

Community Action celebrates successes.

Melissa's Story

Melissa was the single mother of an active toddler, and working a minimum wage job with no benefits. With this limited income, and not many opportunities for promotion within her company, she was trying to go to school, pay the monthly bills, and was struggling to afford child care for her son.

Melissa came to Community Action and enrolled in the Individual Development Account (IDA) program. The IDA program is a matched savings account program that matches each \$1.00 that participants deposit into their savings account, Community Action then matches that amount by \$2.00. IDA participants must utilize their savings for one of the following purposes: 1.) Financing the purchase of a home; 2.) Starting or expanding a small business; or 3.) Funding post-secondary education. Melissa decided right away that she wanted to apply for the IDA program and save up to purchase her first home for her and her son.

"It has been nearly a year since we purchased our home. Since the purchase, I also graduated from Southeast Community College, and obtained full-time employment with benefits at Lincoln Surgical Hospital as a Certified Surgical Technologist. In March of 2013 I began a Bachelor's program at the local University, and will complete my degree in June of 2014. My son began kindergarten this year, which is conveniently located across the street from our new home. We have already made great friends with the neighbors, and feel like we are part of the community.

There comes a sense of pride and community from home ownership that didn't exist when we lived in an apartment. It is amazing how owning this house has blessed our family. This would not have been possible without the IDA program through Community Action, and we are forever grateful."



Our Programs

Rent and Utility Assistance | *The Gathering Place* | Early Head Start | *Head Start* Homeless Voucher Program | *Supportive Housing Program* | Representative Payee Program | *Matched Savings Accounts* | Money Management Education *Computer Learning Lab* | GED Instruction | *Employment Assistance* | Marketplace Navigator | *Affordable Housing* | Weatherization | *Tenant Support Services* Tax Preparation Services | *LanguageLinc Translation & Interpretation Services*

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We empower people struggling in poverty to reach their full potential and achieve self-reliance.

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Self-reliance is a journey of small steps and Community Action is paving the way.



Community Action offers **support** and inspires **hope**.

Community Action believes that its participants are remarkable people.

How do we leave people more self-reliant than when they arrived at our doors? When families work through our programs, they develop greater confidence and motivation to manage setbacks in their lives. At Community Action the answer lies in empowering people to recognize and make use of their own unique strengths and resources in order to improve their lives.

We emphasize the quality of the relationships we build with participants, believing that each point of contact with them is an opportunity to make something positive happen. We watch for that moment when an individual says, either through word or deed, "I'm ready to work to change my life for the better."

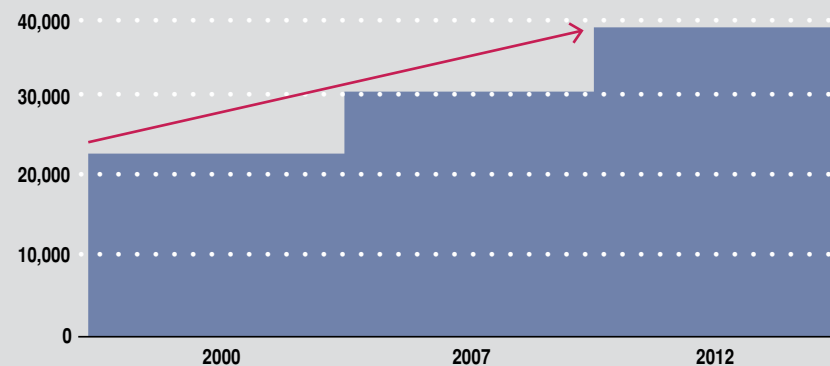
Our participants commit to playing the lead role in making lasting changes in their lives; as a result, they should be able to contribute positively to the social and economic well-being of the greater community long after their engagement with Community Action ends.

Thank you to all who generously contribute to Community Action. Without your support, our work would simply not be possible.



Community Action **changes** lives.

Between the year 2000 and 2012 Lancaster County experienced a 71.5% increase in the number of people living in poverty.



In 2013, Community Action **served** **12,778** unduplicated individuals.

In 2013, 85% of all households that Community Action served were living at or below 100% of the federal poverty level. For a family of 4, this equates to an annual income of just \$23,550.

2013 Revenue

\$10,673,696

Grant Revenue	87.0%
Program Revenue	9.0%
Donations	1.4%
Misc. Income	2.6%

2013 Expenses

\$10,781,227

Basic Needs	4.0%
Child & Family Development	63.5%
Community Services	7.3%
Employment & Training	1.4%
Homelessness Prevention	5.7%
Housing	4.5%
Money & Savings	0.2%
Management	13.3%

Community Action **measures** outcomes.

Self-reliance: reliance on one's own capabilities, judgment, or resources. – *thefreedictionary.com*

Community Action believes that if an individual increases his or her self-reliance, they are better able to manage their living situations and make positive steps toward greater economic self-sufficiency.

To measure this progression, Community Action developed a "Self-Reliance Assessment" based on the work of Fred Richmond and the Center for Applied Management Practices. The assessment measures an individual's ability to meet their basic household needs, their level of employment and education, and their self-reliance (i.e. self-motivation, confidence, and outlook relating to the future) as they enter and exit Community Action programs that provide case management.

In each domain, staff rate participants as "in crisis" (lowest possible rating), "vulnerable", "stable", "safe", or "thriving" (highest possible rating) based on their current situation. Our goal is to observe a decrease in the percentage of individuals who are in crisis or vulnerable, and an increase in the percentage who are stable or above upon completion of the respective program.

Having implemented this assessment for the past two years, we are measuring positive progress toward this goal, as the following graph from FY2013 makes evident. These results are promising. Our entire community benefits from empowering individuals and families to make lasting change in their lives.

Empowering Individuals to Achieve Self-Reliance 2013 Assessment Results

