

# Victories *Everyday*



Cincinnati-Hamilton County  
Community Action Agency  
*We help make things happen*

www.cincy-caa.org

May / June 2011



## From the President/CEO

Times are still tough, but your Community Action Agency is tougher. We are here educating children, motivating fathers, helping seniors keep the utilities on, weatherizing homes to provide protection from the summer heat, and helping people find jobs. Budgets are being cut everywhere, but we are working with our legislators to keep providing the services that Hamilton County residents need most. Use your voice and let your legislators know how important CAA is to this community; speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. Together, we can build a stronger community.

**Gwen L. Robinson-Benning**  
*President/CEO*

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Cincinnati-Hamilton  
County Community  
Action Agency

## Dates to Remember

### Summer Crisis Program

July 1 — August 31

CAA's Jordan Crossing facility

### CAA Closed

Monday, July 4

The agency will reopen at  
8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 5.

### Head Start Open Enrollment for 2011-2012 School Year

Ongoing

Call 513.569.4510



## Bridging the Transportation Gap

Dave could spend an entire day traveling to and from his doctors' appointments using Metro services. Being disabled and not having access to a car forced him to spend most of his time at home. "If I had

an appointment or wanted to do something, I had to plan. There were no spur of the moment activities for me – I was dependent upon public transportation," said Dave. He had unsuccessfully tried to save enough money to purchase a vehicle, until he found the **By Car Program**. Gary applied and was accepted into the CAA program, which is administered by the Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative (GCMi).

GCMi staff and partner organizations worked with Dave to provide individualized counseling and financial education. They also set up an Individual Development Account, where for every \$1 Dave saved into the account, it was matched with \$2. Once he saved the maximum amount allowed, GCMi staff assisted Dave with the purchase of a vehicle.

Now Dave has access to reliable transportation and the freedom to travel anywhere. He can't say enough about the changes that have come as a result of owning a car. "I want to get out more now. It's lifted my spirits tremendously and helped build my self-esteem." Prior to owning a vehicle, Dave missed many opportunities to be there for his children. Now he is a more active father, able to cheer on his kids at their sporting and musical activities. Dave is even more committed to improving his health. No longer relying on time-consuming public transportation, he has increased the amount of time he attends rehabilitation. "It feels good to be busy again. You don't know how blessed you are until you're without a car. I'm so thankful for the By Car program and how it's impacted my life."



## CAA Meets with Legislator to Combat Poverty

CAA held a legislative coffee in May in honor of National Community Action Month. Elected officials and legislators' aides in attendance included: State Representatives Denise

Driehaus, Dale Mallory, and Connie Pillich; State Senator Eric Kearney; Stephen Hill, Director of Community Outreach for U.S. Representative Steve Chabot; David Miller, Chief of Staff for City Councilman Charlie Winburn; and aides from City Councilman Wendell Young's office.

Attendees discussed various initiatives at CAA, including how the agency is working with Cincinnati Bell to help individuals obtain landline or cell phone service through the **Ohio Lifeline Program**. In today's modern society, having access to telephone service can help with employment, medical needs, and family emergencies.

CAA also announced that it will offer its **Summer Crisis Program** again this year beginning July 1, providing fans, air conditioners, and utility bill assistance to individuals over the age of 60 or individuals who suffer from a medical condition which requires avoiding exposure to extreme heat.

**Summer Crisis Program: 513.569.1850.**  
**Ohio Lifeline: 513.569.1840 x 2553.**

## CAA by the Numbers

*From January to March 2011:*

- 38 businesses received service and counseling from the **Greater Cincinnati Microenterprise Initiative**.
- 216 homes received energy efficient home improvement services through the **Home Weatherization Assistance Program**.
- 997 individuals had their 2010 tax return prepared at no cost, totaling \$2,061,876 in refunds by CAA's **Earned Income Tax Credit Initiative**.

## Youth to Build Model Homes

CAA has partnered with the City of Cincinnati and the Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati to provide internships for students from the agency's **Blueprint for Success** construction training program. The students will shadow site managers during the construction of houses for Cincinnati's 10th CiTiRAMA home show. Students will experience the administrative and managerial side of the industry, working side-by-side with top builders, such as Brookstone Homes, The Drees Co., and Potterhill Homes.



Blueprint for Success is a pre-apprenticeship program for individuals who have already earned their high school diploma or GED and are seeking to expand their career opportunities. Participants gain hands-on construction training while also receiving supportive services and referrals to other CAA services.

**Interested in CAA's construction training program? 513.569.1840 x 1466.**



CAA is one of 50 national recipients of the Champions for Healthy Kids grant from the General Mills Foundation. The \$10,000 grant will fund the new Healthy Start initiative at CAA's self-administered **Head Start** sites for the 2011-2012 school year. Through Healthy Start's animal-themed curriculum, the children will:

- Engage in physical activity and motor skill development through songs, games, and stories.
- Learn how to make conscious food choices by using their senses when eating and how to recognize low fat and high fiber foods.

Staff will also engage Head Start parents, providing take home activities to encourage new habits. The goal is to help preschoolers understand that how they treat their bodies affects how they feel and grow.

General Mills' Champions for Healthy Kids is a comprehensive initiative to help youth improve their nutrition and fitness behaviors through grants to community organizations implementing innovative programs.

CAA is currently enrolling toddlers and preschoolers in Head Start early education schools for the 2011-2012 school year. Head Start has over 100 locations throughout Hamilton County, offering both full- and half- day classes. **To learn more or to enroll a child, call 513.569.4510.**