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Worcester Community Action Council
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608
Phone: 508.754.1176 **Web Site:** www.wcac.net



2008

A Year of Vision



Annual Report

Worcester Community Action Council, Inc.

A Message from the Executive Director

“Pay It Forward” is a strategy we live every day at Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC). We are in the business of caring, serving and paying it forward to help people achieve economic self-sufficiency. Our staff and volunteers are heroes on the forefront of what is often challenging, complex, and, certainly, much needed service delivery through our 20 programs. WCAC is a point of entry for services for over 71,000 individuals annually. As such, the agency continues to build “one-stop-service center” strategies to improve efficiencies for customers and staff, while maximizing limited resources. Our work is an integral component of the broader state and region’s economic development agenda.

It has certainly been a vision-filled and action-packed year! Worcester Community Action Council has a new **3-year goal-driven Strategic Plan** that is responsive to our customers’ needs. Hundreds of supportive partners participated in an extensive planning process whereby five priorities emerged: **Education, Employment, Energy, Asset Development, and Capacity Building/Expanding Visibility.** These action areas complement the state’s agenda within the 10-year education reform plan, to include Readiness Schools and Early Education and Child Care; the Energy Bill and Energy Alternative Initiatives; and Asset Development—particularly for vulnerable populations. The **strategic planning identified a significant gap in services and funding**, where poverty, education, and health disparity indicators exceed statewide averages in our Southern Worcester County service area. WCAC, through this plan, will continue to raise our “advocacy voice,” build new affiliations, and request assistance to address these identified needs. We will reach out to the banking and financial community to support our asset development programs and to the legal community to support mediation services. We seek to solidify our partnership with Quinsigamond Community College and businesses in South County, to expand services in that area of our region, and to stay hard wired to media sources to continue strategic education and outreach efforts.

A necessary renovation happened at WCAC where our offices had a modest, but much needed updating. With a laser focus on providing quality programs, we also knew it was time to provide a respectful

setting for customers and staff. Through the leadership of Board member and National Grid (NGRID) representative, Barbara Hassan, WCAC was the recipient of a wonderful donation of executive and systems furniture from NGRID which jumpstarted the project. The goal was to improve professionalism, functionality, customer service areas, and accessibility. Completed in record-breaking time, thanks to our many contractors and renovation project partners (see page 6), furniture was moved, carpet laid, walls painted, lighting improved, accessible doors installed; and meeting, staff, and classroom spaces all upgraded—in time for the opening of fuel assistance season and on budget! Many thanks to the individual, corporate, and foundation donors who are helping us to close the gap in our capital campaign for these improvements.

In 2007, we welcomed Mark Sanborn, an accomplished professional in energy and conservation work, as our new **Director of Energy Resources.** I continue to be amazed and thankful for the dedication of the entire staff, program managers, and leadership team—Priscilla Holmes, Janet Lee, Donna McGrath, Joyce Rowell and Mark Sanborn—who set the standard for all our employees. Lisa Johnson, Executive Assistant keeps all of us, especially me, going in the right direction every day.

WCAC’s Board of Directors has raised the bar again with increased involvement, support, and giving to the agency. In this issue we salute some of our great Board Heroes for their work. We offer a special thanks to Jack Foley, who will step down as Board Chair (but not off the Board), and all Directors for leading the agency through significant transition from executive management appointments, strategic planning, successful fundraising, and a capital campaign, to completion of the renovation project, search for a new audit firm, and extensive monitoring reviews that occurred this year with our Head Start and energy programs.

Our signature event, the second annual **Action Heroes Program**, honored 7 outstanding individuals and agencies for their generosity and support for WCAC. In keeping with our strategic goal to strengthen partnerships in our energy, youth employment, and legislative work, we hosted events with our



Contact Information

Worcester Community Action Council, Inc.

Main Office

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

Phone: (508) 754-1176
Fax: (508) 754-0203

Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP)

Linda Booker

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x125

Weatherization, Appliance Management Program, Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Task Program, National Grid Energy Wise Program

Mark Sanborn

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x149

Lead Abatement

Jodi Casselman

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x157

The Arrearage Management Program

Jacqueline Langelier

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x160

Project Excel/GED

Alan Tubman

Denholm Building
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Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x181

WINGS/GED

Mary Murphy

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x146

Linda Taylor

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x158

Start Our Success

Todd Smith

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x134

Mediation

Carol Balderelli

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x138

Basic Skills

Charla Hixson

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x139

YouthWorks Summer Employment

Charla Hixson

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x139

Worcester Community Connections Coalition (WCCC), Parent Center, and Food Stamp Outreach Program

Anne H. Bureau

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor

(508) 754-1176 x126

Individual Development Accounts (IDA)

Priscilla Holmes

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x169

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Olga Lopez-Hill

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176 x155

African Community Education Program (ACE)

Kaska Yawo

Denholm Building
484 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 754-1176

Head Start/Early Head Start

Joyce Rowell

MacKinnon Center
114 Pleasant Street
Southbridge, MA 01550

Phone: (508) 765-4738
Fax: (508) 765-9076

Classrooms: Southbridge, Millbury, North Oxford, Leicester, Spencer

Healthy Families of Southern Worcester County

Jennifer Reed

61 Pine Street
Southbridge, MA 01550

Phone: (508) 909-0061
Fax: (508) 764-2462

Community Partners for Children

Danielle Morrow

670 Main Street
North Oxford, MA 01537

Phone: (508) 987-0829
Fax: (508) 987-0792

Please visit our website at www.wcac.net.



Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. Board of Directors 2007-2008

Officers

Jack Foley, *Chairman*

Deborah Penta, *Vice-Chair*

Michael Keegan, *Treasurer*

Jean Perkins, *Asst. Treasurer- for Senator Harriette L. Chandler*

Winifred A. Octave, *Clerk*

Barbara A. Hassan, *Asst. Clerk**

Directors

Scott Bleau

Mark J. Carron

Nancy Concemi

Linda Duggan

Barbara G. Haller, *City Councilor*

Kathleen G. Johnson *for City Manager Michael V. O'Brien*

Eve Laye (Hawaba)

Gary W. MacConnell

Melissa Madera

Kenneth W. Michaud

James A. Kersten *for Rep. Vincent A. Pedone*

Gladys Rodriguez-Parker *for Congressman James P. McGovern*

Jacob A. Sanders *for Rep. Robert P. Spellane*

William A. Van Dam

*resigned

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Granite Press, Inc.*



A Message from the Executive Director

oil vendors, business representatives, youth-provider partners, and elected officials.

The demand for **WCAC programs and services** are at an all time high given the economy. Daily, we see people struggling with paying for food, fuel, housing and medicines or looking for jobs, ways to achieve educational goals, or in foreclosure and needing health care services. LIHEAP (Low Income Heating Emergency Assistance Program), the fuel assistance program, is expected to break all previous service records this winter with over 12,000 households projected to apply for benefits. WCAC's energy conservation programs that augment LIHEAP are growing tremendously, and we plan to build our services to meet the changing demand. Our GED program has seen an increase in enrollment requests with over 200 young, at-risk students self-referring into the program; and our new GED program in South County is in high demand. We are honored to be the administering partner with the Worcester Regional Employment Board and the City of Worcester for the YouthWorks summer jobs program for at-risk youth where over 428 young people were aligned with summer and after-school employment. Our newly opened Parent Center, created by staff and volunteers from the Community Connections Coalition sees many families who need service referrals or counseling with housing and budgeting needs and seeking employment. Over 250 families participated in Head Start, Early Head Start and Healthy Families of Southern Worcester County education and support programs in 7 locations throughout our service area. Trends show that program expansion is needed to assist more families. Congratulations to our Community Mediation Center for receiving the Outstanding Volunteer award from the United Way of Central Massachusetts for their exemplary work to train volunteers and provide responsive mediation services to individuals and families in myriad of community and court settings.

We took an aggressive approach to **marketing, outreach, advocacy, and public relations** this year. Our website, www.wcac.net, designed and hosted by PENTA Communications, Inc., is current, jazzy, and informative. Since its inception in April 2008 to the end of our fiscal year, September 30, 2008, we have had 7,488 "hits" from 41 countries including Sweden, Portugal, Ghana, Ireland, and Poland.

Further, we have been fearless in asking for help, donations, funding, partnerships, and more because we understand that this work can not be done in a silo. Staying ever resourceful with limited resources, the agency sought and secured over \$115,840 in new funding sources,

\$1,023,275 in grants, and a \$245,601 value through in-kind donations. These are significant accomplishments of which we are very proud. Thanks to the generous donations of time, talent and resources, strong partnerships, and interagency collaboratives, we are able to accomplish so much and serve thousands each year.

This is an important crossroad in the agency's history. In January, we enter our 44th year, and the planning for a celebratory **45th year anniversary** party will begin. We are thrilled to announce an exciting venture: in honor of the agency's great work, we are building a new **Leadership Council**—to be co-chaired by our venerable former board members—Barbara Hassan and Tony Simas. The Council will consist of board and staff alumni, action heroes, community champions, and ambassadors who will help us expand awareness, build friends, and establish new relations and move this agenda forward. While we would prefer to not have to be in the business of addressing poverty, but rather building and enrolling folks in self-sufficiency programs, we fully recognize the important work of this agency in affecting positive change in the economic vitality and stability of so many people over this significant period of time. An exciting vision has been set and embraced by the Board of Directors and the entire staff team, and we are fueled by the passion to break the multi-generational cycle of poverty for many families in this region.

We salute our counterpart community action agencies through MASSCAP for building a systems approach in our collective work. And, we thank Congressman James P. McGovern, Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray, the state administration—particularly the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the many elected officials in whose districts we serve, for their support for our work. We extend our best wishes to Senator Edward Augustus and School Superintendent Dr. James Caradonio as they move on, having been long-time friends and supporters of WCAC. Lastly, we thank Sarah Lange and the Legacy Consulting team for their tremendous effort in guiding us through the strategic planning process this year.

Collectively, we are poised for action and ready with an unwavering commitment to reduce poverty in the Central and South Central Counties of Massachusetts. We hope you will get involved and join us in one way or many and become engaged in this important "pay it forward" work! Thank you.

Respectfully, Jill C. Dagilis



A Message from the Board Chairperson, Jack Foley



It has been my distinct honor to serve as the Chair of the Board of the Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. for the past three years, an agency that lives its mission every day serving the families of Worcester County. For greater than forty years, WCAC has been there to support families and individuals as they strive to move beyond the struggles of poverty.

This has been another extraordinarily busy year for WCAC. The rising fuel costs have created an overwhelming demand for fuel assistance funding that has tested the limits of the physical facilities and our staff. I want to acknowledge Mark Sanborn and his fuel assistance staff for their great work at the end of the last heating season and their efforts already with this heating season's tremendous demand.

The WCAC conducted a comprehensive strategic plan for the direction of the agency over the next three years. This planning process was handled very professionally by WCAC and reflected the inclusive nature of the agency with input from staff, our constituents, board members, the business community, higher education, elected officials, and other non-profit organizations. The end result is a dynamic document that clearly charts the course for WCAC over the next three years and beyond, with a focus on strong programs, education, jobs, advocacy, and stable funding sources.

An important objective for the agency over the past year has been to increase the level of advocacy on behalf of the people who we serve and to raise awareness about the agency and the programs that are provided. This successful, comprehensive effort has included media, corporate leaders, elected officials, funding sources, and community leaders. More work remains to be done. I am especially grateful to our elected officials at the federal, state, and

local levels for their tremendous commitment to the agency and the people who struggle every day with the challenge of poverty.

The agency has also responded with great energy to provide a physical facility for the staff and our constituents that reflects the proper levels of professionalism and respect that they both deserve. A very generous donation of furniture and office equipment from National Grid was the catalyst for this effort. We would like to thank National Grid and all who donated funds and services to this capital campaign as the WCAC offices at 448 Main have now been magnificently renovated! We need to also thank the staff for their tremendous patience during this transformation.

We have an extraordinary staff at the WCAC and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation for the work that you do every day. You are truly the heartbeat of WCAC and whether you are teaching young children in Head Start, working with families at Community Connection, or helping families with their utility arrearages, the Board gratefully acknowledges your hard work.

I also want to recognize the extraordinary energy and leadership of the Executive Director of WCAC, Jill Dagilis. Jill hit the ground running when she came to WCAC more than two years ago and has not slowed down. I also want to acknowledge the dedicated, highly effective leadership of the senior management staff. They have formed a top level, professional team that tackles every problem with creativity, energy, and wisdom.

As I step down this year as Chair of the Board, I am very pleased to turn the gavel over to Deborah Penta of PENTA Communications, Inc. Deb will bring great vision and energy to the position and help lead WCAC forward very effectively. WCAC has a great board comprised of elected and public officials, representation from the families that we serve, and members from the private sector. This dedicated body has helped lead WCAC in its mission to bring change to the causes of poverty and to provide opportunities for self-sufficiency to those who we serve. Let us all never forget that poverty is not a choice, but the actions that we take to help others move out of poverty is a choice.

Jack Foley
Chair



Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. Financial Year 2007-2008

Sources of Funds

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Housing and Community Development	\$11,344,393.93
Dept. of Early Ed. & Care	\$179,984.49
Dept. of Education	\$89,761.76
Trial Court	\$56,928.57
Massachusetts Attorney General	\$39,002.85

City of Worcester

\$1,011,956.80

Federal – Dept of Health & Human Services

\$2,236,765.73

Other

Utility	\$552,796.03
Children's Trust Fund	\$310,070.63
Private Contributions	\$303,446.13
Mass Service Alliance	\$110,575.69
United Way	\$54,999.96
Mass Bar	\$32,992.78
Other	\$191,540.60

Total Sources of Funds

\$16,515,215.95

Uses of Funds

Case Management-CSBG Special Reports	\$ -
Cityworks	\$154,402.90
Community Connections	\$160,987.03
Community Partnerships	\$107,356.48
Community Safety Initiative	\$91,329.01
CSBG Operations	\$609,284.01
EITC	\$9,792.58
Food Stamp Outreach	\$15,467.67
Fuel Assistance	\$9,802,627.79
Head Start	\$2,493,149.63
Healthy Families	\$310,070.63
HEARTWAP	\$659,974.53
Individual Development Accounts	\$48,802.90
Mediation Center	\$145,219.97
Project Excel	\$54,999.96
Summer Youth Employment Program	\$687,035.24
Training & Education Programs	\$87,133.45
Weatherization	\$954,585.61
Other Expense	\$122,996.56

Total Uses of Funds

\$16,515,215.95

*This statement is unaudited

WCAC's fiscal year is October 1 to September 30. Capital campaign donations and in-kind goods and services received after 9/30 will be included in the FY2009 Annual Report. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of these lists. Please let us know if we have made an error. Thank you.



2007-2008 In-kind Goods
and Services

WCAC Board Social

Tribeca Restaurant
Spoodle’s Deli
Music Worcester, Inc.
Mechanics Hall
Shack’s Clothing
Eric’s LaPatisserie Café
Mass Liquors
Flor-Al’s, Inc.
Nancy Chang’s Restaurant
Viva Bene Ristorante
Neal Rosenblum Company
Bhadon Gift Gallery
Worcester Art Museum
Streaks Hair Design

Second Action Heroes Event

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy
and Health Sciences
86 Winter American Bistro
Worcester Sharks
Viva Bene Ristorante
Showcase North Cinemas
Trader Joe’s
Sole Proprietor
Panera Bread
Flying Rhino Café
Damar Printing
Worcester Art Museum
Mr. Jason Boucher
Ms. Rachel Lemoine, Sevangaits Studio
Holmes-Shusas Florist
Bancroft School
Telegram & Gazette Advertising
Worcester Tornadoes
Inquiry Systems
Prifti Candy Company
Energy Federation Incorporated
Network Health
Halloween Outlet
Worcester Women Infants and Children
Mr. Hui Chen

WCAC Board Retreat

86 Winter American Bistro
Mass Liquors
Spoodle’s Deli
The Perfect Package
Scano’s Italian Bakery
Ed Hyder’s Mediterranean Market Place
Starbucks Coffee Company

Worcester Lead Fair

Jerry’s Hardware Company
Park Ave True Value Hardware, Inc.
Polar Beverages, Inc.

LIHEAP Conference

Worcester Tornadoes
Worcester Sharks
Polar Beverages, Inc.
Trappist Preserves
George’s Coney Island Lunch, Inc.
Prifti Candy Company
Worcester Historical Museum

Additional Donors

PENTA Communications, Inc.
Barnes & Noble, Inc.
Grossman’s Bargain Outlet
Accurate Resource Group
Mass DPH HIV/AIDS Bureau
Price Chopper
Sam’s Club
Masterman’s Wholesale Distributor
Rutland Library
Clark University
Olympic Trophy
Ms. Deborah Penta
Banana Joe’s Farm Stand & Deli
Arcade Industries
Granite Press, Inc.
Bagel Inn
Target



2007-2008
Private Contributions

2008 Capital Campaign
Through 9/30/08

Robert Blackman
Pam and Moe Boisvert
Anne Bureau
Gail E. Carberry
Consigli Construction Co., Inc.
Coghlin Construction
Services Fund
Fairman** and Polly Cowan
Jill C. and Paul M. Dagilis
Sheilah Dooley
Linda Duggan
Jack and Robin Foley
William O. Gardiner, III
Fan Gaudette
Sheriff Guy W. Glodis
David R. and Rosalie A. Grenon
Barbara G. Haller
Judy Hanlon
Priscilla A. Holmes
Industrial Cleaning Products
Kathleen G. Johnson
Michael E. and
Joyce M. Keegan
Donald J. and Janet M. Lee
John Lund
Diane and Gary MacConnell
F.W. Madigan Co., Inc.
Congressman James P. McGovern
Donna J. McGrath
Dr. Leonard and Maxine Morse
Mirick O’Connell
Nault Architects, Inc.
Thomas J. Noonan
Ellen L. O’Connor
Winifred A. Octave
Vincent A. Pedone,
State Representative
Deborah Penta
Gladys Rodriguez-Parker

Mr. and Mrs. David R. Rowell
Jacob Sanders
Jonathan and Lisa Sigel
Tony Simas
William A. Van Dam
Mary Whitehead Santos
4 Anonymous Donors
Bozenhard Charitable Fund of the Greater
Worcester Community Foundation
Fred Harris Daniels Foundation
George F. & Sybil H. Fuller Foundation
Hoche-Scofield Foundation
Stoddard Charitable Trust

Fundraising/Events

Annual Campaign
United Way of Central Massachusetts

Head Start

Community Health Network of
Southern Worcester County
EDC
Town of Southbridge /
Cultural Council
Wal-Mart, Leicester

Fuel Donations

Barbara Clifford
Nancy M. Concemi
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
MASSCAP/Citizens Energy
Oil Heat Fund
Quinsigamond Village
Clergy Association
UniBank

YouthWorks Summer
Employment

UMass Memorial
Health Care, Inc.
United Way of Central Massachusetts
YOU, Inc.

** Deceased



Consumer Success Story

"I told myself, 'This is the year I'm getting my GED,'" said 20-year-old Lydell Moore, as he discussed his three attempts since 2005 to finish his General Equivalency Diploma (GED). He wanted to get through the holidays and start 2008 with his "mind set" on completing the program. He was so determined to finish that it took him less than a month to get his GED.

Lydell hadn't planned to drop out of high school, but when he stayed back in 10th grade, he stopped attending school in the middle of the year. He had heard about WCAC's GED program from his guidance counselor and other youth. "GED is not like school. You are there to study. You do it on your own time. My GED made me feel better about myself; I achieved one goal, and now I look to the future." Lydell said a lot of his friends are "locked up," but he wants to keep moving forward.

GED instructor Mary Murphy and Job Counselor Linda Taylor supported Lydell and the other students by keeping them motivated—and fed each morning with bagels donated weekly by Bagel Inn of Holden. Community service is an additional requirement of WCAC's GED programs, and Lydell and other students sewed small fleece pillows that were donated to UMass Memorial Hospital's Pediatric wing. Mary Murphy remarked that Lydell is always eager to participate in any community service project. "He is willing to set an example for others, whether it be his classmates, friends, or family members."

This past summer, Lydell participated in the Summer Jobs Program and worked six weeks at the Main South Community Development Corporation (CDC). With his earnings, he purchased a laptop computer for his college class work. Through a state-funded afterschool program, Lydell was eligible for employment and now is back at work at the CDC for 15 hours each week.

"Mrs. Murphy was a good teacher; she helps out on a personal level and pushed me to get my

GED. She and Mrs. Taylor encouraged me to go to college." Once he received his GED last February, Lydell applied to Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) and, with financial aid, started four business classes in September. He plans to enter a technical school or transfer to a four-year college, once he receives his diploma.

Like some of the other GED students, Lydell doesn't always live at home because he doesn't want to be a financial burden to his mom. He's "not homeless, but not homebound." Lydell walks downtown to take the bus to QCC and stops in at WCAC about twice a week to see his teachers and use the computer lab. His mother and three brothers are very proud of him. Lydell has taken over a wall in the family living room that displays his GED diploma, graduation pictures, and other certificates from WCAC's programs. As the oldest sibling, Lydell encourages his brothers to work hard in school and to think about the future. He makes himself available to his brothers, "the way Mrs. Murphy was available to me."



Lydell Moore



Members of the Board: Jack Foley, Board Chair; Jacob Sanders for Representative Robert Spellane; Winnie Octave, Clerk; William Van Dam; and Michael Keegan, Treasurer.



Mark Carron, Board Member



James Kersten, Board Member for Representative Vincent Pedone



Deborah Penta, Vice Chair



Jean Perkins for Senator Harriette Chandler & City Councilor Barbara Haller, Board Members



Gary MacConnell, Board Member



Jonathan R. Sigel, Esquire, Board Member



Barbara Hassan, Board Member & Michael Keegan, Treasurer





2007-2008 Private Contributions

Community Mediation Center Donations in Memory of Mediation Volunteer Shelley A. Feinstein

Vivien & Mike Fritz

Ronald Cooper

Edna Wilson

Lise & Myles Striar

Kathleen Beaty

Karen & Ronald Pinkston

Ronald Gedney

Geri & Sherm Dance

Nancy & Steve Tiger

Easton Hospital Information Technology
Department

Isabel Marinus

John & Diane Zeiner

John Martin

AmeriCorps/Cityworks

Dianne L. Brooks

Citizens Bank Foundation

Fred Harris Daniels Foundation

Fallon Community Health Plan

Fletcher Foundation

Webster Five Foundation

GED

Catholic Campaign for Human Development

District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr.
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Individual Development Account (IDA)

Big Y Foods, Inc.

William R. Carrick

Sovereign Bank

Technology

Anonymous National Donor

Ruth H. and Warren A. Ellsworth Foundation

Imperial Distributors

The Stoddard Charitable Trust

Action Hero Event Sponsors

Benefit Development Group

Berkeley Investments

Bowditch & Dewey

EFI

Imperial Distributors

National Grid

NSTAR

Sovereign Bank

UMass Memorial Health Care, Inc.

Agency

Barbara Hassan

Michele Lyman

United Way of Central Massachusetts Campaign

Renovations to WCAC, 484 Main Street, Worcester

Donations - In-Kind Goods and Services

National Grid

Target

Best Buy

Lowe's

Percy's

Atlas Distributors

Halloween Outlet

Z Café

Starbucks Coffee

Eric's LaPatisserie

Banana Joe's

Contractors

F.W. Madigan Company, Inc.

Delorey Contract Interiors, Inc.

Fisher Contracting Corporation

Kesseli & Morse Co.

North Oxford Mills

Arthur Cole Painting Corp.

Commercial Electrical Contractors, Inc.

Doherty Communications

Liberty Movers, Inc.

Jerry Porter- NGrid facilities

Parenteau Floor Covering

IES Commercial Inc.

TCI-NE





Special Hero

Senator Edward M. Augustus



*Senator Augustus and Jill Dagilis at
2007 Annual Meeting*

Senator Ed Augustus is a great man and a great friend. He has been a champion for WCAC and our services for many years, ever-ready to advocate for funds and programs for education and jobs for youth at risk, state support for fuel assistance funding and revisions to the Community Service Block Grant formula so that we can serve a broader network of people living in poverty.

As our keynote speaker at WCAC's 2007 Annual Meeting, he brought messages of inspiration, support, and encouragement for our work to address poverty in the Central Massachusetts and South County regions. As he turns the corner of his career, all of us at WCAC wish him very sincere best wishes, and heartfelt thanks for his work to advance the anti-poverty agenda and help people most in need.

2008 Action Hero Award Recipients



*2008 Action Heroes: Ken Redding; Monica Lowell
for John O'Brien; Deborah Penta; Leonard Feinstein,
husband of Shelley; Reverend Vicki Woods; Tony Pini;
and William Donahue*

UniBank, Whitinsville - Ken Redding, President and CEO—Since November 2000, UniBank has responded to citizens in need and donated over \$75,000 to help provide winter heating oil to 380 income-limited elderly and families with small children in the Blackstone Valley communities.

Granite Press, Inc., Westborough - William Donahue, Vice President/General Manager generously stepped forward to print 3,000 2007 WCAC Annual Reports at no cost to WCAC for a value over \$2,000.

Deborah Penta - WCAC Board Vice Chair and Founder and CEO of PENTA Communications, Inc. and FLIC (Female Leadership Interest Council) has redefined generosity and donated incredible time, energy, funds, resources and thoughtful work to WCAC worth over \$15,000. Through her support, PENTA provided design work for the First Action Hero Award invitations and programs, and WCAC's 2007 Annual Report, while revamping and immensely improving our website.

UMass Memorial Health Care - John G. O'Brien, CEO—Mr. O'Brien and UMMHC donated an incredible amount of funding, time, energy, and work to the citywide Summer Jobs for Youth Initiative over the past three years.

As a partner in the program, his interest in job training and employment for young people encouraged other organizations to step forward and become actively involved. Additionally, UMMHC has donated financial support to WCAC's Youth Job Developer to maintain the position year round to ensure planning continuity for the program.

Shelley Feinstein - posthumous award—Shelley came to WCAC as a trained mediator in the early 1990s. As an active volunteer mediator in WCAC's Community Mediation Center, she mediated consumer issues, small claims, landlord/tenant and parent child cases. Shelley worked tirelessly to provide services wherever she felt she was most needed and was often called upon to mediate particularly difficult cases. Shelley passed away last year, and we want to recognize Shelley and her invaluable volunteer work at WCAC.

National Grid - Anthony Pini, Vice President Property Services and Barbara Hassan, Senior Vice President and WCAC Board member—NGrid recently donated an impressive and expansive set of office systems furniture to WCAC. This wonderful contribution comes at a time when we are working hard to improve the professionalism, functionality, and accessibility of our facility at 484 Main Street Worcester—our home office where thousands of customers are served annually.

Reverend Vicki Woods - is a longtime civic and clerical leader in the Worcester community. She is deeply respected for her passionate work to include special efforts to support new immigrant populations. Since 2005, Reverend Woods has been a member of Worcester Community Connections Steering Committee—a parent-driven coalition whose mission is to support Worcester families by coordinating resources already in the community; helping parents to become more confident, competent and nurturing; bringing out the voices of residents; linking families to needed services; and helping them to advocate for the services they need.



2007-2008 Program Accomplishments

Youth and Family Development

Partnerships for Children - 29 children in 26 single-parent households were provided child-care subsidies so that parents could maintain employment. Of the 26 single-parent households, 16 were working, 2 were disabled, 3 were custodial grandparents/relatives, 2 parents attended school, and 3 parents were seeking employment.

Basic Skills - WCAC's Basic Skills Program, funded through the City of Worcester's Workforce Central, **provided paid internships and case management for 33 high school students with social, emotional, and learning disabilities.**

Community Mediation Center - Highly trained volunteer Mediators, working in pairs, **mediated 335 court (contracts, landlord/tenant, consumer, personal disputes) and 10 non-court** (family, divorce, probate, custody) cases over the past year. WCAC's Mediation Center responded to an **additional 1,150 referrals.**

The Mediation Center trained **16 new volunteer mediators who come from a cross-section of Worcester County** and demonstrate the diversity of the community. Volunteers speak multiple languages, come from all socio-economic levels with various levels of education, and learn invaluable skills to bring back to their neighborhoods. The Community Mediation Center **trained approximately 50 individuals at 5 additional mediation trainings.**

Worcester Community Connections - Hosted by WCAC, the Worcester Community Connections Parent Center opened last February and provided **236 informational referrals to connect families to local resources.** The Parent Center, prior to opening, provided **parent-to-parent coaching and support to 150 parents** by connecting them with vital community resources such as housing, childcare, mental health providers, and **created and distributed over 4,000** pocket-sized resource guides to parents and community partners.

Worcester Community Connections staff presented at and/or attended more than **24 outreach events.** A combined **480 people received information and services** from the outreach efforts.

YouthWorks Summer Employment - 331 youth participated in the program with an additional 97 MCAS students enrolled in the program. Citywide, **over 55 employers provided employment opportunities** for these young people. At the end of the summer, 50 youth were hired for part-time and full-time employment.

More than 700 youth applied to YouthWorks Summer Employment Program. Additionally, **an average of 600 young people walked in over the summer months** (June, July, and August) to inquire about summer jobs. At the same time, **the staff responded to 2,025 walk-ins for educational and employment assistance** including, but not limited to, resume writing, job applications, accessing higher education, and obtaining or improving job skills.

Partnerships, Outreach, and Advocacy

While many of our programs and services have definitive outcomes, WCAC staff and the Board of Directors, as marketing "ambassadors," are members of numerous boards, committees, and working groups at the state, regional, and local levels. From the Regional Employment Board, Regional Chambers of Commerce, non-profit affiliate organizations, MASSCAP, United Way of Central Massachusetts, FDIC's (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) Economic Inclusion Council, to the Worcester Business Development Council, Worcester Public Library, Older Women's League, Female Leadership Interest Council, Early Education and Care, Worcester Lead Action Collaborative, Massachusetts Directors' Energy Association, and numerous hunger and homeless collaboratives, these participatory memberships allow WCAC staff to educate and further inform over 4,000 individuals and groups about our agency's mission, programs, legislative issues, and client needs.

"We celebrate the important contributions of compassionate and professionally managed nonprofits like WCAC. They provide real resources to people in times of difficulty, and they offer a voice to those who would otherwise not be heard."

— Ann T. Lisi, Executive Director, Greater Worcester Community Foundation



Testimonials & Success Stories

Education:

"GED" helped me find myself in different ways, and is a program where you and others can have a future if you need it, don't miss it."

"The Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. GED Program has helped me to achieve my long time goal in getting my GED. I come in everyday with one thought in mind: work hard so I can give my daughter a better life."

Cityworks:

"I am a different and more confident educator thanks to Cityworks. I have been blessed to work for such a wonderful organization."

— Laura, 2007-2008 Cityworks Member

Community Connections:

WCC client said, "You have really helped me. I am so grateful. I can finally get my life back on track. Thanks for helping me to get daycare for my granddaughter. I can go back to school now."

"I'm a victim of domestic violence. I was in need of housing, food, rent. Worcester Community Connections' parent advocate was able to help me find suitable housing for me and my five children. She helped me get the rent money and food for my kids and is also helping with furniture. I'm very grateful..."

One parent enrolled her children in the Early Head Start/Head Start and Childcare Program and became an Early Start Home visitor. With support and assistance from Early Head Start, she completed her Bachelor's degree and is currently enrolled in a Master's degree program. This mother is now able to support her family of six children.

Funder:

"Worcester Community Action Council has been serving people in need for over 40 years and is a pillar in the nonprofit community. The Fuller Foundation was delighted to provide the agency with a capital grant through the United Way of Central Massachusetts for a new entry door in their main office. We were glad to be part of WCAC's renovation efforts to make services more efficient for all clients—especially the elderly, parents with babies in strollers, and individuals with disabilities."

— Mark Fuller,
Chairman, The George F. &
Sybil H. Fuller Foundation

Board Members:

"It truly takes an inspired community to take action and make a difference. The WCAC exemplifies this spirit. Its executive leadership team, dedicated and compassionate staff, and engaged board of directors all believe in wholeheartedly supporting the Agency's mission. We all believe in the possibility of helping our customers achieve a better life today and in achieving a brighter future for their children tomorrow. I am proud to serve for this organization that is so committed to making a difference in the lives of one person and one family at a time."

— Deborah Penta,
WCAC Board Vice Chair

"WCAC is a priority for me in my non-profit/charitable involvement. By being a WCAC board member, I have been given a special opportunity to educate myself and others about our community's most disadvantaged population and participate directly in the Agency's critical work to fulfill those people's basic human needs. I consider myself fortunate to be able to work with Jill Dagilis and the rest of the WCAC staff who work tirelessly to advance the Agency's mission."

— Attorney Jonathan Siegel,
WCAC Board Member



2008 A Year of Vision

Testimonials & Success Stories



Marilyn Boudreau recently received a new heating system



Scott and Ron of Arthur Cole Painting, Partners in Action



Secretary of Education, S. Paul Reville—Action Hero Keynote Speaker



Tony Simas, former Chair of the board and board member, and Barbara Hassan, former Vice Chair, Assistant Clerk, and board member, will co-lead the new Leadership Council.

Education:

"My son quit the Worcester Public School system in 2006 at sixteen years old. Although it broke my heart not to see him graduate with his class, I was insistent that he obtain his GED. With the assistance of Alan Tubman, and especially Mary Murphy, he did obtain his GED in November 2006. WCAC even covered the cost for him to take his exams.

Until we had a need for your services, I was unfamiliar with your agency. I saw first hand some of the young people, many from tough economic/family backgrounds, helped by your agency."

— Judy Whittle,
The Hanover Insurance Group
FAFLIC Organization

Board Members:

"I am proud and pleased to serve on the WCAC board. WCAC's mission to address poverty through services, partnerships, and advocacy is a perfect match to the needs of our neighborhoods. The well managed and professional commitment of this organization means that it is making a positive difference indeed."

— Barbara Haller,
City Councilor and WCAC Board Member

"The WCAC exemplifies how a Community can come together and truly make a difference in people's lives. As important as it is for the WCAC to offer financial assistance to so many people in the Worcester area, it is even more important that the WCAC provide those same people an opportunity to improve their future....The WCAC is committed to helping their clients become self-sufficient. True change in our society can only come about if we can find a way to end the repeating cycle of poverty in so many of our families. The WCAC is committed to creating this change."

— William Van Dam,
WCAC Board Member and NSTAR representative

2007-2008 Program Accomplishments

Appliance Management Program (AMP) - 340 audits were completed and over 150 refrigerators were replaced this year, which makes a considerable impact on low-income families: newer models prolong the shelf-life of food, save 25% on heating bills, and 25% on energy costs.

Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Task Program (HEARTWAP) - 102 heating systems were replaced with Energy Star-equivalent models. **Approximately 500 systems were evaluated, cleaned, tuned, and repaired.** In addition, limited asbestos abatement work was performed.

The Arrearage Management Program - began as a pilot last year. WCAC saw a significant need to "train people" to pay their utility bills on time. With utility companies as collaborators, households in arrears commit to a payment plan and are forgiven a portion of unpaid bills. For fiscal year 2008, **345 clients enrolled in the National Grid, 100 enrolled in NStar, and 2 were enrolled in the Keyspan programs. More than 1,000 clients enrolled in other programs** including Joe 4 Oil, Distrigas, MASSCAP, FEMA, and WCAC's Budget Counseling.

Lead Abatement - WCAC is part of a citywide lead collaborative to identify and make all properties lead safe by 2009. WCAC is certified by the Department of Public Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program to provide monthly classes for moderate-risk lead testing. An 8-hour moderate-risk lead abatement classroom training was attended by **53 individuals** who are now certified to make their home or property lead safe. Children with poor nutrition absorb more lead than those with better nutrition, which is why our many services connect with one another: fuel assistance, food stamps, and lead testing.

Youth and Family Development

Cityworks/AmeriCorps - 9 AmeriCorps members provided 15,298 hours of service, including a reading tutoring program to 68 K-3 students-95% of these students increased their reading skills. A total of **201 new volunteers were recruited and trained to provide 4,774 hours of service** to families of Pernet Family Health Service. In turn, these **volunteers benefited 8,853 city residents.**

AmeriCorps members completed **6 community service projects** which included creating 45 holiday gift bags for WCAC GED students and sewing 100 fleece scarves for donation to the Goddard School of Science and Technology. In addition, members served at 4 community agencies during **afterschool hours and 8 communi-**

ty agencies during the summer months, serving an additional 100 youth through recreational summer programming, tutoring, and urban gardening programs during the summer months.

WCAC has hosted the Cityworks AmeriCorps Program since 1993. Due to funding challenges, 2007-08 was the final year of the program. WCAC is collaborating with the Colleges of the Worcester Consortium to determine how the program can be incorporated into higher education in the future.

Head Start is a family-focused program that recognizes parents as a child's first teacher and principal influence on their child's development. Parents are encouraged to become active in their child's learning. Parent education, family support, and social services are designed to support and empower Head Start families, assisting them in becoming self-sufficient and helping them to identify and achieve personal family goals.

246 children, ages 3-5 years, were served through the Head Start Program in Southern Worcester County. **40 Head Start parents tested for GED, and 25 regularly attended GED classes.** 18 parents participate in the Head Start Policy Council.

Early Head Start - 92 children were served in a home-based model for families in Southern Worcester County and a child care option in collaboration with the Tri-Community YMCA for families in need of childcare. The primary focus of this model is to involve the parent or primary caregiver in the education of their child.

Head Start staff presented at and/or hosted 6 outreach events including parenting workshops and family support fairs. **Approximately 250 people received information and services at the outreach efforts.**

Healthy Families of Southern Worcester County - 116 teen families or approximately 270 individuals (mothers, children, and fathers) became better parents. Families accepted services supporting their education, parenting, children's development and immunizations, family health and safety, family goals, and parent-child interaction. Harrington Memorial Hospital continues to offer space, birthing classes, advisory board membership, and referrals to Healthy Families, along with other strong partners including WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) and Early Intervention.

Healthy Families staff held 6 outreach events for parents and children that provided information and services regarding parenting skills and community resources. **455 individuals benefited from outreach efforts.**



2007-2008 Program Accomplishments

Asset Development

Individual Development Accounts (IDA) - Assists low-income individuals and families in developing weekly saving plans directed toward asset development. Sixteen income-eligible participants enrolled in IDA completing a minimum of 6 weeks of Economic (Financial) Literacy classes and an additional 6 monthly meetings to monitor progress. Of the 16 participants, 8 have saved the goal amount of \$1,333 and 8 participants saved 50% of the goal. Of the 8 who saved the goal amount, **5 participants purchased homes, 2 used the savings for education, and 1 participant started his own business. The remaining 8** continue to save and monitor their finances.

Earned Income Tax Program (EITC) - in collaboration with City of Worcester, WCAC coordinates the implementation efforts of local EITC efforts, provides oversight to monthly collaborative meetings, and assists with the recruitment of additional EITC tax assistance sites within the city. Last year the collaborative assisted in transmitting **946** Income Tax Returns, which totaled **\$950,637** returned to Worcester's low- to moderate- income families.

Nutrition

Food Stamp Outreach Program - **597 families inquired about applying** for food assistance. Of the 597, **467 local families were eligible to apply** for food stamp benefits to help them purchase nutritional food for their families. 77 of the families received information on how to access emergency food assistance.

Education

Project Excel - a GED and employment preparation program for 16-21 year-old youth **enrolled 40 students; 22 achieved their GED and 9 achieved a significant academic gain.** Of the 40 participants, 32 secured jobs and/or went on to higher education.

WINGS - provides GED and pre-employment skills training for 16-21 year-old at-risk youth who have dropped out of high school. **Of the 24 active students, 22 obtained their GED. Seventeen (17) secured employment, and 13 enrolled in higher education.**

200 youth applied to and tested for the WINGS and Project Excel GED programs.

8 service projects were completed by the GED students which included assembling 125 care packages to the YWCA's Daybreak Resources Program, constructing 65 fleece pillows for children in a local hospital, collecting 115 donated handmade scarves, delivering bagels to the Salvation Army and WCAC Parent Center each week, assembling holiday food packages for 100 people at Friendly House, collating 500 mailings at the Veterans Shelter, cleaning a veterans shelter benefitting 40 veter-

ans, and distributing 100 books to Fuel Assistance clients.

Start Our Success - In partnership with the Worcester Police Department, WCAC's **SOS Program enrolled 30 participants, ages 17-24 years, who were highly at-risk and Gang Unit-referred.** 15 of the 30 participants secured employment, 9 participants received their GED, and 2 went on to higher education. At the same time, **9 local businesses and organizations** stepped forward to give these young adults a "second chance."

African Community Education Program (ACE) - Hosted by WCAC, ACE volunteers provide **tutoring on Saturdays for 75 children** 10-20 years of age; **50 children are tutored after-school.** The children are from approximately 10 African countries. **40 parents attend parent groups weekly,** where they learn about American culture, with a strong focus on how to work with the school system.



Customer Joe Klink with his New Co-Gen system

Energy Assistance

WCAC's de facto construction manager serves as a liaison between the contractors and the Massachusetts TechnologyCollaborative. **This past year, 3 co-generation systems have been installed through MTC.** Co-generation systems are new and provide both heat and electricity.

Fuel Assistance or LIHEAP (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program) - Over the past year, **11,756 low-income households applied for emergency fuel assistance benefits.** 5,717 low-income households were served in the City of Worcester, and 4,579 (total of 10,296) low-income households received emergency payments to vendors within 22 communities in WCAC's service area.

Additional Fuel Assistance - A total of **548 households were served through other programs:** 150 households were served through Distrigas- Citizens Gas Heat Program; 81 households in the Blackstone Valley communities were served through UniBank funds; 187 households received Citizens Energy Oil from MASSCAP funding; and 130 households facing shut off of utility service or in need of emergency oil delivery received assistance from the emergency Food and Shelter Program through FEMA.

Weatherization - **226 homes were insulated**—primarily the homes of elders, families with babies, and the disabled. Energy savings range up to 50% with the average yearly savings at about 25%.



2007-2008 Annual Campaign Contributors

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Jill C. and Paul M. Dagilis
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Staff Recognition

Dr. Stephen Rathmill



Dr. Stephen Rathmill is a long-time volunteer and dedicated mediator for the Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. Mediation Program. As a true believer in civic engagement, a business performance specialist, and an expert in leadership and organizational systems, Stephen took an interest in mediation. Stephen said his professional life has given him “the ability to lead people and help them do well in their lives and jobs.” Stephen became a trained mediator and has been with the agency for the past ten years. He provides invaluable services to the Community Mediation Center. “Whenever the Center is in need, Stephen responds in whatever capacity we ask...and he does all of this with a smile and with much humor!” said Carol Balderelli, Mediation Program Director.

Dr. Stephen Rathmill is President and co-founder of Biotricity Medical, Inc., a medical device research and manufacturing company specializing in developing long-term power requirements based on bioelectric generation. “Because of Stephen’s business background, he brings a unique perspective when mediating the many different types of cases,” said Balderelli. Stephen said that his favorite types of mediation include family, community, and divorce. He recalls one divorce case where he was able to facilitate what could have been a very volatile situation, into a positive and successful outcome. “My co-mediator and I were able to provide a caring and supportive environment, which allowed for a successful mediation,” said Stephen. In addition to volunteering as a mediator, Stephen is a member of the Framingham Rotary Club and an involved community member in the town of Hopkinton, MA.

Mark Sanborn



Mark Sanborn is WCAC’s new Director of Energy Resources, and his title says it all: he has boundless energy, is talented and resourceful and is laser focused on meeting our customers’ needs. Upon his appointment in February 2008, Mark rounded out WCAC’s leadership team bringing a no-nonsense, can-do approach to anything he tackles. Considered one of the state’s top energy directors by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, Mark joins us following an impressive track record that includes extensive mechanical work for the military and with heating, conservation, and energy companies, along with service in our sister community action agency—Community Action, Inc. of Haverhill. Mark is responsible

for managing more than 20 staff, conducting outreach and education presentations on fuel assistance to hundreds of families and individuals throughout the region, working with thousands of income-eligible clients, and administering WCAC energy conservation programs, which are experiencing tremendous growth.

Diligent and detail-oriented, Mark was a key leader with WCAC’s office renovations this summer. He served as our internal project manager to coordinate the myriad phases and details of the project with the F.W. Madigan team to upgrade lighting, painting, carpeting, assembling systems furniture, improving accessible entry, and moving, while concurrently keeping all services operating smoothly and delivering the project on time and on budget. Welcome to WCAC, Mark! You have most certainly helped to raise the bar in all of our energy programs and services.

Robert Tangney



Robert Tangney has been a dedicated WCAC staff member for 38 years—from April 1970 until his retirement in August 2008. Bob has been integral to the WCAC team with particular focus on youth development, education and employment services. Well known in the Worcester Public Schools, neighborhoods, and the community at large, Bob’s warm style, commitment to helping young people, and his dedication to WCAC is appreciated. Bob started as a WCAC Vocational Counselor and, subsequently, managed the Neighborhood Youth Corps/Summer Youth

Employment and Training Program for 31 years. Bob’s other responsibilities at WCAC, prior to his retirement, included the management and development of the Community Services Block Grant Workplan and other agency reports required by Department of Housing and Community Development. While many would shy away from assignments that required the completion of countless reports and myriad of data entry tasks, Bob took on each project with a quick “sure” and no complaints. Bob was known by all WCAC staff as having a positive attitude and always willing and eager to “help others.” Bob, thank you for your many years of wonderful service and commitment to “paying it forward” for people in need.



A Tribute to Outstanding Board Members...

Barbara A. Hassan



Barbara A. Hassan, is the kind of board member every agency hopes for. She is dedicated, responsive, active, creative, resourceful and generous. We are so thankful for her service whereby she has brought her incredible experience as a senior executive at National Grid to her volunteer posts at WCAC.

The NGRID representative on our Board of Directors since December 2004 until September 2008, she was a member of the Executive and Personnel Committees and served as Vice-Chair and Assistant Clerk. During her tenure, Barbara was instrumental in the search processes for several senior management posts, helped to improve human resource policies and procedures, participated in the Head Start/Early Head Start federal tri-annual review process, and was influential in the development of the agency’s extremely successful annual campaign. With an

eye on the agency needs, Barbara secured over \$200,000 worth of donated executive and systems furniture that spurred WCAC’s much needed facilities’ upgrade this past summer.

Barbara recently retired as NGRID’s Senior Vice President of Customer Contact Centers including customer satisfaction. She joined Eastern Utilities in 1969 and National Grid in 2000 where she held management-level positions. Upon retirement, Barbara resigned from the Board of Directors as NGRID’s representative, and immediately embarked on a new career—volunteering at WCAC two days each week to assist the Human Resources Division to conduct a comprehensive audit and update on all personnel policies, procedures, and training programs. Topping all this, WCAC is thrilled to announce that Barbara and Tony Simas—another dedicated former board member—will co-chair a new Leadership Council—to build a bank of friends and alumni to support the agency’s important work.

Mark Carron



Mark Carron, former State Representative from Southbridge, served on the WCAC Board of Directors since 2006. Mark’s passion for providing South County with services and information about WCAC programs is infectious. This past year, Mark represented the Board during the federal Head Start/Early Head Start tri-annual review to

discuss the board’s oversight of the Head Start program. As a Marketing Committee member, he was pivotal in the design and implementation of WCAC’s annual Action Hero Program, which is now one of our important signature events. Although immersed in his own business, Mark makes time to advocate for programs and services needed by the people in the South County area. He has committed to staying involved with the Action Hero Events in the future and, of course, we are thrilled!

Gary MacConnell



Gary MacConnell, a retired Vice President and Chief Information Officer and member of the Board of Paul Revere, has served on and off WCAC’s Board of Directors for over 20 years. He served as Board Chair in 1986-1989, and during his recent 10-year tenure, Gary has chaired the Fundraising Committee, served on the Technology/Facilities

Committee, and been an ever-present advocate for the work of WCAC. His keen understanding of technology and non-profit finance reporting have made him a very valuable volunteer who is known for asking tough questions, holding everyone accountable, and providing honest feedback. Gary’s look-you-in-the-eye, quick smile, and strong handshake signature traits make this no-nonsense volunteer a treasure. Gary has been a terrific leader, and we have been honored to have him in our midst.

“A vital organization for our community which provides services to some of the neediest among us.”

– Gary MacConnell, WCAC Board Member

