Partnerships That Work
Access Community Action Agency
Results That Matter

2012-2013 Annual Report
Greetings:

Welcome to our 2013 Annual Report, covering our most recent fiscal year: July 2012-June 2013. As we’ve done for 48 years, this report provides you with a window into Access, our partners and the good work we do together.

We hope you’ll take a few minutes to look through these pages to see both how we’ve stayed faithful to our Mission and the impact that has resulted. Inside you will find:

- Our Strategic Framework, which provides us with a long-term perspective and guides our daily work
- A look-back at some of our accomplishments during the past year, both with numbers and stories that put a face on those numbers
- A finance report
- The names of our funders and generous donors who play such a vital part in our ability to partner to fight poverty

We continue to collect, analyze and report our data through a results-based approach. That means while we look at how much we do, we look carefully at how well we do it and most importantly how individuals, families and communities are better off because of it.

The core of our work continued to be providing services geared toward helping people meet their everyday basic needs – primarily food and shelter. At the same time, we continued to nurture innovative, successful initiatives that help ensure that people living in poverty find their way to economic stability, and that those who are there do not slip back into poverty.

While much work lies ahead, much has been done as we continue to partner to fight poverty with the help of so many. We hope you find this report informative, insightful and even inspiring.

Sincerely,

Tammy Miner

Peter DeBiasi

Chair, Board of Directors

President/CEO
Thank you to our July 2012 – June 2013 Board of Directors!

The Access Community Action Agency Board of Directors consists of dedicated volunteers who generously donate their time and talent in service of the local community. They represent the region’s towns, private businesses, organizations, and constituent groups.

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*Elected in April
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Our Vision
All Windham and Tolland County residents will be economically secure.

Our Mission
To create the conditions that empower individuals, families and communities to overcome the barriers that impair their ability to be economically stable.

Strategic Commitments
Meet Basic Human Needs
Build Capacity to Accumulate Income and Assets
Foster Positive At-Risk-Youth Development

Our Values
Compassion
Empowerment
Respect
Synergy
Accountability
Excellence

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Meet April, an active and contributing member of the Windham community. A young woman who has been visually impaired since birth, April and her mother, Sharron, came to Access in need of energy assistance to supplement their income after Sharron was assigned to light duty due to a back injury. “The Energy Assistance program is a great supplement to my income during the winter season”, says Sharron. They were also referred to Access’ Home Energy Services-Income Eligible program (HES-IE) to increase the energy efficiency in their home. Through this program their home was “weatherized”, and they received a new energy efficient refrigerator.

April has struggled to find employment due to her visual impairment. But last year, through a job placement referral from Goodwill, April landed an 80-hour internship at Access. “I wanted to obtain a job and not struggle in the system”, said April. “I am very interested in computer work and have become proficient in excel, word, and internet research." With her adeptness using assistive technology, April developed a database of contractors for Access’s Access to Assets program.

During her internship, April learned about the Windham Area Hour Exchange or “Time Bank”, and became an active member, adamantly proclaiming, “Just because I was born blind doesn’t mean I’m not capable”. April’s good work, insight and communication skills have led to her recent election to the Access Board of Directors.

Recently April also graduated from the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities’ Partners in Policy Making leadership training program, where she completed an advocacy project. “People with disabilities often feel isolated so for my project, I worked to increase the accessibility of the Time Bank to people with disabilities”, and “...get them out and show that they also have talent and that they are not just ‘takers’ but ‘givers’”.
Results That Matter

Because of the help and hope we provided:

- 8,115 households were able to stay warm last winter.
- 4,730 adults and 3,894 children received supplemental food equivalent to 103,488 meals.
- 29,424 women, infants, and children were provided with nutrition education, and vouchers to purchase $1,507,162 worth of healthy food to promote their health and the health of newborns.
- 220,885 nutritious meals and snacks were provided to 518 low-income children enrolled in 66 licensed home child care settings.
- 354 homeless individuals -
- 187 single adults and 60 families with 101 children - were safely housed in our Emergency Shelter.
- 32 families moved from emergency or transitional housing to safe, stable housing.
- 69 families and 15 single chronically homeless individuals were able to maintain permanent housing because of the supportive services we provided.
- 21 households avoided eviction.
- 59 one-bedroom affordable apartments were provided for income eligible Seniors.
Eva laughs when she describes how she first learned about the Windham Area Hour Exchange, Access’s new community Time Bank. She remembers being offered literature about the program at a community event and saying, “No, thank you...I didn’t realize then what a big part of my life the Hour Exchange would become,” she adds.

The Windham Area Hour Exchange is a network of individuals, organizations, and businesses that use a time-based currency where one hour of service equals one “time dollar”, to “purchase” services from each other. A year after it started, the Hour Exchange has 90 members who have exchanged over 900 hours of services — including transportation, pet care, child care, home repair, resume writing, mentoring, cooking, health and wellness, and much more. Eva joined the program in May 2013 and quickly exemplified what it means to be an “active” Exchange member.

“I joined because I needed transportation for myself and my family because we have no car,” Eva shares. “I’d had my doubts about how the program would work for us, but I thought I should check it out. And I am so glad I did!”

To earn time dollars that she could use to “purchase”
transportation to appointments, classes, and functions for herself, her husband, and her young daughter, Eva cooked meals for volunteers working at Access’s Housing Now! affordable housing construction sites, and helped with set-up and breakdown of equipment for Willimantic’s Third Thursday Street Festival, one of the Exchange’s organizational members. Her family has also exchanged time dollars for transportation to join recreation department bus trips for their daughter. “She loves those trips so much!” Eva shares. “I want to earn as many hours as I can because I want to make them happen for her.”

In spite of being initially reluctant to contact people through the exchange, Eva has built such good relationships that she was recently elected by her fellow members to the Exchange’s advisory council known as the “Kitchen Cabinet”. “I’m willing to share new ideas and create new things for the Hour Exchange,” she says, “and I can’t wait to help it expand to give other families the same experience we have had.”

Results That Matter

Because of the help and hope we provided:

- 982 low-income homes reduced heating costs because their homes were made more energy efficient through the Weatherization Assistance Program. Total estimated annual savings was over $266,000.
- 986 low-income homes lowered their energy costs through conservation measure provided in partnership with CL&P through the HES-IE program.
- 79 individuals found, and maintained or increased their employment.
- 53 individuals were more prepared to find and retain a job.
- 16 low-income adults and youth actively participated in a matched savings and financial literacy program; and 3 adults and 9 youth were able to purchase the qualifying asset for which they had saved.
- 104 individuals are more financially literate.
When adolescents enter Access’s Community Based Life Skills program (CBLS), they have already faced great obstacles. High school aged youth are referred to CBLS by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Often these youth enter the CBLS program still wrestling with the demons of their pasts that include abuse, neglect, and abandonment. Some struggle with making positive choices, which leads to poor school performance, dysfunctional relationships, and substance abuse. Some struggle with complicated medical conditions.

CBLS teaches these youth the skills and tools they need to make a smooth, positive transition into stable adulthood. The curriculum is geared towards improving each youth's ability to maximize his or her potential in school, at work and in their community.

Tiki Herrick, the Director of the CBLS Program, has a deep understanding of the challenges facing these young people, and brings compassion and caring to her work. She works with them individually and as a group to help them define and achieve their goals, and even face and overcome complex obstacles. The program offers opportunities to learn through practical application, critical independent living skills. Youth participants practice budgeting and money management, health and medical care management, household management, and educational and vocational achievement. They also participate in scheduled recreational activities and cultural events to increase their positive engagement in the community.
Results That Matter

Because of the help and hope we provided:

- 138 divorcing parents of 197 children are better able to help their children deal with the difficulty of divorce after completing the Parent Education Program.
- 50 children or youth were able to remain or were reunited with their biological parents.
- 74 children were able to maintain positive relationships with their non-custodial parents.
- 23 adolescents were supported in developing independent living skills at school, work, and volunteering while living in safe, nurturing group homes.
- 14 youth were supported through mentoring to improve their academic, athletic, and/or social skills for school success.

DCF Social Worker Catherine describes the experience of one of her clients: “I have a 15 year old Hispanic male who is medically complex and Tiki has gone above and beyond with her efforts to ensure this young man can attend the CBLS group... She went to meet with my youth and his foster family at their home. In addition, she made a second visit with me and our nurse to meet with him again in regards to his medically complex issue so she could ensure that if any concerns arose she would be able to address it during the groups.”

Catherine continues, “Tiki has made a fantastic connection with him. I have enjoyed working with Tiki and will in the future feel secure when I have another opportunity to utilize the CBLS' group”.
2013 Annual Appeal

Many thanks to our donors “Giving Back and Giving Opportunity.”

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Hampton Congregational Church
Horace Porter School & Staff
Hosmer Mountain Bottling Company, Inc.
Inner Circle
Kaplan & Brennan, LLP
Killingly Intermediate School
Knights of Columbus
Landon’s Tire
Financial Statement

Meeting Basic Needs
WIC, CACFP, LEAP, Emergency Shelter, Food Banks, Energy Assistance, Case Management, Housing Prevention, EFPP, ASHoW, ASHoF

INCOME $10,256,646
EXPENSE 10,206,596

Fostering Positive At-Risk Youth Development
Residential Services, Mentoring, Parenting Programs

INCOME $1,268,084
EXPENSE 1,434,752

Building Capacity for Income & Asset Accumulation
IDA Programs, ARRA CSBG Projects, Energy Conservation, Workforce Development

INCOME $3,108,199
EXPENSE 3,198,091

Administration & Property

INCOME $972,983
EXPENSE 942,939

Unrestricted Contributions

INCOME $30,000

TOTALS

INCOME $15,635,912
EXPENSE 15,782,378

Change in Net Assets

$146,465

Funding Sources

Federal Agencies
Department of Labor (DOL)
Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA)
Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)
Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)
Department of Energy (DOE)
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

State Agencies
Access Health CT
Department of Children & Families (DCF)
Department of Social Services (DSS)
Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)
Department of Education (SDOE)
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP)
Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA)
Department of Labor (SDOL)
Department of Public Health (DPH)
Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS)
Judicial Branch

Local Agencies
Northeast Utilities (NU)
The Connection, Inc.
Yankee Gas (YGAS)
United Way
The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people’s lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Service Delivery Locations

Willimantic
1315 Main Street, Suite 2
Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 450-7400
Access and Visitation
Access to Assets
Administration & Finance
Case Management
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
Climb the Ladder to a Better Future
Emergency Food Bank
Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)
Housing Preservation
Parent Education Program (PEP)
Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition (WIC)
Weatherization (Energy Conservation)
Windham Area Hour Exchange

Danielson
231 Broad Street
Danielson, CT 06239
(860) 412-1600
Access and Visitation
Case Management
Climb the Ladder to a Better Future
Community Based Life Skills
Emergency Food Bank
Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)
Next Steps Supportive Housing
Parent Education Program (PEP)
Supportive Housing for Families®
Youth Group Homes
Youth Mentoring

Emergency Shelter
51 Reynolds Street
Danielson, CT 06239
(860) 774-4977

Hawkins House Adolescent Group Home
Danielson, CT 06239

Crossroads Adolescent Transitional Supervised Apartments
Norwich, CT 06360

Senior Services
Beckish Senior Center
188 Route 66
Columbia, CT 06237
(860) 228-0759

Elisha Brook
56 New Park Avenue
Franklin, CT 06254
(860) 886-0367