



In this issue, you will find stories of how the Community Action Agency of New Haven (CAANH) uses advocacy as one of its core strategies in its fight against poverty. Our goal is to empower individuals and families through access to extensive resources, personal commitment, and

expanded opportunities for employment. Poverty can only be overcome when those who need work have it consistently with increments of pay that provide a livable wage. Thus, our aim is to enable people to acquire the tools necessary to thrive at work, home and in the community.

The power to break the cycle is within our reach. Through advocacy, education, and reemployment individuals and families take ownership and personal responsibility, such that their children are able to reap the benefits.

Children are poor because their parents are poor. Parents are poor because of no work, little work or low

wage work. Work is not just important, it is essential. This means that exercising one's right to vote is one way that clients become empowered. Advocacy is about change and leadership. Advocacy at CAANH is about leading in the face of insurmountable odds because people's lives are at stake. Sometimes advocating means finding your voice for the right causes and what better cause is there than to liberate people from the woes of poverty. That voice, coupled with education, unbiased community dialogue, and active involvement increases the capacity of poor people to use their vote, voice, and vision to carve out a new future for themselves and their children.

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President and CEO
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of New Haven



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Fathers Play an Important Role

The Male Involvement Network (MIN) is a collaborative of local, state, and community based service providers whose mission is to improve child outcomes and strengthen families. This mission is accomplished by supporting and advocating for low-income, non-custodial fathers in their efforts to be involved parents. Their involvement is realized through programs that empower them to become nurturing and responsible forces in their children's lives. Research shows, overwhelmingly, that the positive involvement of men in the lives of children greatly improves the child's outcomes.

“Through advocacy and education, we prepare these men to meet their emotional, social, financial and educational responsibilities for their children,”

Advocacy thus becomes a vital part of this program, due to the fact that low-income, non-custodial fathers are vulnerable because of the systemic barriers they constantly encounter. “Through advocacy and education, we prepare these men to meet their emotional, social, financial and educational responsibilities for their children,” said Blannie Bostic, who is the Project Manager for MIN at the New Haven Family Alliance. “The network provides comprehensive services that address all aspects of the lives. As a result, these men make a commitment to become healthy fathers, and they have a healthy involvement with their families and their communities.

[Continued next page.]

A Message from our Board by Snow Turner



“I love the work that I do and enjoy helping families and young pregnant women achieve some of their goals.”

Snow Turner has worked for the City of New Haven Health Department for 18 years as a Field Supervisor of the Maternal and Newborn Outreach Support (MANOS) program. This is an intensive family support and home visiting program that connects high-risk pregnant women, infants and children with health care and social services resources.

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

There's No Place Like Home

Recently one of our IDA participants, a single mother of five who was recruited in 2007 and educated through the home ownership classes here at CAANH, has achieved success with her goal of owning her own home. An employee of Yale University Dining Services, this participant was educated about the programs in the New Haven area that foster first-time home ownership. She quickly asserted herself and became a part of Empower New Haven's HomePower Initiative. This initiative helps first-time home buyers with one to four family homes. The participant also worked with Yale University's Employee Homebuyer Program and she eagerly set out to save the necessary money to reach her goal. She has stayed dedicated to her "Savings Plan Agreement" and this past December, located a house in New Haven through the Housing Rehabilitation Institute.

"Home ownership is the cornerstone of a strong community."
-Rick Renzi, U.S. House of Rep.

The beautiful home has three floors with two bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor, with access to the basement. The second and third floors have been finished to accommodate this family with four bedrooms, two full bathrooms, living room, dining room and kitchen. The house is equipped with

all new kitchen appliances, including a dishwasher. There is a three car driveway and a completely fenced-in yard.

Attorney Ron Bender, who works with Bender, Anderson and Barba, P.C. and is also the secretary for the CAANH Board of Directors, provided pro bono work on the closing of this house. The successful closing was held in New Haven on April 7, 2009. After working with many people and getting the house in her name, the participant was finally able to make this her home!



CAANH Staff, Sandra McKinnie and Amos Smith, Join New Owner's Family for Home Warming

Preparing for Employment with the U.S. Census

CAANH was the official testing site in New Haven County for the U.S. Census Bureau. We held a series of prep class sessions in early February to help people gain employment. The increase in unemployment, coupled with the bleak economy, led to over 310 calls to the Financial Asset Development department at CAANH from people all over the state concerning jobs with the 2010 Census. Sandra McKinnie, Coordinator of the department, contacted Jayne Byrnes, Assistant Manager of Recruiting for New Haven County. This new partnership created an opportunity for citizens in this area to find viable employment.

With the support of David Halloway from the U.S. Census Bureau, classes were scheduled the day before testing to prepare people to pass the test and pre-employment screening. A total of four classes were scheduled. The preparatory classes, taught by Ms. McKinnie, presented practice tests with class participation in the following areas: clerical, reading, number, and organizational skills. Dinner,

served to the job seekers before the training class and after testing

sessions, was provided by Keith Solomon, owner, Popeye's Chicken in New Haven; Mike Moran, Office of New Haven and State Affairs at Yale University; and Tony Anatonakis of The Greek Olive Restaurant of New Haven.

The U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration provided all classes with practice test booklets and answer keys. A total of 113 people received preparation for testing and pre-employment training at CAANH. All of those people trained at CAANH, with the exception of one person, passed the test needed for employment and 26 of those people were hired by the U.S. Census.

Did You Know?

In 1790, the first census was taken by U.S. marshals on horseback and counted 3.9 million people. Census 2000 counted more than 281 million people. -U.S. Census Bureau

Fathers Play an Important Role [continued]

Above all else, they support the mothers of their children and therefore raise healthy children, physically and mentally."

Connecticut was one of the first states to implement fatherhood legislation and to convene a Fatherhood Council. This council educates local officials about father-friendly and father inclusive policies. As a result, there was a realization that promoting responsible fatherhood is more than programmatic. The more important piece is that its changing the way service providers support fathers in their efforts to be involved with their families.

Did You Know?

Boys with absentee fathers are twice as likely to be incarcerated, regardless of their parents' education level, race/ethnicity, or income. -John S. Martinez Fatherhood Initiative

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