



CAFCA

Connecticut Association
for Community Action



2019 Annual Report

The Connecticut Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA) is the state association for Connecticut's nine Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the state and federal designated anti-poverty agencies empowering people throughout Connecticut's 169 cities and towns.



Our mission is to strengthen the capacity of our members to empower people in need and improve the communities in which they live.

A Message from CAFCA



Deb Polun
Executive Director



Deborah Monahan
Board Chair

Last year, over 250,000 people from across Connecticut received assistance from their local Community Action Agencies (CAAs). They got help with immediate needs like food, heat, and child care, as well as with longer-term needs and goals, such as job training, sustainable housing, and asset development. CAAs serve every city and town in Connecticut, providing a wide array of resources and supports to help people improve their financial, economic, and social well-being.

The Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA) is pleased to be a part of this work. CAFCA helps CAAs maximize their impact through training and technical assistance, grant administration, partnership building, and advocacy for public policies that support the needs of low- and moderate-income people.

Community Action Agencies have been engaged in this important work for over 55 years. And, while they have long helped people with housing, nutrition, transportation, and more, these issues have gained renewed interest among policymakers as “social determinants of health.” Over the past few years, Connecticut’s CAAs have formed and strengthened relationships with local health care providers, working together to help people get and stay healthy – and we are excited for these partnerships to grow in the years ahead. Having trained 100+ employees as Community Health Workers, CAAs are well-positioned to lead efforts to address social determinants of health and improve health outcomes.

As CAAs continue to remake themselves through vision, a focus on data, and innovations, CAFCA does as well. In 2019, we transitioned to a new Executive Director following the retirement of long-time Director – and Community Action champion – Edith Karsky. We have refreshed our logo and website, and have enhanced our social media engagement to help spread the word about the value and contributions of Community Action. Be social with us!

With your partnership, we will help all people in Connecticut reach their full potential and contribute to the well-being of their communities. Thank you for your continued support.

CAFCA Team

Deb Polun
Executive Director

Rhonda Evans
Deputy Director

Kelley Hall
*Development,
Communications &
Grants Manager*

Katrina Bresnahan
*SSBG Case Management
Project Director*



Raul found a safe place at CRT's McKinney Shelter in Hartford. His home for nearly a year and half, it is now a place he returns to every weekday as a dedicated volunteer in the kitchen helping prepare meals for the homeless residents.

"I never knew what it was to share, and how to help others. It is still a learning experience. I love to help the guys and feed the guys - I am learning every day."

The Promise of 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.

259,512 individuals served



106,598 families served



296,293 volunteer hours donated

71% of those hours were from low-income individuals



2,145 partnerships to keep the Promise of Community Action



Isaiah is one of the eight children who are enrolled in HRA's newly licensed infant/toddler classroom. His mother, Jennifer, says "We're happy to be here and he's very happy to be here. He has learned so much since the classroom opened. It really allows me to work in peace when I know that he is safe and learning from teachers who we love so much."



CRT School Supply Drive



New Opportunities, Inc. Pop-up Food Pantry



CAAWC Toy Drive

Community Action Results: *Education & Employment*

5,629

Number of children enrolled in early childhood services

74%

Percentage of individuals who advanced their education or increased their vocational skills

2,500+

Number of unemployed Connecticut residents who went to work

4,400+

Number of individuals engaged in job search services including job coaching, resume development, and interview skills training

421

Number of youth who obtained employment to gain skills and income

Community Action Results:

Financial Literacy & Asset Development and Housing

10,900+

Number of individuals who filed their income taxes with free volunteer income tax preparation assistance, returning over \$8.5 million to our state's economy

79%

Percentage of individuals who engaged in budgeting skills services and achieved and maintained their basic needs for 90+ days

1,706

Number of individuals who obtained safe and affordable housing

1,666

Number of individuals experiencing homelessness who obtained safe, temporary shelter

602

Number of households that avoided eviction



Noel was walking 3-4 miles a day looking for employment. CAANH received a bike donation and gave it to Noel so he would have transportation. "I'm overjoyed to have received this bike. It has removed one more obstacle in my search for employment."

Noel is now employed and was able to pick up hours that he wouldn't have been able to if he didn't have reliable transportation.

"At the Department of Social Services, we are proud of our decades-long partnership with the Connecticut Association for Community Action and its member agencies across the state. In many ways, Community Action Agencies are on the front line of delivering vital services to residents of all ages, from early childhood education and employment & training to energy assistance and senior support services."

Commissioner Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Connecticut Department of Social Services

Community Action Results: *Energy & Heating Assistance*

81,456

Number of households that avoided crisis with energy assistance

32,700

Number of people who received energy conservation education

2,000+

Number of homes that were weatherized to improve energy efficiency



"Thank you many times over for ABCD's assistance with my heating bill this winter and in years past. You are helping a lot of people and making a lot of hard lives a little easier. You have my sincere thanks." - Sheila

Robert came to New Opportunities, Inc. in search of information about the Fatherhood program on a recommendation from a friend. He credits the Fatherhood program for teaching him how to communicate with his ex-wife, use conflict resolution skills, become a more supportive father for his children, and the opportunity to gain employment by learning job readiness skills during his time at New Opportunities. Robert says, "The Fatherhood program not only helped me identify barriers but also helped make a game plan to address these issues."



Community Action Results:

Health and Counseling

1,500+

Number of people who received assistance enrolling in health insurance, allowing them to access needed health care

1,125

Number of people who worked on their mental and behavioral health and well-being by accessing services

2,500+

Number of parents/caregivers who received parenting skills training to strengthen their families

208

Number of fathers who strengthened their parenting skills

97

Number of youth who engaged in supportive services to build self-sufficiency and independent living skills

Maria's outlook for the future was grim. She came to CAAWC for assistance with housing and the desire to live independently. She had a language barrier, limited education, and poor eye sight, which made finding employment very difficult. CAAWC worked with Maria to identify additional barriers and connect her to services and resources to improve her vision. Maria says, "After my eye surgery my entire life changed."

Maria continues to work on breaking barriers that have held her back for so long. "CAAWC gave me a second chance to retake my life and find a better path for the future."



Community Action Results: *Older Adults*

15,540+

Number of people who maintained independent living through support services including home meal delivery, home health, and homemaker services

1,800+

Number of people who received in-home care sessions including nursing, chores, and personal care services

10,785

Number of older adults who participated in home delivered or congregate meal programs



Community Action Agency Staff

1,544 full time employees across the state

44,776 hours of staff training & development



Access Community Action Agency Mobile Food Pantry

Community Action Results:

Nutrition

16,900+

Number of people who received emergency or supplemental food

8,800

Number of people who received food vouchers, formula and/or diapers

2,500+

Number of children and youth who received nutritious snacks and meals at summer congregate meal sites



TVCCA Food Drive



"Thanks to the program (The Access Agency's Accessing Home Ownership Program) I've been able to accomplish something I never thought I could - becoming a home owner. My family now finally has a place to call home", says Sean, who lives with his wife and three children in one of the program's supported homes.

“TEAM has become a part of my family during one of the most challenging times in my life. It was so hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel. To walk through TEAM’s doors and hear someone say, ‘we have a program here that can assist you; we can help you with this,’ gave me light I needed.” Esttiffany adds, “They have been there every step of the way and my family and I wouldn’t be where we are today without their support.”



The Community Action Approach

Using a holistic approach, Community Action Agencies (CAAs) address the immediate, short-term, and long-term needs of low- and moderate-income individuals and families, to help them achieve and maintain economic self-sufficiency.



CAFCA 2019 Activities

Below are highlights of CAFCA's work to assist our Community Action Agency (CAA) Network to empower people in need and improve the communities in which they live.

Strengthening Community Action Agencies with Training and Technical Assistance

Every year, CAFCA works with DSS to offer Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) to Connecticut's Community Action Agencies to support, enhance, and strengthen their organizational capacity. This year's topics included human resources, financial management, DSS programs, and Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA). ROMA is a management and accountability framework that focuses on the results achieved through Community Action Agency services and interventions. Connecticut's CAA Network has four nationally certified ROMA trainers and nine nationally certified implementers to help encourage a learning culture that supports ROMA.

New England Community Action Partnership (NECAP)

CAFCA continued to provide staff support and board leadership for the New England Community Action Partnership (NECAP), which serves the collective interests of its member CAAs and New England's limited income population through representation and education. Through NECAP, CAA directors and staff have the opportunity to come together to discuss and share trends, challenges, and best practices that address poverty-related policy issues on a state, regional, and national level. CAFCA played a significant role in planning NECAP's presidential forum, *Opportunity & the American Dream*.



Working with National Partners

CAFCA attended the National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) conference in Washington, D.C. and met with Connecticut's congressional delegation to advocate for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Head Start, Weatherization, and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Community Action leaders stressed the positive and significant impact these services have on their customers and communities back home, and the importance of supporting these critical funding streams. Connecticut's congressional delegation continues to strongly support the CAA Network and be leaders in Congress for Community Action.



CAFCA also attended the Community Action Partnership's Annual Convention in Chicago to connect and meet with Community Action colleagues from across the country. Networking opportunities and sessions centered on program and community development, best practices in management, program implementation, and capacity building.

CAFCA Grants and Programs

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

The federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is administered by the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS). DSS provides CSBG funding to the state's nine Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to support their work, and to CAFCA to support and assist CAAs. CAFCA's funding allows for Training and Technical assistance (T/TA) and sharing of best practices to help strengthen CAA staff and agency capacity.

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)

CAFCA administers the Social Services Block Grant Case Management (SSBG CM) contract for the state's CAAs statewide. SSBG CM is a federal grant administered by DSS, and helps vulnerable or at-risk people improve their lives by providing intervention, referral, and emergency services to those who qualify. It can also help with setting and reaching short- and long-term goals like life-skills training, job readiness training, education and employment assistance, and crisis intervention. This year, 3,360 individuals received SSBG CM services.

SNAP Outreach

CAFCA administers Connecticut's SNAP Outreach program through a contract with DSS. All nine CAAs conduct SNAP outreach activities and provide application assistance to individuals and households, including older adults and the working poor, who are potentially eligible for SNAP benefits but are not receiving them. Last year, over 5,000 people were screened for eligibility; 1,963 individuals received SNAP application assistance; and, 1,150 community partner or community information sessions about SNAP were held around the state.

Regional Performance and Innovation Consortia (RPIC)

As the Regional Performance and Innovation Consortia (RPIC) lead grantee for New England, CAFCA works in close partnership with the State Associations and state CSBG offices in all six states. Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Community Services (OCS), RPIC supports activities around capacity building; strengthening exemplary practices; and, assisting CAAs across the region to maximize and align T/TA resources, meet and implement Organizational Standards, and encourage and operationalize a ROMA culture. For the 2019-2022 RPIC grant, CAFCA will identify and support multi-year community transformation initiatives that move individuals, families, and communities towards increasing human capacity and sustaining self-sufficiency.

Community Health Workers

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are factors related to where people are born, live, work, and play, which have demonstrated impacts on health. Community Health Workers (CHWs) can help address health disparities related to SDOH by working within their communities to provide a wide range of services including facilitating access to health care, providing nutrition counseling, and helping people enroll in social services programs.

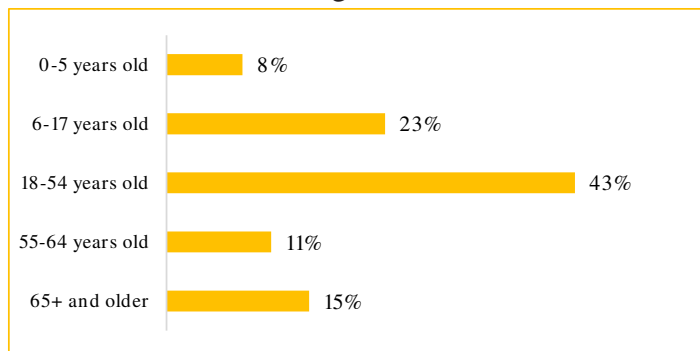
In 2019, CAFCA worked with DSS to train over 100 Community Action Agency staff across the state to become CHWs in preparation for state certification that takes effect in 2020. CAFCA will support agencies and staff as they pursue the CHW certification process and strengthen their relationships with local health providers and other community partners.



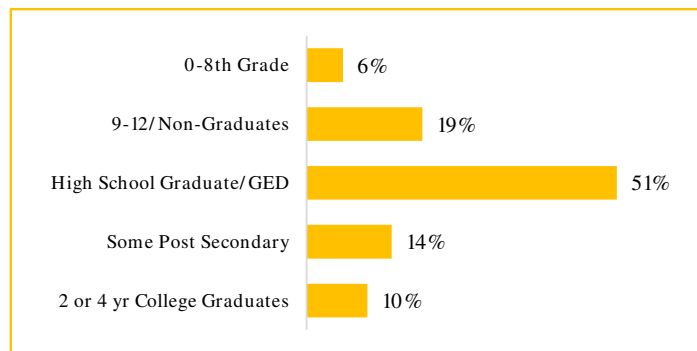
CAFCA ceremony to recognize the CAA staff who completed the CHW training

Our Customers

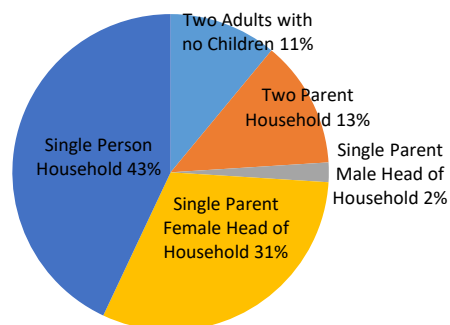
Age



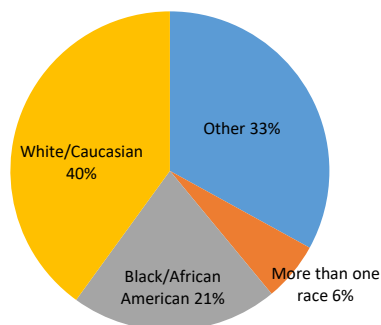
Education Level Individuals age 25+



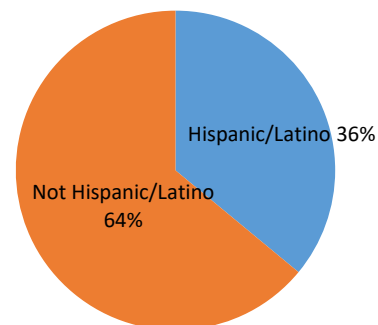
Family Composition



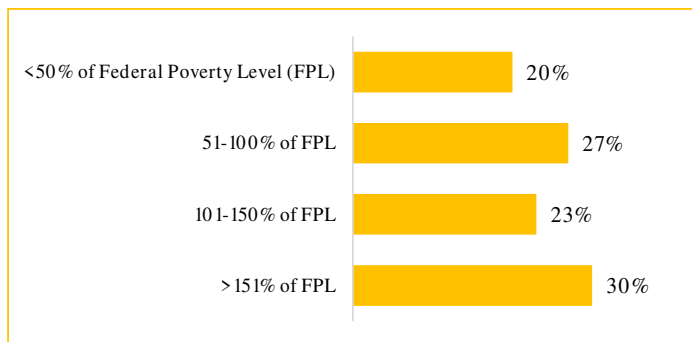
Race



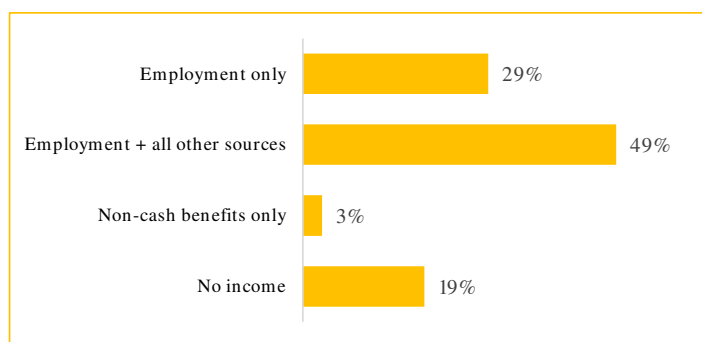
Ethnicity



Income Level*



Sources of Income



**In 2019, 100% of the FPL was \$12,490 for a single person, \$16,910 for a family of two, and \$21,330 for a family of three.*

CAFCA Financials for year ending 12.31.18

CAFCA's 990 can be found online at www.cafca.org

Support & Revenue

Grants & Contracts - Federal	\$	3,735,213
Program & other income	\$	87,050
Total:	\$	3,822,263

Expenses

Salaries & Benefits	\$	456,234
Sub-recipients	\$	2,234,716
Professional fees & Contractual services	\$	575,932
Materials & Supplies	\$	30,832
Other	\$	49,556
Conferences & Meetings	\$	62,678
Occupancy	\$	27,669
SSBG Housing Fund	\$	400,133
Travel & Transportation	\$	13,073
Training & Education	\$	6,181
Total:	\$	3,857,004

Change in net assets from operating activities (34,741)

For every \$1 of federal CSBG funds, CAAs leveraged an additional \$28.55 to help improve people's lives.

Leveraging resources to end poverty

Connecticut CAA Funding Sources

The core operational funding for CAAs is the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). With that funding (\$6,872,082 in FY 2018), CAAs are able to leverage additional funds, create partnerships, conduct local assessments and planning, and organize volunteers. For every \$1 of CSBG, an additional \$28.55 was leveraged.

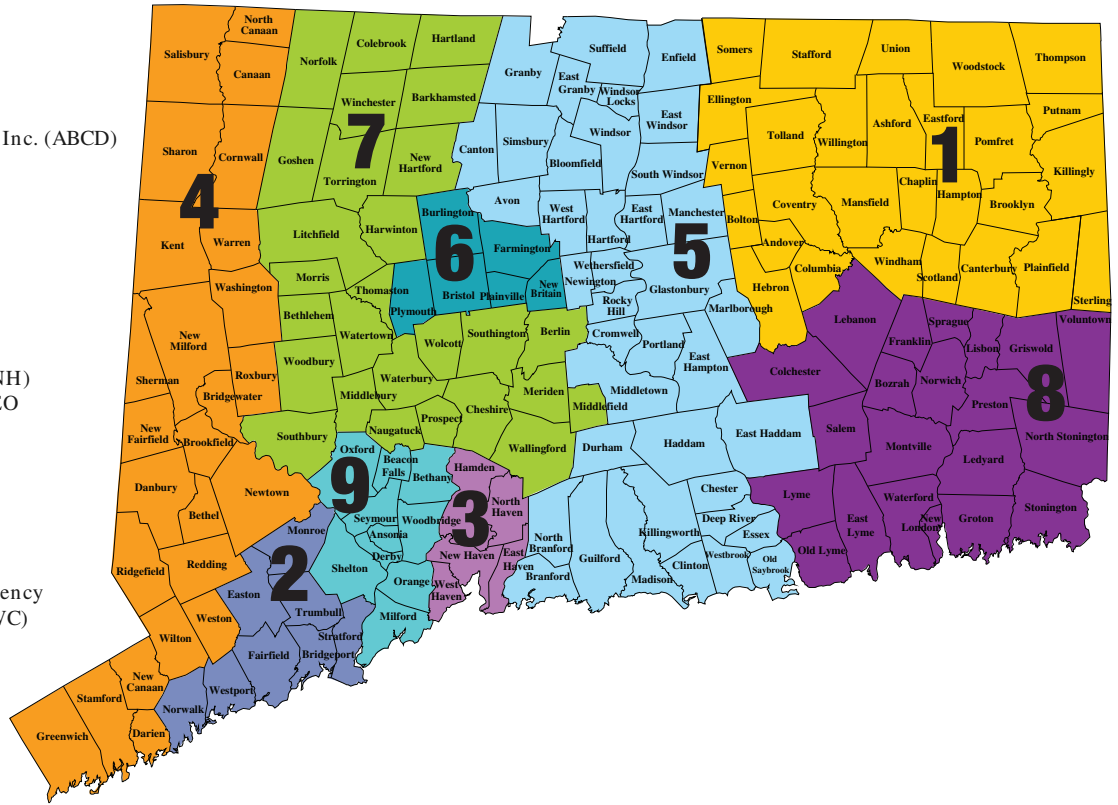
Connecticut CAAs utilize diverse funding sources in our anti-poverty work. Mostly through competitive, private, state, and federal grants, Community Action Agencies directed over \$209M toward fighting the effects and causes of poverty in 2018 and providing positive health and outcomes for Connecticut residents.

2018 Funding Sources for Connecticut CAA Network

Federal (non-CSBG)	\$ 144,945,990
Federal - CSBG	\$ 6,872,082
State	\$ 33,755,994
Local	\$ 4,114,140
Private	\$ 19,489,118
Total:	\$ 209,177,324

The Connecticut Community Action Agency Network

- 1 The Access Community Action Agency, Inc. (*Access*)
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www.accessagency.org
- 2 Action for Bridgeport
Community Development, Inc. (ABCD)
Dr. Monette Ferguson
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www.abcd.org
- 3 Community Action Agency
of New Haven, Inc. (CAANH)
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- 4 The Community Action Agency
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| <p>5 Community Renewal Team, Inc. (CRT)
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CAFCA

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*CAFCA is a proud member of the
National Community Action Partnership*

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