

September 1, 2012

Jeannie Chaffin, Director
US Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services
Division of State Assistance
Attention: Community Services Block Grant Program
370 L'Enfant Promenade S.W., 5th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20447

Dear Director Chaffin:

We are pleased to submit Nebraska's Community Services Block Grant Federal Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 State Plan for CSBG Funds.

The Administrator for the Community Services Block Grant in Nebraska is Jodie Gibson. Jennifer Dreibelbis is the Program Specialist. They can be reached at:

Jennifer Dreibelbis Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
PO Box 95026, 301 Centennial Mall South, 4th Floor
Lincoln, NE 68509
(402) 471-9346, fax (402) 471-9597, jennifer.dreibelbis@nebraska.gov

Jodie Gibson Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
PO Box 95026, 301 Centennial Mall South, 4th Floor
Lincoln, NE 68509-5026
402-471-1069, fax 402-471-9597, jodie.gibson@nebraska.gov

The State CSBG Official who is to receive the CSBG Grant Award is:

Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director
Division of Children and Family Services
Nebraska State Office Building
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
301 Centennial Mall South, 3rd Floor
Lincoln, NE 68509
402-471-1878, fax (402) 471-9034, thomas.pristow@nebraska.gov

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or if you need additional information regarding our plan.

Respectfully,



Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director
Department of Children and Family Services

CSBG

Community Services Block Grant

Federal Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 State Plan

State of Nebraska

**Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director
Division of Children and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services
Designated Lead Agency**

Prepared By:
Jennifer Dreibelbis, CSBG Program Specialist
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Children and Family Services
P.O. Box 95026
Lincoln, NE 68509-5025
(402) 471-9346
(402) 471-9597 FAX
jennifer.dreibelbis@nebraska.gov

I. Federal Fiscal Years Covered by the State Plan and Application

Federal Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 State Plan

II. See Cover Letter

III. Executive Summary:

A. CSBG State Legislation: There is no state statute governing the Community Services Block Grant program in Nebraska.

B. Lead State Agency: The Governor has designated the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to act as the lead state agency for administration of the Community Services Block Grant. (see Attachment A) Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director, Division of Children and Family Services is the designee of the lead agency.

C. Public Hearing Requirements:

(1) Public Hearing: A public hearing for the Federal Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 CSBG State Plan was held on August 16, 2012 at 10AM. Written comments were due August 16, 2012. The public hearing was advertised in the *Lincoln Journal Star* and *Omaha World Herald* which have statewide distribution. Any comments received are included here. (See Attachment B).

(2) Legislative Hearing: In conjunction with the writing of this plan, the Department held a legislative hearing on January 20, 2012 on the Federal Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 CSBG State Plan, as required by law. The testimony is included here. The previous legislative hearing was held on August 25, 2010 and those transcripts are included as well (See Attachment C).

(3) Public Inspection of the Plan: The plan was sent to community action agency offices for comment. In August 2012, Nebraska made the CSBG Federal Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 State Plan available for public review and comment by placing public notice advertisements in the State's two newspapers which have statewide distribution: the *Omaha World Herald* and the *Lincoln Journal-Star*. The plan was also posted to the DHHS web site for the benefit of all interested parties. Copies are provided to anyone upon request. (See Attachment B).

IV. Statement of Federal and CSBG Assurances

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT ACT as amended (42U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) STATUTORY ASSURANCES

The designee of the chief executive of the State of Nebraska certifies that the State of Nebraska hereby agrees to the Assurances in Section 676 of the Act, as follows:

A. Programmatic Assurances

- 1) Funds made available through this grant or allotment will be used:
 - a) To support activities that are designed to assist low-income families and individuals, including families and individuals receiving assistance under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), homeless families and individuals, migrant or seasonal farm workers, and elderly low-income individuals and families to enable the families and individuals to:
 - (i) remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency (including self-sufficiency for families and individuals who are attempting to transition off a State program carried out under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act);
 - (ii) secure and retain meaningful employment;
 - (iii) attain an adequate education, with particular attention toward improving literacy skills of low-income families in the communities involved, which may include carrying out family literacy initiatives;
 - (iv) make better use of available income;
 - (v) obtain and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment;
 - (vi) obtain emergency assistance through loans, grants, or other means to meet immediate and urgent family and individual needs; and
 - (vii) achieve greater participation in the affairs of the communities involved, including the development of public and private grassroots partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, local housing authorities, private foundations, and other public and private partners to document best practices based on successful grassroots intervention in urban areas, to develop methodologies for widespread replication; and strengthen and improve relationships with local law enforcement agencies, which may include participation in activities such as neighborhood or community policing efforts;
 - b) To address the needs of youth in low-income communities through youth development programs that support the primary role of the family, give priority to the prevention of youth problems and crime, and promote increased community coordination and collaboration in meeting the needs of youth, and support development and expansion of innovative community-based youth development programs that have demonstrated success in preventing or reducing youth crime, such as programs for the establishment of violence-free zones that would involve youth development and intervention models (such as models involving youth mediation, youth mentoring, life skills training, job creation, and entrepreneurship programs); and after-school child care programs; and
 - c) To make more effective use of, and to coordinate with, other programs (including State welfare reform efforts). [676(b)(1)]
- (2) To describe how the State intends to use discretionary funds made available from the remainder of the grant or allotment described in Section 675C(b) of the Act in accordance with the community services block grant program, including a description of how the State will support innovative community and neighborhood-based initiatives related to the purposes of the community services block grant program; [676(b)(2)]

- (3) To provide information provided by eligible entities in the State, including:
 - a) a description of the service delivery system, for services provided or coordinated with funds made available through grants made under Section 675C(a) of the Act, targeted to low-income individuals and families in communities within the State;
 - b) a description of how linkages will be developed to fill identified gaps in services, through the provision of information, referrals, case management, and follow-up consultations;
 - c) a description of how funds made available through grants made under Section 675(a) will be coordinated with other public and private resources; and,
 - d) a description of how local entities will use the funds to support innovative community and neighborhood-based initiatives related to the purposes of the community services block grant, which may include fatherhood initiatives and other initiatives with the goal of strengthening families and encouraging effective parenting. ['676(b)(3)]
- (4) To ensure that eligible entities in the State will provide, on an emergency basis, for the provision of such supplies and services, nutritious foods, and related services, as may be necessary to counteract conditions of starvation and malnutrition among low-income individuals.['676(b)(4)]
- (5) That the State and the eligible entities in the State will coordinate, and establish linkages between, governmental and other social services programs to assure the effective delivery of such services to low-income individuals and to avoid duplication of such services, and State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities in the State and in communities with entities providing activities through statewide and local workforce investment systems under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998; ['676(b)(5)]
- (6) To ensure coordination between antipoverty programs in each community in the State, and ensure, where appropriate, that emergency energy crisis intervention programs under title XXVI (relating to low-income home energy assistance) are conducted in such communities. ['676(b)(6)]
- (7) To permit and cooperate with Federal investigations undertaken in accordance with section 678D of the Act. ['676(b)(7)]
- (8) That any eligible entity in the State that received funding in the previous fiscal year through a community services block grant under the community services block grant program will not have its funding terminated under this subtitle, or reduced below the proportional share of funding the entity received in the previous fiscal year unless, after providing notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record, the State determines that cause exists for such termination or such reduction, subject to review by the Secretary as provided in Section 678C(b) of the Act.['676(b)(8)]
- (9) That the State and eligible entities in the State will, to the maximum extent possible, coordinate programs with and form partnerships with other organizations serving low-income residents of the communities and members of the groups served by the State, including religious organizations, charitable groups, and community organizations. ['676(b)(9)]
- (10) To require each eligible entity in the State to establish procedures under which a low-income individual, community organization, or religious organization, or representative of low-income individuals that considers its organization, or low-income individuals, to be inadequately represented on the board (or other mechanism) of the eligible entity to petition for adequate representation. ['676(b)(10)]
- (11) To secure from each eligible entity in the State, as a condition to receipt of funding, a community action plan (which shall be submitted to the Secretary, at the request of the

Secretary, with the State plan) that includes a community- needs assessment for the community served, which may be coordinated with community-needs assessments conducted for other programs; [676(b)(11)]

(12) That the State and all eligible entities in the State will, not later than fiscal year 2001, participate in the Results Oriented Management and Accountability System, another performance measure system for which the Secretary facilitated development pursuant to Section 678E(b) of the Act .[676(b)(12)]

(13) To provide information describing how the State will carry out these assurances. [676(b)(13)] (This is the Narrative CSBG State Plan)

B. Administrative Assurances

The State further agrees to the following, as required under the Act:

(1) To submit an application to the Secretary containing information and provisions that describe the programs for which assistance is sought under the community services block grant program prepared in accordance with and containing the information described in Section 676 of the Act. [675A(b)]

(2) To use not less than 90 percent of the funds made available to the State by the Secretary under Section 675A or 675B of the Act to make grants to eligible entities for the stated purposes of the community services block grant program and to make such funds available to eligible entities for obligation during the fiscal year and the succeeding fiscal year, subject to the provisions regarding recapture and redistribution of unobligated funds outlined below. [675C(a)(1) and (2)]

(3) In the event that the State elects to recapture and redistribute funds to an eligible entity through a grant made under Section 675C(a)(1) when unobligated funds exceed 20 percent of the amount so distributed to such eligible entity for such fiscal year, the State agrees to redistribute recaptured funds to an eligible entity, or require the original recipient of the funds to redistribute the funds to a private, nonprofit organization, located within the community served by the original recipient of the funds, for activities consistent with the purposes of the community services block grant program. [675C (a)(3)]

(4) To spend no more than the greater of \$55,000 or 5 percent of its grant received under Section 675A or the State allotment received under section 675B for administrative expenses, including monitoring activities. [675C(b)(2)]

(5) In states with a charity tax credit in effect under state law, the State agrees to comply with the requirements and limitations specified in Section 675(c) regarding use of funds for statewide activities to provide charity tax credits to qualified charities whose predominant activity is the provision of direct services within the United States to individuals and families whose annual incomes generally do not exceed 185 percent of the poverty line in order to prevent or alleviate poverty among such individuals and families. [675(c)]

(6) That the lead agency will hold at least one hearing in the State with sufficient time and statewide distribution of notice of such hearing, to provide to the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed use and distribution of funds to be provided through the grant or allotment under Section 675A or '675B for the period covered by the State plan. [676(a)(2)(B)]

(7) That the chief executive officer of the State will designate, an appropriate State agency for purposes of carrying out State community services block grant program activities. [676(a)(1)]

- (8) To hold as least one legislative hearing every three years in conjunction with the development of the State plan. ['676(a)(3)]
- (9) To make available for the public inspection each plan or revised State plan in such a manner as will facilitate review of and comment on the plan. ['676(e)(2)]
- (10) To conduct the following reviews of eligible entities:
- (a) full onsite review of each such entity at least once during each three-year period;
 - (b) an onsite review of each newly designated entity immediately after the completion of the first year in which such entity receives funds through the community services block grant program;]
 - (c) follow-up reviews including prompt return visits to eligible entities, and their programs, that fail to meet the goals, standards, and requirements established by the State;
 - (d) other reviews as appropriate, including reviews of entities with programs that have had other Federal, State or local grants (other than assistance provided under the community services block grant program) terminated for cause. ['678B(a)]
- (11) In the event that the State determines that an eligible entity fails to comply with the terms of an agreement or the State plan, to provide services under the community services block grant program or to meet appropriate standards, goals, and other requirements established by the State (including performance objectives), the State will comply with the requirements outlined in Section 678C of the Act, to:
- (a) inform the entity of the deficiency to be corrected;
 - (b) require the entity to correct the deficiency;
 - (c) offer training and technical assistance as appropriate to help correct the deficiency, and submit to the Secretary a report describing the training and technical assistance offered or stating the reasons for determining that training and technical assistance are not appropriate;
 - (d) at the discretion of the State, offer the eligible entity an opportunity to develop and implement, within 60 days after being informed of the deficiency, a quality improvement plan and to either approve the proposed plan or specify reasons why the proposed plan cannot be approved;
 - (e) after providing adequate notice and an opportunity for a hearing, initiate proceedings to terminate the designation of or reduce the funding to the eligible entity unless the entity corrects the deficiency. ['678(C)(a)]
- (12) To establish fiscal controls, procedures, audits and inspections, as required under Sections 678D(a)(1) and 678D(a)(2) of the Act.
- (13) To repay to the United States amounts found not to have been expended in accordance with the Act, or the Secretary may offset such amounts against any other amount to which the State is or may become entitled under the community services block grant program. ['678D(a)(3)]
- (14) To participate, by October 1, 2001, and ensure that all-eligible entities in the State participate in the Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) System ['678E(a)(1)].
- (15) To prepare and submit to the Secretary an annual report on the measured performance of the State and its eligible entities, as described under '678E(a)(2) of the Act.
- (16) To comply with the prohibition against use of community services block grant funds for the purchase or improvement of land, or the purchase, construction, or permanent

improvement (other than low-cost residential weatherization or other energy-related home repairs) of any building or other facility, as described in Section 678F(a) of the Act.

(17) To ensure that programs assisted by community services block grant funds shall not be carried out in a manner involving the use of program funds, the provision of services, or the employment or assignment of personnel in a manner supporting or resulting in the identification of such programs with any partisan or nonpartisan political activity or any political activity associated with a candidate, or contending faction or group, in an election for public or party office; any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance with any such election, or any voter registration activity. [678F(b)]

(18) To ensure that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity funded in whole or in part with community services block grant program funds. Any prohibition against discrimination on the basis of age under the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.) or with respect to an otherwise qualified individual with a disability as provided in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.) shall also apply to any such program or activity. [678F(c)]

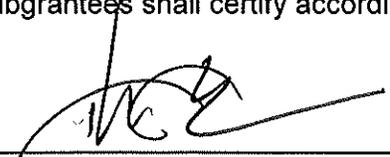
(19) To consider religious organizations on the same basis as other non-governmental organizations to provide assistance under the program so long as the program is implemented in a manner consistent with the Establishment Clause of the first amendment to the Constitution; not to discriminate against an organization that provides assistance under, or applies to provide assistance under the community services block grant program on the basis that the organization has a religious character; and not to require a religious organization to alter its form of internal government except as provided under Section 678B or to remove religious art, icons, scripture or other symbols in order to provide assistance under the community services block grant program. [679]

C. Other Administrative Certifications

The State also certifies the following:

(1) To provide assurances that cost and accounting standards of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB Circular A-110 and A-122) shall apply to a recipient of community services block grant program funds.

(2) To comply with the requirements of Public Law 103-227, Part C Environmental Tobacco Smoke, also known as the Pro-Children Act of 1994, which requires that smoking not be permitted in any portion of any indoor facility owned or leased or contracted for by an entity and used routinely or regularly for the provision of health, day care, education, or library services to children under the age of 18 if the services are funded by a Federal grant, contract, loan or loan guarantee.. The State further agrees that it will require the language of this certification be included in any subawards, which contain provisions for children's services and that all subgrantees shall certify accordingly.

 8/17/12

Signature

Date

Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director
Division of Children & Family Services
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Designated Lead Agency

V. State Plan Narrative

A. Administrative Structure

(1) State Administrative Agency -- The Governor has designated the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to act as the lead state agency for administration of the Community Services Block Grant.

The mission of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services is to help people live better lives.

The goals and objectives of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services CSBG Program are as follows:

- Partner with local agencies to create an integrated service delivery system for Nebraska's families.
- Provide technical assistance to Community Action Agencies.
- Engage in cooperative planning with non-profit, local government and other State agencies to improve the capacity of agencies to serve Nebraskans.
- Monitor eligible entities and discretionary subgrants.
- Further develop Nebraska's CSBG monitoring process as needed.
- Participate in meetings with Community Action Agencies and other agencies in order to support the ability of the State of Nebraska to help people live better lives.
- Continue to work with Community Action Nebraska and the Outcomes Management Committee to further develop and utilize ROMA and the National Indicators in Nebraska.

The State will work in partnership with Community Action Agencies to create and sustain programs and initiatives that strengthen families and communities using the six national ROMA goals listed below :

Goal 1: Low-income people become more self-sufficient

Goal 2: The conditions in which low-income people live are improved

Goal 3: Low-income people own a stake in their community

Goal 4: Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved

Goal 5: Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results

Goal 6: Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

(2) Eligible Entities -- Those entities eligible for community services block grant funds are:

- Blue Valley Community Action Partnership(BVCA)
- Central Nebraska Community Services (CNCS)
- Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties (CAPLS) formerly Lincoln Action Program (LAP)
- Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska (Mid)
- Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWN) formerly Panhandle Community Services (PCS)
- Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership (ENCAP)
- Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership (NENCAP) formerly Goldenrod Hills Community Action (GHCA)
- Northwest Community Action Partnership (NCAP)
- Southeast Nebraska Community Action (SENCA).

(3) Distribution and Allocation of Funds -- The State of Nebraska is distributing funds in the following manner:

- 90% Restricted Funds to Nebraska's nine CAAs
- 5% Discretionary Funds
- 5% Administrative Funds

B. Description of Criteria and Distribution Formula

The criteria for the State distribution of funds are as follows:

- Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements of 676B of the CSBG Act and subsequent amendments and any related federal regulations.
- Applicants in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, A-122, and Generally Accepted Accounting practice must maintain fiscal accounting procedures adequate control systems, and have to ensure the proper disbursement and accounting for all funds received under this Act.
- Applicants must submit an annual work plan and budget
- Applicants must submit required reports as stated in their CSBG Subgrants.

At least 90% of the Federal Fiscal Years 2013-2014 CSBG funds will be distributed by the State to the nine CAAs based on a formula that uses a \$136,000 base plus poverty population to determine allocations. Poverty is determined using the 2010 federal census figures. This is in compliance with *"SEC. 676 c. FUNDING TERMINATION OR REDUCTIONS.—For purposes of making a determination in accordance with subsection (b)(8) with respect to—“(1) a funding reduction, the term ‘cause’ includes—“(A) a statewide redistribution of funds provided through a community services block grant under this subtitle to respond to “(i) the results of the most recently available census or other appropriate data.*

The base plus formula revision took place between January and June 2012. The new formula starts in FY2013 continuing through FY2023 dependent on federal or state changes concerning CSBG. Discussion of the new allotments occurs every ten (10) years in conjunction with the US Census. The new base plus formula includes \$136,000 base and a revised formula as explained below. The State CSBG office worked with the nine community action agencies to devise a formula that took in to account higher rural costs of serving individuals and families. The formula took in to account the number of people in poverty per service delivery area and estimated the cost per person at \$11 per person in urban areas and \$16 per person in rural areas. Starting in 2013, the formula allows for a \$5 differential per person in poverty in rural areas. This change occurred to provide dollars to rural agencies that serve large geographical areas but have smaller populations and therefore lose dollars when the formula relies solely on poverty population. That is why the State determined the \$11 and \$16 per person in poverty multiplier to come up with each agency's percentage in the formula. The base was increased from \$125,000 to \$136,000 to reflect growing costs for services. The new base plus formula revision gave rural areas extra dollars but did not overly impact the urban percentages. The percentages are shown in C.

To avoid community action agencies from having to budget for significant losses or gains in their allotment, the State of Nebraska is instituting a hold harmless policy for FY2013-FY2015. In FY2013, agencies will receive 1/3 of their allotted gain or loss. In FY2014, they will receive 2/3 of their allotted gain or loss. In FY2015, they will recognize their full gain or loss per the new base plus formula.

Community Action Agencies are required to submit a request to carry-over funds. They are required to report on those funds until expended.

C. Description of Distribution and Use of Restricted Funds

Following is the FY2013 distribution formula for CSBG funds based on level funding. Due to the funding formula, as Nebraska allotments increase by more than 1% these percentages change. These figures are based on FY2012 Nebraska allotment level of \$4,699,568:

Blue Valley Community Action Partnership	6.965%
Central Nebraska Community Services	11.130%
Community Action Partnership of Lancaster & Saunders Counties	14.368%
Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska	13.177%
Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska	6.530%
Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership	25.310%
Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership	11.854%
Northwest Community Action Partnership	5.059%
Southeast Nebraska Community Action	5.607%
Total	100.000%

Nebraska's CAAs will continue to offer a wide range of anti-poverty programs to further the stated purposes of CSBG for the two fiscal years covered by this plan. A strong focus will be placed on family development and case management as CAA program services help individuals and families work towards self-sufficiency.

Nebraska's CAAs will continue to lead in efforts to identify the needs of the communities they serve and to fill gaps in services. The State Office, State Association Office and Nebraska's CAAs realize the need to coordinate services with other local agencies and will continue to focus on developing new partnerships.

The State of Nebraska has not had to recapture and redistribute CSBG funds.

D. Description of Distribution and Use of Discretionary Funds

In FY2011 and FY2012 the State CSBG Office instituted a competitive grant process to grant discretionary dollars to any 501(c) 3 organization that served low income populations. The programs were worthy and the competitive process made the granting of these dollars more transparent than previous years. However, the State CSBG Office will be altering this process to recognize agencies that are creating, maintaining and exploring innovative, evidence based and performance based projects that can demonstrate successful outcomes in alleviating the conditions of poverty for clients and their community.

Starting in FY2013, the State CSBG Office will devise a process to provide additional funds to performing community action agencies or exemplary programs. Starting in January 2013, Nebraska CAAs will be eligible to receive additional dollars for programs that have demonstrated high success, innovation or best practices in their community. The criteria will be set in partnership with the Peer Review team set up by Community Action of Nebraska and the State CSBG Office.

The grantees from FY2012 will receive funding in FY2013 per the Request For Proposal (RFP) application and funding notice. The State of Nebraska anticipates the awards for FY2013 will be 10% lower than the year one funding listed here. Those who will receive second year funding in FY2013 are:

1. Community Action of Nebraska (CAN) \$22,049
This project focused on providing Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) training to community action staff (focusing on new hires and board members)

and other partners who receive CSBG Discretionary funding. It also provided for the Association Executive Director to get his ROMA Trainer certification.

2. Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership (NENCAP) \$94,649
This project focused on the agency's Career Development Program that was piloted with CSBG American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds from October 2009 to May 2011. The program targets unemployed and underemployed homeless and near homeless clients across their 14 county service area.
3. Northwest Community Action Partnership (NCAP) \$37,635
This project focused on an After School Program in partnership with Chadron Public Schools. The Boys and Girls Club in the area was ceasing operations and this project helped fill the gap in afterschool programs. Without this funding, more than 240 children would not have access to afterschool programs. This project partnered with community programs as well as NCAP run volunteer programs such as the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and the Foster Grandparent Program.
4. Heartland Family Service (HFS) \$85,667
This project supported the agency's Rapid Re-Housing program that quickly rehouses persons who are low-income, homeless and living in Douglas or Sarpy Counties Nebraska. The project provides temporary financial assistance to individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness and need temporary assistance in order to obtain housing. This project supported efforts from the ARRA funded U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Rapid Rehousing Program in 2009.

E. Description of Use of Administrative funds

The State will use no more than the greater of \$55,000 or 5% of its annual allotted funds for program administration. Administration funds will be used for salaries, supplies, travel, staff training, support of the CAN office, and other expenditures necessary to fulfill the administrative requirements and improve the implementation of the CSBG program. Because the Office of Community Services (OCS) strongly recommends States attend the two NASCSP Annual Trainings the State CSBG Program Specialist will use administrative funds to attend both annual NASCSP trainings in 2013 and 2014 if there are no state imposed travel restrictions. This will ensure Nebraska receives the training needed to keep it in compliance with OCS requirements. Administration of the program will include administrative management, technical assistance and training, planning, and fiscal and program monitoring. A portion of the State's administration funds are set aside for local CAA expenditures of an unexpected and/or extraordinary nature or to enhance initiatives through funding discretionary projects. Any unspent administrative funds will be added to the amount available for discretionary awards the next year.

The State of Nebraska has no charity tax credit laws in effect that utilize CSBG dollars.

F. State Community Services Program Implementation

(1) Program Overview

(a) The Service Delivery System

Nebraska's nine CAAs are private non-profit organizations and serve all 93 counties in the state and several counties in northern Kansas. See map in Attachment D for the service delivery areas.

The majority of Nebraska's population resides in the southeast corner of the state with Omaha and Lincoln making up the two largest metropolitan areas. The Sioux City, IA metro area in the

northeast corner includes two Nebraska counties and is the only other metropolitan area partially included in the Nebraska service delivery area. With the 2010 Census, Grand Island became an urbanized area. Most recent available census data (2010) puts the population at 1.82 million with 1,071,368 residing in metropolitan areas (59%), 404,027 in micropolitan areas (22%) and 350,446 in rural areas (19%). Poverty is present in all areas hovering between 11.9% and 12.4% in the designated areas, with pockets of larger poverty areas in specific counties across the state. Omaha and Lincoln saw dramatic increases in their poverty in the new census 12.9% and 12.5 % respectively.

Nebraska’s Community Action Agencies shall serve as a primary advocate for the reduction of the causes, conditions, and effects of poverty. They provide social and economic opportunities that foster self-sufficiency for low-income persons. Services provided by CAAs are available to all eligible persons with the agency’s service area.

The State of Nebraska does not mandate what services or activities the eligible entities provide. Eligible entities select activities based on their assessments of community needs, analysis of their community’s service delivery system, agreements with partners, and other local factors. Local agencies are empowered to select services that meet their local conditions. No two eligible entities are exactly alike. Most do, however, provide similar types of CSBG services and have similar delivery systems and operate satellite outreach offices.

Additionally, Community Action Agencies work together through the Community of Nebraska (CAN) network and in collaboration with the State CSBG office to plan and carry out strategies to address poverty needs statewide. Programs include but are not limited to: the Nebraska Management Information System (NMIS), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) awareness and preparation initiative, Individual Development Account (IDA) planning and development including an Assets for Independence (AFI) grant received in 2010 with continued funding through 2015.

The current CSBG eligible CAAs are:

Blue Valley Community Action PO Box 273 Fairbury, NE 68352	Counties Served	Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Polk, Saline, Seward, Thayer and York. Also serving Jewell and Smith counties in Kansas
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$283,646
Central Nebraska Community Services PO Box 509 Loup City, NE 68853	Counties Served	Blaine, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Colfax, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Holt, Howard, Key Paha, Loup, Merrick, Nance, Platte, Rock, Sherman, Valley, and Wheeler
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$500,037
Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties (formerly Lincoln Action Program) 210 "O" Street Lincoln, NE 68508	Counties Served	Lancaster and Saunders
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$587,277
Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska PO Box 2288 Kearney, NE 68848	Counties Served	Adams, Arthur, Buffalo, Chase, Clay, Dawson, Dundy, Franklin, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Grant, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Kearney, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Nuckolls, Perkins, Phelps, Red Willow, Thomas, and Webster. Also serving Norton and Phillips counties in Kansas

	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$552,195
Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (formerly Panhandle Community Services) 3350 Tenth Street Gering, NE 69341	Counties Served	Banner, Cheyenne, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, and Scotts Bluff counties. Also provides migrant head start services in Box Butte County
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$280,231
Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership 2406 Fowler Street Omaha, NE 68111	Counties Served	Douglas and Sarpy
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$1,080,599
Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership PO Box 667 603 Earl Street Pender, NE 68047	Counties Served	Antelope, Burt, Cedar, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Dodge, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Stanton, Thurston, Washington and Wayne counties
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$510,282
Northwest Community Action Partnership 270 Pine Street Chadron, NE 69337	Counties Served	Box Butte, Cherry, Dawes, Sheridan, and Sioux
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$213,481
Southeast Nebraska Community Action PO Box 646 Humboldt, NE 68376	Counties Served	Cass, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee and Richardson. Also provides weatherization services in Douglas and Sarpy Counties
	FY 2012 CSBG allocation	\$221,864

(b) Linkages

Nebraska's CAAs lead the effort to identify the needs of the communities they serve and to fill service gaps. CAAs use the needs assessment and case management reports to identify gaps in services. Nebraska's CAAs realize the need to coordinate services with other local agencies and develop partnerships. Nebraska's CAAs participate on advisory boards, coalitions, and continuum of care committees. They collaborate with local, regional, and state partners to meet the needs of the low-income families in Nebraska through the provision of information, referrals, case management, follow up consultations, strategic planning, and implementation of such planning.

(c) Coordination with Other Public and Private Resources

In FY2011, the CAAs leveraged more than \$66 million dollars in federal, state, local, and private funding. The breakdown shows that Non-Federal funding totaled more than \$46 million including \$4.9 million in State resources, \$1.2 million from local governments, and \$14.2 million from the private sector. These funds would not be possible without CAAs coordination with other public and private organizations to achieve results.

The CAAs are leaders in Nebraska's strategy to create a unified delivery system for publicly funded health and human services that result in better services, better use of resources, and better results for the people they serve. The broad-based CAA board composition makes it very advantageous for CAAs to become an integral partner with county governments, local hospitals and health departments, and others to assure the development and success of new services. CAA Executive Directors and staff, the Association office, and the State CSBG

Administrator and Program Specialist sit on a variety of local, regional, and statewide Boards and committees in order to coordinate with other public and private partners.

Public transportation is a need across the state and transportation programs continue to be a strong coordinated effort for many Community Action Agencies. They partner with their communities to provide public transportation in rural areas. Southeast Nebraska Community Action Council partners with County Commissioners to operate a County Transit. Through this partnership they provide affordable, safe transportation to the general public with priority given to elderly and/or persons with disabilities.

Specific examples of CAAs partnerships in providing services:

Northwest Community Action Partnership coordinates with the Sheridan County Commissioners to provide public transportation in Sheridan County and also with the City of Chadron to provide public transportation in the Chadron area.

Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership started providing transportation in partnership with local agencies to provide transport to medical appointments and other needs. Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska runs its own transit program and continues to provide much needed services to the Kearney area and surrounding rural areas.

Northwest Nebraska Community Action Partnership's Operation Great Start program strives to give babies a healthy start in life by ensuring females and males have the resources needed to make informed decisions with pre and interconception healthcare. The program has been in existence for the last six years and has been funded by Maternal Child Health Title V funds. Operation Great Start continues to be comprised of five collaborating partners: NENCAP, Faith Regional Health Services, Ionia Research, Norfolk Public Schools and Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department.

Blue Valley Community Action uses eight AmeriCorps to work in health, housing, volunteer services and juvenile services. AmeriCorps staff conduct RentWise training for renters. The targeted renters have been the Project FIRST enrollees (Supportive Housing Program) and BVCA's housing unit occupants. The curriculum takes an active-learning approach and stresses tenant responsibility. Participants earn a certificate after completing a minimum of nine hours of education. Giving tenants the knowledge, skills and tools enables them to have positive experiences and better outcomes in maintaining housing stability. An added bonus is the support of the community businesses that have donated items used as incentives, i.e. free haircuts, calendars, pizzas, etc.

The Nebraska Energy Assistance Network (NEAN) is an important collaboration. It is collaboration between utility companies across the State, Community Action Agencies, the Salvation Army, Catholic Social Services, the Nebraska Energy Office, the Department of Health and Human Services and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension with a mission of assisting Nebraskans with their energy needs through education, advocacy, and partnership. Their vision is to: educate to use energy efficiently; assist in meeting basic energy needs; link with financial assistance and energy efficiency resources; and provide voice to identify and address energy needs. These are just several examples of how Nebraska's CAAs coordinate with other public and private resources. Other examples are given in other areas of this plan. In 2010, they launched an effort to provide Energy Efficiency kits to clients. A series of energy efficiency webinars took place in July and August to educate providers on NEAN projects and how they can help clients.

(d) Innovative Community and Neighborhood-based Initiatives

Nebraska's CAAs continue to offer a wide range of anti-poverty programs. A strong focus is total family development through case management. This ranges from group classes to a one on one session between the case manager and clients. One part of this case management model is that whenever a client comes in for services, that client is screened for other community action programs the client may be eligible for participation.. Most agencies incorporated a basic intake form for all CAA services that helps in tracking clients and ensuring they are screened for all available services within the agency. While most of the work is within the agency, case management also looks at other community providers to meet client needs. Nebraska CAAs , the Association Office, and the State CSBG Administrator and Program Specialist will continue to work with their partners to provide new innovative community and neighborhood-based initiatives.

Some of the programs currently offered by CAAs include: Temporary Employment, Experience Works (senior employment), Summer Youth Employment, Job Counseling, Back to School Job Fairs, Career Fairs, On-the-Job Training Programs, Alternative Education Programs, General Education Diploma (GED), Pre-school Education Programs, Tutoring Services, Head Start, Minority Education, Home-based Head Start, Education Fairs, Migrant Head Start, Tax Preparation Counseling, Consumer Education, Budget Counseling, Consumer Buying Tips, Financial Planning, Thrift Shops, Weatherization Assistance, Food and Clothing Pantries, Landlord Tenant Mediation, Rental Housing, Home Ownership, HUD Certified Counselors, Security Deposits, Housing Rehabilitation, Individual Development Accounts, Rent and Utility Payments, HUD Lease Program, Disaster/Flood Relief, Home Repair and Maintenance, Domestic Violence Assistance, Homeless Assistance, Eviction Assistance, Transportation, Utility Crisis Intervention, Family Mediation, Drug and Alcohol Counseling, Prenatal Care, Child Care, JOBS Program, AIDS Prevention/Information, and Assistance/Referral.

Specific examples:

Blue Valley Community Action holds the annual Ready-Set-Go event focusing on children from low-income families being ready to start the school year in a positive manner. The project provides free school physicals, immunizations, school supplies, personal care items and vouchers for free haircuts and clothing to approximately 300 low income children. The project is successful through the collaboration of Beatrice Community Hospital, Blue Valley Community Action Partnership, Salvation Army and numerous other community partners and volunteers working together to obtain the needed supplies, vouchers and donations of time and money from area providers and businesses.

Northwest Community Action Partnership –Closer to Home Soup Kitchen is a community collaborative effort to coordinate funding. Closer to Home Soup Kitchen receives donations from the Ministerial Association to offset the costs of rent/utilities, cash donations from the public help for the purchase of food, food is donated every week from Prairie Pines a Retired Living Center, food is also donated from vendors from the Farmer's Market and Pine Ridge Job Corp planted a garden for Closer to Home Soup Kitchen, all produce has been harvested and used in the preparation of meals. Another example of collaborative efforts is through volunteerism, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, local churches, local business affiliations, and Chadron State College students and personnel, volunteer their time to Closer to Home Soup Kitchen.

Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska runs The Reach Your Destination Easily Program (R.Y.D.E.). This is the only brokeraged transit system in the State of Nebraska. The program operates 8 full time and 4 part time buses, offering approximately 400 rides per day to residents in Buffalo County. The current partnership includes: the City of Kearney, Buffalo County, the Good Samaritan Health Systems, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Area Agency on Aging, Kearney Family YMCA, Pumpkin Patch Child Care

Center, Greater Nebraska Goodwill Industries, Kearney Public Schools and various nursing facilities. This program is a great example of how Nebraska's CAA's collaborate with other agencies in their areas to meet a critical community need.

These are just some of the innovative community and neighborhood-based initiatives taking place in Nebraska.

(2) Community Needs Assessment

As a condition for receiving CSBG funding, all Nebraska's CAAs must submit a work plan that includes a community needs assessment. Nebraska requires agencies conduct a complete needs assessment at a minimum of once every 5 years with yearly updates. They must incorporate data from these sources: low-income residents; local elected officials and other service agencies; and statistical data. The CAAs use a variety of methods to ascertain that local needs are adequately assessed and that funds are targeted to the areas of greatest need. Existing needs assessments are utilized in all service areas.

In 2010, Community Action of Nebraska (CAN), the statewide association, took the lead along with Wayne State College and Ionia Research to conduct a statewide community needs assessment over the next five years. A statewide community assessment was released in 2011 and a more detailed study on financial behaviors was released in 2012. This initiative received attention in the CSBG FY2011 Annual Report from NASCSP and The Promise magazine from the Community Action Partnership. The lead team members will present at the 2012 CAP conference in New York City.

Community Action of Nebraska and the nine Community Action Agencies in Nebraska released the results of its 2011 Community Assessment Focus Survey in March 2012. The intent of the survey was to discover the financial challenges faced by Nebraskans, to deepen their understanding of financial decisions Nebraskans are making and assess their knowledge and general attitudes about money. Community Action Agencies in Nebraska will use the results to evaluate and revise their financial literacy and education in programs and services to better fit the needs of the community. The Community Assessment Focus Survey Report is based on a random survey of residents across the entire state of Nebraska conducted in May of 2011. The assessment survey asked questions covering several topics including: financial behaviors, financial services, resources and planning for the future.

Key findings in the survey reveal the hard financial choices faced by many living in the state. Of those surveyed 85% feel emotionally stressed about money, 60% stated that they run out of money to pay for living expenses, and 61% worry about job security. This focus survey report is intended to complement the more comprehensive State and Regional Community Assessment completed in 2010 and future documents being developed by Community Action of Nebraska.

This initiative is funded in partnership with the State and the 9 agencies. It will and has surveyed 10,000 each year across the state. The topic is more focused in 2011, 2012 and 2014 than the general survey completed in 2010 and then again in 2013. Current reports include 2010 general survey, 2011 financial behaviors and the 2012 survey is employment. See Attachment E for a copy of the 2011 and 2012 reports. Agencies will be required to submit information gained from these surveys in their community needs assessments.

(3) Tripartite Boards

The Nebraska State CSBG regulations include provisions for maintaining tripartite boards. In addition subgrants between the State and CAAs for Community Services Block Grant funding require that CAAs have a tri-partite board whose members are chosen in accordance with

democratic selection procedures to assure that not fewer than 1/3 of its members are representative of low-income individuals and families in the neighborhood served; reside in the neighborhood served; and are able to participate actively in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the programs to serve low-income communities. All CAAs are required to include tri-partite board requirements in the by-laws that govern their agency. The by-laws of all Nebraska CAAs must also include a provision whereby a low-income individual, community organization, religious organization, or a representative of low-income individuals that considers its organization or low-income individuals to be inadequately represented on the board (or other governing mechanism) of the eligible entity to petition for adequate representation.

The CSBG Program Specialist requests updates on Board membership in the annual work plan and again during an agency's desk audit or on-site review. Board minutes are reviewed to monitor Board membership and attendance at meetings. Attendance at agency Board meetings is tracked monthly and is part of the on-site review process. Each agency receives a summary of board membership for the most recent Federal Fiscal Year as part of their on site review or their desk audit.

(4) State Charity Tax Program

The State of Nebraska has no charity tax credit laws in effect that utilize Community Service Block Grant dollars.

(5) Program Assurance 676(b)(1)(A)-(C):

(a) Assurance '676(b)

(1): Nebraska's CAA's support many activities that are designed to assist low-income families and individuals receiving assistance under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), homeless families and individuals, migrant or seasonal farmworkers, and elderly low-income individuals and families to enable families and individuals.

The State of Nebraska assures these services are provided by including language in all subgrants and through review of work plans, review of ROMA and National Indicator goals, desk audits, on-site visits, attendance at Board meetings, and monitoring of Board Meeting Minutes and fiscal reports.

(i) Remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency -- Whether providing developmental activities or basic needs, the services provided by Nebraska's CAAs help remove barriers that stand in the way of low-income people achieving self-sufficiency. All CAAs in Nebraska operate case management programs where low-income people can receive one on one assistance and support to help with financial, social and environmental barriers, as well as building goals for a promising future.

In addition, many other types of services such as life skills classes, first time homebuyer assistance, computer labs, weatherization, and job readiness activities are designed to help low-income people make the transition to self-sufficiency. CAAs provide a variety of health programs that aid in the move towards self-sufficiency, including medical and dental screening, immunizations, and mental health services. Nebraska's CAAs continue to be leaders in the operation of family resource centers; continuum of care projects; family preservation programs; local, regional, and state health and human service coalitions; and other local, regional, and statewide efforts at service provision and coordination for the benefit of low-income families and individuals in areas where proven needs exist and where programs are not available.

All of Nebraska's CAA's provide their communities with free tax return preparation services. They work to ensure that families access their full refund, concentrating on the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for which many families qualify. These efforts are coordinated through Community Action of Nebraska. They also host a statewide Tax Assistance Hotline free of charge; facilitates the statewide EITC Coalition; and maintains a database of VITA & AARP sites. The Association and State offices work together to lead a statewide EITC Coalition focusing on sharing resources, getting the word out on EITC, and helping communities establish local coalitions. This effort continues to improve collaboration and impact regarding tax assistance and asset building.

Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska incorporates a life coaching approach in its homeless programs. It focuses more on the possibilities instead of the problems. This approach allows the family to work toward success instead of highlighting deficiencies. The program focuses on many dimensions that ultimately impact family health and development. It also assists families and individuals in defining values, setting goals, and implementing change in any or all dimensions. Families are encouraged to participate together to achieve common goals.

Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties also runs the Tenant Support Services Program. This program focuses on eviction prevention, landlord & tenant mediation and information regarding tenant rights and obligations., Referrals are received from the City of Lincoln's Department of Building and Safety, Office of the Attorney General, other social service agencies and Lincoln Housing Authority. Services are coordinated with Legal Aid of Nebraska which can assist with legal advice and representation as needed..

(ii) Secure and retain meaningful employment – Nebraska's CAAs make every effort to employ low-income people within the agency. Low-income individuals, including senior citizens and youth, are provided opportunities for employment through on-the-job training, job readiness programs, referral to available job listings, assistance with resumes, etc. All programs are closely coordinated with other available employment programs in the area and provide referrals to those services.

Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership (ENCAP) Opening Doors to Success Program targets individuals coming out of the prison system. The agency identified these returning citizens in July of 2009 as a focus of their employment efforts. To date, the program has served more than 600 men. This program is a multi-faceted program that utilizes a client centered approach in facilitating the program components. Components include: an 8-week Life and Living Skills, an 8-week Strategies for Employment and Money Smart which is run concurrently with Life and Living Skills and Strategies for Employment. The fourth component is RentWise for those individuals who would benefit. The final component is Case Management where the client works with the case manager throughout the 16 weeks and this relationship continues into job placement and for up to 18 months. ENCAP is looking at expanding the program into Iowa counties at the request and support of West Central Community Action and the courts in Pottawattamie County.

(iii) Attain an adequate education and improving literacy skills –Nebraska's CAA's provide a variety of educational services, including: Bright Starts, CARE, Education Outreach, Even Start, GED tutorial, Partners in Learning, Back on Track, Computer Learning Lab, Love and Logic Parenting Classes, Job Skills Development, Head

Start/Early Head Start, and literacy classes. Agencies distribute donated children's books to strengthen family literacy. Each agency works closely with its community partners and makes referrals to agencies that provide other educational services.

Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership (ENCAP) has partnered with Omaha Public Schools' (OPS) to provide substance abuse prevention and education to students suspended from area OPS campuses for drug and/or alcohol usage and/or possession. These students participated in ENCAP's Back on Track program and are highly representative of the population of youth most at risk for juvenile delinquency and dropping out of school. Three therapists from ENCAP facilitate this ongoing 15 hour program that students must complete before re-admission back into their respective school. In addition, ENCAP is in partnership with Omaha Housing Authority (OHA) to supervise Counseling Interns from local colleges/universities who provide mental health and substance abuse counseling services to residents of three residential towers in the greater Omaha area.

(iv) Make better use of available income – Nebraska's CAA's provide a variety of services to enable families to make better use of available income. Among the most common are income tax preparation, weatherization, budget counseling, negotiation of utility payment plans, homeowner counseling, and Project First. CAA case management/family development programs focus heavily on budgeting and financial planning.

CAA's, the association office, and the CSBG State office are part of a statewide EITC collaboration that works together to increase public awareness of low-income tax credits and share resources. This collaboration also includes AARP Tax Aide, Voices for Children in Nebraska, the Lincoln and Omaha EITC coalitions, the Mexican-American Commission, the Nebraska Department of Revenue, the I.R.S., and the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. The State Treasurer's office is another partner of the statewide coalition. This collaboration continues to grow and is already planning on new steps to take next tax season.

Nebraska continues to make progress with Individual Development Account (IDA) programs. Community Action of Nebraska secured Assets for Independence (AFI) funding in 2010 to help agencies with IDA efforts. Currently 6 agencies participate in IDA projects with good representation across the state.

All the agencies provide case management/family development support that assist individuals in meeting their goals for self-sufficiency and provide some kind of financial education for clients. This can be as routine as a monthly budget to as elaborate as programs targeting school age populations to learn money management early.

Blue Valley Community Action leads activities around SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) for the Southeast Nebraska Continuum of Care. It is charged with carrying out activities in the southeastern 21 counties. Those with disabling conditions and are unable to be economically stable will be assisted by the SOAR Coordinator to apply for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance). The goal of the project is to have the application approved by Social Security Administration on the first submission. BVCA is learning from two agencies that have been operating this project for 1-2 years, Community Alliance in Omaha and CenterPointe in Lincoln.

The SENCA SMART (Southeast Nebraska Community Action Strategic Money and Resource Techniques) financial literacy program serves approximately 400 8th and 12th

grade students in Richardson and Pawnee County schools. The program was developed as a result of information received from the 2010 Community Action of Nebraska State and Regional Community Assessment Report. SENCA collaborates with Community Action of Nebraska (CAN), Wells Fargo "Hands on Banking", The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, and local and area schools to provide a quality, pro-active financial education program. The program plans to expand into Nemaha and Johnson County to approximately 800 hundred students. During this two year period, FY2013-2014 the program will encompass the entire six county service area by adding in students for a total of 1,200 students receiving SENCA SMART SAVE (Students Attain Valuable Education) and giving them the information they need to focus on a life of independence. In addition to the SAVE program, SENCA developed an adult financial literacy program for case managed clients titled: "Invest in Yourself" and provides 6 hours of classroom training with a focus on banking, budgeting, and the importance of credit. The Invest program began in Johnson County in August of 2011 and currently has approximately 13 participants.

Eight of Nebraska Community Action Agencies conduct Weatherization Assistance Programs, covering the entire state. Renters and owners of mobile homes, multi-units, and single-family dwellings, that meet household income guidelines, are eligible to apply for no cost weatherization assistance. Weatherization services include furnace inspections and service maintenance; insulation of attics, sidewalls, and crawl spaces; and general infiltration work, such as glass replacement, caulking, window and door weather-stripping, and blower door guided sealing. These services are designed to permanently lower a resident's energy consumption and utility bills. All eligible properties are provided with energy-efficient lights bulbs and a carbon monoxide detector. In addition, residents are provided with education to understand what role they play in determining the amount of energy and money saved. Through this education, residents also learn how to maintain the effectiveness of their efficiency improvements along with helpful energy saving tips.

Nebraska CAAs are also actively involved in **RentWise-Nebraska**, a tenant education program that helps people find and keep decent, safe, affordable rental housing that meets their needs. Participants are taught communication skills, so they can have positive relationships with landlords and neighbors and a step-by-step process on how to manage and plan for housing costs. Individuals are also taught how to conduct successful searches for rental units and build a positive rental history; the importance of reading and understanding a lease; and a person's rights and responsibilities as a tenant. They are also encouraged to take pride in their home and set a positive example by taking care of their rental unit.

(v) Obtain and maintain adequate housing – Many of Nebraska CAAs are actively involved in providing housing for low-income families in their areas through housing assistance and affordable housing projects; HOME; coalition of Landlords and Tenants; homeowner counseling and household budgeting; Project FIRST; the Homeless Family Program; first-time homebuyer assistance; emergency shelters; migrant housing project; rent and utilities subsidies; and weatherization. Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership's Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing (HPRP) program partnered with the Northeast Housing Initiative to give RentWise classes to HPRP clients and Section 8 clients across the service area.

Seven out of nine Nebraska CAAs receive Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESG) and Homeless Shelter Assistance Trust Fund (HSATF) dollars from the Nebraska

Homeless Assistance Program to address homelessness, prevention services or emergency housing needs.

Five of Nebraska's CAAs have met the requirements to be designated a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). The CHDO designation is required by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development for receipt of HUD's HOME housing assistance funds. The CHDO designation allows these CAAs to buy, sell, build, and manage low-income housing projects or rehabilitate and renovate local housing stock in communities for occupancy by low-income tenants. CHDO/CAAs also provide technical assistance and act as advisors to local housing programs/projects in the communities they serve.

Central Nebraska Community Services runs the only Supportive Services for Veteran's Grant (SSVF) in the state. The program provides housing opportunities, case management and other supports to Veteran's in their service area. The need was determined through participation in synchronization meetings through the Veterans Administration and sharing the needs of those experiencing the affects from war.

The Representative Payee Program, a nation-wide program of the Social Security Administration, has proven successful in assisting Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties clients in meeting specific financial obligations. The ultimate goal of the program is client self-sufficiency. The Representative Payee Program serves as an effective resource in keeping these individuals safely housed while they work towards self-sufficiency. The majority of the clients utilizing the services of the Representative Payee Program receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and have been identified by the Social Security Administration as incapable of managing their finances due to substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Most of these individuals would not be able to remain housed without an outside party ensuring that their monthly financial obligations are met. By ensuring that a client's basic need obligation, i.e. housing, is addressed, the Representative Payee Program provides low-income individuals the opportunity to address long-term barriers to self-sufficiency.

Many of Nebraska's CAAs also assist local families with completing requirements for low-interest home loan programs or obtaining rental housing and being responsible tenants. CAAs collaborate with other housing programs and agencies and public housing authorities in the state and coordinate housing activities with the Department of Economic Development to assist low-income families. In some areas the local CAA is the designated housing authority. Some Nebraska CAAs own and operate transitional housing projects where low-income families and individuals are provided affordable housing and other needed services as they work toward self-sufficiency.

Blue Valley Community Action's Lease-To-Own housing program (CROWN) continues to enable families to rent a new home with the option to purchase after a compliance period. Single-family homes were constructed that range from 1,100-1,200 square feet each. As a certified Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO), BVCA was able to obtain HOME funding and incorporated tax credits and bank loans to complete financing of the project. This project helps complete the continuum of care process by taking homeless families into permanent housing and eventually to homeownership. Recently, twelve new homes were constructed bringing the total number of CROWN units to sixty.

Southeast Nebraska Community Action Housing Development is certified in Readiness Education Awareness Collaborative for Homebuyers and Homeowners (REACH).

REACH assures quality homebuyer education is available to all Nebraskans. The collaborative has a continually growing membership of non-profit agencies, lending institutions, community development groups, governmental entities, real estate professionals, educational organizations, and experts in housing issues. By SENCA partnering with supporters and providers to achieve services needed for positive outcomes, this program helps improve the conditions of low income households and provides an opportunity for them to own a state in their community.

(vi) Obtain emergency assistance – All Nebraska's CAA's provide emergency assistance. Examples of assistance provided include clothing and household banks, crisis intervention programs, domestic violence programs, emergency shelters, food baskets, food banks, food pantries, youth shelters and youth violence alternatives. Rural outreach is a program that can help with various issues facing rural families or individuals. Homeless Aid provides comprehensive emergency services, including, in some cases, a transportation voucher. CAAs also administer homeless programs and provide other programs that meet the emergency needs of their low-income residents on an as-needed basis. As part of their area's Continuum of Care, coordination is maintained with other resources to avoid duplication and maximize resources to meet the unmet needs of communities.

Seven of the nine Nebraska CAAs receive Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESG) and Homeless Shelter Assistance Trust Fund (HSATF) dollars from the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program to address homelessness, prevention services or emergency housing needs. CAAs have representatives on Statewide Nebraska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (NCHH) and lead subcommittee work in Continuum of Care's and accessing mainstream resources to address chronic homelessness. Additionally they have been active partners in the development of a State wide unified Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

The CAAs provide food and nutrition assistance to counteract malnutrition. Some of the programs include: Home-delivered Meals, Congregate Meals, Commodities Distribution, Women, Infants and Children and other Maternal/Child Health Programs, Family Nutrition Education Programs, Holiday Food Distribution, and Community Gardening.

Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties continues its Emergency Services Program which provides emergency rent, deposit, and utility payments to eligible individuals. Eligibility requirements include: to be eligible for rent assistance applicants must have an eviction notice; to be eligible for deposit assistance applicants must be homeless; and to be eligible for utility assistance applicants must have a disconnect notice. Preference is given to victims of domestic violence, individuals with disabilities, families with children and the homeless. Assistance with electric bills is provided through a partnership with Lincoln Electric System. Community Action continues to be the largest provider of emergency assistance in the Lincoln area.

(vii) Achieve greater participation in the affairs of the community – The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services strongly encourages, promotes and assists local partnerships to promote and enhance cooperation and collaboration among local organizations. The Department considers Nebraska's CAAs a valuable partner in these efforts. Other partners in these collaborations include local government agencies, law enforcement, faith-based organizations and the education community as well as other human service agencies. Throughout the state, outstanding collaboration has been achieved resulting in stronger and more effective communities as well as more effective

use of limited local resources. CAA staff and board members are active participants in such local efforts and in many cases act as the lead agency in the collaborations.

Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska runs The Child Abuse Resource and Education (C.A.R.E) Program. It's mission is: "To provide education, information and resources used towards preventing child abuse and neglect in Kearney and surrounding communities." Happy Bear Presentations, a personal safety program for early elementary aged children, teaches kids about bullying, good touch/bad touch, drug and alcohol prevention and stranger danger. Love and Logic Parenting Classes consist of six training sessions held once a week.

Through partnerships, Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership's Behavior Health Services provides mental health, substance abuse, psychological, and psychiatric evaluations and on-going psychiatric treatment for inmates residing in Douglas County Community Corrections. Mental health and/or substance abuse evaluations and treatment are provided at a specific reduced rate for inmates of the Community Corrections Center of Omaha (CCCO). ENCAP is the primary provider for CCCO inmates requiring violence prevention/anger management programming. They have also entered into a verbal agreement with Douglas County Drug Court (DCDC) as a direct referral for health, substance abuse, psychological, and psychiatric evaluations and on-going psychiatric and out-patient substance abuse treatment. The program received Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) Accreditation in 2011 for its Outpatient Treatment Program and its Case Management/Service Coordination. This three year accreditation shows the agency's and the program's commitment to quality improvement, meeting the unique needs of patients and continuously monitoring results.

Nebraska's CAAs typically play an active role in, and receive funds from, local United Way organizations. They also receive funding from many private and public (local, state, and national) foundations. Many CAAs also receive county, city and municipal government funding. CAAs are designated as the local housing authority in some rural areas of Nebraska.

CAA staff, board members, and clients serve on many advisory boards and other state and local boards and commissions that affect the life of Nebraska's citizens. In keeping with the ROMA National Goal 3: Low-income people own a stake in their community, CAAs encourage and have their clientele serve on governing and advisory boards. This helps educate people on board policy, policy making, and the part they play in making the community a better place to live.

The community members that serve on CAA boards and advisory committees include a diverse make-up of low income individuals, concerned citizens and engaged business people. Examples include: Head Start Policy Councils, Community/Neighborhood Advisory Councils, Human Services Interagency Councils, Senior/Community Centers, VISTA volunteer services, Youth Councils, Low-income Advisory Boards, Rural Volunteer Bureaus, etc.

(2) Nebraska's Community Action Agencies address the needs of youth in low-income communities through youth development programs that support the primary role of the family, give priority to the prevention of youth problems and crime, and promote increased community coordination and collaboration in meeting the needs of youth. The welfare of children is a major focus in the domestic abuse and homeless services offered by CAAs.

Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWN) still operates a youth shelter and a Youth Service Program called the SOS (Street Outreach Services). This program partners with a faith-based program and is reaching out to runaway and homeless youth in the panhandle of Nebraska. Their Transitional Living Program provides a complete continuum of services for runaway and homeless youth between the ages of 16 and 21 by coordinating with various CAPWN programs. The special emphasis is to serve pregnant and parenting homeless youth and provide the skills and knowledge necessary to become effective parents and lead productive and independent lives. CAPWN's Missing Link program is an intergenerational program matching trained youth to elder residents in nursing homes. Youth are specially trained in disabilities and the frailties that seniors experience as they age.

Blue Valley Community Action used AmeriCorps workers to operate an afterschool program averaging 48 youth daily with a medium age of 9 years old. They implemented the 40 Developmental Asset, training, programming and awareness through a media campaign directed at parents and other adults in the community, afterschool programming and a spring town hall meeting/training.

Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership runs Operation Great Start and Operation Building Blocks targeting young children and their families. Operation Great Start is a home visitation program that provides free one on one health education to pregnant families until the child turns one year of age, The program helps with any concerns with parenting and provides information on community resources. Services include pregnancy / prenatal care, newborn care, feeding and infant development, basic infant care, positive parenting, emotions, healthy behaviors, stress and anger management, family nutrition, transitioning to solid foods and education on reproductive life plans. Operation Building Blocks helps families with young children up to the age of five. Families may have many stresses or feel their children's behaviors are out of control. The program works with the families weekly or every other week to learn to lessen the stresses and develop skills to control their children's behaviors. The program works to support parents in being the best parent they can be on their pace and in the direction in which they want to go.

Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership's launched the Success Academy as part of its youth program. This program uses various people from professional backgrounds in corporate, entrepreneurial, and non-profit sectors in an effort to expose youth to various models and methodologies to become self sufficient. It also assists students in indentifying personal talents, skills, and abilities for the purpose of career discovery and alignment as they complete their education and pursue employment opportunities.

The CAAs provide a variety of other youth services and programs, including the computer learning labs, Career Assessment Training and others. Many CAAs have expanded and enhanced their Head Start programs, and several operate other child care programs.

The State of Nebraska assures these services are provided by including language in all subgrants and through review of work plans, review of ROMA and National Indicator goals, desk audits, on-site visits, attendance at Board meetings, and monitoring of Board Meeting Minutes and fiscal reports.

(3) The State of Nebraska and the CAAs continually strive to make more effective use of, and coordinate with, other programs. Nebraska's CAAs continuously identify the needs of the communities they serve and to fill those gaps. They coordinate CSBG projects with other service providers. CAAs have membership on the Statewide Regional WIA Boards. The agencies have strong links with local offices of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. They coordinate and cross-refer with many organizations and businesses in their

local service areas. They provide local leadership for continuum-of-care projects, family preservation programs, family resource centers, and other coalitions with a goal of service coordination that provide many benefits to low-income families and results in strengthening the family. All of these activities help enable families and individuals to achieve the objectives described in subsections i to vii above.

The State of Nebraska will also continue to coordinate the Community Services Block Grant program with other public and private resources. The State recognizes that coordination must also take place at the state level. The CSBG Program staff interacts with other DHHS programs and state departments to encourage linkages between state social service providers and CSBG recipients. The CSBG Administrator is also administrator of; the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program; Assistance to the Aged, Blind or Disabled; General Assistance; and Medicaid Special Programs . CSBG is located in the Division of Children and Family Services Economic Assistance Unit.

The State CSBG Office partners with many other divisions within DHHS, other State Departments, and agencies including the Department of Education, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, and Child Welfare on various issues and needs.

The State of Nebraska also continues to be involved in a number of statewide initiatives. Through EITC, the State CSBG office collaborates with the Community Action of Nebraska (CAN), CAAs, AARP, the IRS, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), Voices For Children in Nebraska, local community coalitions, and others. The office is involved with the ROMA Task Force; Nebraska Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, Community Learning Center Network, Public Awareness Campaign for Early Childhood, Stepping Stones to Recovery training for accessing SSI/SSDI, RentWise, IDA Coalition, Together for Kids and Families (Early Childhood Coordination Systems), Early Head Start Partnership Initiative, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports in Early Childhood, and the www.ne.housing data base initiative. These are just some of the partnerships the State of Nebraska CSBG office is involved with to carry out this assurance.

The State of Nebraska assures these services are provided by including language in all subgrants and through review of work plans, review of ROMA and National Indicator goals, desk audits, on-site visits, attendance at Board meetings, and monitoring of Board Meeting Minutes and fiscal reports.

(b) Assurance 676(b)(4) to provide individuals and families financial assistance and other emergency assistance on an as-needed basis.: Nebraska's CAAs will provide necessary supplies and services, nutritious foods and related services as may be necessary to counteract conditions of starvation and malnutrition on an emergency basis. This is done through food pantries, eviction assistance programs, homeless assistance programs and other emergency programs. Seven of the nine Nebraska CAAs receive Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESG) and Homeless Shelter Assistance Trust Fund (HSATF) dollars from the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program to address homelessness, prevention services or emergency housing needs. Coordination is maintained with other resources to avoid duplication and meet unmet needs of communities. Clothing and household goods are distributed when the situation warrants.

The State of Nebraska assures these services are provided by including language in subgrants and through review of work plans, review of ROMA and National Indicator goals, on-site visits, and monitoring of Board Meeting Minutes and fiscal reports.

(c) Assurance 676(b)(5) and the eligible entities in the State will coordinate, and establish linkages between, governmental and other social services programs to assure the effective delivery of such services: The CAAs will continue to be leaders in Nebraska's strategy to create a unified delivery system for publicly funded health and human services that result in better services, better use of resources, and better results for the people they serve.

All nine Nebraska CAA's participated in the case management training with Beverly Ford and have continued progress in implementing her practices across the agencies. All CAAs do case management as part of their client services. This case management/family development model allows the agencies to link clients to services in their area. Case management emphasis with service delivery is catalyst for the CAAs to collaborate with other human services programs, including the state departments of Health and Human Services and Labor. They are a recognized partner in many state initiatives around client services.

The State also sponsored Pathways to Excellence training for Nebraska Community Action agencies. Pathways to Excellence provides a framework of evaluation and analysis to help CAA's achieve excellence. This is based on the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence tailored to the language and operations of the CAA system. After receiving the training, five of the nine Nebraska CAAs completed the 10 month self-study and submitted an application. All applications were reviewed by a panel of CAA peer experts and each agency received a feedback report that outlined strengths and opportunities for improvement. Pathways to Excellence is the adopted model for the statewide Peer Review Process headed by Community Action of Nebraska. This Peer Review process is mandated by the State CSBG Office. However, the State Office limits its participation to allow agencies to freely discuss areas of improvement and processes. This initiative will strengthen the CAAs and allow continuous improvement in service delivery.

The State of Nebraska assures agencies are coordinating and establishing linkages by including language in subgrants and through review of work plans, review of ROMA and National Indicator reports, on-site visits, and monitoring of Board Meeting Minutes and fiscal reports.

(d) Assurance 676(b)(6) will ensure coordination between antipoverty programs in each community in the State, and ensure, where appropriate, that emergency energy crisis intervention programs under title XXVI are conducted in such communities.: The success of Nebraska's energy assistance programs is dependent upon collaboration with many local community partners such as utility companies, local health and human service offices, county extension service offices and other local human service providers. The CAAs collaborate with many local partners as they operate weatherization programs that focus on conservation of energy and lower fuel bills.

As stated earlier, the Nebraska Energy Assistance Network (NEAN) is a collaboration between utility companies across the State, Community Action Agencies, the Salvation Army, Catholic Social Services, the Nebraska Energy Office, the Department of Health and Human Services and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension with a mission of assisting Nebraskans with their energy needs through education, advocacy, and partnership.

The State of Nebraska assures coordination of services are accomplished through review of work plans, review of ROMA and National Indicator reports, on-site visits, and monitoring of Board Meeting Minutes and fiscal reports.

(e) Assurance 676(b)(9) will, to the maximum extent possible, coordinate programs with and form partnerships with other organizations serving low-income residents of the

communities and members of the groups served by the State, including religious organizations, charitable groups, and community organizations.: The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services emphasizes coordination of programs and services to all organizations serving the poverty population. Because of their funding, board composition and broad-based programs, Nebraska's CAAs lead efforts to identify the needs of the communities they serve and fill those gaps. CAAs continue to provide local leadership to coalitions with a goal of service coordination for the benefit of low-income families. Some examples of areas where Nebraska is currently involved in coordinated efforts are hunger and homelessness, tax credits and youth development.

Many Community Action Agencies partner with the Salvation Army in their annual bell ringing event. Southeast Nebraska Community Services continues to coordinate with the Salvation Army to send youth to Salvation Army summer camps. Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties also partners with Salvation Army to provide winter weekend meals at CAPLSC food kitchen program, the Gathering Place. Northwest Community Action Partnership's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) program which has more than 500 volunteers coordinates with local faith based organizations and businesses to serve their rural area. Their Closer To Home Initiative coordinates with the local hospital, senior center, local ministerial association, and Neighbors in Need.

Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Blue Valley Community Action, and Southeast Nebraska Community Action all partner with a faith based organization to carryout the St. Nicks program which provides gifts in Southeast Nebraska during Christmas time. Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership also partners with Northeast Economic Development District to maximize resources by coordinating weatherization and rehabilitation efforts on area homes and with faith based organizations to provide clinic sites at no cost for Immunization and WIC programs.

The State of Nebraska assures the coordination of programs and forming of partnerships through review of work plans, review of ROMA reports, on-site visits, and monitoring of Board Meeting Minutes and fiscal reports.

G. Fiscal Controls and Monitoring

(1) State Program Monitoring: Evaluation of CSBG grantees is conducted in a variety of ways including the review of financial and progress reports, audits, minutes of Board Meetings, ROMA data and on-site monitoring and peer review. The State of Nebraska continues to look for ways to improve its monitoring process.

- (a) The State conducts annual desk audits for all 9 agencies and on-site reviews at each agency bi-annually. The on-site review includes attending an agency board meeting. In FY2013 the office will conduct on-site reviews at Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties, Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska, Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership and Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership. In FY2014, Blue Valley Community Action Partnership, Central Nebraska Community Services, Southeast Nebraska Community Action and Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska will be on the schedule for on-site reviews. Northwest Community Action Partnership would normally be scheduled for a review in 2014 however a new Executive Director came on in 2012 so they will be reviewed annually until 2014.
- (b) The State does not anticipate any newly designated entities, but if one would be designated, the State would conduct an onsite review immediately upon the completion of the first year in which such entity receives funds through the community services block grant program.

- (c) The State will conduct follow-up visits to eligible entities, and their programs that fail to meet the goals, standards, and requirements established by the State.
- (d) The State will conduct other reviews as appropriate of entities with programs that have had other Federal, State or local grants terminated for cause.
- (e) The State will continue to provide training and technical assistance around accounting principles and the OMB Circulars.
- (f) Dates for last audits conducted and the period covered by the audit for the State's eligible entities are as follows:

AGENCY	DATE OF LAST AUDIT	PERIOD COVERED BY AUDIT
Blue Valley Community Action Partnership	02/10/2012	October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011
Central Nebraska Community Services	12/29/11	October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011
Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties (formerly Lincoln Action Program)	03/07/12	October 1, 2010– September 30, 2011
Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska	12/30/11	October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011
Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska	03/06/2012	July 1, 2010– June 30, 2011
Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership	10/26/2011	October 1, 2009 – September 30, 2010
Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership	01/05/2012	October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011
Northwest Community Action Partnership	11/14/2011	July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011 CSBG ARRA 4/1/09 - 9/30/10 CSBG Discretionary funds 10/1/09 - 9/30/10
Southeast Nebraska Community Action	11/09/11	October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011

(2) Corrective Action, Termination and Reduction of Funding: In the event the State determines an eligible entity failed to comply with the terms of their contractual agreement established with the State or the State plan, to provide services under the CSBG program or to meet any standards, goals and other requirements established by the State (including performance objectives), the State will comply with the requirements outlined in Section 678C of the Act, to:

- a. inform the entity of the deficiency to be corrected;
- b. require the entity to correct the deficiency;
- c. offer training and technical assistance as appropriate to help correct the deficiency, and submit to the Secretary a report describing the training and technical assistance offered or stating the reasons for determining that training and technical assistance are not appropriate;
- d. at the discretion of the State, offer the eligible entity the opportunity to develop and implement, within 60 days after being informed of the deficiency, a quality improvement plan

and to either approve the proposed plan or specify why the proposed plan cannot be approved;

e. after providing adequate notice and an opportunity for a hearing, initiate proceeding to terminate the designation of or reduce the funding to the eligible entity unless the entity corrects the deficiency.

(3) Fiscal Controls, Audits, and Withholding: The State of Nebraska and its nine Community Action Agencies have fiscal controls, procedures, audits and inspections in place to assure the proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds paid to the State under CSBG. These procedures ensure that cost and accounting standards of the Office of Management and Budget apply to the CSBG funds. The State of Nebraska and its nine Community Action Agencies also make appropriate books, documents, papers, and records available to the Secretary and the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, for examination, copying, or mechanical reproduction on or off the premises of the appropriate entity upon a reasonable request for the items.

Annual audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act are completed by the State and each of the nine Community Action Agencies. The State of Nebraska's most recent audit was for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011 and is available to all readers at: www.auditors.nebraska.gov

A list of dates of the audits of Nebraska's nine Community Action Agencies can be found in section G (1). Each agency submits copies of their most recent audit to the State CSBG Office. The State Office routes a copy of each audit to the DHHS Internal Auditor. The Internal Auditor receives and reviews all finding and proposed corrective action plans.

(a) Assurance 676(b)(7): The State of Nebraska and its nine Community Action Agencies will permit and cooperate with Federal investigations undertaken in accordance with section 678D of the Act. Subgrants require agencies permit and cooperate with Federal investigations. The State of Nebraska will seek answers to questions from Federal Project officer when needed. We welcome any visits to our State for purposes of monitoring program Administration and offering any technical assistance to improve operations.

(b) Assurance 676(b)(8): The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services as the state lead agency, may recommend termination of CSBG funds to any CSBG grantee. The Department will send the grantee and their governing board written notification of intent to terminate funding. The CSBG grantee will be allowed sixty (60) days from receipt of the notification of intent to terminate to present the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services with a plan to correct any noncompliance. If a correction plan is in process or the noncompliance is corrected within sixty (60) days, it will not be necessary to continue with the termination process and all appropriate parties will receive written notification by the State. If the entity continues to be out of compliance after sixty (60) days, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services will send a notification of termination in thirty (30) days which will include the reason(s) for termination and an explanation of the right to appeal. The grantee may appeal the decision to terminate funding. The appeal must be in writing and must be received within thirty (30) days of the date of the notification of termination. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services will issue a notice of hearing on the appeal. The notice will include:

1. Statement of the date, time, place, nature and manner of the hearing;
2. Acknowledgment of the right for representation by a legal or other representative of choice by either party.

All testimony will be recorded. A hearing officer will call the hearing to order and the parties involved will be given an opportunity to present opening statements. Thereafter, the parties

shall present their evidence as directed by the hearing officer. After no more than twenty (20) days of deliberation, the hearing officer will offer the proposed decision to the Director of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. If the Director's decision sustains the termination of funding, the grantee may then request a federal review by written notification to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which will review the State's findings and issue a written statement of determination within thirty (30) days. The U.S. DHHS findings constitute the final decision for termination of CSBG funding. If the U.S. DHHS confirms the State's findings, CSBG funding to the grantee will be terminated.

(c) Assurance 676(b)10: All CAAs are required to include tri-partite board requirements in the by-laws that govern their agency. The by-laws of all Nebraska CAAs must also include a provision whereby a low-income individual, community organization, religious organization, or a representative of low-income individuals that considers its organization or low-income individuals to be inadequately represented on the board (or other governing mechanism) of the eligible entity to petition for adequate representation. The State of Nebraska reviews agency by-laws and monitors board composition annually.

H. Accountability and Reporting Requirements

(1) Results Oriented Management and Accountability: Nebraska was one of the first states to actively focus on ROMA development and implementation. A Nebraska ROMA Task Force was organized in 1977 with all CAAs represented. The task force determined that the true measure of outcomes is measured by the progress in changing the lives of the people served, therefore all CAAs have concentrated on family development and the provision of case management to customers. This committee meets regularly with one scheduled in person meeting per year with the purpose of keeping ROMA in the forefront and promoting ROMA at all levels of CAAs.

Nebraska currently has four certified ROMA trainers. These trainers have been providing training to staff and Boards across the State.

All nine Community Action Agencies are required to submit six month and annual NPI reports. Each agency is required to report outcomes for all relevant activities.

Though each agency has been developing ROMA goals for each of their programs, the ROMA task force has developed the following statewide goals:

Goal 1 Low-income people become more self-sufficient (self-sufficiency).

- Families will reduce reliance on public assistance (programs by Federal Poverty Level [FPL] as noted below) through obtaining a job or increase in employment income.
 - Aid to Dependent Children >100% FPL
 - Sliding Fee Child Care 125% FPL
 - Food Stamps 130% FPL
 - Transitional Child Care 185% FPL
 - Medicaid/Kids Connection 185% FPL
- Number and percent of participants who receive rental housing education
- Number and percent of participants who receive home ownership education
- Number and percent of participants who receive rental housing subsidy
- Number and percent of participants who receive home energy conservation education
- Number and percent of participants who receive housing provision

Goal 2 The conditions in which low-income people lives are improved (community revitalization)

- Distribution of Special Events Donations
- ARRA jobs maintained through non ARRA funds

Goal 3 Low-income people own a stake in their community.

- No changes to this goal since the FY2009 NPI form

Goal 4 Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved.

- CAAs specify partnerships with specific entities: Libraries, Civic Organizations and Child Care Providers
- CAA's will continue current and develop new partnerships to provide community education to the public
- CAA's will continue current and develop new partnerships to provide contract training

Goal 5 Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.

- CAA's will increase their capacity through providing Tax Wise Trainers/trained employees
- CAA's will increase their capacity through providing CPI Trainers/trained employees
- CAA's will increase their capacity through providing RentWise Trainers/ trained employees
- CAA's will increase their capacity through providing Money Smart Trainers/trained employees
- CAA's will increase their capacity through providing AFI Trainers/trained employees
- CAA's will increase their capacity through providing VITA Trainers/trained employees
- CAA's will increase their capacity through providing Family Development Certification of employees

Goal 6 Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems (family stability.)

- Families , specifically Seniors, are provided with Commodity Supplemental Food Program
- Community Action Agencies provide emergency assistance support through gardening programs.
- Community Action Agencies provide emergency assistance support through providing childseat restraints training for parents.

Nebraska's Outcome Management Committee, renamed the ROMA Task Force, continues to place an emphasis on board and staff training on the ROMA concept. The ROMA Task Force works with the State CSBG Program Specialist and develops a new annual work plan based on ROMA. They meet once a year in person to review the previous year and make recommendations for the next fiscal year. Any changes from the 2012 meeting in May 2012 are reflected above.

- (2) Annual Report:** The State of Nebraska submitted its FY2011 annual report prior to March 31, 2012 . For detailed information on the success of Nebraska's CSBG activities, please review the report already submitted (Attachment F).

The State of Nebraska will prepare and submit to the Secretary an annual report in March of fiscal years 2014 and 2015 covering FY 2013 and FY2014 on the measured performance of the State and its eligible entities as described under 678E(a)(2) of the Act. This report will include at minimum information that is pertinent and comprehensive, and which describes in

detail CSBG activities and services as well as addresses outcomes that measure how CSBG funds were used to promote self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization.

VI. Attachments

- A. Governor Designation Letter
- B. Public Hearing Notice and Comments
- C. Legislative Hearing Testimony
- D. Service Delivery Area Map
- E. Community Assessment Reports
- F. Annual Report CSBG-IS Report for FY2011



Thomas D. Pristow, MSW, ACSW, Director
Division of Children & Family Services
Nebraska Dept. of Health and Human Services
Designated Lead Agency

Date

ATTACHMENT A



Dave Heineman
Governor

STATE OF NEBRASKA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
P.O. Box 94848 • Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4848
Phone: (402) 471-2244 • gov.heineman@gov.ne.gov

September 1, 2012

Jeannie Chaffin, Director
US Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services
Division of State Assistance
Attention: Community Services Block Grant Program
5th Floor West
370 L'Enfant Promenade S.W.
Washington, DC 20447

Dear Director Chaffin:

As Chief Executive Officer of the State of Nebraska, I have exercised my authority to designate the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to act as lead agency for administration of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program.

Any questions or comments should be directed to Jennifer Dreibelbis, CSBG Program Specialist, at 402-471-9346.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Heineman".

Dave Heineman
Governor

ATTACHMENT B

**NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEARINGS on PROPOSED REGULATIONS**

**THURSDAY, August 16, 2012
STATE OFFICE BUILDING, LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM A**

**Public Hearing at 10:00 a.m. CT
on
Proposed State Plans for
The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program &
The Community Services Block Grant**

All interested persons are invited to attend and comment at any hearing. Written comments are also welcome and will be given the same consideration as comments made in person. **Written comments must be postmarked or received by 5:00 p.m. CT August 16, 2012**, and should be sent to the Division of Children and Family Services, Policy Section, 4th Floor, Nebraska State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68509.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, August 16, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. CT
State Office Building,
Lower Level Conf. Room A
301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Children and Family Services is holding this hearing to accept comments on proposed state plans for:

- The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program for the period of October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013. The state plan is submitted annually to the federal Department of Health and Human Services, which provides funding to states to assist low-income individuals and families with home heating and cooling costs. The plan describes Nebraska's program, including eligibility requirements and benefit guidelines. Copies of the proposed plan are available from the Division of Children and Family Services, Economic Assistance Unit, 4th Floor, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68509, phone 402-471-9450.
- The Community Services Block Grant for the period of October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2014. The state plan is submitted biennially to the federal Department of Health and Human Services. The CSBG is an anti-poverty federal grant providing the base funding for Nebraska's nine local Community Action Agencies, which operate programs and services to low-income families statewide. The CSBG also provides discretionary dollars used to fund specific programs or initiatives. The plan describes Nebraska's use of CSBG funds, including eligible entities, the service delivery system, and developing or ongoing initiatives. Copies of the proposed plan are available from the Division of Children and Family Services, Economic Assistance Unit, 4th Floor, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln NE 68509, phone 402-471-9346, or at dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/chs_csb_g_csbindex.aspx

All interested persons are invited to attend and comment at the hearing or to submit comments in writing. Written comments should be submitted by 5:00 p.m. CT on August 16, 2012 and sent to the address above.

If auxiliary aids or reasonable accommodations are needed to participate in the hearing, please call 402-471-9022. For persons with hearing impairments, please call 402-471-9570 (voice and TDD) or the Nebraska Relay System at 711 or 800-833-7352 TDD.

Proof of publication

AFFIDAVIT

State of Nebraska, County of Douglas, ss:

Tracy Thompson, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he/she is an employee of The Omaha World-Herald, a legal daily newspaper printed and published in the county of Douglas and State of Nebraska, and of general circulation in the Counties of Douglas, and Sarpy and State of Nebraska, and that the attached printed notice was published in the said newspaper on the 6 day of August 2012, and that said newspaper is a legal newspaper under the statutes of the State of Nebraska. The above facts are within my personal knowledge. The Omaha World-Herald has an average circulation of 145,620 Daily and 179,203 Sunday, in 2012.

(Signed) Tracy Thompson Title: Account Executive

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 6 day of August, 2012.



Hillary Addison
Notary Public

Printer's Fee \$ _____
Affidavit _____
Paid By _____

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of Nebraska }
LANCASTER COUNTY, } ss.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Thursday, August 16, 2012,
at 10:00 a.m. CT
State Office Building,
Lower Level Conf. Room A
301 Centennial Mall South,
Lincoln, NE

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Children and Family Services is holding this hearing to accept comments on proposed state plans for:

- The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program for the period of October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013. The state plan is submitted annually to the federal Department of Health and Human Services, which provides funding to states to assist low-income individuals and families with home heating and cooling costs. The plan describes Nebraska's program, including eligibility requirements and benefit guidelines. Copies of the proposed plan are available from the Division of Children and Family Services, Economic Assistance Unit, 4th Floor, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68509, phone 402-471-9450.
- The Community Services Block Grant for the period of October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2014. The state plan is submitted biennially to the federal Department of Health and Human Services. The CSBG is an anti-poverty federal grant providing the base funding for Nebraska's nine local Community Action Agencies, which operate programs and services to low-income families statewide. The CSBG also provides discretionary dollars used to fund specific programs or initiatives. The plan describes Nebraska's use of CSBG funds, including eligible entities, the service delivery system, and developing or ongoing initiatives. Copies of the proposed plan are available from the Division of Children and Family Services, Economic Assistance Unit, 4th Floor, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln NE 68509, phone 402-471-9346, or at dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/chs_csba_csbg_index.aspx

All interested persons are invited to attend and comment at the hearing or to submit comments in writing. Written comments should be submitted by 5:00 p.m. CT on August 16, 2012 and sent to the address above.

If auxiliary aids or reasonable accommodations are needed to participate in the hearing, please call 402-471-9022. For persons with hearing impairments, please call 402-471-9570 (voice and TDD) or the Nebraska Relay System at 711 or 800-833-7352 TDD.
#7058612 11 Aug 6

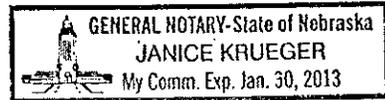
The undersigned, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that she/he is a Clerk of the Lincoln Journal Star, legal newspaper printed, published and having a general circulation in the County of Lancaster and State of Nebraska, and that the attached printed notice was published in said newspaper one successive time(s) the first insertion having been on the 6 day of Aug. A.D., 2012 and thereafter on _____, 20____ and that said newspaper is the legal newspaper under the statutes of the State of Nebraska. The above facts are within my personal knowledge and are further verified by my personal inspection of each notice in each of said issues.

Barbara Chermut

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 28 day of August, 2012

Janice Krueger Notary Public

Printer's Fee, \$ _____



7058612

ATTACHMENT C

**Community Services Block Grant Program
Health and Human Services Committee
January 20, 2012**

**Scot Adams, Interim Director
Division of Children and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services**

Good afternoon Senator Campbell and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Scot Adams, S-C-O-T-A-D-A-M-S, Interim Director, Division of Children and Family Services within the Department of Health and Human Services.

I am speaking to you today concerning Nebraska's State Plan for Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funds for Federal FY2013 and FY2014. Nebraska submits a plan every two years to the Office of Community Services in the United States Department of Health and Human Services laying out what the State of Nebraska and community action agencies will do in the specified period. The CSBG Act governs this federally mandated program and the act requires a legislative hearing once every three years. That is why we are here today.

CSBG funds are federal funds distributed to the states and earmarked by federal law for distribution to eligible entities that in Nebraska are community action agencies. A formula based on each state's poverty population determines each state's grant amount. Nebraska receives approximately \$4.7 million dollars annually, less than one (1) percent of the federal allotment.

CSBG funding provides a range of services and activities to assist the needs of low-income individuals. Community Action Agencies are required to provide services and activities addressing key areas. The services and activities are determined locally through needs assessments and other community-based assessment tools. Agencies report outcomes and activities twice a year and send an annual report going to the federal funder every February.

Nebraska recognizes nine community action agencies serving all 93 counties. The board of each community action agency is comprised of 1/3 low-income representatives, 1/3 elected officials or their representative, and 1/3 private sector representatives all who live in the community action service area. Community action agency board members are responsible for planning, management and operation of the agency; and the state is responsible for monitoring and oversight of the agencies to assure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.

Guidance on the federal fiscal year 2013 and 2014 state plan will come out in April 2012. Nebraska will submit its state plan to the Office of Community Services by September 1, 2012. Copies of the plan will be available for public viewing and copies provided to this

Committee prior to submission per CSBG Act requirements. We anticipate level funding for FY2013.

Per federal law, 90% of the funds go to Nebraska's nine community action agencies. The state may use up to 5% of the funds for state administration of the grant and the remaining 5% of funds are available through a competitive grant application. This competitive grant application allows CSBG to support other service providers who are addressing low-income issues across Nebraska.

The Community Services Block Grant is only one funding source for community action activities. It is the base funding to allow agencies to leverage additional private and public dollars for their programs. Last year, agencies leveraged more than 66 million dollars, or 16.50 per CSBG dollar, in other federal, state and local dollars.

Thank you for allowing me to present Nebraska's intention to submit the Community Services Block Grant state plan and to provide you a small sampling of what community action does in our state. If you are not familiar with the community action agency in your district, I invite you to visit those agencies.

I will be happy to answer any questions.

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT ACTIVITIES

Community Action Agencies conduct an in depth community needs assessment at least once every three years. This community needs assessment provides a picture of the services and programs needed; strengths and opportunities in the community to address low-income issues, poverty and helping individuals achieve self-sufficiency. In 2010, Community Action of Nebraska in partnership with DHHS released State and Regional Community Assessment Report. This statewide effort to collect data on the perceptions and experiences of Nebraskans was the first of a five year project. This report received national attention in the National Association of State Community Services Programs 2010 Annual Report.

Agencies continue to focus on holistic approaches to alleviating poverty. Much of their efforts are around in depth case management for their clients. While each agency is diverse and offers a variety of services based on their community, several programs are similar including: Head Start, Early Head Start, and adult education programs; job training and direct employment of low-income individuals; AmeriCorps; housing services; child care; homeless shelter and other homeless assistance; migrant services. Emergency assistance is also a key program area for community action agencies. These services provide rental assistance, utility deposits and arrearages, food and transportation; alcohol and drug counseling; mental health services; food pantries, food banks and the commodity foods program. Agencies also collaborate with other state agencies and local organizations to operate programs such as public health, including W.I.C., Maternal/Child Health, and immunizations; senior centers and other senior programs including home-delivered meals, transportation and telephone reassurance; youth mentoring projects; and the low-income weatherization program.

In 2010, Community Action Agencies in Nebraska provided services to more than 107,000 individuals, from more than 38,000 families, facing a variety of barriers to self-sufficiency. More than 35,000 of these were children age eleven or younger and more than 6,600 were over the age of 70. Community Action Agencies continue to serve mostly families at or below 125% of poverty. Eighty-one percent of their clients fall in this category, representing more than 28,000 in 2010. Of those, 32% were at or below 50% of the Federal Poverty level. More than 31,000 were without health insurance.

Community Action Agencies do more than just provide services to low income individuals and families. They assist in bringing in resources and dollars into the community through employment assistance and job training, tax preparation, child support recovery assistance, home renovation and energy conservation among other programs. For example, in 2010, Community Action Agencies helped more than 1,100 people find employment. Community Action Agencies also provided tax assistance to 3,162 Nebraskans, bringing more than 5.4 million dollars of tax refunds to Nebraska communities. This was an average return of \$1,820 per filer.

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

Health and Human Services Committee
January 20, 2012

[LB820 LB837 LB871 LB904]

The Committee on Health and Human Services met at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, January 20, 2012, in Room 1510 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on LB871, LB837, LB904, and LB820. Senators present: Kathy Campbell, Chairperson; Mike Gloor, Vice Chairperson; Dave Bloomfield; Tanya Cook; Gwen Howard; Bob Krist; and R. Paul Lambert. Senators absent: None.

SENATOR CAMPBELL: Director Adams.

SCOT ADAMS: Yes.

SENATOR CAMPBELL: Are you here for the block grant?

SCOT ADAMS: I am.

KATHY CAMPBELL: Oh, good. Would you come forward? We'll let you get settled, and I'll make the announcements while you're getting settled.

SCOT ADAMS: Okay, thank you.

SENATOR CAMPBELL: I'd like to welcome you to the hearings of the Health and Human Services Committee. I'm Kathy Campbell, and I serve as the senator from District 25, which is Lincoln and part of Lancaster County. And the reason for all of the talking up here is we're trying to figure out...because we have members of the committee who are opening on other bills in other places. So we looked at the agenda and went, aha, there is a matter of business that we could take care of quite quickly. So I'm going to go ahead and do Director Adams, and then we'll come back, and I'll do the, what would I say, all of the instructions for the day. Director Adams, thank you so much for coming, and you are going to talk to us about Nebraska's state plan for Community Services Block Grant funds presented by the Department of Health and Human Services.

SCOT ADAMS: (Exhibit 1) Thank you so much, Senator Campbell. It's good to be here today, and good afternoon to all of you. My name is Scot Adams, S-c-o-t A-d-a-m-s, and I serve as the interim director for the Division of Children and Family Services within the Department of Health and Human Services. I'm speaking to you today concerning the Nebraska state plan for Community Services Block Grant funds for federal fiscal year 2013 and 2014. Nebraska submits a plan every two years to the Office of Community Services in the United States Department of Health and Human Services laying out what the state of Nebraska and community action agencies will do in the specified period. The CSBG Act governs this federally mandated program and requires a legislative hearing at the state level every three years, and that's why we're here today.

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

Health and Human Services Committee
January 20, 2012

By the way, I have (inaudible). We thank you. CSBG funds are federal funds distributed to states and earmarked by federal law for distribution to eligible entities that in Nebraska are known as the community action agencies. A formula based on each state's poverty population determines each state's grant amount. Nebraska received just under \$4.7 million for federal fiscal year 2012, less than 1 percent of the federal allotment overall. CSBG funding provides a range of services and activities to assist the needs of low-income individuals. Community action agencies are required to provide services and activities addressing key defined areas. Services and activities are determined locally through needs assessments and other community-based assessment tools, and agencies report their outcomes and activities twice a year and send an annual report to the federal funder every February. Nebraska recognizes nine community action agencies serving every one of our 93 counties. The board of each community action agency is comprised of one-third low-income representatives, one-third elected officials or their representative, and one-third private sector representatives, all who live in the community action area. Community action agency board members are responsible for planning, management, and operation of the agency, and the state is responsible for monitoring and oversight of the agencies to ensure compliance with federal laws and regulation. Guidance on the federal fiscal year 2013 and 2014 state plan will come out in April of 2012, so we're coming up to it. Nebraska will submit its state plan to the Office of Community Services by September 1 of this year. Copies of the plan will be available for public viewing and copies provided to this committee prior to the submission, per CSBG Act requirements. We anticipate level funding for the next fiscal year from the federal government. That could change, as we know. Per federal law, 90 percent of the money that we receive go to Nebraska's nine community action agencies. The remaining amount, then: 5 percent the state may use for state administration of the program, and the remaining 5 percent then are available through a competitive grant application. This competitive grant application allows CSBG to support other service providers who are also addressing low-income needs across the state of Nebraska. The Community Services Block Grant is only one funding source for community action agencies and for community action activities. It is the base funding to allow agencies to leverage additional private and public dollars for their programs. Last year, agencies leveraged more than \$66 million, or \$16.50 per Community Services Block Grant dollar, in other federal, state, local, and private dollars. It's a pretty impressive leverage amount, in my opinion. As a former director of a nonprofit organization, this kind of base funding is critical to being able to ensure the stability of the program and to allow and to give credibility to other fund-raising efforts. Thank you for allowing me to present Nebraska's intention to submit the Community Services Block Grant state plan and to provide you with a small sampling of what community action does in our state. If you're not familiar with the community action agency in your district, I invite you to visit those agencies. I think you'd be very pleasantly surprised. I'll be happy to answer any questions and would note that there is an attachment that has some additional examples of what the community action agencies do across Nebraska, just a smattering of highlights. It gives you a sense and

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

Health and Human Services Committee
January 20, 2012

flavor, I think, of some of the good that is done by these agencies. I will not read that but let you read that at your leisure. That concludes my testimony. Thank you.

SENATOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Director Adams. Are there any questions from the senators? Senator Gloor.

SENATOR GLOOR: Thank you, Senator Campbell.

SCOT ADAMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR GLOOR: Director, I have...actually, now that I'm looking at this page, maybe it's on the material you gave me. I haven't had a chance to answer yet, but what are some examples of some of the other programs that public funds...that can be leveraged, or even private funds that can be leveraged, that the community action agencies do?

SCOT ADAMS: Well, it's...

SENATOR GLOOR: Weatherization, is that an example of...?

SCOT ADAMS: Weatherization could be an example of that. State has federal dollars that pass through to other programs. Head Start programming would be another example.

SENATOR GLOOR: WIC?

SCOT ADAMS: I'm not familiar if that's exactly right, but I think there's no reason not to think that.

SENATOR GLOOR: Okay.

SCOT ADAMS: I'm just, off the top of my head, not familiar with that being a possibility.

SENATOR GLOOR: I think it's in here. Now that, you know, I'm...be able to look at the rest of the material you gave us. It may be in here, so I'll peruse this and get my answer.

SCOT ADAMS: Okay. If there are other questions afterwards, please feel free to...

SENATOR GLOOR: Thank you.

SCOT ADAMS: I would also draw attention to the last page of that handout. It gives you a multiyear sense of the dollar amounts available to Nebraska. It's been somewhat declining. The middle column represents the federal infusion of ARRA money for those two years, so there was a little bit of a boost during those tough times. And these are

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

Health and Human Services Committee
January 20, 2012

the agencies that work with the poor in deep ways. We also note that there are people who are elderly and children served by these funds, and that is, I think, a very important factor to the work being done by these agencies.

SENATOR CAMPBELL: Any other questions from the senators? Thank you, Director.

SCOT ADAMS: Thank you so very much.

SENATOR CAMPBELL: As this is a public hearing on the Community Services Block Grant program, is there anyone in the hearing room who would like to testify in either opposition or in favor? All right, we will close the hearing on the block grants and thank the director for bringing over a report. It always helps us to know what that program does entail. For everyone today, I'll go through the usual instructions, so if you're here every day, you can probably, you know, just sit back and relax for a minute. We try to tell people to turn off their cell phones or to put them on silent, so if you haven't checked your phone, you may want to do that. It's very disruptive for people who are testifying if the phone starts ringing. If you are testifying today, you need to complete one of the orange sheets, bright, bright orange, and as you come forward, you can give them to the clerk, Diane Johnson, who is to my far left. And any handouts that you have, we don't require handouts in this committee, but if you do, we would like 12 copies. And if you need extra copies, you can see the two pages that are again to my left, and they will help you. If you do not wish to testify but you want to at least make a comment of where you are on a bill, there are sign-up sheets in white, I believe, on the sides, and you can feel free to do that. As you come forward and give all your materials to the clerk, the pages will distribute for you. And the second and last thing about coming forward is please state your name for the record and spell it so that we're sure that we have everything. As is our practice here, we have self-introductions by the senators, so I'll start to my far right.

SENATOR LAMBERT: I'm Senator Paul Lambert representing District 2.

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Senator Dave Bloomfield, District 17, Wayne, Thurston, and Dakota Counties.

SENATOR COOK: I'm Tanya Cook. I represent Legislative District 13 in Omaha and Douglas County.

SENATOR GLOOR: Senator Mike Gloor, District 35, which is Grand Island.

MICHELLE CHAFFEE: I'm Michelle Chaffee. I'm the legal counsel for the committee.

SENATOR KRIST: Bob Krist, District 10 in Omaha and Bennington.

Nebraska allotments CSBG FY2008-FY2012

YEAR	FFY2008	FFY2009	ARRA FFY09-10	FFY2010	FFY2011	FFY2012
AMOUNT	\$4,532,487	\$4,850,247	\$6,969,553	\$4,850,247	\$4,715,906	\$4,699,568
Gain/Loss per year from 2008		\$317,760	\$6,969,553	\$0	-\$134,341	-\$16,338
Percent gain/loss		7.01%	100%	0%	-2.77%	-0.35%

Allotments to agencies CSBG FY2008 - FY2012

Agency	FFY2008	FFY2009	ARRA FFY09-10	FFY2010	FFY2011*	FFY2012 **
BVCA	\$276,164	\$290,575	\$420,095	\$290,575	\$290,873	\$281,481
CNCS	\$481,758	\$516,419	\$822,603	\$516,419	\$517,123	\$500,405
GHCA	\$491,548	\$527,112	\$841,660	\$527,112	\$527,835	\$510,768
ENCAP	\$1,033,271	\$1,122,340	\$1,902,501	\$1,122,340	\$1,124,135	\$1,087,729
LAP/CAPLSC	\$564,567	\$607,469	\$985,876	\$607,469	\$608,337	\$588,635
MID	\$531,525	\$570,855	\$919,620	\$570,855	\$571,657	\$553,149
NCAP	\$209,673	\$217,346	\$289,583	\$217,346	\$217,512	\$210,465
PACWN/CAPWN	\$272,901	\$287,011	\$413,743	\$287,011	\$287,303	\$278,012
SENCA	\$217,831	\$226,095	\$305,176	\$226,095	\$226,277	\$218,967
TOTALS	\$4,079,238	\$4,365,222	\$6,900,857	\$4,365,222	\$4,371,052	\$4,229,611

* in FFY2011 the State of Nebraska paid agencies a total of \$126,737 out of CSBG Discretionary dollars. The State absorbed the 3% cut when the final FY2011 budget came out.

** FFY2012 is the current year. The State of Nebraska received it's final allotment notification on 1/18/2012 via OCS email from Jeannie Chaffin.

ACRONYMS

- FFY = Federal Fiscal Year runs October 1 - September 30. For example FFY2012 is October 1, 2011 - September 30, 2012
- BVCA= Blue Valley Community Action, Fairbury, NE
- CNCS= Central Nebraska Community Services, Loup City, NE
- GHCA= Goldenrod Hills Community Action, Wisner, NE
- ENCAP = Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Omaha, NE
- LAP/CAPLSC = Lincoln Action Program/ Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties, Lincoln, NE
- MID= Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska, Kearney, NE
- NCAP = Northwest Community Action Partnership, Chadron, NE
- PACWN/CAPWN = Panhandle Community Services of Western Nebraska/Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska, Gering, NE
- SENCA = Southeast Nebraska Community Action, Humboldt, NE

**Todd Reckling, Director
Division of Public Health of Children and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services**

**TESTIMONY
Community Services Block Grant Program
Health and Human Services Committee
August 25, 2010**

Good morning Senator Gay and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Todd Reckling, R-E-C-K-L-I-N-G, Director, Division of Children and Family Services within the Department of Health and Human Services.

I am speaking to you today concerning Nebraska's State Plan for Community Service Block Grant funds for FY2011 and FY2012. Nebraska submits a plan every two years to the Office of Community Services within the US Department of Health and Human Services laying out what the State of Nebraska and community action agencies will do for the period specified. The CSBG Act governs this federally mandated program and the act requires a legislative hearing once every three years. That is why we are here today.

Community Services Block Grant, or CSBG, funds are federal funds distributed to the states and earmarked by federal law for distribution to eligible entities who are primarily community action agencies. In Nebraska, all nine recipients are community action agencies. A formula based on each state's poverty population determines each state's grant amount. Nebraska receives less than one (1) percent of the federal allotment.

CSBG funding provides a range of services and activities to assist the needs of low-income individuals. Clients include but are not limited to: unemployed or receiving public assistance, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), at-risk youth, custodial and non-custodial parents, residents of public housing, persons with disabilities, persons who are homeless, and individuals transitioning from incarceration into the community.

Community Action Agencies are required to provide services and activities addressing seven key areas: employment, education, better use of available income, housing, nutrition, emergency services and/or health. The services and activities are determined locally through needs assessments and other community based assessment tools. Agencies are also required to track progress and outcomes through the National Performance Indicators using the Results Oriented Management Accountability (ROMA) process established in the 1990s. Agencies report outcomes and activities twice a year with a year report going to the federal funder every February.

Nebraska recognizes nine community action agencies serving all 93 counties. The board of each community action agency is composed of 1/3 low-income representatives, 1/3 elected officials or their representative, and 1/3 private sector representatives who live

within the community action service area. This tripartite (TRY PAR TIGHT) board structure allows low-income individuals to have a stake in their community and help determine what happens within the agencies. Community action agency board members are responsible for planning, management and operation of the agency; and the state is responsible for monitoring and oversight of the agencies to assure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.

Congress has yet to vote on the Federal FY2011 budget. The House and Senate have proposed different amounts for CSBG's allocation. The Senate proposed level funding at 700 million dollars and the House proposed an additional 100 million for a total 800 million dollars to the program. The fiscal year 2010 allocation of CSBG funds to Nebraska was \$4,850,237. We expect to receive at least this amount in fiscal year 2011.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocated an additional one billion dollars to the Community Services Block Grant program. These extra funds allowed community action agencies to pursue more intensive and detailed programs. A final report on CSBG ARRA activities will be available in early 2011. Nebraska received \$6,969,533 in additional funds from July 2009 to September 2010.

Per federal law, 90% of the funds go to Nebraska's nine community action agencies. Division of CSBG funds to the nine agencies in Nebraska is the base plus formula model. Agencies receive 125,000 dollar base plus the formula that is the poverty population respective to their whole population in their service delivery area. The poverty population comes from US Census figures and due to change in FY2012 when Nebraska's population statistics are available. The state CSBG formula is located on page ten of the plan. Attachment D in the state plan shows the service delivery area map.

The state may use up to 5% of the funds for state administration of the grant and the remaining funds are available for the state to use to provide technical support to community action agencies, support new statewide innovative anti-poverty initiatives, emergency needs, or to support unforeseen future needs of the State's Community Action Agencies. The state plan lists the Community Action Agencies, the counties they serve, and the CSBG allocation received by each on page thirteen.

The Community Services Block Grant is only one funding source for community action activities. It is the base funding to allow agencies to leverage additional private and public dollars for their programs. Last year, agencies leveraged more than 66 million dollars, or \$16.50 per CSBG dollar, in other federal, state and local dollars.

Thank you for allowing me to present Nebraska's Community Services Block Grant state plan to you today and to provide you a small sampling of what community action does in our state. I invite your review of the plan and, if you are not familiar with the community action agency in your district, I invite you to visit those agencies.

I will be happy to answer any questions.

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT ACTIVITIES

Community Action Agencies conduct an in depth community needs assessment at least once every three years. This community needs assessment provides a picture of the services and programs needed; strengths and opportunities in the community to address low-income issues, poverty and helping individuals achieve self-sufficiency. Agencies continue to focus on holistic approaches to alleviating poverty. Much of their efforts are around in depth case management for their clients. While each agency is diverse and offers a variety of services based on their community, several programs are similar including: Head Start, Early Head Start, and adult education programs; job training and direct employment of low-income individuals; AmeriCorps; housing services; child care; homeless shelter and other homeless assistance; migrant services. Emergency assistance is also a key program area for community action agencies. These services provide rental assistance, utility deposits and arrearages, food and transportation; alcohol and drug counseling; mental health services; food pantries, food banks and the commodity foods program. Agencies also collaborate with other state agencies and local organizations to operate programs such as public health, including W.I.C., Maternal/Child Health, and immunizations; senior centers and other senior programs including home-delivered meals, transportation and telephone reassurance; youth mentoring projects; and the low-income weatherization program.

In 2009, Community Action Agencies in Nebraska provided services to more than 104,000 individuals, from more than 40,000 families, facing a variety of barriers to self-sufficiency. More than 35,000 of these were children age eleven or younger and more than 8,200 were over the age of 70. Community Action Agencies continue to serve mostly families at or below 125% of poverty. Eighty-three percent of their clients fall in this category, representing more than 27,000 in 2009. Of those, 34% were at or below 50% of the Federal Poverty level. More than 58,000 were without health insurance, which is an increase from the 20,000 in 2007.

Community Action Agencies do more than just provide services to low income individuals and families. They assist in bringing in resources and dollars into the community through employment assistance and job training, tax preparation, child support recovery assistance, home renovation and energy conservation among other programs. For example, in 2009, Community Action Agencies helped more than 720 people find employment. Community Action Agencies also provided tax assistance to 3,945 Nebraskans, bringing more than 3.6 million dollars of tax refunds to Nebraska communities. The agencies helped 139 individuals recover child support payments bringing in more than 45 thousand dollars for those families.

ATTACHMENT D



1 Blue Valley Community Action Partnership (BVCA)

6 Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership (ENCAP)

2 Central Nebraska Community Services (CNCS)

7 Northeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership (NENCAP) formerly GHCA

3 Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties (CAPLSC) formerly LAP

8 Northwest Community Action Partnership (NCAP)

4 Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska (MID)

9 Southeast Nebraska Community Action (SENCA)

5 Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWN)

ATTACHMENT E

The following are the Executive Summaries from the two Statewide Community Needs Assessments produced to date.

For the full documents please go to www.canhelp.org and click on

2011 Community Assessment

Or go to: <http://www.canhelp.org/documents/2011%20Community%20Assessment.pdf>

2012 Community Assessment

Or go to: http://www.canhelp.org/documents/2012_Community_Assessment_Report.pdf

Community Action of Nebraska
State and Regional Community
Assessment Report



Community Action of Nebraska

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

President Lyndon B. Johnson and the Congress of the United States proclaimed a national "War on Poverty" by enacting the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

To assist in fighting this "War on Poverty," local Community Action Agencies (CAAs) were created to provide a variety of services at the community level to help individuals achieve self-sufficiency. Today there are more than 1,000 CAAs across the United States working toward a common goal of eliminating the causes and conditions of poverty.

CAAs are private non-profit organizations that do this important work in a variety of ways -- by assessing the needs and resources of low-income people; devising strategies for eliminating poverty; identifying sources of financial support for their work; advocating on behalf of low-income people; mobilizing community resources, and administering a variety of programs. Common programs offered by CAAs include employment assistance, Weatherization, Head Start and Early Head Start, food assistance, housing assistance, utility assistance, and more.

THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

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.

CONTRIBUTORS

Pam Armknecht, Family & Community Services Director at Southeast Nebraska Community Action Council, Inc.

Rebecca Christensen, Director of Resource Development at Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties, Inc.

Carrie Eurek, Human Resource Director at Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska

Laura Hilly, Grant Writer / Resource Development at Central Nebraska Community Services

Ardith Hoins, Family & Community Services Director at Blue Valley Community Action Partnership, Inc.

Nancy Livingston, Family Development Services Director at Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Inc.

Amy Munderloh, Grants Director at Goldenrod Hills Community Action, Inc.

Susan Phillips, Development Director at Southeast Nebraska Community Action Council, Inc.

Amy Richardson, Head Start Director at Northwest Community Action Partnership, Inc.

Brad Staman, Director of Development & Community Relations at Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska

Staff of Community Action of Nebraska

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was funded by the State of Nebraska's Community Service Block Grant Discretionary funds. We are truly thankful for Jennifer Dreibelbis, Community Service Block Grant Program Specialist and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Children and Family Services for their generous support of this project.

Community Action of Nebraska expresses its sincere appreciation to Wayne State College Social Sciences Research Center Director Joseph Nitzke, PhD, for the data analysis and assistance with the development of this report. We would also like to thank Joseph Blankenau, PhD, professor of Political Science at Wayne State College, for his guidance with the community needs survey.

Special thanks to Jason Codr for report design and layout.

Portions of the Community Action of Nebraska State and Regional Community Assessment Report may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited as: Community Action of Nebraska State and Regional Community Assessment Report 2010.

Table of Contents

1	<i>Executive Summary</i>
5	<i>Health Care</i>
10	<i>Housing</i>
15	<i>Perceptions About Poverty</i>
18	<i>Children and Youth</i>
23	<i>Basic Needs</i>
26	<i>Employment</i>
28	<i>Income and Finances</i>
32	<i>Regional Community Assessment Data</i>
33	Blue Valley Community Action Partnership, Inc.
34	Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties, Inc.
35	Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebaska
36	Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska, Inc.
37	Central Nebraska Community Services, Inc.
38	Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership, Inc.
39	Goldenrod Hills Community Action, Inc.
40	Northwest Community Action Partnership, Inc.
41	Southeast Nebraska Community Action Council, Inc.
42	<i>Methodology</i>

Executive Summary

Community Action of Nebraska (CAN) is the state association for the Community Action agencies in Nebraska. Established in 1984, CAN provides training and technical assistance to the local Community Action agencies. CAN staff participate in numerous statewide initiatives with other partners, working on policies and practices that assist other organizations in working with low-income families.

Community Action of Nebraska launched the 2010 Community Assessment Survey May 5-31, 2010, mailing 10,000 surveys to residents all across Nebraska. With the survey, Community Action aims to discover the most pressing challenges Nebraskans face so that Community Action agencies across the state will be better equipped to address those challenges.

The survey is funded by the Community Action agencies of Nebraska and the Department of Health and Human Services. Community Action agencies are private, non-profit organizations dedicated to helping low-income people attain self-sufficiency in all 93 Nebraska counties.

The assessment survey asked questions covering a wide range of topics including: choices and access to health care; issues related to raising, educating, and caring for children; issues related to home ownership and household expenses; employment, income, and debt; and problems faced in meeting basic needs, access to employment and educational services, access to health and community services, safe activities for teens, and independent living.

Health Care

Meeting health care needs created difficulties for two-thirds of the Nebraskans in this survey. Access to health care and the cost of health care continue to be pressing issues. Two-thirds of respondents reported difficulties finding affordable medical, eye, and dental care. In a number of households, individuals chose not to seek medical care because of the costs. In this survey, two-thirds (67%) of respondents delayed medical care because of cost, with half (51%) saying that they

"sometimes" delay care, and one in six (16%) saying they "always" delay care because of costs. Typically delays in medical care range from routine checkups, visits to a doctor for cold or flu symptoms, or for critically needed medical treatments.

Other health services. In addition, respondents also described difficulties with access to other types of health services. The greatest overall concern was access to disability services for adults (31%) and for children (23%). One-fourth (24%) of respondents reported difficulties accessing mental health care.

Routine care. Though most of the respondents (85%) have a family doctor, about one in six (15%) do not. Some (7%) get routine health care at a walk-in clinic, a few rely on emergency room care, and yet others reported they do not seek health care.

Housing

Home ownership. Home ownership is directly related to age of the respondent; younger respondents are less likely to own a home and peak ownership occurs among householders 65-74. In this survey, 28% of those under age 24 are home owners; nationally, 23.3% of those under age 25 are home owners.

Repairs. In Nebraska, one-fourth (24%) of all housing units were built before 1940; 40% before 1960; and 69% of all housing units were built before 1980. **About one-third (31.4%) of respondents, both owners and renters, said that their homes were in need of structural repair, including roof, walls, and foundation.** One-fourth (23.3%) need plumbing and electrical work, and one in six (16.1%) need updates to heating and/or cooling.

Monthly Utilities. For monthly utilities paid by home owners/non-home owners, the distribution in each of the categories runs parallel. About 40% of home owners pay between \$200-\$299 in utilities each month, while 28% of non-homeowners pay between \$100-\$199 per month, and 24% pay between \$200-\$299 in utilities each month.

Mortgage/Rent Payments. National housing figures show that 32% of owner-occupied housing units were owned free and clear. About one-third (35.5%) of home owners in the survey have paid off their mortgage. About two-thirds of non-home owners pay between \$200 and \$600 each month for rent. At the lower income levels, results from the survey suggest that average payments for utilities and mortgage/rent consume as much as half of their annual household income.

Non-homeowners. For those who were not home owners (30%), the most frequent explanation was that they were unable to make a down payment (45%). Related factors selected were a poor credit rating (35%), unable to get a loan (34%), and no assistance for 1st time home buyers (19%).

Perceptions About Poverty

This survey asked respondents to identify what they believe causes poverty. Overall, respondents said that the causes of poverty were: lack of training and education (56%); low motivation (51%); drug abuse and addiction (37%); single parent households (37%); and not enough jobs (35%). For those in households earning less than \$25,000, the top causes of poverty are 1) Lack of training/education, 2) Not enough jobs, and 3) single parent households (low motivation ranked 4). For those in households earning more

than \$35,000, the top causes of poverty are 1) Lack of training/education, 2) Low motivation, and 3) Drug abuse/addiction. (Responses identifying the causes of poverty vary by income; in particular, those in higher income levels are more likely to say that poverty is the result of low motivation.)

Children and Youth

The 2010 Community Assessment Survey elicited information about child care, educational services for children birth through five years of age, problems related to raising children, and access to safe activities for teenagers. The context of issues related to child care must be considered within the context of the age of the child and by the proportion of children who spend time in non-parental childcare.

Recent figures from national studies indicate that 61% of children from birth through six spend some time in non-parental child care. In Nebraska, 57.3% of children received 10 or more hours of non-parental child care per week¹. Respondents who provide child care or are raising children were asked to identify issues related to child care. The extent to which the cost of childcare is a concern is related to the age of children in the household. When asked to identify problems for their household, two-thirds (66%) of respondents identified affordable child care. **In households with children five and under, three-fourths (73%) responded that finding affordable childcare has been a problem. For households with children ages 11 and younger, 58% responded that finding affordable childcare has been a problem.**

Children Birth to Five. Respondents were asked what type of educational services they need for children five and under. Two-thirds (68%) identified preschool for ages three through five. Also, 42% needed early childhood care for birth to age three, and one-third (32%) favored part-day educational services.

About one-third of respondents also reported problems obtaining other services for children, including: access to educational support services for children (32%); access to a Head Start program (30%); access to preschool programs (30%); and one-fifth cited a need for access to parenting classes (21%).

Teens. Over half of the respondents also expressed concern about safe teenage activities, including activities in the summer (57%), on the weekends (54%), and after school (50%).

Basic Needs

Respondents were asked about personal difficulties meeting needs across six topics: basic needs, health services, employment and education, community services and resources, access to safe activities for teens, and independent living. Basic household expenses were a problem for over one-third of respondents (affordable food, 41%; affordable clothing, 35%). Nearly half (44%) reported problems keeping up with utility costs.

(1) Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2007 National Survey of Children's Health, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. Retrieved 12/15/2010 from www.nschdata.org.

Nearly half (43%) of the respondents saw home maintenance as a barrier to independent living, followed by shopping and then meals. Of those reporting home maintenance as a problem, 55% identified structural problems; 48% plumbing and electrical repairs; 29% heating and cooling maintenance; and 21% appliance repair.

Employment

Responses in this survey indicated that at least one adult in one-third of the households (29%) was unemployed. Of those respondents 24 and under, 43% reported an unemployed adult in their household.

As a follow-up, respondents were asked what is preventing that person from finding employment. One-third (36%) are not currently looking for employment; one-third (31%) cited lack of available jobs, and one-fourth (27%) cited health problems/disability.

Income and Finances

When asked to describe their current financial status compared to last year, a majority (54%) said it was about the same, 30% thought it was worse, and just 16% thought they were better off than a year ago. Household income reported in the survey was evenly distributed across the seven ranges identified in the item. In the majority of households (57%) two persons contributed to the income, while just under half (41%) relied on income from one person. Among the sources of income listed,

about three-fourths (74%) listed employment, one in five received income from Social Security (23%) and self-employment (20%), and one in 20 (5%) reported income from unemployment or child support. Respondents often relied on more than one source of income, such as Social Security or self-employment.

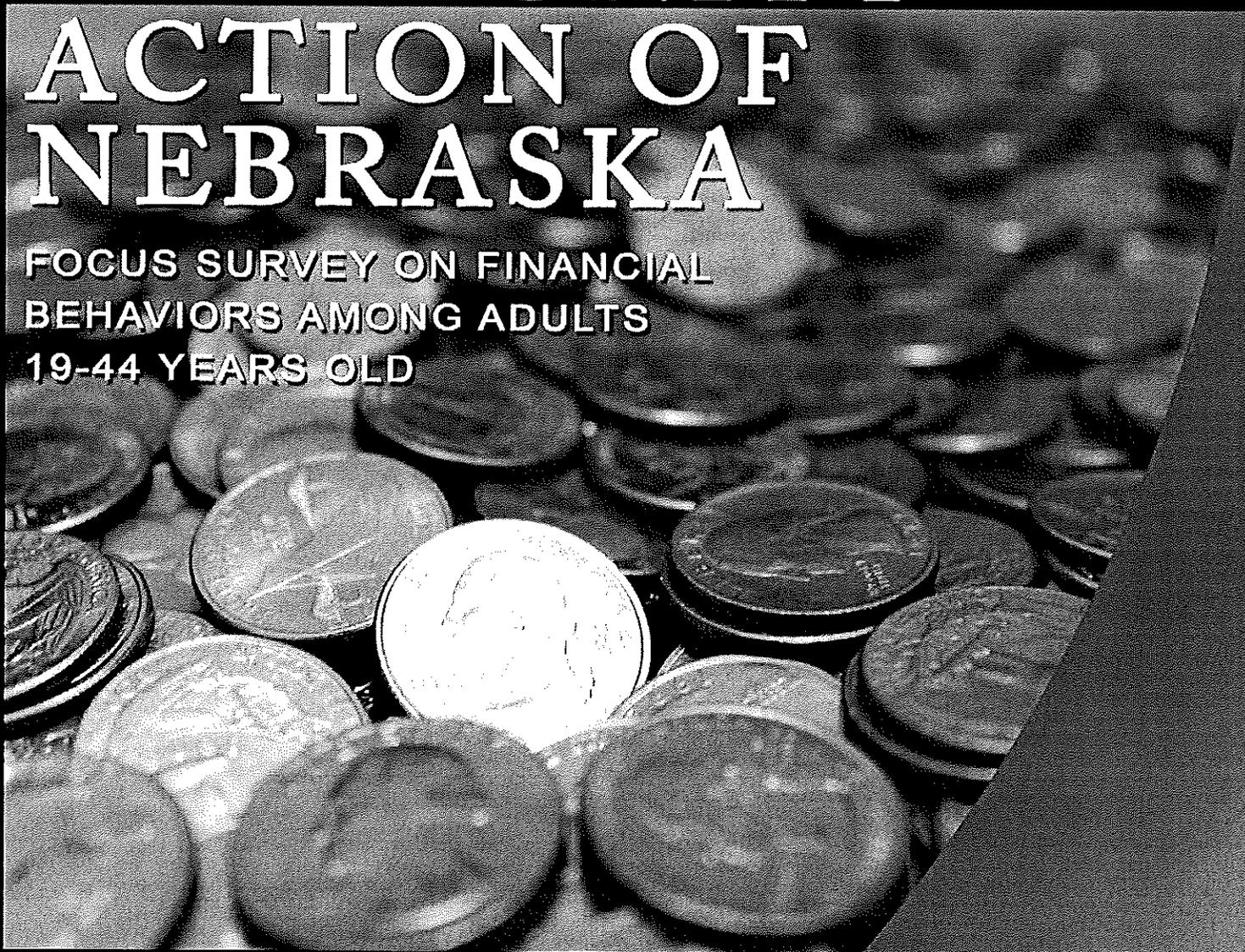
Half (50%) of the survey respondents reported no credit card debt. Almost one in three (37%) report more than \$1,000 in credit card debt. Nearly one in five (19.5%) respondents reported credit card debt greater than \$5,000.

In behaviors related to spending and saving, the most frequent responses reflected 'positive' behaviors on the part of respondents. During the past 12 months, nearly half (47%) put money into savings, and a similar proportion (43%) reported following a budget, while one-third (37%) invested in retirement accounts. On the other hand, nearly 40% withdrew money from savings during the past 12 months, and 5% withdrew money from retirement. Between 10-20% reported actions that could be characterized as negative during the past 12 months: paying utility bills late (18%); paying only the minimum on credit card bills (18%); and making late payments for housing (10%, mortgage or rent). Seven percent were threatened with repossession.

2011

COMMUNITY ACTION OF NEBRASKA

FOCUS SURVEY ON FINANCIAL
BEHAVIORS AMONG ADULTS
19-44 YEARS OLD



Community Action of Nebraska

HISTORY OF A MOVEMENT

President Lyndon B. Johnson and the Congress of the United States proclaimed a national "War on Poverty" by enacting the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. To assist in fighting this "War on Poverty," local Community Action Agencies (CAAs) were created to provide a variety of services at the community level to help individuals achieve self-sufficiency. Today there are more than 1,000 CAAs across the United States working toward the common goal of eliminating the causes and conditions of poverty.

The CAAs in Nebraska are private non-profit organizations that do this important work in a variety of ways -- by assessing the needs and resources of low-income people; devising strategies for eliminating poverty; identifying sources of financial support for their work; advocating on behalf of low-income people; mobilizing community resources, and administering a variety of programs. Common programs offered by CAAs include employment assistance, financial stability, assets development, Weatherization, Head Start and Early Head Start, food assistance, housing assistance, utility assistance, and more.



Sargent Shriver (1915-2011)

Architect of the War on Poverty, and founder of Community Action.

CONTRIBUTORS

Blue Valley Community Action Partnership
620 Fifth Street, Fairbury, Nebraska, 68352
(402) 729-2278, www.bvca.net

Central Nebraska Community Services
626 N Street, Loup City, Nebraska, 68853
(308) 745-0780, www.welcome2cnccs.com

Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties
210 O Street, Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 471-4515, www.communityactionatwork.org

Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska
16 W. 11th Street, Kearney, Nebraska, 68848
(308) 865-5675, www.communityactionmidne.com

Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska
3350 10th Street, Gering, Nebraska, 69341
(308) 635-3089 www.capwn.org

Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership
2406 Fowler Avenue, Omaha, Nebraska, 68111
(402) 435-5656, www.encapomaha.org

Goldenrod Hills Community Action
1119 Avenue E, Wisner, Nebraska, 68791
(402) 529-3513, www.goldenrodhillscmmunityaction.org

Northwest Community Action Partnership
270 Pine Street, Chadron, Nebraska, 69337
(308) 432-3393, www.ncap.info

Southeast Nebraska Community Action Council
802 Fourth Street, Humboldt, Nebraska, 68376
(402) 862-2411, www.senca.org

Community Action of Nebraska
210 O Street, Suite 100, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68508
(402) 471-3714, www.canhelp.org

THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was funded by the State of Nebraska's Community Service Block Grant Discretionary funds. We are truly thankful for Jennifer Dreibelbis, Community Service Block Grant Program Specialist and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Children and Family Services for their generous support of this project.

Community Action of Nebraska expresses its sincere appreciation to Ionia Research Director Joseph Nitzke, PhD., for the data analysis and assistance with the development of this report. We'd also like to thank Joseph Blankenau PhD., professor of Political Science of Wayne State College for assistance with the development of the survey.

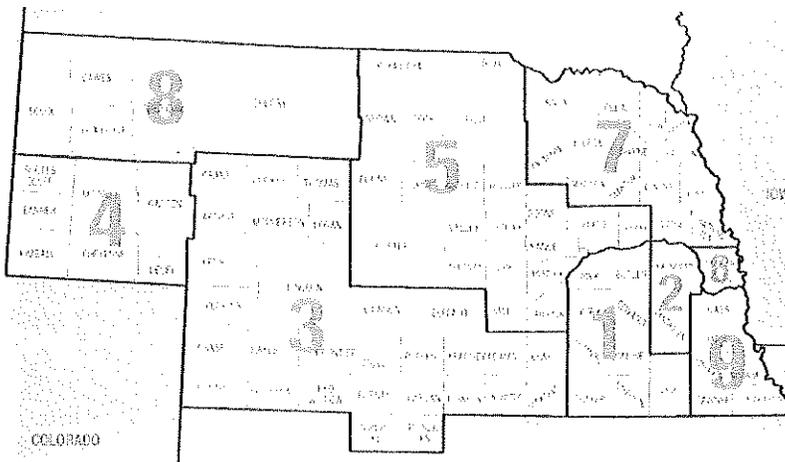
We are also grateful to the thousands of Nebraskans who took the time to fill out the survey. This report would not be possible without their cooperation.

Portions of the Community Action of Nebraska State and Regional Community Assessment Report may be reproduced without prior permission, provided the source is cited as: Community Action of Nebraska Financial Behaviors of Adults (Age 19-44) 2011 report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	SUMMARY
6	FINDINGS
6	FINANCIAL BEHAVIORS
14	FINANCIAL SERVICES
18	PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
21	METHODOLOGY
21	DEMOGRAPHICS

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES IN NEBRASKA



1. Blue Valley Community Action Partnership
2. Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties
3. Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska
4. Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska
5. Central Nebraska Community Services
6. Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership
7. Goldenrod Hills Community Action
8. Northwest Community Action Partnership
9. Southeast Nebraska Community Action Council

Summary

Community Action of Nebraska (CAN) is the state association of the nine Community Action Agencies in Nebraska. Established in 1984, Community Action of Nebraska provides training and technical assistance to the local Community Action Agencies.

Through CAN, the staff members of the local agencies participate in numerous statewide initiatives with other partners, working on policies and practices that assist other organizations in working with low-income families.

Community Action of Nebraska launched the 2011 Community Assessment Survey May 5-31, 2011, mailing 10,000 surveys to residents all across Nebraska. This survey was distributed using a mailing list which targeted adults ages 19-44.

The purpose of this survey was to increase our understanding of financial decisions Nebraskans make and assess their knowledge and general attitudes about money. Community Action Agencies in Nebraska will use the results to evaluate and revise their financial literacy and educational programs and services to better fit the needs of their communities.

This focus survey report complements the more comprehensive State and Regional Community Assessment completed in 2010 as well as future documents developed by Community Action of Nebraska. This report and the 2010 report is available at www.canhelp.org.

The survey was funded by the Community Action Agencies of Nebraska and the Department of Health and Human Services. Community Action Agencies are private, non-profit organizations dedicated to helping low-income people attain self-sufficiency in all 93 counties in Nebraska.

The assessment survey asked questions covering a wide range of topics including: financial behaviors, financial services and resources, and planning for the future. In terms of content, the survey focused on issues related to finance, for example: setting financial goals and managing household assets, use of financial services, levels of debt, and behaviors/attitudes related to spending and saving.

FINANCIAL BEHAVIORS

Participants were asked to rate ten possible barriers to getting ahead (Question 1: Items that get in the way of you saving money and getting ahead. Scale: Never = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4). Based on the mean scores from that scale, six chief barriers to getting ahead were (in order):

1. Transportation
2. High utility bills
3. Day-to-day family expenses
4. Pay off mortgage
5. Medical expenses
6. Paying off credit card debt

Differences were noted when barriers were tested against key demographic variables. For example, the barriers faced by **households with children** were significantly greater than for households without children, especially in the areas of transportation, day-to-day expenses, and medical expenses.

Respondents with higher education levels reported they were better able to deal with identified barriers. Consistently, the effect of the barriers decreased as education increased.

Money Management/Avoiding Dangerous Loans

Though most respondents believed that they could manage their money and recognize dangerous loans, 15% of respondents were less confident in their abilities. Confidence in money management increased with higher levels of income and education.

Tax Refunds

Household respondents were asked how they spent their last tax refund. About one-third used their last tax refund on everyday expenses (39%) and paying down debts (36%); one in four (24%) put money in savings; and one in five (19%) paid down credit card debt. Proportions varied by education, age, income, and household type.

Types of Debt

Respondents reported having had household debt in one or more of the following categories: Personal loans, 65%; Credit Cards, 61%; College loans, 42%; Medical/dental, 60%; Business loans, 13%; Debt consolidation loans, 7%; and Income tax, 6%. For the purposes of this report, the review focused on the four most prominent types of debt. Overall, participants age 35-44 were more likely to have medical loans, while younger (19-24) were more likely to have college loans. Older respondents were more likely to have personal loan debt, with the most debt concentrated in the \$5,000-20,000 range.

Personal Loans: Personal loan debt was the most common type for the participants of this survey, with two-thirds of all respondents reporting some type of personal loan debt. Of all respondents, half (50%) had loan debt of more than \$5,000, with the largest single category of loan debt between \$10,000 and \$20,000.

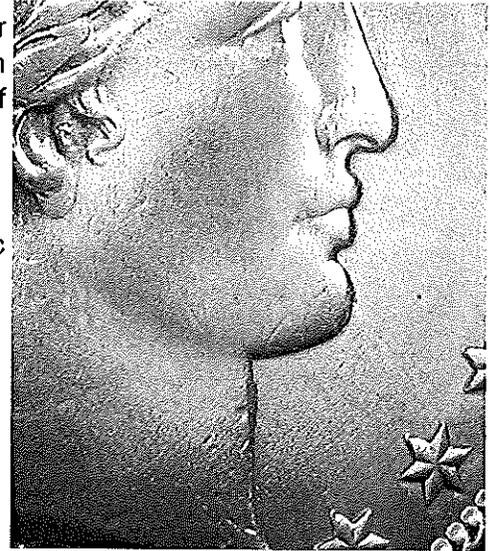
Credit Card: About three in every five households (61%) reported carrying credit card debt. For households with children, that proportion was higher, with two thirds (64%) of households with children carrying credit card debt, compared to 54% of those without children. In addition, household credit card debt also increased with earnings; as households earned more they tend to have higher levels of credit card debt.

Medical /Dental: Two in five households (40%) reported debt for medical/dental services. Nearly half (47%) of households with children reported debt for medical/dental services, about twice the level of households without children (27%).

Specific Behaviors

Respondents were asked about how often they engaged in specific behaviors. The top seven are ranked in order below:

1. Felt emotionally stressed about money
2. Spends too much money
3. Ran out of money
4. Repaid installment debts on time
5. Worried about the security of one's job
6. Reached the maximum limit on a credit card
7. Received overdue notices



In households with children, one in four (27%) Often/Always ran out of money compared to one in five households without children (20%). Households with children were more likely to write a check without sufficient funds in the account and were more likely to pay bills and installment debt late; and 44% of households with children were Often/Always emotionally stressed about money (compared to 37% of households without).

FINANCIAL SERVICES

The survey addressed participant knowledge of programs and services available through banks and the government. Nearly one in three (31%, combining strongly disagree and disagree) participants said they were not confident in their knowledge of services offered by banks. Knowledge about banking services increased with household income and education; Whereas, 45% of those that earned less than \$25,000 lacked confidence in their knowledge of financial services from banks and credit unions.

Resources for “Getting By”

Participants were asked how often they used a series of options to get by during the past year. These ranged from loans (family, payday, and pawn shop) to taking a second job.

- The most frequent strategy (54%) was to work extra hours or take a second job.
- One-third borrowed from friends and family.
- One in six had either received assistance for rent, food or fuel. By income, 50% of those that earned \$25,000 or less received assistance, compared to 16% of those that earned \$25,000-\$60,000.
- One in six used a debt repayment/consolidation plan.
- About one in twenty households had either used a pawnshop or a payday loan.

Use of Financial Services

Participants were asked to identify financial services they had ever used. The services most frequently used were financial planning, assistance with opening checking/savings account, and money management classes.

- Respondents most likely to use financial planning services were older, earned more income, and had more education. Across education, for example, households using financial planning services increased from 17% for those with a high school diploma or less to 52% for those with a master's or professional degree.
- Money management classes were the third most frequently used service (15% overall). Of the respondents with a high school diploma or less, 9% reported using money management classes, and that percentage increased for each level up to 19% for those with an master's degree or above.
- First-time homebuyer classes were more likely to be used by households with children and those with higher education. Households that earned \$25,000-\$60,000 were more likely to have used home buyer classes (13%) than households that earned less than \$25,000 (9%). The age group utilizing first-time home buying classes at the greatest rate was 25-34 (17%) compared to 6% for those 19-24.

Checking or Savings Accounts

Most (94%) of the responding households reported having a checking account. About three in four (76%) respondents reported having a savings account, while 24% did not. Having a savings account varied some with age but the greatest disparities were reflected in levels of income. Of those that earned less than \$25,000, nearly half (47%) did not have a savings account.

Emergency Funds

Three of five households (59%) had low to non-existent emergency funds.

Data Through Words & Experiences

A Homeless Family Reaches the Light at the End of the Tunnel

At the beginning of the school year, the Taylor's, a homeless family of five came into a Community Action Agency for help. They were staying with a friend who had one child and lived in a very tiny house which was only large enough for two adults; not seven people. The car they had was on the verge of breaking down. They enrolled their pre-school age child into a Head Start Program which requires one home visit per semester. During the first home visit, budgeting and transportation goals were discussed and established. Dad had just started a new job allowing them to start saving money. The family received self-sufficiency focused case management and guidance over the course of the year. Soon they were able to pay for a security deposit and first month's rent on a three bedroom house.

With the homeless problem solved they now could focus on their goal for a reliable vehicle. Even though it was hard, they continued to budget and save money for the next several months. By the end of March they were able to purchase a good used minivan; big enough to transport the whole family. The Taylor family now has a home and a vehicle they are proud to say they worked very hard for. Assistance from their local Community Action Agency and hard work, encouragement and patience helped this family overcome homelessness and establish stability for the whole family.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

One-third of the respondents did not feel able to set and achieve financial goals. The ability to set goals varied significantly by education, income, and age, and did not vary significantly by household type. Moreover, 46% of households did not regularly save or put money away for the future. Nearly half (48%) of households with children were unable to save regularly. For those with a master's degree or above, only 26% were unable to save regularly. For respondents with a bachelor's degree, 32% were unable to save, that increased to 54% for respondents with some college, and to 62% for those with a high school diploma or less.

For levels of income, the proportion of households that were unable to save regularly decreased as the level of education increased. For those that earned less than \$25,000, two-thirds (69%) were unable to save regularly, which decreased to 26% for those that earned more than \$60,000.

Tax Refunds

Overall, one in four (24%) were able to put some money into savings, but only one in 20 (5%) invested any of their tax return, and one in twenty-five (4%) put any of that refund into a retirement account.

Retirement and Investment Accounts

The proportion of households with retirement accounts increased with education from 51% for those with a high school diploma or less to 88% for those with a master's or professional degree. One-third (32%) of those that earned less than \$25,000 had a retirement account, compared to 71% of those that earned \$25,000-\$60,000 and 90% of those that earned more than \$60,000.

Investments in CDs, Stocks, Bonds: About half (45%) of the households reported having investments. While there was no difference by household type, the range for education was from 27% (high school or less) to 66% for those with a master's degree or above (some college, 40%; BA, 59%). For the lower income levels (less than \$25,000), 21% reported having investments, which increased to 38% for those that earned \$25,000-\$60,000 and 66% for those that earned \$60,000 or more.

Data Through Words & Experiences

Couple Struggles with Medical Hardship

Dan (age 58), lost his job of 33 years when the manufacturing plant he had worked in all of his adult life, closed permanently. Because of the economic situation in rural Nebraska, he could not find employment that required the job skills he possessed. Dan decided to enroll in medical classes to earn a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification. Dan and his wife Rose lost their home to foreclosure during this time and the couple relocated approximately 30 miles south to the community where Rose was employed. Dan was able to find employment as a CNA in a local care facility. The local Community Action agency assisted the couple with the first month's rent in order for them to make the move and start over. Dan had a significant cut in pay that has left the couple struggling to afford needed health care. Health Insurance is available through Dan's employer, but premiums would cost over \$1,300 per month (more than his take home pay) and would still leave them with a \$5,000 deductible. They recently lost their COBRA health insurance when the premiums became too much for them to pay. Rose has been experiencing some medical issues and cannot afford to have the necessary check-ups to rule out cancer. Although Dan and Rose have secured employment, their wage is not enough to cover their basic needs *and* health care. This is an unfortunate reality for thousands of Nebraskans.

ATTACHMENT F

NEBRASKA CSBG –IS REPORT FOR FY2011 SUMMARY

Nebraska submitted the full CSBG-IS Report to NASCSP in March 2012.

RESOURCES

Nebraska received \$4.7 Million (M) in CSBG funds. The nine Community Action Agencies were able to add an additional \$66.9 M in Federal, State and Private funds for programming and operations. This is a \$14.23 return on every CSBG dollar provided.

Federal funds are an important part of Community Action programs. These federal dollars allow community action to operate programs throughout Nebraska. The largest federal funds come from Head Start (\$18.3 M), WIC (\$6.7 M), Early Head Start (\$4.8 M), LIHEAP (\$2.8 M) and Weatherization (\$1 M)

The total non-Federal funding in 2011 included \$4.9 M in State resources, \$1.2 M from local governments, and \$14.2 M from the private sector.

Volunteers are another key resource to community action programming. In 2011, more than 14,000 community members logged 606,886 hours of volunteer service. Low-income community members donated an additional 408,109 hours.

IMPACT

In 2011, 1,457 Nebraskans receiving services from Community Action Agencies were able to obtain jobs or improved their earning capacity and 1,334 obtained safe and affordable housing. Emergency services provided 28,082 persons with emergency food supplies, 9,097 persons heating or utility assistance, 1,379 individuals with clothing and helped 6,130 persons remain in their homes. 7,309 persons received assistance in filing State and Federal tax returns.

Community Action services for the elderly allowed 13,572 Senior Citizens to maintain their independent living. Various programs provided 15,171 children with the necessary immunizations, medical and dental care necessary to participate in pre-school or elementary education. An additional 16,353 children were ensured adequate nutrition. Overall, 154,023 food boxes and 287,355 pounds of food were distributed. In addition, persons without transportation were provided with 275,896 rides over the course of 2011.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Community Action Agencies in Nebraska serve all 93 counties and 4 counties in Kansas.

In 2011, the agencies combined served more than 114,000 un-duplicated persons from almost 38,000 families. Of those persons, 56% were female, 42.6% of the persons were under the age of 18, 33.5% were between the ages of 18-44, 16.9% were aged 45-69, and 7% were 70 or over.

White persons comprised 78.7% of those served, African Americans 4.3%, Native Americans 2.9%, Asian/Pacific Islanders 7%, and 13.4% were multiracial or of some other racial background. 21.6% were Hispanic/Latino.

Of the adults served, 75% had at least graduated from high school and 28% had at least some post-secondary studies. 31% of individuals lacked health insurance. 52% of the families served rent their home, while 32 % own their own home.

Of the families Community Action Agencies served, 24.2% were single parent households, 29.7% were two parent households, and 29.6% were single individuals. Of all households served 92.6% were at or below 150% of the poverty line, 62% were at or below the poverty line, and 63% were on some form of public assistance.