

Tompkins Community Action

September 2021

News & Updates



Issue 5

What is a Community Action Agency?

Throughout the United States, Community Action Agencies (CAA) are local private and public non-profit organizations that carry out the Community Action Program (CAP). CAP was founded by the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act to fight poverty by “empowering the poor as part of the War on Poverty”. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is the core federal funding for a CAA. CAAs operate a variety of grants that come from federal, state, and local sources.

TCAction started as a grassroots effort in 1964 and was incorporated in 1966 under the name Economic Opportunity Corporation (EOC) as a community action agency. EOC became Tompkins Community Action (TCAction) in 1998. Today, TCAction operates a Food Pantry, Early Head Start & Head Start Programs, and a variety of Housing Programs throughout Tompkins County using federal, state, and local funding. TCAction evaluates ever changing community needs and responds by creating and implementing new programs to meet those needs.

TCAction is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of at least one-third low-income community members, one-third public officials, and up to one-third private sector leaders. This composition ensures the people served by TCAction have a voice and decision-making power through the board leadership responsibilities.

TCAction is fortunate to have very dedicated staff who carry out the mission: **“Tompkins Community Action collaborates with individuals and organizations to sustain and improve economic opportunity and social justice for families and individuals impacted directly or indirectly by poverty.”**

TCAction is community action.
#CommunityActionWorks

Family Services Spotlight

Our Family Services Staff (Head Start /Early Head Start Programs) have returned from their break excited and refreshed to begin a new year of classroom and home-based program services for our children and families!



Classrooms are fully opened and providing Monday through Friday programming to enrolled children. Home-Based visiting has also fully resumed services and home visiting teachers are anxious to meet new families and reconnect with returning families.

Classroom programming includes social/emotional development, learning in all academic areas, meals, safe play spaces, and family events and activities.

Home-Based programming comes into the home:

Home Visit Requirements:

- 90-minute visits each week
- Parent/Guardian presence

Teachers Provide:

- Materials for activities; lesson planning
- Child development/community resources

Families Provide:

- Input for weekly lessons
- Space for activities (indoors or outside)

Children Receive:

- Fun home activities
- Books for home
- Learning opportunities to promote growth

We have several openings available in both program options for eligible families. Programs serve children birth to five, including pregnant moms, and is free to families.

Keep an eye out for “Baby Shark” as she holds recruitment events around the county!

To apply, please visit our [website](#) or call Rachel, Enrollment Specialist, at 607.227.3284.

We can't wait to see/meet you!



Housing Services Spotlight



Ithaca Arthaus

Do you know anyone 18- 25 years old who is struggling to find a safe place to live?

TCAction is opening 40 apartments at Ithaca Arthaus in October as Supportive Housing Program for youth.

Please contact our partners the [Learning Web](#) and [Village at Ithaca](#), they can help young people connect with this housing option.

Community Connections

College Initiative Upstate



TCAction is pleased to announce our expanded collaboration with College Initiative Upstate (CIU) (a program of OAR) by encouraging our Housing Choice Voucher recipients to enroll in CIU's free College Prep program or seek CIU support if interested in enrolling directly in a college degree program. CIU also assists students who have outstanding student loans regain their ability to receive federal and NYS financial aid, provides textbook stipends, Chromebooks, tutoring in all subjects areas, semester-long bus passes and much more.

CIU is a learning community of students, educators and volunteers working together to build pathways to and through college of people in Tompkins County who experience barriers to higher educations because of low-income, substance use disorders, court involvement or former incarceration. All services are free of charge. The only requirement is a high school diploma or equivalency and a strong desire to continue their educational goals. By effectively addressing the individual and structural barriers to higher education CIU offers a life-changing path for non-traditional students.

Interested in joining? The next College Prep session begins October 12 – December 17, 2021

Contact Maria Vargas today at 607-351-3201 or ciutompkins.mv@gmail.com or ciutompkins.org.

