

## COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

Serving Central and Northeast Kansas  
Spring 2011

[www.cactiontopeka.com](http://www.cactiontopeka.com)

Lead Story

### Community Action Month marked by uncertainty

**Federal funding, Community Action Agency network in limbo after 47 years**

A NEW U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES with new priorities has cast a pall on National Community Action Month, a celebration of empowering individuals, families and communities to overcome poverty marked this year by threats to funding and the very structure of the 47-year movement to “help people help themselves and each other.”

Given the stagnant economy still fighting to gain a purchase for low-income Americans, demands for Community Action Agency (CAA) services are at an all-time high, with poverty, unemployment and food stamp rates rising. This juxtaposed against the new budget priorities of the U.S. House have produced



**COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH: Opportunity and Economic Security in America**

different realities.

President Obama has also joined the U.S. House in asking for cutbacks, including calling for a 50 percent cut in Community Services Block Grant funding (the CSBG is one of the main funding mechanisms for Community Action Agencies) in his 2012 budget and the restructuring of the administrative and service delivery systems of CAAs which, according to the Community Action Partnership, “could dissolve our 47-year track record of local control, local partnerships, and community

**See MONTH, Pg. 2, Col. 1**

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### Community Action founder Shriver dies

**War on Poverty, Peace Corps, Head Start highlights of his legacy**

ROBERT SARGENT SHRIVER DIED ON January 18, 2011 at age 95. “Sarge” was a distinguished public servant and a visionary leader — the father of Community Action. He headed up the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the Peace Corps and the Special Olympics (with his wife, the late Eunice Kennedy Shriver).

Sargent Shriver was the first OEO director — a position established by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964 — in which he helped to direct the creation of Community Action, Head Start, Job Corps, and the many other programs that grew out of the War on Poverty.

Former President Bill Clinton said this about the contributions Shriver made to the betterment of the

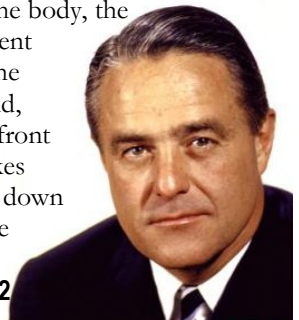
lives of millions of people he never met:

“Fifty years ago, President Kennedy told us we should ask what we can do for our country. A whole generation of us understood what President Kennedy meant by looking at Sargent Shriver’s life.”

Son-in-law and former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger said this about Shriver’s heart:

“As someone who has always believed very strongly in the power of the body, the mind and of the will, Sargent taught me a new power: the power of the heart. He said, “Tear down the mirror in front of you -- the one that makes you look at yourself. Tear down the mirror and you will see the millions of people

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Helping People Help Themselves Since 1970



#### COMMUNITY ACTION'S MISSION SUMMARY

To alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty through the promotion of public policy that helps those in poverty move to greater self-reliance and by providing services and resources that meet basic needs, promote self-reliance and enhance the quality of life for individuals and families.

#### 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.

"It is well to be prepared for life as it is,  
 but it is better to be prepared to make life better than it is."  
 — R. Sargent Shriver, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity (1915-2011)

**Head Start**

## Students learn about fire safety; Head Start Director accepts award

### Day honors former student; State group fetes Marmon

COMMUNITY ACTION, INC., in conjunction with the Topeka Fire Department, honored the life of Davier M. Holmes with its second Fire Safety Day on April 21 at Community Action's Hudson Center.

Community Action Head Start's Edmund Lewis began the day by reading a proclamation and Topeka Fire Department Public Information Officer David Banks spoke to Head Start students about fire safety. The students then toured the Fire Department's "Fire Safety House," which is a trailer that contains a simulation of what happens in a house fire.

Holmes died in a fire at his family's



Head Start students crawl to safety during a fire simulation.

home on December 23, 2009. He was four at the time of his death. He had been a student with Community Action's Head Start program.

### MARMON ACCEPTS ADMINISTRATOR OF YEAR AWARD

Community Action Head Start Director Phyllis Marmon received her Administrator of the Year Award at the Kansas Head Start Association's meeting in Salina in April.

Marmon's tenure with the agency has been marked with excellence, including being named Staff Person of the Year in 2006 and becoming a Certified Community Action Professional in 2009. Marmon has been with the agency for 10 years. **END**



Head Start Director Phyllis Marmon with her award

**Client Profile**

## Updates please owner

### New furnace, insulation to save hundreds of dollars

SARA MCCRAE'S APPRECIATION IS almost infectious. Recently Community Action's Weatherization program installed a new furnace and added insulation in her home, in addition to performing routine inspections and checking the batteries in her smoke detectors.

Weatherization Services Project Director Aaron Brucker estimates that the improvements to McCrae's home, highlighted by a new furnace that's 32 percent more efficient than her old one, could save her close to \$800 annually on her gas bills alone. Doubling the amount of insulation in her attic, he said, also would contribute to lower bills.

McCrae said the Weatherization staff were wonderful to her.

"The staff treated me like I was their mama," she said. "I would recommend your program to everybody."

McCrae said she found out about the Weatherization program from an acquaintance.

McCrae said the updates to her home were appreciated:

"Your company added years to my life when the new furnace was installed. The work done gives me peace as now I feel safer. I am grateful for your work and feel that this community does have concern for the seniors who live here." **END**



McCrae's new furnace.

## MONTH, from Page 1

stakeholder involvement."

Community Action, Inc. Executive Director Susan Wheatley said the bad economy has added more to the load borne by the poor.

"People come to Community Action desperate for help because they have experienced too many hardships and have lost all hope," she said. "We show them that they can change their lives. Our programs are designed for a variety of situations and individuals, and we have a proven track record helping the most vulnerable achieve economic security."

For more, please go to [www.communityactionpartnership.com](http://www.communityactionpartnership.com) or [www.cactiontopeka.com](http://www.cactiontopeka.com). **END**

## SHRIVER, from Page 1

(who) need your help."

Shriver said this about the War on Poverty, one of his most enduring legacies that created Community Action Agencies:

"The simplest description of the War on Poverty is that it is a means of making life available for any and all pursuers. It does not try to make men good — because that is moralizing. It does not try to give men what they want — because that is catering. It does not try to give men false hopes — because that is deception. Instead, the War on Poverty tries only to create the conditions by which the good life can be lived -- and that is humanism." **END**



### DATABASE-LINES: WHAT DOES THE 2011 BUDGET DEAL MEAN? (DATA FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES USA)

- ◆ Community Services Block Grant: Funded at \$680 million, \$20 million less than FY 2010 enacted level.
- ◆ Head Start: Funded at \$7.6 billion, \$340 million more than FY 2010 enacted.
- ◆ Emergency Food and Shelter Program: Funded at \$120 million, \$80 million less than FY 2010.
- ◆ Community Development Block Grant: Funded at \$3.3 billion, \$650 million less than FY 2010.
- ◆ Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): Funded at \$4.71 billion, \$390 million less than FY 2010.
- ◆ Senior Nutrition: Funded at \$847 million, the same amount as FY 2010.

"The income tax has made more liars out of the American people than golf has."  
— Will Rogers, U.S. Humorist and Showman (1879 - 1935)

Community Services

## Free tax prep, counseling, e-filing services successful again

### Services offered to low-income for more than 20 years

COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.'s collaboration with AARP provides staff and volunteer community members to assist consumers with free Tax-Aide preparation, counseling and e-filing.

Community Action, Inc. serves as the point of contact for information on Tax-Aide services. For the last two years, an average of 900 people have come through the doors at Community Action's Swygart Building to receive Tax-Aide assistance, including free homebound Tax-Aide services to assist seniors and people with disabilities or physical limitations who were unable to get to one of the four free Tax-Aide service locations.

Community Action Direct Client Services Coordinator Alice Schimmel served



Direct Client Services Coordinator  
Alice Schimmel.

over 250 individuals by herself with homebound Tax-Aide services in Shawnee and Wabaunsee County.

Many of the consumers who Schimmel assists with homebound Tax-Aide assistance also are a part of the agency's monthly commodities program.

Every January, Schimmel begins work-

ing with Tax-Aide and its AARP volunteers at several facilities which serve as free Tax-Aide sites.

Schimmel also provides year-round assistance to answer tax questions and provide additional one-on-one assistance for individuals who need to file tax amendments. Spanish speaking staff members are also available to assist.



(L to R) Jose Soto has his taxes prepared by an AARP Tax-Aide volunteer.

Schimmel said that with the stress of filing can come benefits.

"Not all seniors, for example, are aware that even though they don't have to file an income tax return, they should in order to receive beneficial tax credits including approximately \$900 dollars from a Homestead Refund and/or up to \$90 per exemption in Food Sales Tax Credits," she said.

### FIRST TEE FINDS FAIRWAY WITH EVENTS

May and June will be busy months for The First Tee of Shawnee County.

May 23 is the date for the 3rd annual First Tee Shawnee County Golf Benefit. This year's benefit will be held at Lake Shawnee Golf Course, 4141 SE East Edge Rd.

Summer golf camps begin on June 6 for youths. No equipment is necessary. Please visit The First Tee website at [www.thefirstteeshawneecounty.org](http://www.thefirstteeshawneecounty.org) for details.

The First Tee shapes young lives through the game of golf. **END**

### Free Food to be Distributed In Auburn and Rossville, KS

In 2011 the Auburn Rural Mobile Food Pantry will be held on the fourth Friday of each month from 1 - 2 p.m. at the Auburn Community Center, 121 West 11th.

The Rossville Rural Mobile Food Pantry will be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. at Citizen Potawatomi Nation, 806 Nishnabe Trail.

For more information, please contact Alice Schimmel or Jessica Villegas at 785-235-9561 (800-792-7056) or [aschimmel@inlandnet.net](mailto:aschimmel@inlandnet.net) or [jvillegas@inlandnet.net](mailto:jvillegas@inlandnet.net).

### May - July 2011

#### Safe Kids Buckle Up Events

(FOR DETAILS CONTACT COMMUNITY ACTION'S SWYGART CENTER AT 785-235-9296)

**May 14:** 9 a.m. - Noon, Dillon's Store #54, 800 NW 25th St. (NW Hwy 24 and Rochester Rd.)

**May 28:** 9 a.m. - Noon, Fire Station #11, 2000 NW Lower Silver Lake Rd.

**June 18:** 9 a.m. - Noon, Ed Bozarth Chevrolet, 3731 SW Topeka Blvd.

**June 28:** 4 - 7 p.m., Dillon's Store #58, 1400 SW Huntoon

**July 16:** 9 a.m. - Noon, Fire Station #8, 2700 SW Fairlawn Rd.

**July 28:** 4 - 7 p.m., Dillon's Store #58, 1400 SW Huntoon

### Community Action Directory

#### ADMINISTRATION, EARLY HEAD START

##### HOME VISITATION:

Hancock Center  
1000 SE Hancock  
Topeka, KS 66607-1578  
Phone: 785-235-9561 (866-235-9561)  
Fax: 785-235-9564

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES, HOUSING AND HOME SERVICES, WEATHERIZATION/WINTERIZATION, CACFP, SAFE KIDS, FIRST TEE:

Swygart Center  
621 SE Swygart  
Topeka, KS 66607-2070  
Phone: 785-235-9296 (800-792-7056)  
Housing, Home Svcs.: 785-235-9296  
Weatherization/Winterization: 785-232-3499  
CACFP: 785-232-3258  
Safe Kids, First Tee: 785-235-9296  
Fax: 785-290-3200

#### HEAD START:

Hudson Center  
2410 SE Highland Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66607-1765  
Phone: 785-266-0245 (800-792-8039)  
Fax: 785-266-4967

### DATABASE-LINES: WHAT DOES THE 2011 BUDGET DEAL MEAN? (DATA FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES USA)

- ◆ Community Supplemental Food Program: Funded at \$176 million, nearly \$5 million more than FY 2010.
- ◆ The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): Funded at \$49.5 million, the same amount as FY 2010.
- ◆ Juvenile Justice Programs: Funded at \$148 million, \$14 million less than FY 2010 enacted.
- ◆ Women, Infant, and Children (WIC): Funded at \$6.748 billion, \$504 million less than FY 2010.
- ◆ Homeless Assistance Grant: Funded at \$1.9 billion, \$40 million more than FY 2010.
- ◆ Section 8: Funded at \$18.4 billion, \$233 million more than FY 2010.



## CAP-LINES

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www.cactiointopeka.com

### COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

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### \*\*\*ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED\*\*\*



If you would prefer to receive CAP-LINES via e-mail, please contact our office at 785-235-9561 (866-235-9561) or [mbell@inlandnet.net](mailto:mbell@inlandnet.net).

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### Home and Housing Services

## Inspections, conference, new staff, new housing highlights

**Homes to be more efficient, new techniques learned, clerk hired, five houses acquired**

**W**EATHERIZATION INSPECTORS have been working hard getting many homes inspected and ready for contractors to begin changing out furnaces, insulating and air sealing.

Amid their busy schedules, the inspectors were able to attend the ACI National Home Performance Conference to learn about innovative techniques and standards being used across the country by other weatherization providers.

Some much needed relief from day-

to-day operations arrived with the addition of O'Shara Hayes, the new Weatherization Clerk. Hayes provides assistance to current and prospective applicants and



Weatherization Clerk  
O'Shara Hayes



927 SE Overton (above) is one of the newly acquired Community Action Homes

screens applications for eligibility. We are pleased to have her as a part of our team.

Community Action also has finished the acquisition process for five single-family HOME properties, referred to as Community Action Homes, all located near the agency's administrative center at SE 10th and Hancock. Work is under way to prepare two of the homes for occupancy, which will provide more options for affordable housing.

The other three homes are occupied by the same tenants as before Community Action acquired the homes, meaning that those people didn't have to move. **END**

### COMMUNITY ACTION CALENDAR

May - July 2011

#### Board of Directors' Meetings

**May 4:** Executive Committee  
**May 12:** BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING  
**May 19:** Head Start Review Committee  
**May 24:** Program Committee  
**May 26:** Housing Committee

**June 1:** Executive Committee  
**June 16:** Head Start Review Committee  
**June 28:** Program Committee

**July 6:** Executive Committee  
**July 14:** BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING  
**July 21:** Head Start Review Committee  
**July 26:** Program Committee  
**July 28:** Program Committee  
**July:** Finance Committee TBA

#### Events, Holidays

**May 30:** Memorial Day Holiday (Agency Closed)  
**July 4:** Independence Day (Agency Closed)