

VERMONT COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP (VCAP)

Annual Report 2022





"The staff and volunteers at Vermont's Community Action Agencies work to make sure no family is left behind – that the experience of poverty need not be a given.

Vermont's Community Action Agencies are a critical part of our communities – they lift up marginalized voices, they help us to build and sustain connections between neighbors. Most importantly, they are a strong backbone agency working to make sure that our communities offer opportunity for all Vermonters."

SARAH PHILLIPS,
Director of the State of Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES PROVIDED SERVICES TO

39,612

Vermonters
with low
income

21,381

Vermont
households

4,516

Vermonters
of color

1,059

Vermont
Veterans

10,116

older
Vermonters

7,620

Vermonters
with disabilities

2,770

Vermonters
employed full
time

1,408

Vermonters
experiencing
homelessness

VCAP COVERS
100%
OF VERMONT
CITIES,
TOWNS &
PEOPLES

THE VERMONT NEED

10.9%

68,053 people/28,659 households
live in poverty in Vermont

12.3%

13,975 Vermont children are
living in poverty

10%

6,486 Vermonters of color
are affected by the conditions
of poverty

7.7%

9,073 Vermonters 65 or over are
living in poverty



Vermont Community Action Agencies help thousands of individuals and families improve their economic stability. During 2022 we supported distressed microbusinesses, provided direct business counseling, offered educational workshops, provided essential assistance with tax preparation, and helped Vermonters hold on to and grow their savings accounts. We offered concrete strategies to help Vermonters build a stronger future. "VCAP's statewide Micro Business Development Program (MBDP) successfully provided over \$2.3M in \$5,000 EMBRACE grants to 471 of Vermont's smallest businesses impacted by the pandemic. This critical bridge helped rescue and expand these businesses – a backbone of Vermont's economy." — *Tom Donahue, BROCC Community Action*



ASSET BUILDING

THE VERMONT NEED

23%
of Vermonters have income volatility

20%
of Vermonters have low financial well-being

21%
of Vermonters are employed by micro-businesses

3%
of Vermonters are unemployed

\$63,477
is the median income for Vermonters

VCAP REACH

249 individuals received coaching to build assets and increase financial skills

769 enrolled in financial capability classes

4,043 Vermonter households received tax assistance

Vermont micro businesses received federal funding through EMBRACE grants administered by BROCC Community Action on behalf of the VCAP network

114 New Americans participated in financial coaching, house parties and classes

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

157 Vermonters increased their savings

1,807 Vermonters participated in micro-business and development start-up classes

\$9,410,982 in tax refunds were returned to the Vermont economy through the VITA Program with **\$3,280,351** in tax credits

\$2,355,000 was distributed through EMBRACE to over **471** micro-businesses in the midst of a pandemic when business was faltering and low income entrepreneurs were struggling



"It was somebody right there with me, walking beside me, to guide me through. I have now owned my business for 11 years." PARTICIPANT

"Vermont Community Action Programs Agencies operate as agents for change in the communities we serve. In actionable ways, we respond to the needs of the most vulnerable Vermonters. We listen to our communities and strive to improve the quality of life by leveraging our resources and forming strong and effective relationships with other organizations and state offices. Often, we work directly with community members and providers to develop local solutions to local problems. We move collaborative efforts into integrated partnerships. Community Action Agencies recognize that we are truly stronger together by sharing community investments and building on each other's strengths."
— Jenna O'Farrell, Northeast Kingdom Community Action



THE VERMONT NEED

3,737

Vermont children between the ages of 0-4 live in poverty

14%

of Vermont children of color live in poverty

27,312

Vermont children are eligible for free and reduced lunch

VCAP REACH

821 Vermont children were served

1,248 home visits were made

388 children received dental assessments

571 children received physicals

1,124 Vermont families attended parenting classes addressing barriers to stability

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

981 parents improved family functioning skills

789 children became ready for kindergarten



"To know that someone believes in you and somebody cares, that can be the thing that really gives you that motivation to keep going."

PARTICIPANT

Community Ambassadors, Fair Housing, Vermont Tenants, Mobile Home, Community Justice, Thrift Stores

Vermont Community Action Agencies touch specific populations. Community Action staff advocate for our neighbors in times of vulnerability, lift up marginalized voices and work towards justice through Community Justice programs, security, relief from discrimination in housing and safety from domestic and sexual violence.



THE VERMONT NEED

7%

Vermont adults do not have high school diplomas

1,852

Vermont youth ages 16-19 are not working or in school

14%

Vermonters have poor or fair health status

8%

Vermonters forgo Doctor's visits due to the cost

27,348

Vermonters are uninsured

VCAP REACH

1,800 Vermonters attended Fair Housing workshops to learn about housing discrimination

928 Vermonters were helped with low or no-cost clothing, furniture and household items by NEKCA, SEVCA and BROCC

91 Vermonters were helped through training in the BROCC Community Action's Community Justice Program

Asylum seekers, immigrants, New Americans and refugees find support and a path to strengthen Vermont

VCAP agencies engage in the effort to make our world safer and more sustainable through participation in the work of the Vermont Climate Council.

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

751 Vermonters avoided evictions

678 individuals improved their leadership skills through community engagement

518 Vermonters improved self-employment skills to provide for themselves and their families

513 Vermonters found safety in domestic and sexual assault intervention programs.

90 Vermonters found shelter, **1,974** hotline calls, web-chats and email assistance were provided



"They made us feel as though we weren't worthless, that we did have potential, that every little step was something to celebrate." PARTICIPANT

Food Shelves, Community Kitchen Academy, Vermont Everyone Eats, Covid relief

The Community Action Agencies continue to be first on the scene to address ever growing food insecurity brought on by Covid-19 with more than 50 years of experience feeding the hungry, promoting nutrition and advocacy for the well-being of Vermonters with low income.



HEALTH & WELL-BEING

THE VERMONT NEED

56,010

Vermonters are food insecure

13,610

Vermont children are food insecure

27,790

Vermont households are receiving SNAP benefits

VCAP REACH

3.45 million meals were prepared and distributed to date through Vermont Everyone Eats (VEE) under the leadership of SEVCA

260 participating restaurants are on track to purchase **\$3.7** million worth of food from more than **300** Vermont farms and food producers with more than 35% of the ingredients for meals being sourced from local Vermont businesses

Community Kitchen Academy employed graduates to feed the hungry during the pandemic

5,154 individuals were assisted in applying for SNAP benefits

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

54,352 hot meals were made and distributed to Vermonters in need

18,955 boxes/bags of groceries were distributed



"It's such a relief to know that someone is there in the wings, waiting and ready to help when I fall down." PARTICIPANT

Homelessness and Housing Assistance

"At our Community Resource Center we see up to 140 people a day who are struggling with homelessness and housing. We provide hot meals and services every day. A young mom often comes in with her daughter because her daughter always asks to go to the restaurant. The mom told one of our volunteers how good it makes her feel that her daughter thinks she is eating at a restaurant. 'I feel just like everyone else, she said.'" — Paul Dragon, Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity



THE VERMONT NEED

2%

vacancy rate for housing

1,481

unsafe and unsanitary occupied Vermont housing units

75,478

renter occupied households in Vermont

36,723

Vermont households paid more than 50% of their income on housing

VCAP REACH

VCAP agencies provided services to the homeless in hotel settings. CVOEO has a Street Outreach Team and is operating a Community Resource Center

828 home repairs were provided by Community Action Agencies

1,480 individuals experiencing homelessness during the pandemic worked with Community Action Agencies to find permanent housing

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

121 Vermonters experiencing homelessness were provided emergency housing

714 individuals experienced homelessness and were helped to find permanent housing

479 Vermonters received security deposits

1,207 Vermonters received rental assistance



"You have given me peace of mind. I did not want to sleep outside in the freezing cold. I truly realize how lucky I am. You're the best, you took the bull by the horns and saved me. I have been very, very lucky." PARTICIPANT

Weatherization, Emergency Home Heating, Crisis Fuel, Warmth, Home Heating & Utility Assistance

Vermonters with low incomes are disproportionately impacted by the effects of our changing climate – from heat waves and flooding to health disparity and food insecurity. VCAP leads Vermont's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) which is among Vermont's top strategies for lowering our carbon footprint and reducing the costs of energy use. As a member of the Vermont Climate Council, VCAP gives voice to the needs of the most vulnerable and works to advance a "just transition" to a clean energy future. — Sue Minter, Capstone Community Action



ENERGY ASSISTANCE

THE VERMONT NEED

18%

of annual income spent on energy costs by Vermonters with low income

Vermont has some of the oldest housing stock in the nation

11%

of adult Vermonters suffer from asthma

VCAP REACH

1,033 units/homes were weatherized by Community Action Agencies

\$2,240,474 was spent on labor, materials and replacement systems through the Emergency Heating Repair and Replacement program

\$615,841 was raised in the heating season for the Warmth Program, which is sustained entirely by donations

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

4,491 Vermonters received crisis fuel for short term emergency assistance

3,449 Vermont households have improved energy efficiency and energy burden reduction



"The follow-up to the completed work was outstanding. I asked many questions and was never feeling that I was a bother. Thanks for this incredible opportunity and to feel safe that my home is environmentally sound." PARTICIPANT

VCAP LEADERSHIP



BROC Community Action

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Serving Rutland and Bennington Counties



Capstone Community Action

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Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

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Serving Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle and Addison Counties except for Granville and Hancock



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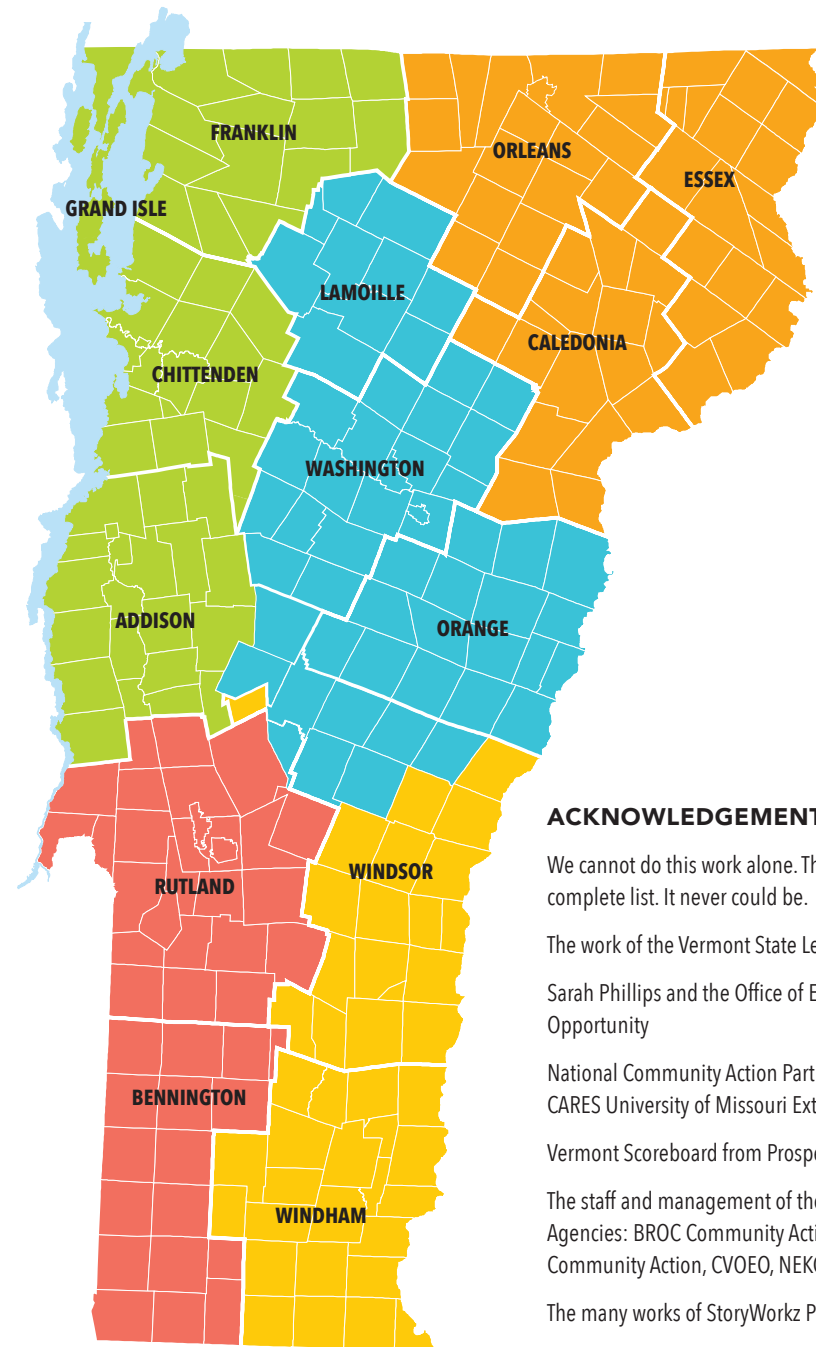
Serving Orleans, Essex and Caledonia Counties



Southeastern Vermont Community Action

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Serving Windham and Windsor Counties, except for Barnard, Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge



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The work of the Vermont State Legislature

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Vermont Scoreboard from Prosperity Now

The staff and management of the five VCAP Agencies: BROCC Community Action, Capstone Community Action, CVOEO, NEKCA and SEVCA

The many works of StoryWorkz Photography

