

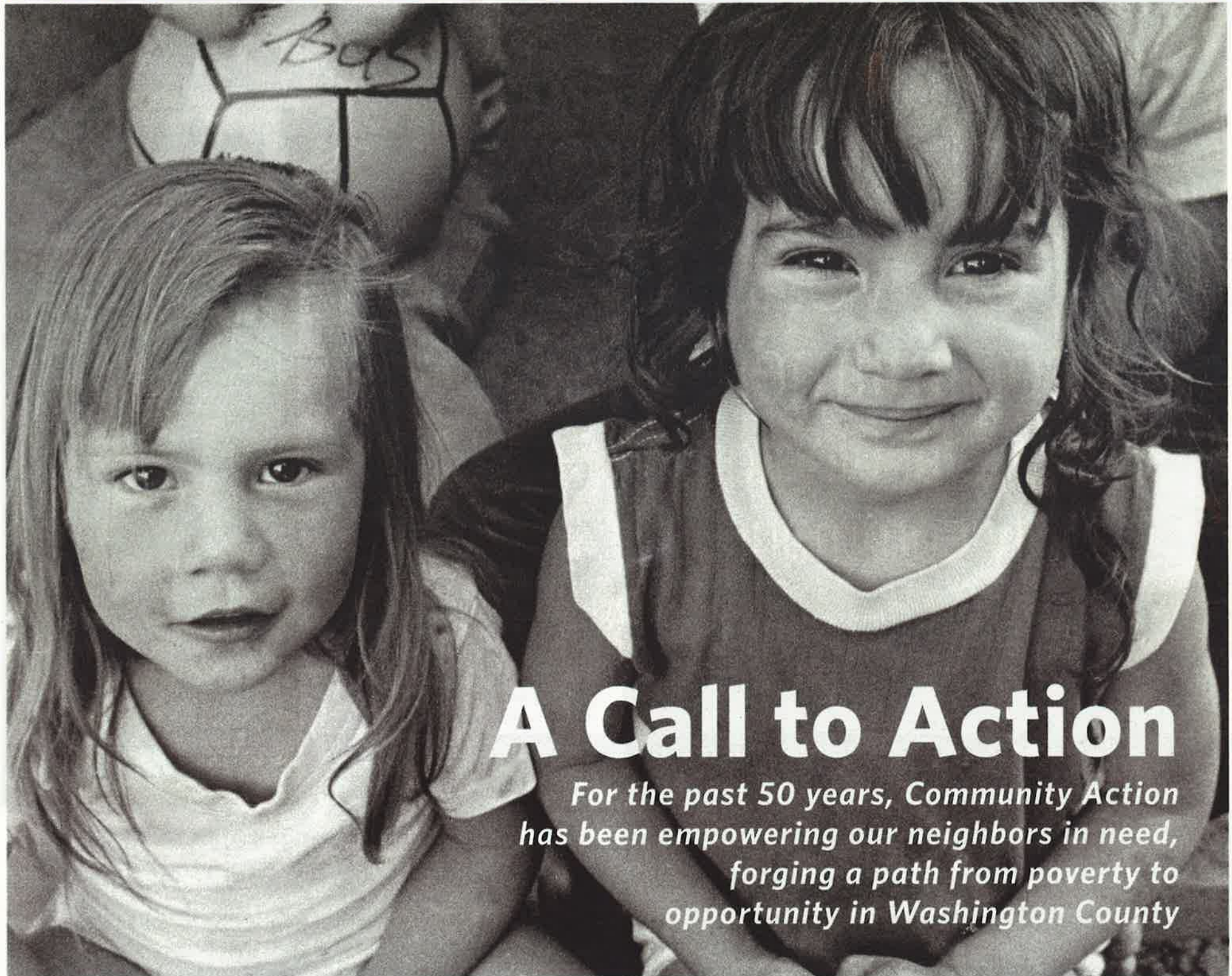


Community **Action**

*Helping people. Changing lives.*

**50** YEARS  
OF SERVICE  
1965-2015

October 2015



## A Call to Action

*For the past 50 years, Community Action  
has been empowering our neighbors in need,  
forging a path from poverty to  
opportunity in Washington County*

A special publication of Community Action and The Pamplin Media Group

*"The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."*

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

Community Action 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Proclamation  
October 11-17 – Community Action Week

WHEREAS, concerned Washington County citizens joined together 50 years ago to address the needs of their neighbors struggling to move out of poverty and founded Community Action in Hillsboro, Oregon on October 13, 1965; and

WHEREAS, for the past 50 years Community Action has led the way to help eliminate conditions of poverty, creating a community where everyone can thrive; and

WHEREAS, Community Action supports more than 30,000 Washington County individuals each year, including low-income households as they develop their abilities to be self-sufficient; and

WHEREAS, Community Action understands that it is only through strong collaborations that we can achieve success for families, and works to be a catalyst for change through its many public and private partnerships, including the State of Oregon;

NOW THEREFOR, I, Kate Brown, Governor of the State of Oregon, do hereby proclaim October 11 to 17, 2015 as **Community Action of Washington County Week** in Oregon and encourage all Oregonians to join in this observance.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause the Great Seal of the State of Oregon to be affixed. Done at the Capital in the City of Salem in the State of Oregon on this day September 25, 2015.

Kate Brown, Governor

Jeanne P. Atkins, Secretary of State

Thanks to  
**Community Action**  
for 50 years of  
tireless work, offering  
a path to opportunity  
for all residents  
of Washington  
County.

Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici

State Sen. Richard Devlin  
State Sen. Betsy Johnson  
State Sen. Chuck Riley

State Rep. Jeff Barker  
State Rep. Deborah Boone  
State Rep. Margaret Doherty  
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County Commissioner Dick Schouten  
County Commissioner Bob Terry

Mayor Jef Dalin, Cornelius  
Mayor Krisanna Clark, Sherwood  
Mayor Denny Doyle, Beaverton  
Mayor Pete Edison, Banks  
Mayor Lou Ogden, Tualatin  
Mayor Peter Truax, Forest Grove  
Mayor Jerry Willey, Hillsboro



### Why we support Community Action

*We support Community Action because we know that there are people in our midst who are hurting and in need of some help to get themselves back on their feet. It's just the right thing to do.*

*Rick and Cheryl Van Beveren  
Reedville Cafe and Reedville Catering  
Hillsboro*

Congratulations  
to Community Action  
from Tuality Healthcare  
on 50 years  
of commitment  
to the Washington  
County community.

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[www.tuality.org](http://www.tuality.org)

## 50 years of hope, help and change

Fifty years. Half a century. That's how long Community Action has been serving the people of Washington County with dedication and empathy.

The faces of poverty in Washington County have changed during that period, demanding changing responses from government and the private sector.

As a fledgling agency created under President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, Community Action was almost alone as an agent for change in addressing poverty in the county.

The early years exposed intense community conflicts over why people were poor, the rights of the poor and the proper role of government in addressing their concerns.

In the midst of those debates, Community Action concentrated on getting its arms around local poverty issues and testing alternative approaches to helping struggling people get back on their feet and achieve greater economic security.

In the 1960s and 1970s, poverty was primarily rural and generational in nature, holding migrant farmworkers, the elderly and disabled in its grasp. The '70s and 80s brought a feminization of poverty associated with young single mothers at one end and elderly women on fixed incomes outliving their spouses at the other.

The '80s and '90s saw a jump in the working poor, households where two or more were employed in full-time and part-time jobs, but with low wages and no benefits.

Then came the Great Recession in 2008, pummeling many residents who



had never before faced severe economic stress.

No one can predict what new challenges lie ahead, but with 50 years of experience behind it, Community Action is prepared for whatever comes next as it works to eliminate conditions of poverty and create opportunities for people and communities to thrive.

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### Acknowledgements

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## OUR MISSION

*Community Action leads the way to eliminate conditions of poverty and create opportunities for people and communities to thrive.*



# Bringing all our veterans home

**Community Action partners with others to care for those who served our country**

*By Leda Garside*

"I'm ecstatic about life," Robert Foley, a Navy veteran, said recently, a major turnaround from how he felt a few years ago.

In 2011, after a painful divorce, unemployment and the emergence of a bipolar disorder, Foley, who had served as a boiler technician in the Navy, became homeless.

"I lived on streets, on peoples' porches, in their garages, in barns or wherever I could get shelter," he said. "When you're homeless, accessing even your basic necessities, such as a shower, a restroom, a place to eat, somewhere to stay dry and clean, is difficult and stressful. You think each day will get better, but it doesn't."

Holding him back were street people who told him seeking succor would be a sign of weakness.

"One of the hardest things for me," he recalled, "was reaching out for help when some people just said, 'Be a man.'"

But he finally reached the end of his rope and in mid-

2013 he called the Veterans Administration's nationwide crisis number.

Within two hours he got a call from the homeless veterans program at the Portland VA Medical Center. He went there first and then headed to the Salvation Army's Veterans & Family Center in Beaverton, arriving with nothing but the clothing he was wearing.

Working as a team, a multitude of organizations



**Robert Foley**

reached out to bring Robert Foley back. The center, supported by VA dollars, Salvation Army funds, and supplementary private fundraising, is a comfortable, welcoming place that was formerly a retirement home. It provided him with much welcomed safety, shelter in a plain room, three meals a day and clean clothes.

The center helped him sign up for mental health classes and visits with a

psychiatrist and primary care physician. Community Action partnered with the center, assigning a capable, caring caseworker to work closely with Foley and help

him get back on track.

The caseworker enrolled him in a free "Rent Well" education class that helps train prospective renters who are having difficulty being accepted for rental units.

Community Action also gave Foley free bus passes and helped him find an apartment.

Earlier this year his Social Security disability claim was approved and he got some back benefits that enabled him to buy a used car. He's also been able to move to a nice apartment with rental assistance from a HUD-Veterans Affairs program.

At 57, Foley is filled with gratitude for all the efforts of people who have stood by him and he's optimistic about his future.

But other veterans still need help.

About 12 percent of the adult homeless population is made up of veterans. Most are male, with about 8 percent female, and the majority suffer from mental illness, alcohol and/or substance abuse or co-occurring disorders.

The total number of homeless veterans has been declining because of aggressive government and private efforts to help, but much work remains to be done to truly bring all our veterans home.

*Leda Garside, RN, is clinical services manager for ¡Salud! Services, an outreach program of the Tuality Healthcare Foundation.*



## Why I support Community Action

*"I support Community Action because of its work helping people learn to better their lives through education, services and respectful caring without judgement. This allows people to build and continue life with dignity and create a positive outlook for the future. As individuals, neighbors and members of the community we can show empathy and look beyond our circumstances to lend a hand to those who need a helping hand today."*

*Linda Eshraghi  
Eshraghi Nursery, Hillsboro*

# Hard times in the Land of Opportunity

A series of photos from 1973 captures the pride and struggle of local migrant workers

Cucumbers.

That's what Clyde Keller remembers.

"Acres of cucumbers in the rich fields of Washington County, picked by migrant farm laborers," Keller recalls. "Chicanos mostly, who were recruited from Texas to live in

smallish plywood shacks."

Thanks to Keller and Community Action, the images he recalls have been preserved in a series of stunning photos, many of which are on display at the Washington County Museum in downtown Hillsboro.

In 1973, Community Action (through the Rural Awareness Project) commissioned Keller to document life in the migrant labor camps.

Keller writes on his website that one notorious land owner recruited Latino workers with advertising showing "modern-style houses."

When they arrived in Washington County, he writes, they found something far different. "Families, sometimes over a dozen children, all lived together in square, a 20x20-foot one-room plywood shacks with inadequate water, heat, and moldy damaged mattresses. A typical bait and switch tactic."

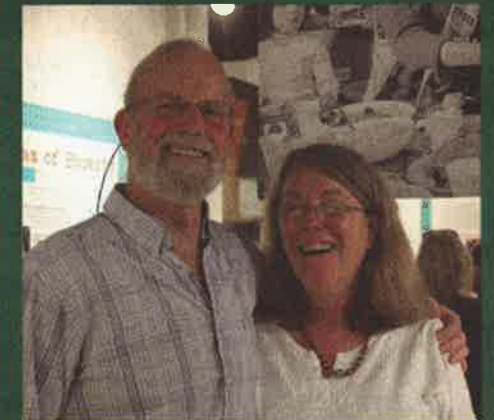
Keller's photos evoke a mix of emotions.

"I was there to take portraits of these indigenous subjects, and here in the Land of Opportunity they were all seemingly proud," he writes. "But these scenes resembled another America to me, going back in time to the 1930s or before."



*"Community Action has led the way for 50 years to create a county where residents are strong, resilient, involved in the community and live with dignity and security."*

**Richard Odell, Board Chair,  
Community Action**



## Why we support Community Action

*"First and foremost, it is Community Action's visionary leadership, and use of the 'power of story' that keeps us committed to supporting their work. Instead of bureaucracy and patronizing attitudes, clients are met with respect, and given the tools to help break the cycle of poverty for themselves and their families. Empowerment, rather than handouts, make Community Action an exceptionally effective organization."*

**Brad and Linda  
Stiles Taylor  
Forest Grove**

# A rich history of fighting poverty

**Museum exhibits shows challenges faced by those struggling in Oregon's wealthiest county**

The Hubble.  
1900s Baseball.  
The repeal of Prohibition.

Since opening its downtown Hillsboro space three years ago, the Washington County Museum has managed to supplement its traditional permanent exhibits of local history with occasional celebrations of compelling and entertaining topics.

So why would the museum agree to partner with Community Action on an exhibit about poor people? Where's the fun in that?

Jim McCreight, chairman of the museum, addressed that question head on last month on the eve of the opening of the exhibit, "The Changing Face of Poverty."

The museum's mission statement, he noted, states that it aims to "bring to life the diverse



**"The Changing Face of Poverty" exhibit will be at the Washington County Museum, 120 E. Main St. in Hillsboro, through Nov. 21. For more information call 503-645-5353.**

cultures that so richly define this remarkable region..., which includes the affluent and impoverished."

Yes, he said at a gathering honoring Community Action's work, the county has the highest average family income in the Oregon. "But for us to ignore the stories of poverty in Washington County would be to fear the truth and provide a false image of the world around us."

"The Changing Face of Poverty," he said "sheds light on the multitude of challenges faced by the people who are our friends, neighbors and even family members" while celebrating Community Action's five decades of working to "eliminate conditions of poverty and create opportunities for people in our community to thrive."

*"For us to ignore the stories of poverty in Washington County would be to fear the truth and provide a false image of the world around us."*

**Jim McCreight, Board Chair,  
Washington County Museum**

*"If the community isn't creating enough living-wage jobs and affordable housing, little progress can be made in reducing poverty."*

**Jerralynn Ness**  
Executive Director,  
Community Action

## The crossing point

**Jerralynn Ness made a career of finding common ground and fostering hope for families in need**

A lot can change in 50 years. For nearly 43 of Community Action's 50 years of service to Washington County, Jerralynn Ness has been a driving force at the organization. After 32 years as executive director, she will relinquish that role on Nov. 1, and retire on Jan. 1, 2016.

**Why did you decide to step down as executive director of Community Action this year?**

For several reasons. Community Action is strong and well-positioned to ensure that Washington County has a sustainable response to poverty reduction for years to come. Our board and staff directors are well-equipped to successfully lead this organization through any challenge that may surface. We have strong public, private and non-profit sector partners committed to our mission. And we are commemorating our 50th anniversary this year, a perfect time to pass the torch on to our next executive director, Renée Bruce.

**What do you consider your major accomplishments at Community Action?**

Establishing Community Action as a trusted organization and partner that can be relied upon to effectively steward resources and deliver impactful services. Also, to be known for a deep commitment to, and respect for, the families that turn to us for help and hope in their darkest hour of need.

**You have spent most of your working life at Community Action. Have your views of the world shifted over that time?**

Yes. I felt that our world was very divided by our views about why poverty exists and what should be done about it. In Washington County many in our community had biases about people in poverty and if felt like it would be impossible to find common ground and work on solutions together. My whole journey in Community Action was to achieve an understanding of other's views, their values, where our values crossed. It was at that crossing point that I found we had beliefs in common that we could unite around, that we all want to live in communities where families and children have the opportunities to succeed in life. Over and over again I watched as hearts and minds changed towards people experiencing poverty.

**Looking forward, what are the principal challenges facing organizations trying to help people find a path out of poverty?**

Organizations can have effective health, education, training and social services in place for families and children, but if the community isn't creating enough living-wage jobs and affordable housing, little progress can be made in reducing poverty. The second challenge is ensuring that these effective services are adequately invested in, so that they can be scaled to meet the need.



**With retirement looming at the end of the year, what's next for you?**

I am looking forward to living freely and having more time with my friends, family and personal interests. My husband and I plan to travel a lot and are looking forward to completing home and garden projects at our properties here and in eastern Oregon. Staying physically active and in good health is a priority. And I will stay on two national Community Action Boards for the first few years.

I am blessed to have had Community Action as my life-long work, and I am grateful for that and all of the people who have been a part of this amazing journey. I am approaching this next chapter of life filled with great joy and excitement, and humility to have this privilege.

**Senator Betsy Johnson Congratulates  
Community Action  
for 50 years in Washington County.**

*Thank you for your service!*



Mayor Denny Doyle and Beaverton City Council

**CONGRATULATE**  
—Community Action—  
for serving our community for the past

**50**  
years

Thank you for all you do!

Beaverton

*"What we do best is listen to those we serve and offer them support and hope for the future."*

**Renée Bruce**  
**Executive Director-Elect,**  
**Community Action**



## A clear message

**Renée Bruce, Community Action's new executive director, will keep group's focus on early education, affordable housing and healthy families**

*In early September, Community Action announced that Renée Bruce, the organization's longtime director of Family & Community Resources, will take over as the executive director on Nov. 1.*

### What will be your first priority in your new role?

My first priority will be to ensure a smooth transition, maintaining a positive environment for the board, staff, funders and the community.

### How does Community Action's work make a difference in Washington County?

With the array of services and support that we provide to the low-income community, we are making a difference each day.

For example, our Energy & Emergency Rent program makes a difference by assisting people with their energy bill or rent which keeps them in their homes. When people are evicted from their homes it is very costly to the family, their landlord and to the community. Our Head Start program works with children and their families providing them with rich experiences so that they are prepared for success in school and in life. What we do best, however, is listen to those we serve and offer them support and hope for the future.

### What are the most important issues affecting low-income people today?

The people we serve are telling us: not enough job opportunities; low wage jobs with no benefits or consistent work schedule; inability to find reliable, high quality, affordable child care for their children so that they can work; a lack of safe, affordable housing.

### Which of those is the biggest obstacle?

Housing is a big challenge for many in our county, but the effect it has on individuals and families getting by on poverty-level wages is even greater. Housing is expensive and our vacancy rate is low, so the people we are working with are struggling to find housing they can afford. If you don't have housing or you are always in the position that you may lose your housing, it is hard to focus on or benefit from the supportive services being offered.



### Community Action already offers a wide range of programs. Would you like to add any new ones?

We are always looking to offer programs needed by the people we serve, so first we need to understand their needs and the support they are looking for. This could mean improving current services or developing new ones. We are a mission-driven agency, so we are very careful to not add programs that do not help us achieve our mission, which is to eliminate conditions of poverty and create opportunities for people and communities to thrive."

### What can Washington County residents do to help support positive changes for those living in poverty in our community?

I have lived and worked in Washington County for 26 years. The first thing we need to do is acknowledge that many of our residents are struggling to make ends meet. Then we need to understand the many issues of poverty and the situations many of our neighbors and friends are dealing with on a day-to-day basis. This will open our eyes to a variety of ways that we can support positive changes for those struggling in our county. We can support building more affordable housing, securing the funding needed so all eligible children can attend Head Start, and job training and education so people can make a living wage.

We congratulate Community Action on 50 years of service in Washington County.

**Banker Fred Johnson**

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# From poverty to PhD

Community Action changed my life by connecting me to opportunities

By Donna Beegle

In 1986, I walked through the door of Community Action to ask for help in paying my utility bills. That day was the beginning of my journey of moving from a 9th-grade high-school dropout to earning a doctorate.

When I came to Community Action, I was a 26-year-old single mother of two surviving in outer Southeast Portland on \$408 a month. My rent was \$395.

I was born into generational poverty; for many decades, most of my family members were uneducated, unskilled and, like 42 million Americans, at the lowest level of literacy skills. My family survived in temporary, minimum wage jobs that didn't provide opportunities to move out of the war zone of poverty.

My dad worked temporary seasonal jobs, the only ones he could get. My mom, like her widowed mom, picked cotton. We were highly mobile and survived mostly on

migrant labor work in Arizona, California, Oregon and Washington.

We followed the fruit season to pick cherries, strawberries, oranges and grapefruits. We picked green beans and dug potatoes. My parents were workers of the land, never owners.

In school, I didn't know the middle-class life examples teachers used to explain academic subjects. I was unable to understand and speak in their middle-class language.

Growing up in poverty, I grew accustomed to believing that middle-class people, even teachers and principals, didn't care about kids like me. It was much later in my life, when I finally had opportunities to interact with people who study poverty, that I realized it was not that middle-class people did not care.

I saw them volunteering for soup kitchens and battered women's shelters and providing Christmas baskets to families. At first, I couldn't figure it out. If they cared, why would they allow poverty to continue to harm fellow human beings? I quickly learned that most held deep stereotypes about people who lived in poverty.

Part of that is because we are segregated in America in the sense that we spend our time with people who are like us. People in poverty associate with others in poverty, middle-class people spend most of their time with other middle-class people and the wealthy socialize with the wealthy. They could no more know and understand my life in generational poverty than I could know their lives in the middle class.

I began studying where people get their information about poverty. I was



Donna Beegle

surprised to discover most people graduate from college without having a foundational understanding of the history of poverty in the United States, the many different life experiences of people in poverty and the true structural causes of poverty. The majority of people in America learn about poverty from the media, which often presents extreme cases and dramatized stories.

Community Action changed my life. It connected me to an opportunity to build my self-confidence, to earn my GED at 26 and 10 years later to earn my PhD in educational leadership from Portland State University.

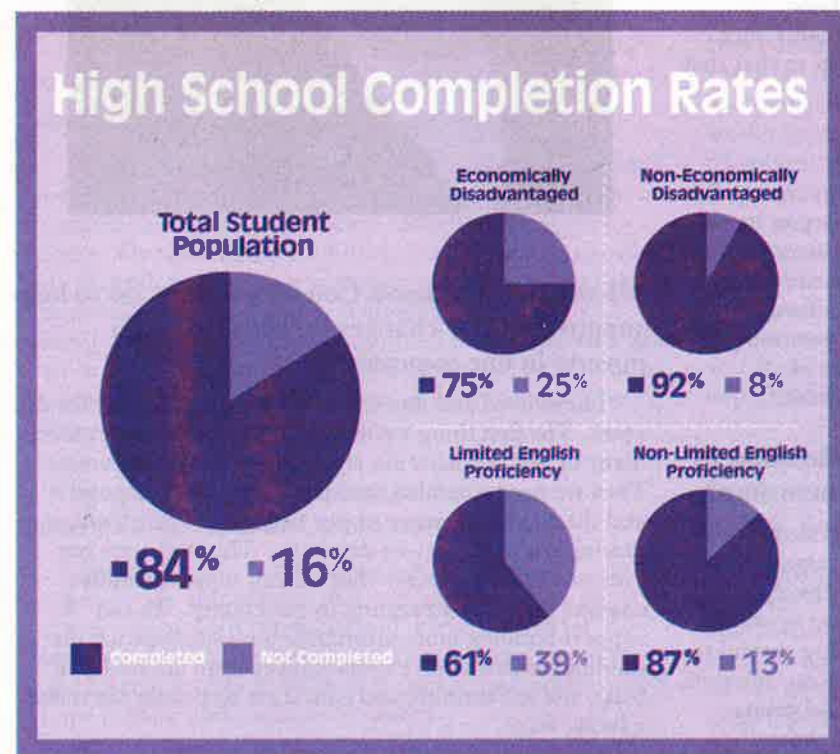
Now I appreciate opportunities to share an insider's perspective, combined with 25 years of studying "what works," to assist our neighbors in moving out, and staying out, of the war zone of poverty.

And Community Action continues to change the lives of people just like me by staying true to its goal of providing access to basic resources and connecting people to opportunities for moving out of poverty.

*Dr. Donna Beegle is president of Communication Across Barriers, based in Tigard*

*"In school, I was unable to understand and speak in their middle-class language."*

**Donna Beegle**



**Congratulations,**  
Community Action, for 50 years  
of service and your help in  
building community and  
strengthening lives.

Your friends at Family Promise  
of Washington County



PACIFIC LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT HONORS  
COMMUNITY ACTION  
FOR 50 YEARS  
OF SERVICE TO WASHINGTON COUNTY.

SERVING WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

**PACIFIC**  
LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

# Giving kids a running start

## North Plains native credits education program for his success

By Jane Hogue

Fifty years ago, the Head Start early education program for children of low-income families was launched in the White House Rose Garden. It was part of a broader effort to eradicate the causes of poverty by creating job opportunities, increasing productivity, and enhancing the quality of life.

Head Start continues to thrive today. In Washington County, Head Start operates programs through Community Action at multiple locations in the Hillsboro, Beaverton and Tigard-Tualatin School Districts and serves more than 1,000 children every year.

Many of the children enrolled in the program over its history are now the bedrocks of their communities and parents of strong families.

"Decades ago, we began developing the foundations for adults who are now leading and making significantly positive impacts in our country," said Blanca Estela Enriquez, director of the federal Office of Head Start. "Every Head Start program in every state has alumni who are repaying the investment Head Start made in them."

One of those alumni is Chad Andersen, who attended Head Start in North Plains 20 years ago. He went on to earn a Masters in Business Administration at Southern Oregon University in Ashland and then to

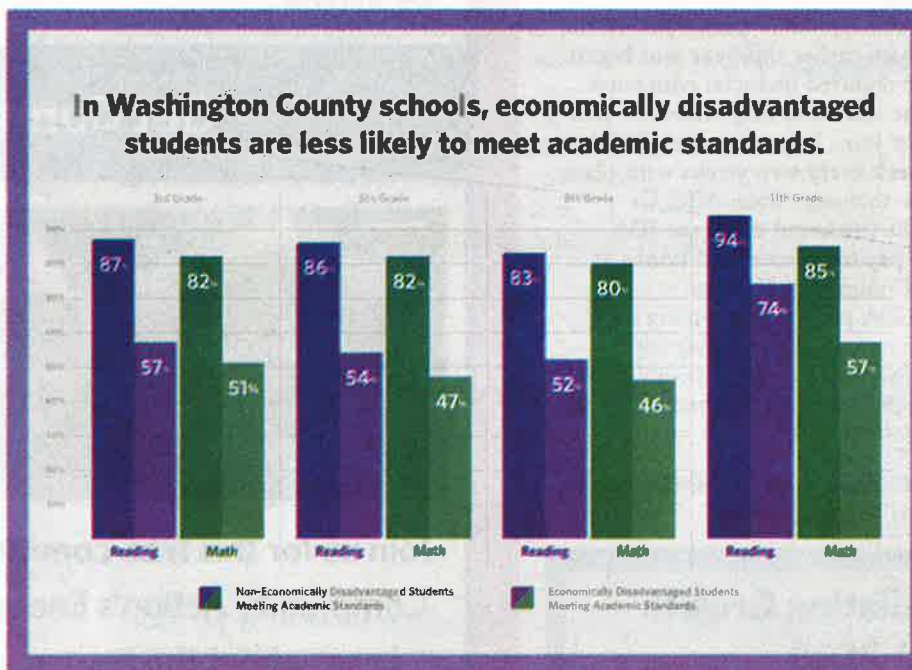
secure a job as an auditor with Crowe Horwath, a respected public accounting firm in San Francisco. "Without the Head Start program, I would have had an even harder time as a child," he said. "Without it, I would likely not be where I am today."

President Barack Obama, speaking at a White House Early Education Summit in 2014, praised Head Start as a foundation for success. "It's the essential promise of America that where you start should not and will not determine how far you can go....," he said. "It's never too early in a child's life to begin delivering on that promise."

*Jane Hogue is the director of Head Start at Community Action*



Chad Andersen



# Where the heart is

By Pat Rogers

Home is a place with a tidal pull, where one's life is revealed "by meeting one's past at every turn, around every corner, inside every cupboard..." wrote Joan Didion in her essay, "Going Home".

But finding and keeping an affordable home is a challenge for thousands of struggling low-income Oregonians.

The Portland region's low vacancy rate for rental housing, accompanied by soaring rents, is behind much of the crisis.

It's generally accepted that if families are paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing they have a hard time affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care. That's the case with half of all Washington County renters, while 1 in 5 are using 50 percent of their income to meet the rising cost of housing.

Community Action's "Issues of Poverty 2015" report notes that the burden is disproportionately shouldered by families with children, people of color, people with disabilities and adults with less than a high school education. Meanwhile, people on welfare or disability with seasonal work or with a criminal conviction often have difficulty finding a landlord who will even accept them.

Stable housing is the foundation of a healthy, stable life, the report says. Without it, it is more difficult to maintain employment, good health, succeed in school and reach one's full potential.

*Pat Rogers is Community Action's Housing and Homeless Services Manager*

**"The ache for home lives in all of us."**

— *Maya Angelou*



## Why I support Community Action

*Providing the opportunity for each and every member of a community to enjoy a good quality of life is essential to the livability and vibrancy of the community as a whole. Community Action has been providing these opportunities in Washington County for the past 50 years and Premier Community Bank is proud to have been a partner with the organization. Congratulations on 50 years of providing hope to so many.*

**Fred Johnson,**  
Executive Vice President and Chief Credit Officer, Premier Community Bank

# Saving Elizabeth

Community Action helps low-income residents reach financial goals

By Griff O'Brien

Things just fell apart.

In 2008, Elizabeth Ebert was struggling to take care of her cancer-stricken father in Tigard. The effort was so draining, time-consuming and distracting that she lost her job.

Then her father died. Unready, she and her three daughters found themselves suddenly homeless.

It wasn't until 2011 that Community Action was able to find Elizabeth an apartment in Hillsboro. And it wasn't until July 2013 that Elizabeth got a job.

She started as a part-time resident assistant at Community Action's family shelter. Now, she's working full-time at the shelter, earning an annual salary of about \$24,000 plus full benefits.

Elizabeth, however, wants more for herself and her family. She wants to get a college degree and become a mental health professional working with the homeless.

Community Action offered a way to accomplish that: sign up for the Individual Development Account program. Oregon's IDA initiative helps build the financial capability skills of low-income Oregonians while they save toward specific goals.

Every dollar saved by a participant is matched, typically at \$3 for every \$1 saved. Participants can deposit as much as they want into their savings account, but the maximum match over 12 months is \$3,000. So \$1,000 in savings will generate

a \$3,000 match, creating \$4,000 in total savings. An IDA can be used to quadruple savings through matching funds up to a total of \$12,000.

The matching money comes from private donations. For every dollar contributed, a taxpayer receives a 75 percent Oregon tax credit. That can be used to directly lower Oregon tax liability, up to the maximum contribution of \$100,000 per return each tax year.

Initiative participants can benefit from their savings and the matched funds to help them accomplish a number of goals, including purchasing a home, fulfilling an educational goal, developing and launching a small business, restoring a home or purchasing equipment to support employment.

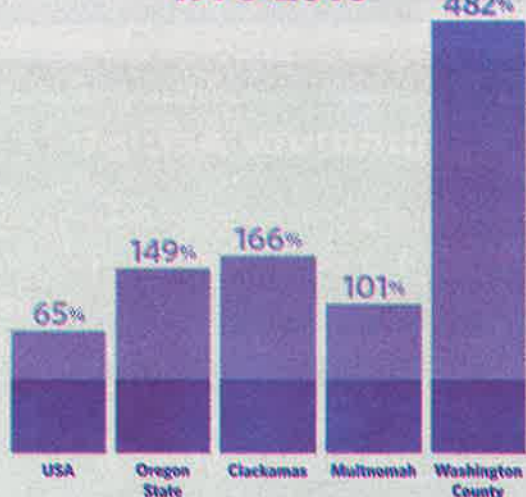
Elizabeth applied to participate in the IDA program earlier this year and began taking the required financial education classes. She started saving under the IDA program in June, beginning with \$30 from her paycheck every two weeks with plans to increase that over time. After six months, she can begin using the IDA money to pay for tuition and books at Portland Community College.

"The IDA program is helping me learn how to save and teaching my children how you can build your future, even though you may have had a difficult past," Elizabeth said.

*Griff O'Brien is senior vice president at Advantis Credit Union*

In Washington County, as in the rest of the United States, the increase in poverty has outstripped population growth over the past four decades. Nationwide, the population has risen 52 percent since 1970, while the population of those living in poverty has jumped 65 percent. In Washington County, the general population rose 237 percent during that time, while the poverty population jumped 482 percent.

## Poverty Population Growth 1970-2010




# Community Action

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## Get Connected!



Join us for this free community event hosted by Community Action's Energy Conservation team.

Learn about the resources made available by Community Action and its partners to Washington County residents and families, including energy savings, health, safety, and much more. In addition, there will be a host of fun activities such as facepainting, giveaways, and refreshments!

Energy Conservation | 503.906.6550

[www.caowash.org](http://www.caowash.org)

Instagram: @cao\_wx\_fair



# A Call to Action

There are a variety of ways you can help Community Action create opportunities for everyone

When any of our neighbors don't have enough to eat, it impacts all of us. When even one child arrives at school unable to focus because she is not sure where she will sleep that night, it impacts all of us.

We all want to live in a community where everyone has a safe, affordable place to live. We are all better off when everyone has access to opportunities so they can support themselves and their families.

Here are just a few ways you can help create a community where everyone can thrive:

## Advocate

Encourage Washington County commissioners and your local elected leaders to continue placing a priority on addressing issues such as early childhood education, work force development and affordable housing. Thank them for all the good work they have done and encourage them to do more.

## Educate

Commit to talking to friends, neighbors and co-workers about these issues. Help others understand how issues of poverty impact all of us.

Ask Community Action to speak on issues of poverty. Email us at [gbrooks@caowash.org](mailto:gbrooks@caowash.org) and we will contact you to set up a time to speak in your workplace, service club, church group or social club.

## Participate

Vote for the renewal of the Washington County public safety levy, which helps fund critical services addressing the needs of our homeless neighbors.

## Donate

Go to [caowash.org](http://caowash.org) to make a gift today. As we enter the holiday season, every tax-deductible gift helps assure that we can provide critical services to families seeking a path out of poverty.



Thanks to our generous sponsors, donors, volunteers, and stakeholders who made the Empowerment Summit possible. With your support, Community Action is helping people and changing lives every day!

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CommAct's

**W**e congratulate Community Action for five decades of assisting some of our most vulnerable residents as they have faced poverty and other economic challenges. Thank you for your service as a vital community partner.

—Washington County Board of Commissioners



**Congratulations to Community Action for 50 years of helping change lives in Washington County. -Love, SRM**



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