



SEACAA

Southeastern Association of Community Action Agencies

spotlight

on community action

A Newsletter of the Southeastern Association of Community Action Agencies

"Come to a place where the water meets the land, where the spirit and excitement of the French Riviera blend with the traditional elegance and comfort of the American South."

— <http://www.biloxibeachcondorentals.com>

Number 14-Issue 2 < April 2014

Make plans now

...to attend the 2014 SEACAA Annual Conference September 8-12 in Biloxi commemorating 50 years of community action

Beau Rivage is conveniently located on the Gulf Coast in Biloxi, approximately an hour drive from New Orleans to the west and Mobile, Alabama, to the east. Known for its natural treasures, as much as its manmade pleasures, the Mississippi Gulf Coast has something for everyone. A visit to the Gulf Coast offers miles of sandy beaches, outlet malls, entertainment, exceptional cuisine, over 20 championship golf courses and 24-hour gaming at world-class casinos. Other Mississippi Gulf Coast attractions include the Gulf Islands National Seashore, NASA's StennisSpace Museum, and charter boat fishing excursions.

Registration/Sponsorship Form available online at www.seacaa.org ♦

RESERVATIONS

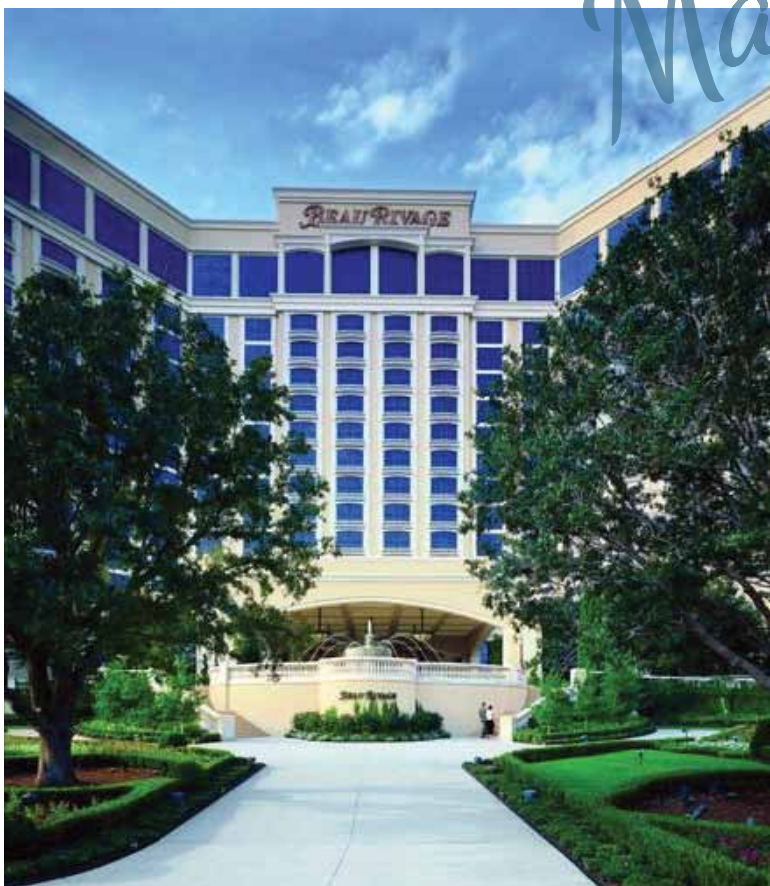
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Group: SEACAA 2014 Annual Conference

Cut-off Date: Friday, August 15, 2014



Biloxi Slang:

Playground of the South



Jackie Sheckler Finch www.examiner.com

Biloxi, a small but important city on Mississippi's Gulf Coast, has been reincarnated many times since its founding in the early 1700's, but it has always remained the "Playground of the South". Biloxi was once the capital of French Louisiana until it was devastated by a hurricane in 1722 and the capital was moved to New Orleans. In the early 20th century it was the center of the world's seafood industry. During World War II it was a major training center for the Army and Air Force. And today, it is one of the most popular resort towns on the Gulf Coast.

Biloxi is home to the Biloxi Lighthouse which survived the devastation of Hurricanes Camille and Katrina. The Lighthouse is now emblazoned on most license plates in the State of Mississippi and reminds us every day that we are survivors. Today, much of Biloxi has been rebuilt and is more beautiful than ever.

One of the first slangs I learned when I moved here is that Biloxi, MS is pronounced, "Bil-

lux-zee, Miss-ssip-pi". I also quickly learned to love the slow, deliberate pace and the special sense of place that exists here.

1. "It's hot as blue blazes!"

I visited Biloxi long before I moved here. In August 1966, when I was 13-years-old, my family took a trip from the Northeast down to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. We stayed in Biloxi, MS at the best Gulf-front hotel. I still remember the stately homes, grand oak trees and small, quiet town. I remember taking a boat from Biloxi across the Mississippi Sound past mysterious barrier islands and into the Gulf of Mexico. It was the hottest place I had ever been. I remember overhearing someone say, "It's hot as the devil today!"

A few of the locals

warned my younger sister and me to stay out of the hot afternoon sun for fear of heatstroke. "You best stay out of the sun in the afternoon." During the days I wandered down the white sand beach and watched the shrimp and crab boats come in. I stopped in the shops and tried to talk to people. I really couldn't understand half of what they were saying. The Biloxians were just as mystified by my Yankee accent and the fast pace of my speech. But people were friendly and nice to me. After just a couple of days, I got used to the way everyone spoke.

I drank proper tea with the ladies on the hotel porch, and ate small cakes and tomato sandwiches. I learned that it was essential to be polite and always to say "Yes, sir" and "No, ma'am", and when you just had to say something mean or nasty, it was essential to end the sentence with "bless her heart." Like, "That girl is just so ugly no man'll ever marry her, bless her heart."

Soon I knew that "carry", could mean "drive" as in "Ima going to carry your mama

downtown." That "a Coke" was a term for any soda. And I just fell in love with the pictures people painted with their language. "I'm all over that like a hobo on a ham sandwich." "He's stuck like a fly on tarpaper." "I'm onto you like a chicken on a June bug." I returned to Biloxi many times after that summer visit and finally decided to make Mississippi my home. I am a proud Mississippian by choice.

2. Gone Fishing

Biloxi is home to some of the finest sports fishing along the entire northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico and people come from all over to fish here. Both visitors and locals down here do a lot of fishing, but they spend even more time talking about fishing. On any given day, you can walk into a cafe or bar and hear guys talking about what they caught or what they should have caught. I'm told that "a bad day of fishin'" is better than a good day of work." There are, however, surprisingly few local fishing expressions probably because fishing is a universal language. The same expressions used in the North and throughout the South are found in Biloxi. "Time to fish or cut bait." Of course, this is the South so we also have hunting and hunting expressions. My favorite is still, "that dog won't hunt" which is used to describe an argument that doesn't make sense.

3. "Are you hungry, want something t'eat?"

Here food is a central part of life. Every holiday and occasion is an excuse for food. From the Sunday church potluck to a birthday celebration, you can be guaranteed that dinner will be served. If you want people to come to a political rally, have a fish fry and offer everyone a free dinner. You want to raise money for the Red Cross, hold a "pig roast" (barbecue a whole hog and serve it with the fixin's). In Biloxi, the local cuisine that is just a bit different – part Southern, a bit French Creole, fresher and lighter than most Southern food but still loaded with butter. Food based on French and British traditions, influenced by Austrians, Bohemians and Louisiana Cajuns who moved to the city about 100 years ago, and refined by chefs from the city's elegant tourist and

bless
her heart



casino hotels – stuffed crabs, Shrimp Biloxi in beer and butter sauce, grilled redfish and strawberry trifle. And there are still a couple places in town with “proper tea service”.

4. Biloxi Blues

The blues were born in the nearby Mississippi Delta and are part of life in Biloxi and its slang. Gospel, zydeco, R&B, rock & roll, and country music flourish here. Some people say there is music in the language of the South. I’m not sure about that but I know there is a lot of talk about music in Biloxi. Today, most of the music in Biloxi is found in the casinos that line the beachfront.

5. Right and Might

People really do not use a lot of slang in Biloxi. But some words have different meanings here. “Right” can be used to mean an emphatic version of very: “She’s right smart.” or “I didn’t think I would like beets, but I’ll admit, they’re right good!” “Might” is also used in unusual ways that are grammatically wrong, but very expressive: “I’ve never done that before, but I might could.” meaning there is more than a bit of doubt that it will happen.

6. Picturesque Expressions

Biloxians, like most Southerners, pepper their speech with vivid expressions. The best of these sayings need no translation and new ones are constantly being invented. Here are a few common examples: “She’s more nervous than a long tail cat in a room full of rockin’ chairs” “The lights are on, but nobody’s home.” (A description of someone who is just plain dumb.) “Common as pigs’ tracks.” (A trashy person.)

7. A Bit of Magic

Hoodoo and Voodoo are found from southern Mississippi over to New Orleans and both have added to the rich vocabulary of the Blues. But in Biloxi they have shown up in some unexpected places – on the menus of some of the casino restaurants. Chicken Grigri from gris-gris, a Voodoo talisman that protects the

wearer from evil and attracts good luck. Steak Mojo named after the Hoodoo good luck charm, “mojo”, and pronounced with the “J” versus the Cuban and Latin American mojo sauce which is pronounced with an “H”. And my favorite, Black Cat Bone BBQ named after a mystical and very powerful Hoodoo charm.

8. A Day at the Casino

People have been gambling in Biloxi since the city was founded. But in 1992 gambling was legalized in Mississippi and Biloxi was transformed once again. Now the beach is lined with over a dozen casino complexes with resort hotels and 24-hour gambling. One day, I walked into one of Biloxi’s casinos and just watched people. They were in a hotel on one of the most beautiful beaches in the U.S., no one even knew if it was day or night, but they were all playing! Well, that’s what Biloxi is here for!

9. My Heavenly Days!

Whatever else one wants to say about Biloxi, it is still in Mississippi and that means that there is always someone “Praising the Lord” or talking about heaven. “Gracious light!” (Oh my!) “She’s just a precious angel straight from heaven!” (She so cute or sweet or both.) “That stinks to high heaven.” (That smells really bad.) “Lord, she sho nuff is in trouble now. She is flat standin’ in the need of prayer.” And adding a mention of God sometimes just makes an insult acceptably “po-lite”: “He hasn’t got the sense the Lord gave a toad.” (My neighbor’s favorite expression!)

10. Playground of the South

Biloxi’s motto describes the city perfectly. For over 300 years, people have come to Biloxi to relax, enjoy the pristine beach, boat, fish, gamble, drink and party. And Biloxians add to the whole spirit of the place with how they constantly play with language.

Kentucky

From Homeless to the Highway...And Back to the Stage.

Bennie Smith describes his story as “From Homeless to the Highway...And Back to the Stage”. He was laid off from his employment three different times



in late 2012 and early 2013, which eventually led to the loss of his apartment and the need to seek shelter at Wayside Christian Mission. Upon seeking rental assistance from Neighborhood Place, he was referred to a short-term job training offered by Louisville Metro Community Action Partnership in July 2013, part of the city’s Department of Community Services and Revitalization. Just months later, he was hired full-time by Falcon Trucking Company and credits the “total team effort” of all parties involved for his success.

Bennie loves his job and is currently driving the Clinton, TN – Kansas City, KS route, transporting GM parts to the GM Plant in Kansas City twice weekly. While home in Louisville, he enjoys time with his family –



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CCAP CEO Receives Prestigious Athena Award

FAYETTEVILLE— Cumberland Community Action Program's CEO, Cynthia Wilson recently received the 2013 ATHENA Award presented by the Fayetteville NC Chamber of Commerce.

The ATHENA Award recognizes the person who has demonstrated excellence, creativity and initiative in their business or profession; provided valuable service by contributing time and energy to improve the quality of life for others in the community and actively assisted women in realizing their full leadership potential.

"I am honored that my body of work is being recognized by the esteemed Fayetteville/Cumberland Chamber of Commerce. A body of work requires employees, participants, partners, volunteers and patrons over the course of many years to bring the work to life. So it seems so fortuitous that this year's Athena award would recognize the work related to a Community Action Agency, as CAAs across the county launch our 50th year celebration. I celebrate the courage, strength, and wisdom of the many over the past 50 years who have possessed and shared Athena-like characteristics, inspiring and motivating all of us to do



the work we do."

Wilson received this award because of her ability to foster a continuous learning environment within an organization of 300 staff members, her leadership and guidance for a CCAP program that provides job readiness training for women entering or re-entering the business world

and because of her ability to develop and implement strategies that sustain high service delivery when faced with a \$430k budget cut.

Wilson's dedication to helping those in need in our community through her visionary leadership continues to set the bar for other nonprofit leaders. ♦

ABOUT CCAP The Cumberland Community Action Program, Inc. is a private human services agency offering a comprehensive, supportive approach to helping families and individuals achieve and sustain economic security. Established in 1965, CCAP has become a respected agency among the top-tier of the national network of community action programs whose purpose is to address poverty in America. CCAP has a direct presence in some 34 counties throughout southeastern North Carolina. CCAP is the parent organization for the Second Harvest Food Bank of Southeast North Carolina (SHFB); the Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS); the Comprehensive Housing and Weatherization Programs; Self-Sufficiency Programs (ASPIRE); and Head Start. CCAP is accredited by the Council on Accreditation. For more information about CCAP programs and services, visit www.ccap-inc.org.

From Homeless to the Highway...

continued from page 3

including two grandkids – and now has the energy and stability to pursue his musical interest. Bennie recently released two record singles and one album which is being digitally distributed on iTunes, Amazon and other outlets. ♦

Community Action Kentucky (CAK) is a statewide association representing and assisting the 23 community action agencies as they work to empower individuals and families to attain greater economic success. Community Action Kentucky acts as a statewide voice for local community action agencies and low-income individuals, addressing policy issues of importance to them.

Georgia

GSU holds TRIO Day

Hundreds of high school students packed into the Russell Union Ballroom on Georgia Southern University's campus Saturday for the first-ever Southeastern Georgia TRIO Day, hosted jointly by Georgia Southern, Savannah State University and Concerted Services Inc., a community action agency serving 18 southeast Georgia counties. The last Saturday in February is observed as National TRIO Day in recognition of the federally funded programs designed to help students from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds succeed in high school, college and beyond. What is TRIO, and what effect does it have?

The keynote speaker, Mario Ball, told high school students from across the region attending the event just what TRIO programs did for him. In fact, Ball's resume itself is a good testimony. Ball graduated from Morehouse College and Georgia Tech with degrees in applied physics and biological engineering. He gained experience with agencies such as NASA and companies such as Kimberly-Clark. He was recognized this year as No. 2 out of 209 managers in

Stryker Orthopedics, a medical device company, and is ready to start his own medical device sales and distribution services business.

After being introduced with that resume, Ball quipped, "I guess I sound like somebody important." He attributed his success in large part to TRIO. "First and foremost, I want to let you guys know that I'm one of you," said Ball, emphasizing his Millen roots. "Just a few years ago, I was in your same seat — Saturday afternoon, here at TRIO Day, listening to someone potentially lecture about their accomplishments on what TRIO has done for them."

He referred to a Dateline NBC episode that aired in 2011 spotlighting Millen, which at the time had one of the highest unemployment rates in Georgia, as "the town that jobs forgot." While the negative portrayal of his hometown dismayed him, it did remind him of the limited resources available there.

"Coming from a background like that, resources are extremely limited," Ball said. "I would also say, from an academic standpoint, we have to take it into our

"I wanted to walk a different path. I wanted to do something different than I had seen growing up," he said. "And I charge you guys to think about that in the same way."

— Mario Ball

own hands to achieve and attain the knowledge that we need in our life."

TRIO programs are ones that young people "should align ourselves with," he told the students, "as I have." Ball said TRIO's Upward Bound Math and Science summer program at Morehouse dramatically changed his life.

"It was the first time I ever left home," he said. "First time I have ever been outside of Millen on my own, living for six weeks on campus at Morehouse. That was probably the scariest thing I've ever done — most challenging for my parents, as well. But I would also say that it was probably one of the greatest decisions I have made."

That summer program is what convinced Ball that he wanted to be a biomedical engineer. Even afterward, he wasn't sure what he would have to do in college to attain that goal, but it kept him focused the rest of his time in high school and on into college.

"I wanted to walk a different path. I wanted to do something different than I had seen growing up," he said. "And I charge you guys to think about that in the same way."

The Georgia Southern event also featured a panel discussion in which four TRIO alumni shared how their experience in TRIO programs impacted them, a step show by members of the Georgia Southern chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and a dance show by the Gator Girls, organized by Concerted Services.

Also, Carolyn Crume-Blackshear, the Educational Talent Search director for Concerted Services, presented a resolution to Dr. Joyya Smith, the director of Educational Opportunity Programs at Georgia Southern. The resolution was from the mayor and City Council of Statesboro, signed by Mayor Jan Moore, proclaiming Saturday as "Educational Talent Search and Upward Bound Day" in conjunction with National TRIO Day. ♦



<http://www.concertedservices.org/trio> <http://www.statesboroherald.com/section/1/article/57254/>
~Jason Wermers

Concerted Services, Inc. (CSI) is a private nonprofit Community Action Agency originally established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to fight American's War on Poverty. CSI started doing business under the umbrella of Slash Pine Area Planning and Development Commission in 1965 and was incorporated October 7, 1968 as a private non-profit charitable organization. It changed its name July 25, 1984 from Slash Pine Community Action Agency, Inc. to Concerted Services, Inc. <http://www.concertedservices.org>

The War On Poverty's Fundamental Flaw: Not Enough Jobs

However you evaluate its impact, the 50-year-old War on Poverty raises the puzzling question of why the world's most prosperous economy continues to harbor the largest percentage of persons in poverty of any developed nation. For North Carolina, the Community Action Agencies are the War on Poverty's most significant legacy.

Eliminating poverty by creating economic opportunity was based on the belief that through education, training and other supportive services, the poor would find their way into jobs and begin to climb the ladder to economic self-sufficiency. While the War on Poverty focused serious national concern on poverty and committed funds to confront it, the war offered a battery of innovative service programs designed to prepare the poor for work rather than provide cash support.

The prospects of an "unconditional" War on Poverty led to intense competition among federal agencies to administer it. The Department of Labor wanted to be the lead agency, but it had not demonstrated an ability to work effectively with the poor. Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz wanted to create jobs for the poor while President Johnson wanted to get the poor into existing jobs.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare had become too "categorical," and the War on Poverty working group feared that new initiatives would simply end up in old program forms.

In the end, the working group rejected both agencies and created a separate unit, the Office of Economic Opportunity.

This decision to administer the War on Poverty outside established social welfare structures undoubtedly contributed to the gradual erosion of support for its innovative programs. Yet the War on Poverty's ineffectiveness resulted more from

the failure of America's economic system to produce economically adequate jobs than from an unprepared labor force.

This has been one lesson taught by the recent Great Recession, which not only exposed basic weaknesses in America's economic system but also revealed a fundamental flaw in our social welfare structure. It rests entirely on work, not work in the sense of financial resources necessary to support social welfare initiatives, but work as the underlying reason for social welfare in the first place.

Americans are not eligible for Social Security if they have not worked. They cannot collect Unemployment Insurance if they have not worked enough in "covered employment." There are no Earned Income Tax credits for those who are not working. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families requires mothers of needy children to work, even though there is little or no jobs even at shameful wages.

Supplemental Security Income benefit payments, for those presumably unable to work, are kept below the poverty level for fear that higher benefits will discourage persons from working.

For those unable to work, only cash supplements will lift them out of poverty. This is the lesson learned in the early 1970s when Social Security benefits were liberalized, reducing poverty among the aged by one half and subsequently reducing the overall poverty rate- the only significant drop in poverty during the past 50 years.

The shortcomings in the War on Poverty must be seen in the context of an economic system that ties its economic prosperity to a full-employment economy but is unable to produce enough jobs at above poverty income levels. We must take into account America's economic failures along with individuals who make bad decisions. After all, there are many



persons who make bad decisions who do not end up in poverty and many poor persons who make good decisions who remain poor.

Perhaps the continued existence of Community Action Agencies remains the most unappreciated legacy of the War on Poverty. An afterthought in planning, Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act established the principle of "maximum feasible participation of the poor" in the decisions of implementing programs affecting them. Across the nation and in North Carolina in particular, these organizations, now incorporated as 501(c)3 nonprofits, have become the sole voice of (not for) the poor.

North Carolina has 36 CAAs that serve the needs of the poor in every county. They weatherize substandard homes, provide shuttles to free health clinics and stitch together diminishing social resources as simple as gloves for children in Western North Carolina and seeds for poor people in Eastern North Carolina to grow vegetables. They are funded by donations, used clothing sales, homemade baked goods, raffles and ever-diminishing administrative funds from the state's Community Services Block Grant.

Community Action Agencies are the soapboxes of the poor. If we would listen, the poor will tell us how to reduce poverty. ♦

Andrew Dobelstein, Ph. D., is professor emeritus of Social Welfare at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"We have learned to fly the air like birds and swim the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of living together as brothers."

Georgia

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We Have Not Eliminated Poverty

Today in Savannah, we have not eliminated poverty...these are the words spoken by EOA Executive Director, John Finney, during the Economic Opportunity Authority's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. observation in January. The EOA event, with the theme of "Unity Among all People" was the 42nd annual EOA event to honor King and his legacy.

The observance began in 1972. Savannah native and Savannah State College graduate, Marine Corp Lieutenant General, Walter E. Gaskin, accepted the W.W. Law Award at the Economic Authority's observance. He recalled that Law, the late Savannah civil rights leader and historian, told him after he graduated for the Naval ROTC program at Savannah State to "go off and make us proud." Savannah, Gaskin said, was the foundation for all he achieved in life. Also receiving awards were Inez Jenkins, a long-time Savannah-Chatham County school board employee and youth leader, who was awarded the Earl P. Jones Award named for a retired Air-force employee and EOA official along with Russ Albott, Chatham County Manager for nearly 26 years, who was presented the James T. Deason Award, named for the former longtime EOA deputy Director.

In his comments to the audience, Finney, who has headed the agency for more than 40 years, said more than four families live at or below the poverty line. Vowing to continue the fight, he goes on to say, "We still have unbelievable conditions in our community." Savannah Mayor Edna Jackson reminded the gathering that Savannah's celebration of King's legacy "started here at EOA." Jackson, whose career started as a social worker at the EOA "at a very young age," praised officials for what they do for the community.

EOA strives to be a locally recognized and acknowledged non-profit organization known for its exemplary leadership and collaborative effort as an agent of social change that provides outcome based programs, services, and activities that help low-moderate income individuals and families achieve economically stable, thriving, and productive lives. <http://www.eoasga.org> ♦ *Savannah Morning News, January 2014*

SEACAA CALENDAR

APRIL – JUNE 2014

Visit the website for more details.

SEACAA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2014

- **National Low-Income Housing Coalition:**
2014 Policy Conference and Lobby Day, April 27-30, 2014
- **National Head Start Association :** 41st Annual Conference and Expo, Long Beach, CA, April 28-May 2, 2014

MAY 2014 – National Community Action Month

- **NCCAA Race 4 Change:** NC State Centennial Campus, Raleigh, NC, Sunday, May 4, 2014
- SEACAA Board of Directors Meeting, NCCAA 2014 Annual Conference, Raleigh Marriott Crabtree Valley, Raleigh, NC, Tues., May 6, 2014, 9:00 am

JUNE 2014

- June Newsletter Submission Deadline: June 15

North Carolina

ESR Turns 50 and Moves to a New Facility

Chartered as one of the first eleven Community Action Agencies in 1964, Experiment in Self Reliance (ESR) will be celebrating its 50th anniversary during 2014. Throughout the year, ESR will release 50 touchpoints that highlight their clients, partners, and available services.

Additionally, ESR will be moving to a new facility in April 2014. The building is located on Dominion Street in Winston-Salem and will be able to house most of ESR's programs.

ESR was chartered in 1964 and has served the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County community for nearly 50 years, working to eliminate poverty and homelessness, and helping people help themselves. In North Carolina, ESR was one of the original 11 CAA's supported by Governor Terry Sanford's North Carolina Fund. <http://www.eisr.org> ♦

Just in case you missed it. Here are a few highlights from Don Mathis' article, Late Night at the Foundation: A Top 10 List of Congressional To-Do's as it appears in the Nonprofit Quarterly, March 2014. See the complete article at <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/philanthropy/23777-late-night-at-the-foundation-a-top-10-list-of-congressional-to-do-s.html>



Number 7: Recognize stuff that works.

Don Mathis' "Late Night" Congressional To Do's

President/CEO of the Community Action Partnership, Don Mathis, uses David Letterman's top Ten List to call attention to how the institutional power and individual behaviours of Congress can make real, substantial differences in the lives of millions.

If you've ever watched or participated in a congressional hearing, you've more than likely been frustrated by the seeming disinterest and absenteeism of many of the senators and representatives members who are often talking with their staff, reading and signing papers, and exiting early for their overbooked schedules of votes, meetings, and fundraising.

Especially disheartening is when philanthropic leaders, researchers, and advocacy leaders testify and the important information and analysis of these hearing witnesses seems to fall into a legislative black hole, never to re-emerge.

Members of Congress, however, do seem to be more attentive and responsive when celebrities and other stars testify. Perhaps the most effective way to get our vital policy issues higher on congressional agendas would be to have a celebrity carry the lessons learned and policy recommendations needed. Would a hypothetical "David Letterman Foundation," with a "Letterman Foundation's Top Ten Recommendations to Congress" attract the level of attention and action that these ideas merit? Specifically, on non-glamorous issues like poverty, income inequality, and social cohesion, would a Late Show-esque Top Ten List

of to-do's move the action needle on Congress's attention meter?

If so, a Top Ten List of what Congress should do might look something like this...

Number 10:

Involve foundation leaders and researchers in the development and evaluation of new reauthorizing and appropriations legislation and public policy priorities that affect human needs.

Number 9:

Stop the foolish posturing that "foundations, charities and churches/religious groups should handle these problems." Government funding and attention is more needed than ever to address and resolve the issues of poverty, social and economic mobility, and opportunity.

Number 8:

Acknowledge publicly that safety net programs and other domestic spending are investments. Drop the banal aphorism "government programs throw money at problems." That mean-spirited cliché devalues the important work that helping agencies do, and more significantly, ignores the positive results and outcomes that federal spending produces.

Number 7:

Recognize stuff that works. This year is the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty and the signing of the Economic Opportunity Act. Several members of Congress and pundits continue to echo President Reagan's statement, "We fought a war on poverty and poverty won." That sound

bite appeals only to people who ignore or discount the facts. Hundreds of millions of Americans have been helped and been provided with increased opportunities and economic security. Millions of low and low-middle income people today are helped by SNAP, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), community economic development, Community Action, Head Start, healthcare reform, housing assistance, and other congressionally authorized and appropriated programs. Moreover, these programs are effective because they have evolved and innovated over the years to respond to the bona fide needs of communities, rural areas, and states.

Number 6:

Help foundations, nonprofit community-based agencies, and state and local governments refine and improve their services and programs by including funds for evaluation and analysis of federally funded programs (see number 7 above).

Number 5:

Accept and promote that science and research findings are legitimate. A small but very vocal number of elected officials reject and pooh-pooh the findings of scientific, social research, economic, and academic institutions.

Number 4:

Work with the philanthropic and business communities to bring successful, effective programs to scale. The challenge is to take what works to the communities, areas, and service sectors that

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can adopt and customize them. Federal leadership and funding is essential.

Number 3:

Develop incentives for social service and economic security programs. Businesses get tax and investment credits. But human needs programs could receive financial and regulatory incentives when they meet or exceed their goals and objectives.

Number 2:

Put revenues on the table in current and future federal budget and appropriations negotiations.

And the number one action the fictional Letterman Foundation suggests that Congress undertake...

Number One:

Learn more about the concept of "social cohesion" and how it represents the most traditional and basic American values. Congress can take a major role in revitalizing America's spirit, ethos, and economically competitive excellence by embracing and promoting social cohesion. Scapegoating America's 46.2 million poor people, the long-term unemployed, and others of different cultural and demographic categories hurts all of us. To those members of Congress, corporate and civic leaders, and others who work hard every day to make our nation are more just, more caring and more equitable nation, thanks for your leadership and tenacity. But the social cohesion movement needs more participants and fewer naysayers.

Epilogue

It's a fact of life and logic that all of our institutional and individual behaviors can be improved. Our national problems and challenges are massive, but solutions to them are promising and most are feasible, at least incrementally. Congress, other political leaders, and the foundation and corporate worlds have serious wealth and resources. Can we help make it all come together for our national and collective well-being?

Donald W. Mathis is President/CEO of the Community Action Partnership, a Washington, D.C.-based national organization representing the interests of 1,000 Community Action Agencies across America that fight poverty on the local level. He provides leadership and guidance to CAAs and oversees the development and implementation of several anti-poverty initiatives.

North Carolina

The Race 4 Change™ | A NCCAA Campaign Event

"The happiest, hippest, most happening 5K ever!"

RALEIGH, NC – NCCAA has engaged in a lot of brainstorming about what it can do to make a big impact in commemoration of Community Action's 50th Anniversary. It was Sharon Goodson who came up with the innovative idea to launch a campaign to raise \$500,000 in order to resource the efforts that NC CAA's make on a daily basis to "help people and to change lives."

The campaign synergizes well with a new community outreach and fundraising event already in the works for the association, The Race 4 Change™. The NCCAA team has been "running" ever since with the possibilities this concept "sparked". The idea is that The Race 4 Change™ will serve as an awesome vehicle to help NCCAA reach its financial goal and to herald that "Community Action Works." Agencies are forming race and fundraising teams knowing that a significant percentage of every dollar raised will be returned to them as unrestricted dollars to leverage their efforts to empower low-income families and communities. The Race 4 Change™ will also be a fun celebration as participants are encouraged to dress in 60's, 70's or 80's appropriate gear for the costume



contest which will be judged at the finish line along with the Community Action "Decades Dance Party". This truly will be the happiest, hippest, most happening 5K ever!

Join NCCAA in its campaign! Here is how you can get involved:

- Donate to the NCCAA Campaign. Info on how to donate is available at www.therace4change.org.
- Fundraise for the cause by asking 20 people for \$12.50.
- Participate in The Race 4 Change™ 5K race on Sunday, May 4, 2014 at NCSU Centennial Campus at 2:30 p.m. There will be a competitive running division as well as, a non-competitive run/walk division. Virtual Race Participants are welcome!

For more information visit:
www.therace4change.org. ♦

SEACAA Silent Auction More Important than Ever

Nancy Spears and Michelle Pugh have prepared for the SEACAA Conference's Silent Auction for years now. Nancy says, "I know it seems like we say the same thing every year, but the Silent Auction this year really is more important than it has ever been."

Really.

With this year's Silent Auction, let us demonstrate our appreciation for and confidence in NCAF with our most generous donations and bids.

How can you help?

**Please donate items to be auctioned.
Please bid on items being auctioned.**

Kentucky Head Start Program Featured in Photo Exhibit at U.S. Capitol

"Lost Opportunities: A Lens on Head Start and the Sequester"

The National Head Start Association unveiled a captivating photo exhibit, "Lost Opportunities: A Lens on Head Start and the Sequester" in January, 2014 that captured the fortitude and dignity of Head Start families supported by Kentucky's Audubon Area Community Services. The photos were on display in the U.S. Capitol's Russell Senate Office Building from January 27-31, 2014 and will be displayed at the National Head Start Association's national conference in Long Beach, California on April 28-May 2. The display will then go on tour of the nation at selected sites.

The photo displays from Kentucky's Audubon Area Head Start program, along with those from four other states, offer visual insight into the crushing impact of the 2013 federally-mandated sequester budget cuts. As funding is restored and Audubon works to rebuild, these photos graphically emphasize the need for a renewed commitment to Head Start and economic mobility for all our nation's children.

Created by Curators Without Borders and taken by photographer Sarah Hoskins, the exhibit depicts a day in the life of rural, urban, tribal, and migrant Head Start programs and families in Kentucky, California, Maine, Maryland, and South Dakota. Each photograph captures the strength and resiliency of the at-risk children and families being served by Head Start. Sadly, sequestration deepened the vulnerability of these children and their futures. Sequestration reduced access to the Early Head Start, Head Start, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs. More than 57,000 children lost critical health, nutrition, family support, and educational services. Head Start programs closed classrooms, reduced hours or laid off over 18,000 staff and hundreds of thousands of dental visits, home visits and medical visits did not occur.

In an email to Aubrey Nehring, CEO, and Peggy Grant, Head Start Director of Audubon Area Community Services, Yasmina Vinci, Executive Director of NHSA stated, "Special thanks go to you both for your support and your stellar work with the media! You deserve much credit for this accomplishment. We are all grateful, Yasmina and NHSA Team." Ms. Vinci referred to Audubon's media efforts that helped call attention to the impact of the sequester on children and families and acknowledged Audubon's contribution to the restoration of the Head Start funding lost through the sequester.

Audubon Area Community Services, Inc. is the largest Community Action agency in Kentucky, serving 34 Western Kentucky Counties. Our mission, "Developing Resources... Investing in Human Potential" is brought to fruition by our outstanding Senior Leadership Team and their staff. Audubon employs over 750 employees, covering four Regions, where "Excellence is Everything"! ♦



SEACAA CCAMP Certification Training Program - A Steady Spark

A steady spark of mission stimulation and rejuvenation is readily available in SEACAA's Certification Training Program. More than 1,000 staff members from dozens of local SEACAA agencies are currently active in the program, which offers administrators at all levels a choice of three graduate certification curricula: Certified Manager, Certified Service Provider, and Certified Community Organizer. Each of the graduate certification requires completion of various courses that target key administrative duties and functions. Eight modules (133 hours) satisfy program requirements. A test is required for completion of each module.

The Certified Manager curriculum consists of eight 20-hour modules:

- Module I – History and Philosophy of Community Action: A Historical Review and Philosophical Focus
 - Module II – Fundamentals of Corporate and Financial Management: Maintaining Corporate Integrity
 - Module III – Managing Human Resources: Productivity Improvement Through People
 - Module IV – Organizational Leadership: Managing the Work Group
 - Module V – Managing Organizational Change: The Manager as a Change Agent
 - Module VI – Organizational Excellence: Building High Involvement Teams
 - Module VII – Strategic Leadership: Creating the Future
 - Module VIII – Achieving Service Excellence: Focusing on the Customer
- Both the Certified Service Provider and Certified Community Organizer curricula include five courses, the three highlighted modules are required for both:
- Module I – History and Philosophy of Community Action
 - Module II – Managing Change: Preparing the Future

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Call for Proposals 2014 SEACAA Annual Conference

In recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the War on Poverty, the Southeastern Association of Community Action Agencies is calling for proposals to be presented at its 2014 SEACAA Annual Conference at the Beau Rivage Hotel in Biloxi, MS, September 8-12, 2014. Proposal submissions will address poverty and its causes in American society, as well as the extent to which the law supports the ability of citizens to fully participate in areas targeted by the War on Poverty:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Child/Family Development | • Healthcare |
| • Community Engagement | • ROMA and Evaluation |
| • Corrections/Re-entry | • Self Sufficiency Models/Successes |
| • Employment | • Senior Services |
| • Fiscal Management | • Social Enterprise |
| • Governance | • Staff Development |
| • Housing | • Weatherization |
| • Human Resources | • Workplace Safety and Liability Issues |
| • Leadership | • Technology |

Presenters must be experienced professionals or practitioners. Presentations should be a minimum of 45 minutes and should not exceed 90 minutes in length. All proposals should include a workshop title, description, learned outcomes and presenter name(s) and title along with contact information.

Please submit presentation proposals by May 1. We would be pleased to receive proposals that support the theme and/or address topics in any of the tracks listed. Email: endia.hall@nccaa.net or sharon.goodson@nccaa.net.

Share this information with other staff, agencies, and organizations you would recommend for presentations at SEACAA's Annual Conference. Presenters will gain exposure to community action agencies in the 8-state southeast region. Those chosen will be notified via e-mail prior to July 31.



SEACAA ELECTIONS:

***Let Your Voice Be Heard -
Information coming
May 2014***



President's Corner



The 2014 SEACAA Annual Conference is approaching. You should have seen the Save The Date notice on the www.



Ricky Baker

seacaa.org website. The Annual Conference will be held September 8-12 at the Beau Rivage Hotel in Biloxi, Mississippi. The theme is SEACAA: Commemorating 50 Years of "Changing Lives". We look forward to seeing everyone in Biloxi!

I ask each of you to visit the SEACAA website in the coming months for more information about conference workshops and activities. You can find current and upcoming training opportunities through our SEACAA certification program. You will also find information about our annual awards for agencies, staff, and volunteers. These awards are presented at the banquet each year and information will be posted on the website for the submission process. Help honor those who have helped Community Action "change lives".

SEACAA's mission is to strengthen the Community Action Agencies in Region IV. By providing technical

support, training opportunities, and advocacy, SEACAA remains on the leading edge in providing support to the Community Action Agencies of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. If you know a way that SEACAA can help you or your state, please let us know how!

I ask that if you have not officially joined SEACAA to do so soon. It has never been more important than now to have a unified voice in the Region IV. We must have our message heard and with the strength in numbers to make sure that it is not only heard, but heeded as well. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "There is power in numbers and there is power in unity." So join SEACAA today!

As is our promise, "Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live". See you in Biloxi in September!!!

Ricky Baker
President, SEACAA

SEACAA Executive Committee

President, Ricky L. Baker,
Kentucky

Vice-President, William Holt,
Florida

Secretary, Brenda L. Fox,
Kentucky

Treasurer, Arnold Collins,
South Carolina

Community Action Partnership, Paul Dole, CCAP,
Kentucky

NCAF, Janice Riley, CCAP,
Georgia

Our Mission

SEACAA exists as a professional organization that provides research and policy development resources, education and training to ensure progress toward the elimination of poverty and causes of poverty in the Southeast.

We focus particularly on serving our membership, which represents the interests, issues and concerns impacting the quality of life in communities.

We also link local, state, and national organizations in developing strategies, policies, and actions.

We believe that investing in improving the quality of life of citizens and communities through carefully planned programs and policies is a crucial investment in the nation's well being.

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SEACAA CCAMP Certification Training Program – A Steady Spark

- Module III – Managing Interpersonal Relationship
- Module IV – Developing Skills & Resources for Direct Services
- Module V – Community Services Delivery: Developing Family and Case Management Skills
- Module VI – Organizational Excellence: Building High Performance Teams
- Module VII – Community Organization Skills
- Module VIII – Achieving Service Excellence: Focusing on the Customer

Courses run for two and a half days and are offered throughout the year at various times and locations – often in conjunction with SEACAA Board meetings. Courses can be sponsored by local SEACAA agencies, state SEACAA agencies, or SEACAA itself. Certified Graduates are required to complete a two-day re-certification class each year to maintain an active status.

Beginning with the Charter Graduating Class in 1993, more than 250 have attained Certified Graduate status to date!

For more information about these courses sponsored by SEACAA or for directions and other information about currently scheduled courses, please contact Andrea Carnes at (606) 546-3152, ext 109 or acarnes@kceoc.com. For certification training information in general, please contact Paul Dole at (606) 546-3152 or pdole@kceoc.com.