



# Network Connection

Mission: To advocate for low-income Missourians and strengthen the Community Action Network  
 Vision: A state where all people and communities thrive

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*Did you know that Missouri women make 78 cents for every dollar earned by men with full time employment?  
 (2015)*

## ADVOCACY – A voice for low-income Missourians

### **Advocacy – It all begins with Trust**

*By: Kurt Brewer, Executive Director, [kbrewer@communityaction.org](mailto:kbrewer@communityaction.org)*

Our political environment is built on trust. We empower our elected officials, and entrust them to act on our behalf to make important decisions to secure and improve our society. Do you trust your legislators to listen to you and your concerns? Your neighbors' and families' concerns? Do you know your legislators well enough to trust them? Do they know you? Getting to know someone is the first step in developing trust. Building a relationship based on personal connections rooted in common ground takes time and effort. Every relationship you have starts with a simple introduction, either on your own or through a mutual acquaintance. These personal relationships build trust, and that is often the key to success in the advocacy arena. Who do you know that would listen to you about important issues concerning your community and our low-income neighbors? Who would you like to know, that would trust you as an expert and source of information in the areas related to poverty?

The National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) included these two talking points about trust in a recent email:

- “During a time of great distrust of institutions, Community Action remains a trusted and valued community asset.”
- “Unlike other programs, (CAAs) are solely focused on local priorities and engage the entire community in the creation of an annual Community Needs Assessment. This needs assessment, used to tailor the organization’s approach to the community’s most pressing needs, allows us to be more helpful to our individual community. This yields a unique relationship between the agency and those we serve.”

How can we help you build your relationships with legislators and other decision makers? How are you planning to leverage your existing relationships to help ensure that our public policies protect our most vulnerable? We need to

be vocal and remind our elected officials of the trust and responsibility of their positions. And by the same token, we need to remember the needs of those who trust in us.

On behalf of our Network, I testified in support of [HB327](#) this month, which would provide vouchers for seniors to use at farmer's markets and similar outlets for fresh produce. This is not new money, but is part of an existing federal program, in which Missouri has not previously participated. The bill is sponsored by Rep. Lynn Morris, and an identical bill was killed on the last day of the 2016 session. This was my first time giving testimony at the Capitol, so I was a little nervous when Agriculture Policy committee chair Rep. Jay Houghton asked me to come to his office afterward. He simply wanted clarification on the term "food deserts" used in my testimony. For those that don't know, food deserts, as defined by the USDA, describe locations whose distance from a supermarket creates a potential burden to achieving food security. This includes both rural (10 miles) and urban (1 mile) locations. This bill would help alleviate that burden by allowing seniors to purchase fresh produce at local farmer's markets and similar outlets.

It is my goal that by testifying when needed, and being able to address both simple and complex questions, I am building trust in myself to represent the Missouri Community Action Network, and for others to trust us as the poverty experts. There is much to do. Won't you join me? If you haven't already, be sure to follow us on social media:

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/MoCommunityAction](https://www.facebook.com/MoCommunityAction) **Twitter:** [twitter.com/Missouri\\_CAN](https://twitter.com/Missouri_CAN) **Blog:** [MissouriCAN.org/blog](http://MissouriCAN.org/blog).

## Save the Date! 2017 Advocacy Day at the Missouri Capitol

The 2017 Community Action Network Advocacy Day will be held on Wednesday, March 1, 2017. As part of our program we will again be holding a rally in the rotunda of the Capitol! It is always a great event. This is an important day for our Network to show our legislators the true power of Community Action in the State of Missouri.

## Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Next Generation

*By: Courtney Kohler, Program Director, [ckohler@communityaction.org](mailto:ckohler@communityaction.org)*

OMB has approved the annual report package. Implementation will come in phases and no immediate changes to reporting will occur for agencies this year. More information on implementation and what the package includes is in [IM 152](#).

## NETWORK CAPACITY – Helping you help others

### Onboarding Team Update

*By: Kurt Brewer, Executive Director, [kbrewer@communityaction.org](mailto:kbrewer@communityaction.org)*

Work continues on the version 6 MIS upgrade. A small group had a first look at the new user interface in early January. The developer had many things completed, but wanted time for additional testing, and we wanted to ensure that all features are ready for the initial User Acceptance Testing event, so we pushed that event back two weeks. We are anxiously awaiting February 6-10, when several MIS users from across the state will be working to test, evaluate, and even trying to "break" the system – all in an effort to ensure the software is ready to use. The next Onboarding Team meeting is February 15 at the Missouri CAN office.

## Poverty Simulation Facilitator Training

By: Becky King, Training Manger, [bking@communityaction.org](mailto:bking@communityaction.org)

The Poverty Simulation Facilitator Training will be held March 20-21 in Kansas City. Registration is now open for that training and will again be free for Missouri Community Action Agency staff members registering by the Early Bird registration deadline. We are excited to once again host this training for participants from all over the United States who attend to learn about becoming advocates for low income community members.

## Community Needs Assessment Workshop

By: Courtney Kohler, Program Director, [ckohler@communityaction.org](mailto:ckohler@communityaction.org)

On March 15-16, Missouri CAN is hosting a two-day workshop at Tan-Tar-A in Osage Beach in which agency teams of participants will not only learn the best practices of the Community Needs Assessment, but also have work sessions to compile results, analyze data, and determine questions to explore with remaining qualitative research back at their agency. In addition, communication of the Community Needs Assessment will be discussed.

- **Bring agency teams of 3-4.** Recommended staff include: CSBG Program Manager, ROMA Trainer or Implementer, Executive Director, and either a front-line staff or other critical agency program manager.
- **Bring any data collected.** Pull reports from [Community Commons](#) for agency service area and bring any client survey or focus group results.
- **[Register online today!](#)** MissouriCAN.org → For Members → Calendar

## Missouri Asset Development Program: Match Rate Increase

By: Courtney Kohler, Program Director, [ckohler@communityaction.org](mailto:ckohler@communityaction.org)

In an effort to utilize the remainder of our federal Assets for Independence (AFI) grant funds that have been drawn down, we are making some changes to the project design. This should allow participants to receive the same match funds faster with a more attainable savings goal. The three assets to save toward remain the same: homeownership, small business, or education.

Old Match Rate: 2:1

New Match Rate: **8:1**

Maximum match amount still cannot exceed \$4000 (\$2000 federal grant funds/\$2000 non-federal funds).

This means participants could save:

- \$500 for \$4000 match = \$4500 total toward asset
- \$250 for \$2000 match = \$2250 total toward asset

All current savers are eligible for this savings plan. If they are at \$500 currently, they are eligible for the \$4000 match now! Our hope is to provide match to the current savers (13 statewide), as well as 20 newly recruited savers through September 2017.

## Winter Online Trainings

By: Courtney Kohler, Program Director, [ckohler@communityaction.org](mailto:ckohler@communityaction.org)

Take online courses for free through [Missouri CAN University - Moodle!](#) These trainings are short, 5-10 minute video segments on various Community Action topics. This winter, we are launching new courses through March. The newest courses include the following:

### 1) Internal ROMA Consultants

This course is for Internal ROMA Consultants in the Missouri Community Action Network. It contains ROMA information and resources for NCRTs.

### 2) Day in the Life

This short module allows you to experience poverty through the eyes of a typical Missouri family. Learn about the latest poverty statistics and data along the way.

### 3) Community Development

Community Development is at the heart for Community Action. Take this course for more on overview of the processes and procedures in effective community development. You'll also find a plethora of resources included.

Missouri CAN is also offering a Project Management Webinar series, free to all Community Action staff, through the month of February each Wednesday, 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. [Click here to register!](#)

## 2017 Missouri CAN Membership Campaign

By: Becky King, Training Manager, [bking@communityaction.org](mailto:bking@communityaction.org)

The membership campaign is in full swing, but there is still plenty of time to get your name in the drawings. Current Missouri CAN Members will have their name placed into the \$100 “Member Get a Member” drawing for each new member they recruit during the campaign. A second \$100 prize will be drawn from all existing members. Drawings will take place at the Annual Conference, and you do not have to be present to win either prize.

The agency with the largest increase in membership and the agency with the largest percentage increase in membership for the period of June 1, 2016 through March 30, 2017 will be recognized at Annual Conference. The winning agencies will win a “Sweet Treat” delivered by Missouri CAN at the agency’s All Staff Day or day of choice.

You have just over a month to recruit new members, as the campaign ends on March 15, 2017!

## 2017 Missouri CAN Annual Conference

By: Becky King, Training Manager, [bking@communityaction.org](mailto:bking@communityaction.org)

Are you prepared for the 2017 Missouri CAN Annual Conference? Between presentations from industry professionals, to an auction and competition that is sure to entertain – there will be something for everyone!

Tuesday starts with the Awards Luncheon. Has your agency nominated an Outstanding Community Partner that helps to achieve our vision as a state where all people and communities thrive? Award nomination forms were sent out with conference registration, which opened December 5, and are also available on the Missouri CAN website, Annual Conference page: [MissouriCAN.org/2017conference](http://MissouriCAN.org/2017conference).

Is your agency prepared for the Missouri CAN Olympics? We’ll be playing a series of “Minute to Win It” games that will challenge and entertain. The evening will also consist of basket auctions that are representative of the agency’s chosen country. The scores from the “Minute to Win It” challenges combined with the basket auctions will result in an agency winner! That winner will have the opportunity to choose the 2018 auction theme.

Missouri CAN CAPACITY – Helping us help you

## Missouri CAN Staff Vacancies

By: Kurt Brewer, Executive Director, [kbrewer@communityaction.org](mailto:kbrewer@communityaction.org)

We have filled one of our vacancies (Aubrey Schrader, Data Analyst), and are accepting applications and conducting interviews in February and March for our Information Systems Manager/Trainer, Outreach Director, and CAPS Project Manager positions. Please see the ‘Our Team’ page of our website for more information.

## **Agency Visits**

- Kerri Voyles, Strategic Communication Manager, visited Community Action Agency of Greater Kansas City (CAAGKC) on January 6, 2017 and provided technical assistance to marketing staff.
- Becky King, Training Manager, and Terra Guittar, Administrative Assistant, visited with Rob Baker, CSR, and staff at South Central Missouri Community Action Agency (SCMCAA) on December 15, 2016 and discussed the many programs and services provided by SCMCAA. On December 16, 2016, Becky and Terra visited with Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation (DAEOC) at their Annual Conference and presented about Missouri CAN membership and the Membership Campaign.

**Activity Calendar on the following page**

## ON THE CALENDAR

**MCADA**

February 8...Missouri CAN Office

**Project Management Webinar-Session 2**

February 8...Online

**MEP – Missourians to End Poverty**

February 9...Jefferson City

**MIS Onboarding Team**

February 15...Missouri Can Office

**Project Management Webinar-Session 3**

February 15...Online

**President’s Day Holiday**

February 20...Missouri CAN Office Closed

**ITPA – Information Technology Professional Alliance**

February 22 – 23...Missouri CAN Office

**Project Management Webinar-Session 4**

February 22...Online

**OPPA – Outreach Personnel Professional Alliance**

February 23...Jefferson City

**Community Action Advocacy Day 2017**

March 1...Missouri State Capitol

**HRPA – Human Resource Professional Alliance**

March 2...Missouri CAN Office

**MCADA**

March 8...Missouri CAN Office

**Missouri CAN Board Meeting**

March 9...Missouri CAN Office

**CCAP – Certified Community Action Professional**

March 9...Jefferson City

**ITPA – Information Technology Professional Alliance**

March 15-16...Missouri CAN Office

**Community Needs Assessment Training**

March 15-16...Tan-Tar-A at Lake of the Ozarks

**Poverty Simulation Facilitator Training**

March 20-21...Hilton KC Airport Hotel, Kansas City, MO

**2017 Missouri CAN Annual Conference**

April 4-6...University Plaza Hotel, Springfield, MO

**2017 Missouri CAN Link Up One-Day Conference**

April 5...University Plaza Hotel, Springfield, MO

**MCADA**

April 12...Missouri CAN Office

**RDPA – Resource & Development Professional Alliance**

April 18...Missouri CAN Office

**EHPA – Energy and Housing Professional Alliance**

April 19...Missouri CAN Office

**CKMW – Committee to Keep Missourians Warm**

April 20...Missouri CAN Office

**ETPA – Employment & Training Professional Alliance**

April 25...Missouri CAN Office

**OMPA – Outreach Managers Professional Alliance**

April 26-27...Missouri CAN Office

**MEP – Missourians to End Poverty**

April 27...Missouri CAN Office

**Training Bootcamp**

May 2-3...Missouri CAN Office

**IRCPA – Internal ROMA Consultants Professional Alliance**

May 4...Missouri CAN Office

**Truman’s Birthday Holiday**

May 8...Missouri CAN Office Closed

**View additional details and register for events on the Activity Calendar at [MissouriCAN.org](http://MissouriCAN.org) under the “For Members” tab.**



**Kurt Brewer, Missouri CAN Executive Director  
February 3, 2017**