

# The Community Actioneer

VOLUME I

AUGUST 2008

Written by and for our Employees

## GARRETT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION



Duane Yoder

### Welcome!

We extend a warm welcome to our newest employees!

- Arden Green, GTS
- Ashley Kahl, Wrap-Around Child Care
- Terri Lapp, AAA
- Jessica Long, Head Start

## Message from the President

### Update on the Strategic Plan

I'd like to thank our staff who have participated in updating Community Action's Strategic Plan. It has been a long, but educational process. We are nearing completion; the finished document will provide strategic direction for the work GCCAC does and is designed to focus on the outcomes to be achieved, rather than the actions to achieve it.

We hired Paige Teegarden of Managance, Inc. to facilitate our progress. I'd like to provide you with a summary of the efforts to date. Over the past year, Paige met with the board of directors and each department several times to examine our mission, values and beliefs, strengths and areas for improvement. She also met with external stakeholders to look at

trends impacting the county and opportunities for growth and change. We conducted a one-day retreat with staff and board members. Staff met again and wrote "white papers" on issues raised during the retreat. From those meetings, we've adopted five goals and are in the process of writing objectives and strategies to meet those goals, listed below. All of the goals are of equal importance and priority.

Let us not forget our mission – to enable people in need to improve the quality of their life by becoming more self-sufficient and receiving essential services.

Thank you again for your dedication to the community you serve.

### GCCAC Strategic Plan Goals

1. Increase the number of families and individuals who are economically self-sufficient and able to live independently in the county
2. Expand economic opportunities
3. Increase broad public recognition of our roles and successes
4. Diversify and increase our discretionary income while maintaining our non-discretionary revenue
5. Recruit, retain and support the development of staff and board members

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## A Passion for Giving

By Marguerite Hayhurst

Our employees, almost 200 of them, seem to have one thing in common – they give of themselves. Giving of one's self lets us fulfill the need to become all that we are capable of becoming. Community Action employees give back to their community with dedication and enthusiasm, while allowing the beneficiaries of our programs to maintain their dignity.

Our employees share a vision of how our community might be improved, how wrongs can be righted, how human suffering

might be alleviated, and how thoughtful and caring words and actions might triumph over poverty and instability. Every day our employees are empowered to make improvements and right the wrongs.

One employee at a time selflessly serving one person at a time, whether a driver, a teacher, a cook in a senior center, a secretary processing intake forms, we all share the same goal – to help county residents improve the quality of their life.



## Your Hidden Paycheck

By Marguerite Hayhurst

Can you imagine being offered a job and not knowing the full compensation package? Sadly, that occurs more frequently than we know. Generally, employees know their salary, but they are not aware of the considerable financial investment made by their employer. Community Action offers its employees one of the best benefits packages in Garrett County. The Human Resources

department hopes to provide a personalized Hidden Paycheck statement to all employees in the coming months to raise your awareness of your full compensation package and to communicate to our employees the value that we place on our staff. In the example below, an employee earning \$8.87/hr or \$18,443/yr receives \$12,287 in benefits which makes the total compensation package equivalent to \$15.94/hr or \$27,679/yr.

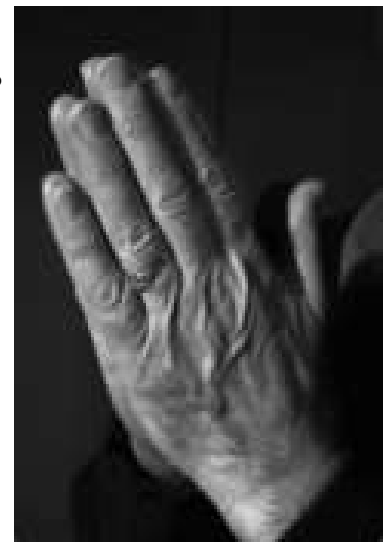
Pay for time worked + total benefit contributions = Total Compensation		
Total annual income @ \$8.87 per hour		\$18,443
Pay for time off (holidays, vacation, estimated sick days)		3,051
Pay for time worked		15,392
Your annualized benefits	Your contribution	Community Action's contribution
Social Security & Medicare tax	\$1,319	\$1,319
Pension	66	1,443
State unemployment tax	0	121
Worker's Compensation	0	1,207
Life insurance/Accidental Death & Dismemberment (2 x basic annual earnings)	0	157
Medical and Rx (single coverage)	0	4,989
Holidays (104 hrs per year)	0	922
Vacation (96 hrs for 1-5 yrs service)	0	852
Estimated sick leave (144 hrs)	0	1,277
Total benefit contributions	\$1,385	\$12,287
<b>Your estimated Total Compensation is equivalent to \$15.94 per hour</b>		<b>\$27,679</b>

## Senior Citizens Prayer

She folded her hands and bowed her head  
 Then to her God this prayer she said:  
 "Bless the ones that understand,  
 My faltering steps, my shaky hand.  
 Bless the ones that leadeth me,  
 When my sight grows dim and it's hard to see.  
 Bless them for their patience Lord,  
 When they must repeat each spoken word.  
 The little things that mean so much –  
 Words of kindness, a gentle touch,  
 A good morning smile to greet each day,

Shows more love than mere words can convey.  
 Growing old can be lonely if you have no one to share,  
 How lucky I am to have those who care.  
 So bless them each and every one  
 Until the day my life is done.  
 Let them know how grateful I'll always be  
 That they cared enough to take care of me."

BLESS THEM LORD  
 Poem submitted by Donna Arndt



## Community Action—From Civil Rights to Today

The impetus for the Garrett County Community Action Committee grew from the adoption in 1964 of the Economic Opportunity Act and the vision of a group of people in Garrett County, Maryland who pursued plans to organize a community action agency to confront the causes and effects of poverty.

GCCAC was incorporated in 1965 as a private non-profit corporation and started operation in 1966. The founding board hired Brad Rinard as its executive director, a role that he maintained until 1980. The organization's first activities focused on identifying interests and needs of six target communities and implementing a Head Start program for preschool age children and their families. The Mainstream job training project and an economic development initiative to attract jobs to the area soon followed. Funding for the new organization came primarily from the Office of Economic Opportunity, Department of Labor and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The corporation concentrated much of its initial work in the communities of Friendsville, Kitzmiller, Crellin, Deer Park, Jennings, and Finzel. Head Start centers were opened in three communities. Trainees in the Mainstream program provided labor for a number of public works projects including

the fire stations in Finzel, Bloomington, Accident, and Deer Park. The new organization utilized the classic governance model of community action agencies with a board of directors composed equally of representatives from low-income communities, elected officials and the private sector. The economic development grant was spun off to the county and became the force for recruiting a Bausch and Lomb plant. The plant became the largest private employer in the County.

In the 1970s, GCCAC organized a number of programs including services for senior citizens, developmentally disabled adults, and alcoholism counseling. Other program areas that the agency initiated included transportation, weatherizing homes, and parenting skills. Some of the initiatives emerged as independent entities or were handed off to other sponsors. During the decade of the 70s, GCCAC also started projects to assist low-income persons with home heating costs and nutrition. In the 1980s, the GCCAC launched an aggressive drive to develop and finance affordable housing and assumed expanded responsibility for administering a variety of rental assistance and emergency housing services. GCCAC's housing finance and development capacity matured into the 1990s to include facility construction and economic and

business promotion. The Agency's crowning achievement was the completion of Yough and Glades Villages, the successful culmination of a ten-year effort to resolve a failed low-income housing project in Oakland.

In 1983, GCCAC, along with community action agencies around the country, survived a traumatic shift in federal policy that eliminated the Office of Economic Opportunity/Community Services Administration and substituted a new Block Grant with a substantial reduction in funding. During the 1990s and continuing to today, GCCAC has diversified its income. Earned income grew to 20% of revenue and amount of private investments and contributions made up another 20%.

Entering the 21st century, GCCAC worked to sharpen its focus on community development and asset building strategies. Community Action is now the largest developer and owner of affordable rental housing in the County. New program initiatives included micro enterprise, individual development accounts, and home ownership. The corporation also developed a number of commercial and community facilities. A significant amount of effort is devoted to identifying and tracking GCCAC outcomes and in partnering with other community entities with common purposes and mission.

Garrett County Community Action today is a mature community-based organization employing over 180 full-time employees with a net worth of over ten million dollars. One third of the county's households participate in one or more of the Agency's activities. Ten percent of the housing units in the county were assisted or developed by Community Action projects. The organization is an important tool used by its partners and the community to improve the quality of life in the county and to remove barriers to low-income persons seeking greater self sufficiency.

*“One third of the county's households participate in one or more of the Agency's activities.”*



Yough and Glades Villages

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By Pam Simpson

Recently a group of Southern High School students earned Community Service Learning Hours at Community Action by assembling Head Start enrollment packets. This project is conducted annually and is just one of many projects available for high school students to earn their required 40 hours of Community Service Learning Hours.

Here are some ideas if you need to earn service work hours with a non-profit organization before you graduate. Contact Pam Simpson for more information @ ext 127.

Serve dinner at a shelter or senior center.

Collect clothing for people in need.

Join an organized legal march for a clean environment.

Help others and society.



From left to right: Jerica Bennett, Virginia Byrne, Lexie Byrne, CAC staffer Pam Simpson, Hannah Newcomb and Caitlin Simpson.

## GARRETT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITY, EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

### Call for Ideas

Do you have any idea for *The Community Actioneer*?

- Suggestion for a time-saving or cost-efficient work flow process
- Microsoft Word tip or trick



Remember, this publication is written by our employees and for our employees.

Submit your ideas to Marguerite Hayhurst (ext. 101) or [mhayhurst@garrettcac.org](mailto:mhayhurst@garrettcac.org).

### Keep Learning

By Sheila Ford

*At the Mary Browning Sr. Ctr.*

Scrapbooking is held Friday evenings beginning at 6:00pm. All are invited to attend, no charge; help and new ideas are shared. Bring photos and a smile!

On Saturday, September 20, Mandy Steele will teach a paint class beginning at 9:00am. No experience necessary.

She is a great teacher, the cost for the class is \$40.00 and everything is provided.

If interested, please notify Sheila Ford (ext. 135) no later than 9/18/08 so we can provide space for everyone.

### Random Acts of Kindness



Photo: Glenn Tolbert



A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves.

- Lawrence G. Lovasik