Missouri Community Action Network

is the state association of Missouri’s 19 Community Action Agencies, Allies, and Supporters united to help people and change lives. We are the voice for the Community Action Network and Missourians struggling with poverty.

Our Vision
A state where all people and communities thrive.

Our Mission
To advocate for low-income Missourians and strengthen the Community Action Network.
Community Action Agencies connect people in need to resources available within their communities and help people achieve self-sufficiency.

In Missouri, there are 19 Community Action Agencies. They provide services in every Missouri county and the City of St. Louis.

At Missouri CAN, we help those agencies connect to the tools and training they need to enhance their efforts.

We provide training and technical assistance to agencies based on the needs of their individual communities. We also raise awareness about poverty-related issues and advocate for low-income Missourians.

Our vision is simple: a state where all people and communities thrive. Our mission is strong: to advocate for low-income Missourians and strengthen the Community Action Network.

Missouri CAN is the state association of Community Action Agencies, Allies, and Supporters united to end poverty. We are the statewide voice for the Community Action Network and for Missourians struggling with poverty.
Missouri Community Action Network experienced a year of progress and significant change in 2018. With a new Executive Director and a newly-elected President of the Board of Directors, the Network spent the last half of 2018 getting accustomed to the new and different. The talented staff here at Missouri CAN went above and beyond to not only welcome the change, but also to continue moving our mission forward without skipping a beat.

2018 saw the publishing of the biennial Poverty Report, a joint effort with Missourians to End Poverty, to create a comprehensive tool for anti-poverty advocates. This exceptional report is used to increase public awareness of what poverty looks like in Missouri, to articulate the barriers many families with low incomes face in their journey, and to help policymakers gain an understanding of realities working poor families face and the importance of building up communities so all Missourians have the opportunity to thrive.

Additionally, our scope in educating not only Missourians, but also people around the country and even the globe, expanded in 2018 with a 25% increase in Community Action Poverty Simulation kits licensed and a record year of facilitators trained. The potential for this valuable education tool to reach even larger audiences continues to gain momentum.

In May, Missouri CAN held a successful annual conference with high-quality content that served as professional development for the employees at our 19 Community Action Agencies. The Missouri CAN Training and Technical Assistance team worked tirelessly to garner the best speakers and facilitators for this event. Attendance was at an all-time high with some great karaoke entertainment to boot! Just a few months later, Missouri CAN, along with Missourians to End Poverty, hosted the 2018 Poverty Summit. The one-day event offered amazing keynote speakers, moderators, and panelists to engage individuals and organizations across the state in conversation and action against poverty.

These are just a few highlights of Missouri CAN’s impact throughout the last year. As we reflect on all the accomplishments in this report, know that we are excited to grow forward in 2019 with an organization and a Network on the move. This new leadership brings a renewed energy focused on strengthening and growing the capacity of the Missouri Community Action Network.

In Community,

Angela Hirsch, Missouri CAN Board President

Angela Fogarty, Missouri CAN Executive Director

Where We’ve Been

Missouri Community Action Network experienced a year of progress and significant change in 2018. With a new Executive Director and a newly-elected President of the Board of Directors, the Network spent the last half of 2018 getting accustomed to the new and different. The talented staff here at Missouri CAN went above and beyond to not only welcome the change, but also to continue moving our mission forward without skipping a beat.

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In Community,
Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families. But unless you’ve experienced poverty, it’s difficult to truly understand. The Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS) bridges the gap from misconception to understanding as an interactive immersion experience that sensitizes community participants to the realities of poverty. Missouri CAN licensed 259 CAPS kits in FY18, exceeding the agency’s goal. We trained facilitators on-site in Canada, hosted a facilitator from the Caribbean island of Curaçao at our Springfield, MO training, and even learned about a Poverty Simulation event in Australia.

In addition to offering the CAPS kit, Missouri CAN equips kit licensees with the training and tools required to facilitate an effective simulation for their community. The association held three facilitator trainings in Missouri in FY18, and 232 total individuals were trained at these events. 257 people were trained at 6 events out of state, while a new virtual training format allowed for 22 additional facilitators to access training. A total of 511 facilitators received training in FY18—a record year for Missouri CAN’s CAPS trainings.

“The Facilitator Training] gave me the structure I needed to proceed with planning and facilitating a simulation. It gave me new ideas while answering specific questions.”

—CAPS Facilitator Training Attendee
Every two years, Missouri CAN and Missourians to End Poverty conduct secondary research and cull available data on poverty to create a comprehensive report for the Network and nonprofit organizations across the state. The 2018 Missouri Poverty Report was released in March 2018 and is widely used for education, advocacy, grant making, and research by countless individuals and organizations.

The 20-page report illustrates national and Missouri-specific poverty data surrounding the five elements of poverty—Economic and Family Security, Education, Food and Nutrition, Health, and Housing and Energy—in charts, maps, and infographics. Additionally, the report highlights safety net programs such as SNAP and their effectiveness at poverty reduction.

Nearly 4,000 copies of the report have been made available to Community Action Agencies, Missourians to End Poverty members, news reporters, elected officials and their staff, community members, and a variety of organizations through community presentations, local events, summits, individual requests, website downloads, and other outlets. The Missouri Poverty Report sets the standard for disseminating data for poverty-related issues.
The 2018 Missouri CAN Annual Conference took place May 15-17, 2018 in Osage Beach, MO. The theme, “Better Together,” united staff from all 19 Community Action Agencies for professional development across all job functions. 251 people were in attendance, representing an 8% increase from 2017 attendance.

Two pre-conference sessions and 25 workshops were offered over the three-day period. Workshop sessions included content targeted at Community Action’s day-to-day operations such as training on the statewide information system, standards for organizational compliance, and continuing education for Head Start workers. Other professional development topics included board governance and multi-generational workplaces. Additionally, the five elements of poverty—Economic and Family Security, Education, Food and Nutrition, Health, and Housing and Energy—were addressed through multiple sessions and topics.

Outstanding Community Service Awards and the Charles Braithwait Leadership Award recipient were recognized during an awards luncheon, reinforcing the role communities play in helping people.

“I’m leaving with some takeaways and things that can improve our agency. This year’s keynote and closing speaker were also spectacular.”

—Conference Attendee
Missouri CAN provides training and technical assistance to Community Action Agencies across the state, equipping direct service providers with tools and resources to make an impact in their communities. Trainings range from technical support for the statewide Community Action information system to professional peer learning groups, officially known as Professional Alliances. These alliances serve as a platform for sharing resources, best practices, and challenges, as well as a place to identify training needs of Community Action staff.

In FY18, 3,297 participants across the Network participated in Missouri CAN trainings or received technical assistance for their job functions. The majority of trainings—64%—took place in person; however, Missouri CAN continues to offer a variety of training formats to reach more staff throughout the Network. For instance, Community Action staff completed 350 courses through Missouri CAN’s distance learning platform in FY18. These trainings improve the organizational culture of Community Action Agencies, enhance the care customers receive from agencies, enable professional development, and encourage growth for employees.
Advocacy Week

In March 2018, Missouri Community Action Network supported Community Action Agencies in hosting in-district tours, lunches, or similar events during the state legislative spring break for an Advocacy Week of Action, showing elected officials Community Action’s impact in their home towns. The advocacy initiative was a success, with half of Missouri’s Community Action Agencies hosting events during that week or summer break.

From open houses showcasing new or renovated locations to small group discussions, Advocacy Week of Action events allowed legislators and community members the opportunity to see the positive impact Community Action Agencies have on their communities and encouraged dialogue of poverty-related issues unique to their communities.

Where some agencies held one-on-one meetings with various legislators, others hosted community-wide BBQ picnics. Regardless of the scale or scope of a Community Action Agency’s advocacy event, they each carried a common thread: highlighting how communities have come together to help people and change lives, creating a path forward to self-sufficiency.
On September 20, 2018, approximately 200 guests attended the Missouri Poverty Summit, hosted by Missouri CAN and Missourians to End Poverty, with dialogue centered around building resilient communities. A key theme of the day was the importance of place and community:

"...Where you live is tied to the quality of school your kids attend. Where you live determines the value of your house and how much that will increase. Where you live determines how safe your environment is because you’re stressed about crime rates. All of this is tied to the place you call home. We’ve walled off the resources in those wealthy areas. It’s about place. And until we change place about where you live, disparities persist." — Dr. Jason Purnell

Two panel discussions focused on community-based solutions and public policies related to the five elements of poverty. Keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis delivered an impassioned narrative about the importance of advocacy, and Dr. Jason Purnell shared his research on social determinants of health. Ultimately, attendees had an opportunity to share best practices about building resilience in their own part of the state.

Poverty Summit Attendee

“I truly enjoyed my time at the Summit. I didn’t know a lot about poverty. Everyone was welcoming and eager to answer questions.”

— Poverty Summit Attendee
Where We’re Going

2018 was a year of transition and transformation. As we shift into 2019, Missouri Community Action Network is eager to advance our efforts with a renewed concentration on strengthening and growing the capacity of the Missouri Community Action Network. This transformation at Missouri CAN is like blossoms appearing on the flowering dogwood tree when spring begins—full of life and promise for a new season.

In the spirit of growing forward, the Missouri CAN staff, Executive Director, and the full Board of Directors are each committed to providing high-quality training and technical assistance for the Network, dedicated to growing Allies and Supporters from across the state, and unwavering in our advocacy work for low-income Missourians.

Our goal is to develop an even greater impact to help our 19 agencies move Missouri’s communities forward. We are growing forward in 2019. As a voice for both those living in poverty and the state’s Community Action Network, Missouri CAN’s vision remains: a state where all people and communities thrive.

MissouriCAN.org
REVENUE

Grants $1,063,802
Poverty Simulation $573,517
Registration Fees $235,756
Membership Dues $158,252
Investment Income $28,579
Special Event Income $17,320
Other $3,974

TOTAL REVENUES $2,081,200

EXPENSES

Training and Technical Assistance Grants $985,052
Poverty Simulation $456,736
Missouri CAN Support Services $169,605
Network Professional Development $146,506
Health Advocacy Grant $78,541
Missourians Building Assets (MBA) $20,709

TOTAL EXPENSES $1,857,149

INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS $224,051

NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR $1,769,895

NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR (Sept. 30, 2018 unaudited figures) $1,993,946

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