
Central Florida Community Action Agency, Inc.
Serving Alachua, Levy, and Marion Counties



Annual Report

October 1, 2006 – September 30, 2007

INSIDE:

- A message from the chair of the board of directors
- 2007 fiscal year expenditures
- A message from the executive director
- Program news and results

Community Action: Decades of Making a Difference

The community action movement began following the signing of the *Economic Opportunity Act* in 1964 by President Lyndon Baines Johnson. This landmark legislation set into motion President Johnson's "War on Poverty."

Today's promise of community action among more than 1,100 community action agencies nationwide proclaimed by the national Community Action Partnership is: "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."

Central Florida Community Action Agency (CFCAA), Inc., was incorporated in 1981 as a nonprofit agency to develop and administer anti-poverty programs for the fine folks who call Alachua, Levy, and Marion Counties home. Funded partially by the Community Services Block Grant, community action agencies are required to have a tripartite board structure which means that one-third of the board members must represent the public sector, one-third of the board members must represent the private sector, and one-third of the board members must represent the community (low-income) sector.

The initial focus of the community action movement beginning at its inception in 1964 was to address emergency situations for individuals and families. Today, the primary services provided by CFCAA for individuals and/or families are emergency energy assistance, home improvement conservation measures, and family self-sufficiency case management counseling and assistance.

A greater emphasis is now being placed on the agency's family self-sufficiency program with the intention of breaking the chains of dependence on governmental financial support for individuals and families who are served by CFCAA. The CFCAA board of directors is committed to setting and implementing policy that personifies the old Chinese proverb that focuses on "teaching a person to fish" as a means to lifelong survival rather than "giving a person a fish" to address one day's hunger.

Realizing that there are simply not enough financial resources to address the needs of everyone in CFCAA's three-county service area, the mission statement of CFCAA pronounced in its board bylaws and strategic plan is: "*Central Florida Community Action Agency is committed to helping people strengthen their lives through community partnerships.*" Community partners are critical to the success of CFCAA in addressing poverty.

This annual report summarizes the accomplishments of CFCAA over the past year and sets the tone for future efforts of the agency in eliminating the causes of poverty in North Central Florida. In addressing the root causes of poverty, the CFCAA Board of Directors and staff are committed in the belief that: "*Helping people help themselves is a common mission worthy of pursuing every day of our lives!*"

A message from the chair of the board of directors...

The Central Florida Community Action Agency (CFCAA) board of directors considers it a privilege to serve the low-income residents of Alachua, Levy and Marion Counties. We are dedicated to assuring fair-minded decisions are rendered in our deliberations. Under our tripartite structure, the board strives for equitable representation from the three sectors prescribed in Community Services Block Grant policies and procedures for membership, which are public, private and community (low-income) representation.



As chair of the CFCAA board of directors, I am proud of the board's growth and maturity over the past year. We have developed a better understanding and implementation of our responsibilities to establish financial, organizational, programmatic, and personnel policies, procedures, and guidelines for the agency. We also feel honored to have as executive director, a person who genuinely cares about improving the lives of those less fortunate and is willing to work closely with board and staff to live up to the agency's mission statement of "helping people strengthen their lives through community partnerships."

Future economic conditions in our three-county service area as well as the State of Florida will require that CFCAA remains diligent in the effective and productive use of tax payer's dollars. As citizens demand more accountability, we are proud to be a leader in open government and program and policy transparency as we continue to improve lives.

- Charles J. Harris, Jr.

A message from the executive director...

This is my initial article for this very first "formal" annual report at this dynamic agency. I am almost at a loss for words to explain just how exhilarating it has been since arriving on November 20, 2006, to begin my tenure as the CFCAA executive director ... I'll try anyway.

First off, my wife, Diane, and I are very happy to be in Gainesville since we have family who live in the Jacksonville and St. Augustine areas and our only child, Scott, resides in Pensacola. Coming home to Florida--I am a native Floridian born in Jacksonville--was a dream come true.



Although my time for nearly seven years as an executive director of an organization in Jonesboro, Arkansas, was very rewarding, CFCAA has presented me with new challenges and a different set of unique opportunities. My former community action agency had a budget of \$17 million, had over 400 employees, and covered an eight-county area in Northeast Arkansas.

We are smaller at CFCAA ... \$2 million budget and 15 employees with a service area of three counties. However, the comforting aspect of coming to another community action agency is that our mission remains basically the same which is "helping people, changing lives."

Even though we are smaller at CFCAA, we are here to battle poverty and assist individuals and families achieve greater self-sufficiency in their lives just as my former agency did in Arkansas. The network of over one thousand community action agencies across America are joined in a very unique partnership by being the preeminent leaders in establishing viable anti-poverty programs. I am proud to be a part of this network.

Small or large, we in community action are joined together to rid our country of the blight of poverty among us. We at CFCAA are blessed to be associated with a group of committed professionals across our country in making a difference.

(cont. on page 3)

(cont. from page 2)

I am especially fortunate to have joined an organization that has a board of directors that takes its fiduciary and advocacy responsibilities very seriously. In addition, members of the CFCAA staff are truly remarkable and they are a dedicated and compassionate team who are willing to go the extra mile in finding solutions to the many problems they encounter on a daily basis.

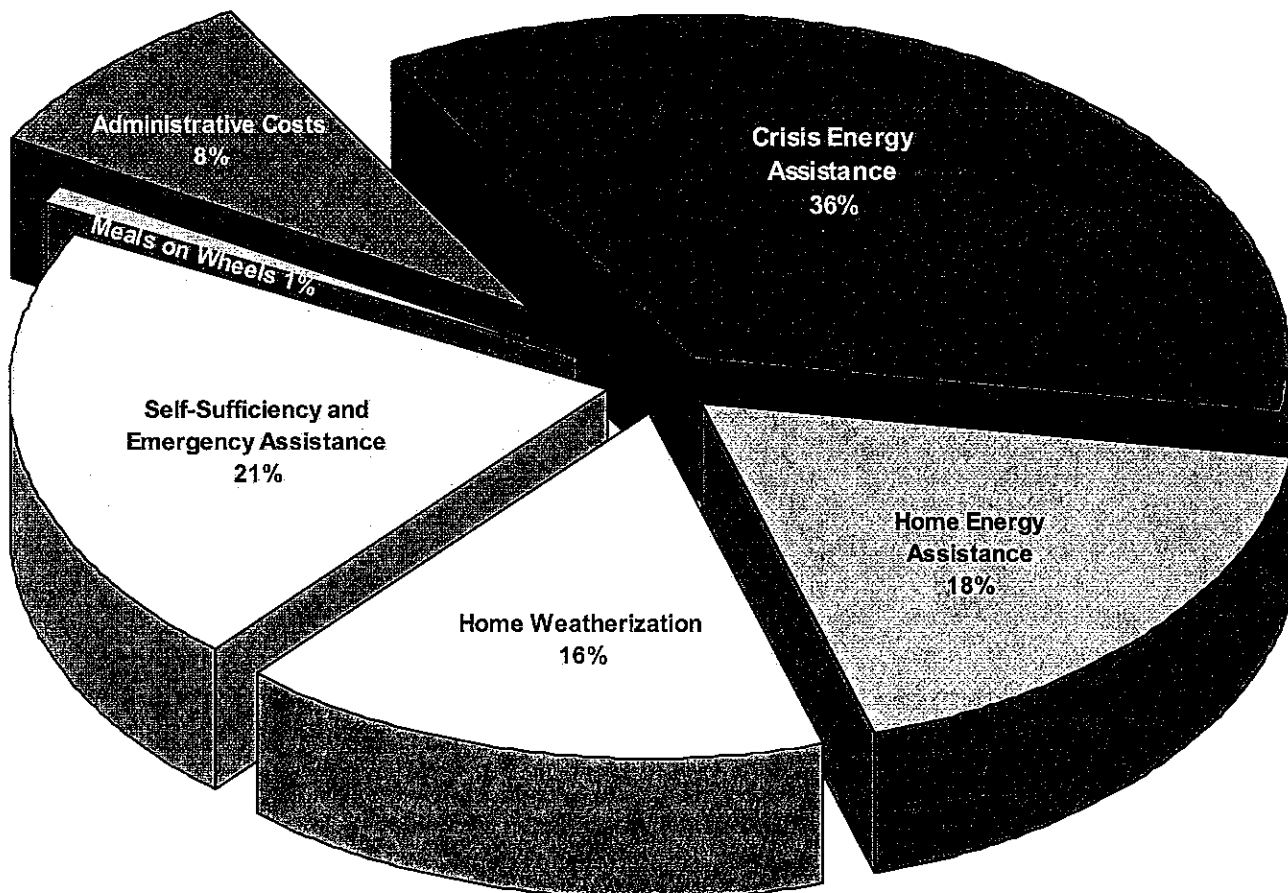
Blessed, you bet! Challenged, you can count on it! With firm resolve, I will continue to count my many blessings every day in facing the challenges that confront me as the executive director of an agency that cares as we, the board of directors and staff, join together in forever remembering that: *“Helping people help themselves is a common mission worthy of pursuing every day of our lives!”*

- Robert W. Wilford

“We at CFCAA are blessed to be associated with a group of professionals across our country in making a difference.”

Stewardship: Using tax dollars frugally!

Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2006/07



The board of directors takes its role as “stewards of the tax dollars placed in its trust” very seriously and sets policy that focuses on limiting administrative costs while concentrating on maximizing services ... mission accomplished again in FY 2006/07!

Program news and results

Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) - The board of directors and staff of CFCAA wholeheartedly embrace the Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) systems management concepts in the delivery of its multiple program services. By employing ROMA concepts, the focus is on reporting outcomes and successes rather than just counting services. More emphasis is being placed on “return on investment” benefits in administering tax dollars by the network of Community Action Agencies all across America. Each successive year, ROMA “return on investment” qualitative and quantifiable results will be the report card by which CFCAA will be judged in using tax dollars in the delivery of services.

Emergency Assistance - The emergency assistance program assists eligible households with immediate financial emergencies and provides assistance in disaster relief efforts. This past year, CFCAA assisted households with financial emergencies 394 times for a total of \$64,684 in direct financial assistance; 218 families (536 persons) were provided with emergency food; and, 63 families (221 persons) were assisted with emergency rent or mortgage payments to prevent eviction which would have resulted in homelessness.

Energy Assistance - Home energy assistance is a one-time payment benefit towards the household’s energy account. The amount of the benefit is based on the total household income. Crisis assistance may assist eligible households that are about to have their utilities shut off due to nonpayment of a utility bill, or, whose utilities have already been disconnected. The amount is based on need up to the maximum allowed per household. In FY 2006/07 CFCAA assisted households to pay 5,315 utility bills for a total of \$1,463,809.

Weatherization Services - CFCAA provides a variety of repairs to weatherize area homes to improve energy efficiency. These repairs are provided to qualified low-income residents in Alachua, Levy, and Marion Counties, and may include repair or replacement of inefficient heating and cooling units and minor repair of windows and doors. In FY 2006/07 CFCAA weatherized 50 homes at a cost of \$251,047.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSSP) - The FSSP is basically an employment and education program that strives to assist individuals and families become totally self-sufficient or free from dependence on social and public service assistance. A case manager is assigned to assist clients in determining personal strengths and weaknesses, assessing specific needs, setting goals, acquiring professional credentials, and overcoming obstacles to financial independence. Seventeen clients participated in the FSSP during FY 2006/07 and five clients graduated out of the program by reaching established goals. A number of participants significantly increased their annual income and moved completely off of social and public service assistance.

Meals on Wheels - A meals on wheels program is provided in the City of Newberry for elderly, disabled, and homebound individuals who are maintaining independent living partially due to being able to receive this home-delivered food service. A nutritious hot meal is delivered to these homes four days per week to help ensure the health and well-being of these individuals. This past year 35 qualified individuals were provided with meals at a cost of approximately \$27,000. It is noteworthy that the City of Newberry provides partial funding for this program.

CFCAA Board of Directors: Charles J. Harris, Jr. (Chair), Brad Nimmo (Vice Chair), Lena Smith (Secretary), Freddie Warmack (Treasurer), Tina Albritton, Debra Houska, Billie Monroe, Carl “Dick” Tummond, and Mary Lou Wilkerson.

This annual report is printed by approval of the agency’s board of directors. The following individuals are responsible for its content: Charles J. Harris, Jr., Board Chair (Editor-in-Chief), Robert W. Wilford, Executive Director (Editor), Monique Harrison, Family Services Coordinator (Associate Editor), and Lauren Kromke, University of Florida Intern (Publisher).