Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies

Breaking News from Ohio's Poverty Fighting Network

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OACAA to Administer Funds for Lead Abatement

Ohio's Community Action Network joined the Ohio Department of Health yesterday in accepting a $2.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to create healthier homes for Ohio's families.

"Safe, affordable housing is one of the keys to moving from poverty into self-sufficiency," said Philip Cole, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies (OACAA) which will administer the grant. "A stable environment, free of hazards such as lead poisoning, allows children to grow and learn, parents to work and guide, and all families to thrive."

Ohio Department of Health Director Ted Wymyslo, M.D., accepted the $2.1 million check from Thomas Leech, Columbus Field Director for HUD. The project targets 30 Appalachian counties and six counties in northwest Ohio. Work to abate lead from 300 homes will be performed by crews trained in both weatherization and lead abatement from the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development and WSOS Community Action Commission.

Read More

PICCA Hosts Poverty Simulation

Could you survive a month in poverty? Forty members of the Pickaway County community learned about the challenges of poverty in a simulation hosted by Pickaway County Community Action on May 27 as part of the agency's commemoration of Community Action Month.

"It's a simulation that enables participants to look at poverty from a variety of angles," said PICCA Executive Director David Hannahs. "It was designed to sensitize those who frequently work with low-income families and create a broader awareness of the realities of poverty among policymakers, community leaders and more."

During the simulation, participants role play the lives of low-income families. Some are TANF recipients, some are disabled and some are senior citizens on Social Security. Participants have the stressful task of providing for basic necessities and shelter on a limited budget during the course of four, 15-minute "weeks." They interact with volunteers portraying human service agencies, grocers, pawnbrokers, bill collectors, employers and police officers.

PICCA's event was staffed with volunteers from the AmeriCorps VISTA program and organized by PICCA's own VISTA, Lacey Elliott. The simulation was created by the Missouri Association for Community Action and PICCA purchased a kit with a grant provided by the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation.

Anyone interested in hosting a poverty simulation should contact Becky Hammond, PICCA's Emergency Services Director, at 740-477-1655, ext. 304.

Catch a great rate! Be an Early Bird by registering now for Summer Conference!

Registration is now open for the 2011 Annual Summer Conference at the Crowne Plaza Toledo, June 29 through July 1.

The Early Bird rate is only $275 and the Early Bird Deadline is TOMORROW June 3.

The agenda is now complete and available here.

Book your hotel room by calling 1-888-444-0401.

The Crowne Plaza is a non-smoking hotel. If you would like a smoking room, we have reserved a block at the Park Inn, 101 N. Summit St. Call 419-241-3000 for reservations.

See you in Toledo!

National Entrepreneurship Awards

LACCA Director Started as Head Start Parent

Veronica McLaurine is the new Director of Housing Services for Lima Allen Council on Community Affairs (LACCA) and another Community Action success story.

Veronica came to LACCA in 1993 as a Head Start single parent. She began her career with the agency in 1999 serving in various capacities including part-time substitute teacher, co-teacher and social worker. She has been the agency's Fair Housing Services Coordinator since 2005.

"I wonder how I ever overcame the odds of life pushing against me in the opposite direction," she said. "I often think about what pushes me the most every morning when I get out of bed. Then with a sigh of relief I say 'Thank you, God' for putting LACCA in my pathway. Without this organization, I would be incomplete."

Since first visiting LACAA, Veronica has earned her BA from Mount Vernon University and is a state licensed and ordained minister through Faith Ministries International. She is a certified Bridges Out of Poverty instructor and graduate of Ohio's Community Action Leadership Academy. She serves as Vice President of the Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities and on the boards of the Allen County Housing Consortium and the Kibby Corners Development Corporation.

"Many years of needing someone to reach out to me makes me feel honored to serve in this community to reach out to others," Veronica said.

Cincy's Blueprint Participants Work on Major Event

About a dozen participants in a unique Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency program will help make a signature Cincinnati event successful this fall.

Students from the Agency's Blueprint for Success Program will be part of the construction crews for Citirama, the 10th annual urban home show hosted by the Home Builders Association of Cincinnati and the City. The students - each of whom has completed Blueprint's nine-month pre-apprenticeship program will work alongside Citirama's builders on the five new homes in the the Villages of Daybreak in Bond Hill.

Blueprint for Success assists young people in learning a marketable trade while providing a supportive environment that helps them overcome barriers to self-sufficiency. Students study a curriculum based on state and national standards and receive basic tools which are theirs to keep when the complete their final project.

These participants, pictured below, joined Cincinnati Mayor Mark Mallory (center) in the June 1 ceremonial groundbreaking: Benjamin Durrett, Jamaal Baskerville, James Price, Ebony Mullins, Justin Dean, Jake Turner and John Heckler.

Citirama is scheduled to run Sept. 17 to 25.

Community Action Agencies for outstanding leadership and innovative operations to create change for low-income individuals and families in urban, suburban and rural communities.

Winners receive, among other recognition, $2,500. Agencies must be a current member of the Community Action Partnership to be eligible.

The deadline is July 1, 2011.

For detailed information and forms, visit the Partnership's website.

Job Postings

Check out the latest job postings in the network!

Send your job postings to OACAA