Click to view this email in a browser

Arizona Community Action Association

Advocating, Educating and Partnering to Prevent and Alleviate Pove

*Fall 2010 Newsletter*

**In This Issue**


- Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow
- ACAA Community Forums
- Global Water Resources Partnership
- APS Crisis Bill Assistance Partners
- Commissioner Mayes Weatherization Tour
- Weatherization Stimulus Funds
- Arizona Receives Federal Energy Grant
- Welcome ACAA Board Appointees
- Welcome Marie Lawrence
- Welcome Heidi Meyer
- Nancy Rossano Retires
- Renew your Membership or Join ACAA NOW!


Find us on Facebook

# Letter from the Director

This past year has brought much success, and it has brought a great deal of hardship to families throughout Arizona. It is important to remember that Community Action "changes people's lives every day." We should never lose sight of this, and always celebrate the successes we see, the success we help realize.

Some of our successes include:

Arizona Public Service Company and Salt River Project, through their rate processes, made significant increases in the availability of bill assistance funding for their low-income customers, funds which are administered by the ACAA Home Energy Assistance Fund, Community Action Agencies and other community partners. Thanks to this support, many more families will be able to maintain the use of their utilities.

Thanks to all of you, and in particular, Senator Debbie McCune Davis, Kelly Griffith, David Higuera and many other community partners for your efforts in defeating payday lending in Arizona. This was the issue that would not retreat, and even though millions of dollars were spent to maintain this predatory industry, the legislation enabling this business model sunset on June 30, 2010.

The Changing Face of Poverty campaign continued to run throughout the year, increasing awareness about the many difficult choices families must make, demystifying "poverty", while at the same time raising funds to assist families.

Weatherization was funded at record levels during the year, due to ARRA funding. Thanks to the funding and the great work of the Community Action Agency staff, many more homes have been or will be made more energy efficient, and families are saving money on their utility bills for the long term. In addition, many jobs were created or saved from termination here in Arizona and nationally.

In addition, programs funded through CSBG ARRA were the 6th highest job creation program of the 200 ARRA funded programs nationally. Great work Community Action!

So as we move forward, it is important to continue to focus on the great work being done, the families that are succeeding, and the work being done every day to end poverty in Arizona. Thank you all for your commitment and your enthusiasm.

Suggestions for our next newsletter? Please email them to info@azcaa.org!

Cynthia Zwick
Executive Director

---

# ACAA Selected to Host Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow

ACAA is honored to have been selected to host a member of the 2010-2011 Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship class. The Congressional Hunger Center selects and assigns 20 participants to community-based organizations nationwide for the 11-month project to develop effective leaders with a deep understanding of hunger and poverty at both the local and national level to enable them to find innovative solutions and create the political will to end hunger.

Marie Lawrence will work with the Arizona Community Action Association to increase information about and access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Arizona Hispanic and Latino communities and identify barriers to enrollment, ensure maximum participation and address how to overcome the challenges. She is joined by Matthew Mellon, who will be working with the Association of Arizona Food Banks.

A native of Dallas, TX, Marie graduated with a BA in Public Policy Studies from Duke University. Prior to joining ACAA as a Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow, she interned in the education and health care departments at United Way of New York City and in the NYC Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services with the city's Food Policy Coordinator.

One of the critical outcomes of this project is to develop strategies for ACAA and our community partners to become more effective in meeting the needs of the Hispanic/Latino communities in Arizona. ACAA wants to break down barriers for participation in programs and access to services that help low-income families in our communities.

Marie arrived in Arizona in early September and will stay through February 2011, and then go to Washington, D.C. to work with national organizations involved in the anti-hunger and poverty movements including national advocacy organizations, think tanks and federal agencies.

For more information about the project, visit www.hungercenter.org.

# Thank You!

ACAA would like to recognize the generous gift of free housing and utilities provided to our National Hunger Fellow by **Legacy Suites, a property of Heers Management Company**. A special thank you to **Andrina Shields**, Vice President of Heers Management Company for her hard work to help locate accomodations for Marie and Matthew, and to **Maria Terrazas**,

Senior Manager of Legacy Suites for the generous donation and warm welcome to our Fellows!

ACAA would also like to thank **Carolyn Sechler** for her assistance in spreading the word about the need for housing for these Fellows, and **Melissa Foley, Vice President of National Sales for Multi Family Insurance Partners** for connecting ACAA with Heers Management Company.

We truly could not have provided this amazing opportunity to Marie and Matthew without the help of these wonderful individuals and organizations!

---

# ACAA Community Forums on the Road

ACAA has been on the road – traveling throughout the state this summer to hear from individuals and families that utilize social and human services in their communities. So far we have held Community Forums in Pinal, Maricopa, and Gila counties. Yuma and Flagstaff are still on the agenda! The purpose of the forums is to allow people who utilize services the opportunity to share their story and to ask them about the experiences they had on their journey to reaching their goals. In all of the communities so far, several common themes have been emerging. We have been gathering all of the information and will bring it back to providers this fall to inform them of what is working and what isn't in their communities. Stay tuned…

ACAA would like to thank all of the attendees and all of the agencies and partners that helped us recruit attendees. These forums wouldn't be possible without you! An additional thank you to Rick Knopf and Andree Brennan from Arizona State University for facilitating the forums.

Maricopa County Forum participants, ACAA staff, and ASU partners.

---

## Partnering With Global Water Resources

ACAA is excited to announce the upcoming partnership with Global Water Resources in administering the first Low-Income Water Bill Assistance Program in Arizona. The Arizona Corporation Commission recently approved a rate increase on August 30, 2010, that included the development of a Low-Income Bill Assistance program. These funds will be administered through the Home Energy Assistance Fund in Global Water Resource's service territory. We will keep you posted as details unfold.

---

## ACAA's New APS Crisis Bill Assistance Partners

ACAA would like to welcome Chicanos Por La Causa, City of Avondale, City of Glendale, Community Services of Arizona, and Concerned Citizens for Community Health, and the Salvation Army in Phoenix as our newest utility assistance partners. These agencies have been contracted with ACAA to administer the Arizona Public Service (APS) Crisis Bill Assistance Program. This program was implemented as a result of the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) decision on December 9, 2009 to provide bill assistance to households whose incomes are no less than 150% and no more than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. ACAA is looking forward to working with our new partners!

---

## Kris Mayes, Arizona Corporation Commission Chair, Joins ACAA for a Weatherization Home Tour

Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) Chair, Kris Mayes, made a visit to a Maricopa County Weatherization site in Tempe this past month. She observed firsthand measures taken on the home with contractor Al Lopez , from a rooftop vantage point. Chairman Mayes has long been an advocate for weatherization and other energy efficiency measures. Recent rulings by the ACC in APS, Southwest Gas, and TEP/UniSource rate cases have resulted in ACC rulings mandating and increasing the funding of weatherization and repair/replacement services.

Maricopa County, one of the 10 Community Action Agency providers of the low-income Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), will weatherize approximately 1600 units – individual homes and multi-family complexes - by March 2012, utilizing Department of Energy American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, a program managed locally by the Department of Commerce Energy Office.

Weatherization measures, which typically include installing insulation in walls, floors and attics; reducing air infiltration and pressure imbalances; sealing and repairing ducts; tuning and repairing heating and cooling units lowers energy consumption and reduces energy costs. These measures also benefit the community by reducing energy consumption, improving housing stock and neighborhood conditions. In Arizona 132 direct jobs have been created through the Weatherization Assistance Program stimulus funding, and hundreds of indirect employment opportunities have been created. The Weatherization stimulus program nationwide has been credited with funding more than 8000 direct jobs and thousands more of indirect employment nationwide.

This homeowner is receiving a new HVAC unit. The weatherization crew first lays out all the insulation and materials.

Contractor Al Lopez takes Commissioner Mayes up onto the roof of the home to explain the energy audit findings and what weatherization measures they will take to improve this home's energy efficiency.

Thank you to the homeowner, Maricopa County, and Foundation fo Senior Living for making the tour possible, and to Commissioner Mayes and her assistant, Giancarlo Estrada for taking the time to come see weatherization at work.

**----------**

# Final $28.5 Million in Stimulus Funds Received by Arizona; 2,199 Homes Weatherized

The Department of Commerce Energy Office announced last month that Arizona's Weatherization Assistance Program will receive $28.5 million, the final phase of funding from the U.S. Department of Energy as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. This is the third and final phase of funding of the $57 million awarded to the State Energy Office at the Arizona Department of Commerce.

Final phase funding was awarded when Arizona met 30% of its goal of weatherizing 6500 homes and or apartments by March 2010. Arizona's Weatherization Assistance Program has provided services to 2,199 homes reducing utility costs for Arizonans by an estimated $390,000 in its first year.

---

# Arizona Receives Federal Energy Grant –

# Sustainable Energy Resources for Consumers Grant

Arizona, recognized by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as a high-performing weatherization state, will receive a total of more than $3 million in Sustainable Energy Resources for Consumers Grant for a pilot program to install solar hot water systems and heat pump and hybrid water heaters. Three local Arizona agencies have been selected to receive this grant: The City of Phoenix, Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG), and Mesa's MesaCan Community Action Program. Arizona received 3 of the awards made to 103 agencies nationwide. This funding will expand current programs and will assist families with incomes up to 350% of Poverty Level to provide weatherization and solar or heat pump water heating equipment.

- **Mesa-CAN**, based in Mesa, will receive $275,000 to install solar and heat pump hot water systems.
- **The City of Phoenix's Neighborhood Services Department** will receive nearly $700,000 to install solar and heat pump hot water systems.
- **Western Arizona Council of Governments**, based in Yuma, will receive over $2.1 million to install hybrid water heaters

In addition to delivering even greater energy-bill savings for local families, these innovative pilot programs will benefit the environment and build on the Department of Energy's existing investment in energy efficiency and continue to expand and drive innovations in the weatherization program that will provide even greater energy and cost savings to low-income individuals and families.

**----------**

# Please Join ACAA in Welcoming New Board Appointees

At the July meeting of the ACAA Board of Directors, one new and five returning Board members were appointed. Each brings her own unique experience and talents to the Board, and it is our pleasure to welcome them!

**DaNelle Haynes** was appointed to her first term on the ACAA Board of Directors and brings with her over 20 years of public service, including her current position as Weatherization Project Manager for the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department. DaNelle's knowledge in Community Action and weatherization are an asset to the Board.

ACAA's Board also reappointed the following Board Members for an additional term:

**Judith LaSpada**, who has worked in the financial industry since 1987 and is currently Chief Executive Officer for Virtuoso Sourcing Group, LLC. Judith brings broad experience in finance, banking, and consumer protection.

**Anna Maria Maldonado**, Marketing Manager of Care 1st Health Plan of Arizona, one of six AHCCCS insurers in Maricopa County. Anna Maria has a passion for building private and public partnerships to benefit the underserved and low-income communities in Maricopa County and beyond.

**Linda Martinez**, Case Manager/Certified Public Manager for PPEP, Inc. Linda performs long-term case management for agricultural workers and their families to attain self-sufficiency in

Pima and Pinal Counties.

**Bonnie Temme**, who works for SRP and brings over 10 years of community engagement to the ACAA Board. Bonnie's expertise and experience continue to be an asset to ACAA.

We would also like to welcome Betsy Bolding and Sylvia Sheffield who were appointed to the Board at the ACAA May meeting. Betsy was recently appointed as a Member at Large and Sylvia Sheffield was reappointed as a Member at Large.

**Sylvia Sheffield**, who works for the City of Avondale in the Social Services Division, brings over 20 years of social service and Community Action experience to the Board.

**Betsy Bolding**, who works for Tucson Electric Power brings over 20 years in the utility industry to the Board. She also continues to be an advocate for the low income community in Pima County while working alongside the local Community Action Program and various community –based organizations.**----------**

# ACAA Welcomes Intern Heidi Meyer!

Heidi Meyer moved to Arizona from West Des Moines, Iowa in July 2009. She graduated from Saint Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa with a Bachelor's in Psychology and a minor in Sociology. She is currently working on her Master's in Social Work at ASU, with an emphasis on Planning, Administration and Community Practice. Heidi is excited to be gaining experience with the ACAA in her last year of graduate school!

**----------**

# Nancy Rossano Retires from DES

Nancy Rossano, a true friend to ACAA and the families and individuals served by Community Action, retired from her position with DES in June. ACAA staff would like to take the time to acknowedge the contributions Nancy made over her career, and to thank her for her guidance, support, and friendship. Nancy, ACAA will miss working with you, and we wish you the best!

**----------**

# Renew Your Membership or Join ACAA NOW!

ACAA's Memerbship year coincides with our Annual Conference, running May 2010 - May 2011. If you registered for the 2010 Conference, your Annual Membership was included in the cost of Conference registration.

If you were not able to attend the ACAA 2010 Annual Conference, NOW is the time to join ACAA or renew your membership!

To join online and pay by credit card OR to print an application and pay by check, please visit ACAA's website.

ACAA offers a low-income waiver to households meeting certain criteria. To see if your household qualifies and apply for a low-income waiver, please visit ACAA's website and look

| | |
|---|---|
| | at the downloadable application available there. |