, 2016

### Assets

Cash	\$541,595	7.93%
Receivables	1,534,652	22.47%
Other Assets	165,698	2.43%
Prepaid Expenses	336,872	4.93%
Property & Equipment, Net	4,252,459	62.25%
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$6,831,276</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### Liabilities & New Assets

Accounts Payable	\$594,155	8.70%
Accrued Expenses	1,307,608	19.14%
Deferred Revenue	31,013	0.45%
Long-Term Liabilities	—	0.00%
Unrestricted Net Assets	2,478,764	36.29%
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	2,419,736	35.42%
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$6,831,276</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Consolidated Statement of Activities

Year Ended September 30, 2016

### Sources of Dollars Used to Fund Operations

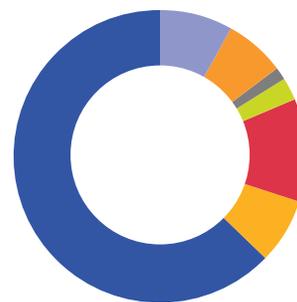
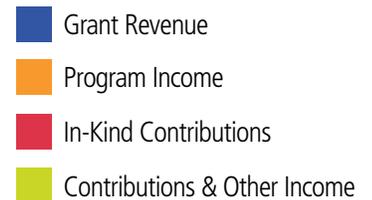
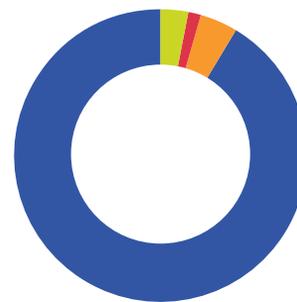
Grant Revenue	\$20,437,076	91.34%
Program Income	905,535	4.05%
In-Kind Contributions	293,249	1.31%
Contributions & Other Income	738,734	3.30%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$22,374,594</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### Expenditures by Service Group

Head Start/Early Head Start	\$13,971,134	62.57%
Energy Conservation	1,641,984	7.35%
Energy Assistance	2,519,058	11.28%
Property Management	596,215	2.67%
Planning & Communications	303,542	1.36%
Community Engagement	1,459,899	6.54%
Fundraising	30,358	0.14%
Administration	1,807,543	8.09%

**Total Expenses** **\$22,329,733** **100.00%**

**Change In Net Assets** **\$44,861**





Community Action has a tripartite Board of Directors, consisting of one-third representation from the low-income community, one-third representation from the private sector, and one-third representation from the public sector.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Sanaide "Sara" Appolon**

Community Member

**Esmeralda Cortes**

Head Start Policy Council

**LeAndra Estis\***

Community Member

**Connie Greer**

Office of Economic Opportunity Former Director

**Blake Huffman, President**

Ramsey County Commissioner

**Marcie Jefferys\***

Ramsey County Deputy Manager's Office

**Michelle Kemper, Treasurer**

Washington County Community Services

**Ta'Lisa Lissimore\***

Community Member

**Robin Madsen, Member-At-Large\***

AFSCME Local 1842 Former President

**Mary Jo McGuire**

Ramsey County Commissioner

**Heather Meyers, Secretary**

Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services

**Shereen Page**

Community Member

**Jane Prince\***

City of Saint Paul Mayor's Office

**Kerri Sawyer, Vice President**

Minnesota Department of Health

**Keith Schuler**

McGough

**Evelyn Shelafoe\***

Century Trails Resident Association & Board

**Mary Spaulding\***

Head Start Policy Council

\* Not pictured

**Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties**

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