



Dear Colleagues,

Two years ago, the Board and staff met in order to develop our plan for the future. During this meeting we concluded that in order for the Community Action Agency of New Haven (CAANH) to rebuild, it would be

important to embrace best practices in everything that we do. We reframed our mission and identified the component parts that would be essential to our success. We identified and agreed that providing customer/client services that are integrity-centered and results oriented would be the cornerstones of our work and our Human Services Infrastructure (HSI) provided the capacity to expand our services.

As a result, our systems for processing and measuring effectiveness of client outcomes have significantly improved. We have focused our system for accountability, such that we are seeing greater results for our clients. For example, for the past three years (2007-2009) we have seen steady increases in the number of families served 12,300,

14,922 and 15,000 respectively served by CAANH staff at the same time that we reduced cost. We can also identify targeted results for families and have learned to maintain solid control over our finances. All of these things contribute to providing better outcomes and consistent service for our clients. As you can see, it is important to us that we provide quality service with integrity that leads to tangible results. This is what the new Board members demand of us and this is our contribution to ensuring results for the community. In fact our Board member, Seila Mosquera-Bruno, is being featured in this publication because of her consistent experience with both leading and serving by example.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *The Advance!*

Amos L. Smith, MSW, LCSW
President and CEO
Community Action Agency
of New Haven



The CAANH Advance

May 4, 2010 Volume 3 Number 1

ARRA Funds Create Jobs

Funds from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) have allowed CAANH to partner in some new and exciting ways! CAANH's mission is to offer pathways to prosperity for those in poverty in the Greater New Haven area. With the help of organizations such as New Life Corporation, Community Mediation, Inc., Christian Community Action, New Haven Family Alliance and Knowledge Network, CAANH has started the implementation of the "Passport to Prosperity." The purpose of this initiative is to establish a network of comprehensive, client-centered and culturally competent services for CAANH customers.

Four new programs have been added to the Agency's menu of services: an **Asset Building and Family Support** program providing opportunities for low-income individuals/families to develop financial assets, essential skills, and knowledge to better manage their personal financial resources; a **Computer Literacy and Adult Basic**

“. . . this initiative establishes a network of comprehensive, client-centered, and culturally competent services for CAANH customers.”

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A Message from our Board by Seila Mosquera-Bruno



One of the most important functions of running a successful non-profit is filling the workplace with a sense of service. You need to express gratitude to staff, funders and partners for their good work. It enforces the main reason that you're in business - to help people.

If you begin your day thinking about helping others, even the most common tasks become an opportunity to serve. The workplace becomes a place to help others: a service place. And you'll see amazing results. People will take pride in serving with you. The people you help today will be people who help others tomorrow.

Seila Mosquera-Bruno is the Executive Director of the Mutual Housing Association of South Central Connecticut, Inc., dba NeighborWorks® New Horizons.

CAANH offers pathways to prosperity to those in poverty in the Greater New Haven area.

◆Service ◆Collaboration ◆Advocacy ◆Knowledge Generation

Food Pantry Provides Healthy Choices

The Open Choice Food Pantry at CAANH has been open since December 2009. Incorporating an emphasis on good nutrition and education, the Pantry organizes foods into five sections according to the USDA's Food Pyramid food groups: vegetables, fruit, grains, meat and beans, and milk.

The shelves in the Pantry are color-coded so that the customer knows what food groups will provide healthier meals for their families. Customers shop once a month, assisted by a staff member, and must call ahead to schedule an appointment as only one shopper at a time can use the Pantry. Customers also sign and date a Shopping Guide each time they shop, as part of the Pantry's records of how many use it each month. First time shoppers are given a reusable bag with the CAANH logo, address, phone and web info to use for their selections as well as a "Guide to Good Eating," a color flyer from the National Dairy Council based on the Food Pyramid food groups.

In the last three weeks of December, the Pantry served 35 households or 124 individuals, 72 of whom were children. Using three meals a day for each person in the household for three days, this represented 1,116 meals. Only six households called regarding a Christmas basket and did receive a bag of food put together by staff, the other 29 households actually "shopped" and chose their foods.

In the first quarter of 2010, 263 households used the Food Pantry, for a total of 680 individuals and the



According to Pat Hagen, "customers seem quite happy with open choice and the idea of being able to select what they want, judging by the surprise and smiles on their faces."

equivalent of 6,120 meals. Of the individuals served, 32 were elderly (60+), 51 disabled and 347 are children under 18. The Connecticut Food Bank in East Haven is the principal source of the food in the Pantry. Additional sources of food include the annual Mail Carriers Food Drive, donations from a local Westville church and some generous individuals. To make a contribution please visit our web site at www.caanh.net and click on **How You Can Help**.

ARRA Funds Create Jobs [continued]

Education program; **Emergency Housing Assistance** for those in need of rental/ mortgage assistance and **S.M.A.R.T. Women** (Single Mothers Actively Reaching the Top), a program offering support to single mothers.

In addition, two programs have been expanded to better address the needs of the community. The **Manage Your Future** program, which provides low-income youth between the ages of 14-21 with the skills to enhance their self-sufficiency as young adults, has grown from a summer program to one that is offered year-round. The new **Open Choice Food Pantry**

includes a broader selection of items that can be selected by customers according to government nutrition standards. Understanding ROMA gives our staff new insight into the value of using data to generate knowledge and manage our programs more efficiently and effectively. The expansion of our programs through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funding and its requirement for frequent reporting provide us with another level of accountability and services for our community. ROMA is where it's at and CAANH is in the game!

Thanks!

To the National Association of Letter Carriers for helping to fill our Food Pantry. Our customers have benefited from this generous collection for many years. We appreciate the willingness of the New Haven community to provide the food and for the mail carriers for providing transportation!

To Stop n' Shop for their generous donation of \$1,000 in Gift cards which will be used to help supplement our Food Pantry and Youth programs.

The CAANH Advance Staff

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