

**Fostering Partnerships to Reduce  
Poverty & Create Opportunities**

**2020-2021**

**Annual Report**



**CAROLINA  
COMMUNITY  
ACTIONS, INC**

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# About Us

On August 20, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Economic Opportunity Act as part of his "War on Poverty," which created the nationwide Community Action Network. The purpose was to expand educational opportunities, eliminate poverty, provide health and financial assistance to the elderly, and increase assistance for the poor and unemployed. The York County Economic Opportunity Commission had been previously established and by August 2, 1965, Carolina Community Actions, Inc. (CCA) was incorporated to include Chester, Lancaster, and York counties as the service area. The said purpose of the corporation "is to do all things necessary and proper under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Public Law 88-452, and/or subsequent related federal legislation or under any applicable state, county or local legislation which has as intent to aid in improving the education, economic opportunities, living environment and general welfare of the people living in Chester, Lancaster and York counties in South Carolina, either directly or through other private or public organizations." On December 8, 1965, CCA was officially recognized and approved by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and received its first grant funds. Due to the geographic service area being altered through federal directions and actions, the Board of Directors voted on November 4, 1974 to amend the charter to add Union County as part of the CCA service area. Fairfield County was added to CCA service area in 1998. CCA is currently the designated community action agency for Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Union, and York Counties of South Carolina.



## Mission of CCA

To promote self-reliance of low-income individuals and families by forming partnerships, which will provide a systematic reduction of the cause and conditions of poverty.



## 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.

# Leadership

## **Board of Directors**

### Chester County

Azilee Hill  
Burley McDaniel  
Davida Schultz  
Angela Twitty

### Union County

Edith Foster  
Sonya Glenn  
Pamela Sloss  
Harold Thompson

### Fairfield County

Curtis Squirewell  
Michael Fanning

### York County

Fred Garrison  
Denise Lowry  
Cheryl McClain  
Melvin McCullough  
Regeana Phillips  
Chakakhan Sarpong  
Isaiah Venning

### Lancaster County

Timothy Cureton  
Leocadia Francis  
Elaine McKinney  
Bobbie Murchinson

## **Executive Director**

**Karen Brackett Browning**

## **2020-2021 Head Start Policy Council**

### Chester County Parent Representatives

LaTonia Coleman  
Nekita Sandlin

### Union County Parent Representatives

Edna Jennings  
Mary Robbins

### Community Representatives

Kimberly Davis  
Fred Garrison

### York County Parent Representatives

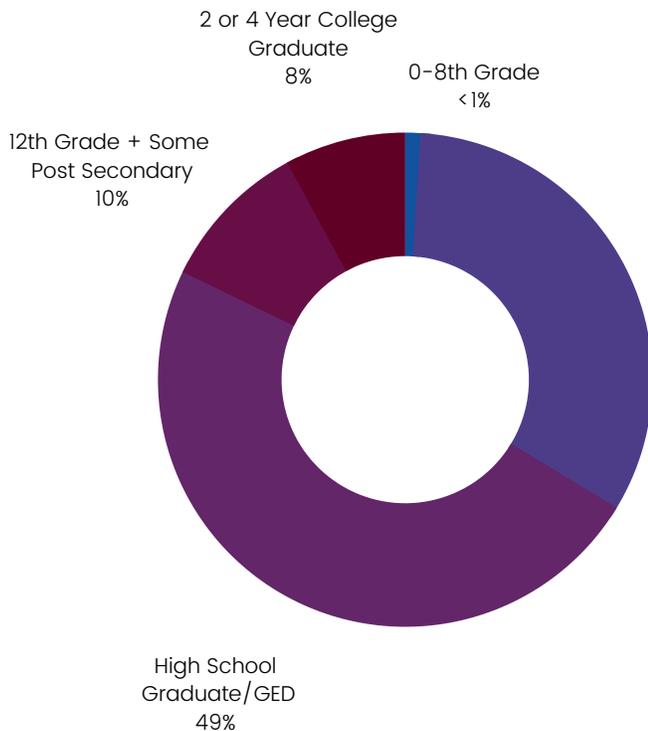
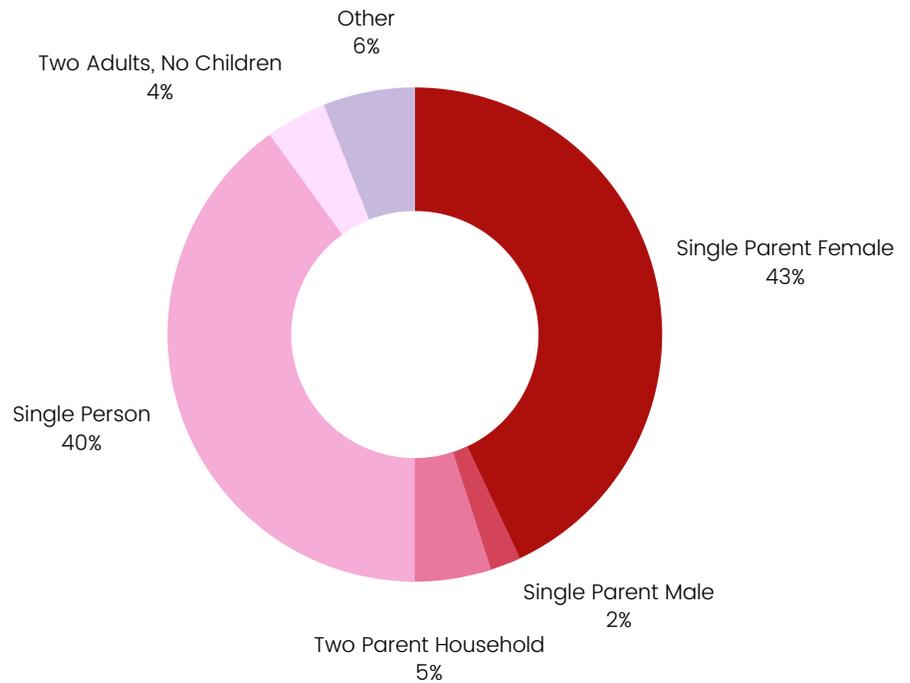
Janiya Goode  
Cheryl McClain  
Nezjma Smith

# Individuals Served

The following data includes demographic information for the 6,277 individuals (3,778 households) those assisted by CCA in 2020–2021.

## Family Type

- Single Parent Female
- Single Parent Male
- Two Parent Household
- Single Person
- Two Adults, No Children
- Other



## Education Level

- 0-8th Grade
- 9th-12th Grade/Non-Graduate
- High School Graduate/GED
- 12th Grade + Some Post Secondary
- Two Adults, No Children

# Individuals Served

## Levels of Household Income Served by CCA

| <b>% of HHS Guidelines for 2021</b> | <b>Annual Income Household Size of 1</b> | <b>For each additional person in the household, add the amount corresponding to the % for Annual Income</b> | <b>Income Level % of Total Households Served by CCA</b> |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Up to 50%                           | \$6440                                   | For each additional person, add \$2,270   | 18%   |
| 51% to 75%                          | \$6569 to \$9660                         | For each additional person, add \$2,315-\$3,405   | 15%   |
| 76% to 100%                         | \$9,789 to \$12,880                      | For each additional person, add \$3,450-\$4,540   | 43%   |
| 101% to 125%                        | \$13,009 to \$16,100                     | For each additional person, add \$4,585-\$5,675   | 13%   |
| 126% to 150%                        | \$16,229 to \$19,320                     | For each additional person, add \$5,720-\$6,810   | 10%   |
| 151% to 175%                        | \$19,449 to \$22,540                     | For each additional person, add \$6,855-\$7,945   | .05%  |
| 176% to 200%                        | \$22,669 to \$25,760                     | For each additional person, add \$7,990-\$9,080   | .05%  |

# Family Income Level

MIT's Living Wage Calculator indicates that a family of four with one working parent and three children in each of the service areas needs to earn above \$96,000/year before taxes just to meet basic living expenses. The income threshold for a family of four, living at or below the poverty level was \$26,500/year.

## Family Size – 1 Adult 3 Children 2021 Poverty Level \$26,500

| County    | Living Wage Rate             | Poverty Wage Rate           | Gap                         |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Chester   | \$96,907/yr.<br>\$46.59/hr.  | \$26,500/yr.<br>\$12.74/hr. | \$60,965/yr.<br>\$29.31/hr. |
| Fairfield | \$101,754/yr.<br>\$48.92/hr. | \$26,500/yr.<br>\$12.74/hr. | \$65,416/yr.<br>\$31.45/hr. |
| Lancaster | \$99,091/yr.<br>\$47.64/hr.  | \$26,500/yr.<br>\$12.74/hr. | \$62,899/yr.<br>\$30.24/hr. |
| Union     | \$97,718/yr.<br>\$46.98/hr.  | \$26,500/yr.<br>\$12.74/hr. | \$61,464/yr.<br>\$29.55/hr. |
| York      | \$109,741/yr.<br>\$52.76/hr. | \$26,500/yr.<br>\$12.74/hr. | \$71,864/yr.<br>\$34.55/hr. |

**76%**

of CCA households' income was at or below 100% of the federal poverty level.

**18%**

of CCA's households served were living in extreme poverty (annual income at or below 50% of the federal poverty level).

# Our Work

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Herein, we present Carolina Community Actions, Inc. (CCA) Annual Report for the 2021-2022 fiscal and program year. During this period, the agency experienced evolving change and growth as opportunities were created to expand CCA's capacity to "meet needs and change lives." The communities in Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Union and York Counties in South Carolina were positively impacted by the assistance and services provided. The agency continues to adhere to its purpose by providing valuable services that include: early childhood education and school readiness; adult basic education and career readiness; financial assistance to prevent utility disconnections and homelessness; and installation of home energy conservation measures to reduce energy burdens.



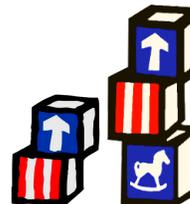
**Community  
Services Block  
Grant (CSBG)**



**Low Income Home  
Energy Assistance  
Program (LIHEAP)**



**Weatherization  
Assistance  
Program (WAP)**

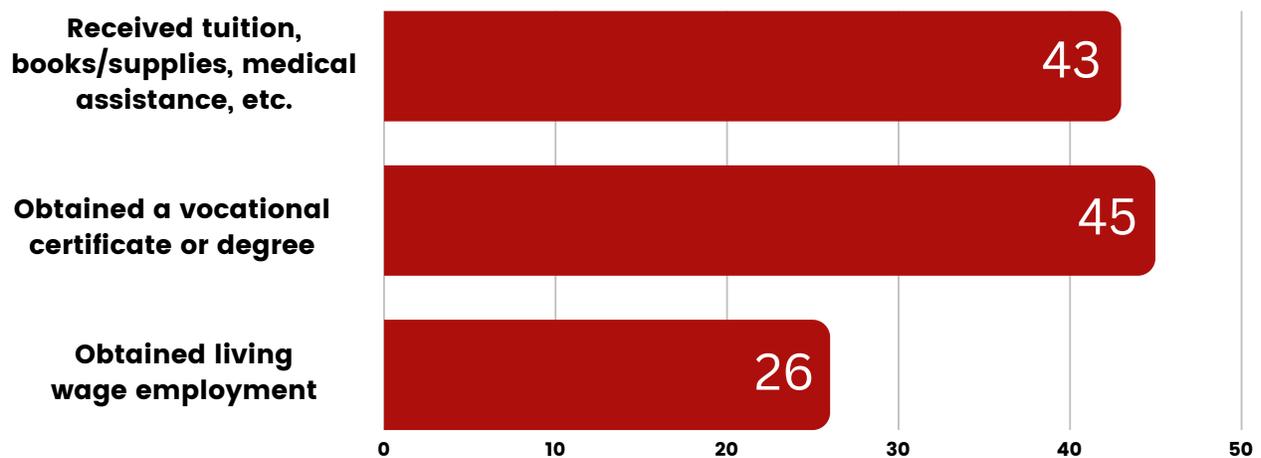


**Head Start/  
Early Head Start  
(HS/EHS)**

# Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

CSBG provides flexible funds for programs that work to meet individual and community needs. CCA uses funds to provide its service users with 4 programs including the following: Self-Sufficiency, Nutrition Assistance, General Emergency Assistance, and Youth Leadership.

The graph (shown below) shows the number of individuals who benefited from CSBG's Self-Sufficiency Program from January 2021 - December 2021



Additional achievements in 2021:

- **Self Sufficiency Program** - provides case management services such as education/training (GED, Vocational Skills Training), employment placement assistance, and support services (i.e. uniforms, transportation, etc)
  - 120 individuals participated in the program in 2021
- **Nutrition Assistance Program** - provides education on proper food choices and identification of nutrition resources
  - 153 individuals received nutrition education and access to food
- **Youth Leadership Program** - provides character/personal development and paid work experience for career exploration for youth ages 16-18
  - 23 youth completed the program objectives
- **General Emergency Assistance Program** - provides emergency financial assistance
  - 818 households obtained/maintained safe housing (556 households through regular funding, 262 through CARES Act/COVID-19 funding)
  - 252 households maintained utilities (173 households through regular funding, 79 through CARES Act/COVID-19 funding)

# Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

WAP is the largest residential energy efficiency and retrofit program in the United States. It has been in existence since 1976 and its mission is to reduce energy costs for low-income persons using a whole-house approach to improve the energy efficiency of the home. Weatherization specialists use state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment to reduce energy costs and improve the comfort and indoor quality of the home while ensuring the health and safety of the household.

Weatherization measures on a home could include any or all of the following:

- Insulation in the attic space, under the home, and/or the sidewalls
- Seal and insulate duct work
- Weatherstrip and/or caulk around windows and doors
- Install smoke alarms and CO detectors
- Vent and/or wrap hot water heater and pipes
- Vent dryer
- Install energy-saving light bulbs
- Check readings on appliances

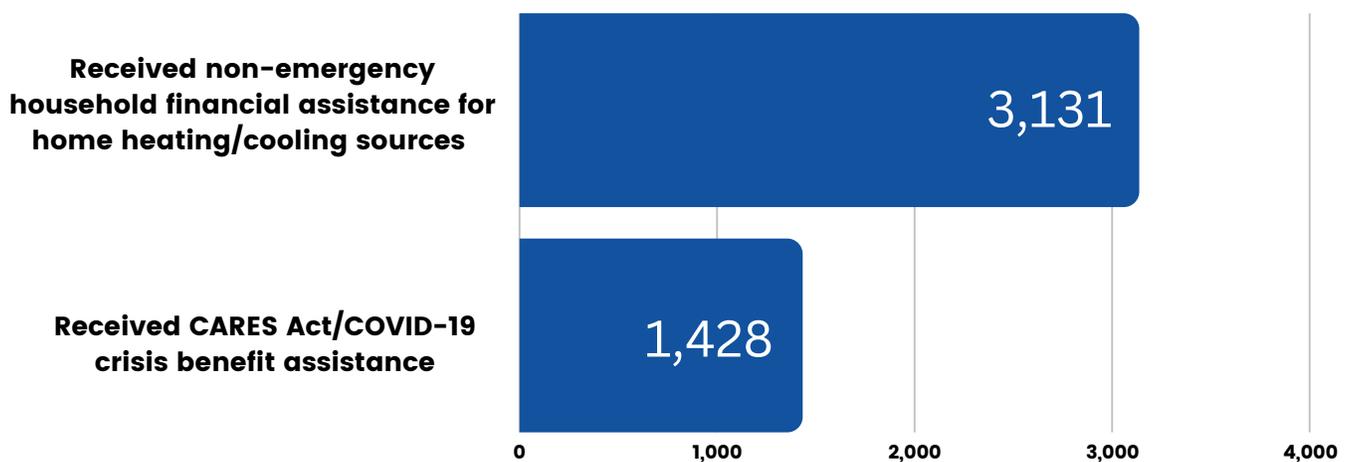
# 37

**The number of LWAP & DOE WAP Dwellings from 4/1/21 to 3/31/22 (15 Dwellings the prior year)**

# Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP is designed to help low-income households meet their home heating and cooling needs and increase energy self-sufficiency, thereby reducing the vulnerability resulting from energy needs.

The graph (shown below) shows the number of households that utilized LIHEAP's services from January 2021 - December 2021



Additional achievements in 2021:

- 514 seniors (adults 60 years or older) and 640 people with 1 or more disabilities received emergency fuel/utility assistance
- 1794 seniors (adults 60 years or older) and 1696 people with 1 or more disabilities received non-emergency household financial assistance for home heating/cooling sources
- 1443 received additional benefits for energy assistance through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) which allowed them to pay their utility bills, avoiding disconnection

# 2,310

**Number of individuals who received emergency fuel/utility assistance in 2021**

# Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS)

Head Start is a comprehensive child development program that has served low-income families since 1965. This child-focused program serves children, ages three to five years, and their families with the goal of increasing school readiness in children. The services are provided for 9 to 10 months during the year. Early Head Start's services target infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, to enhance the development of very young children, and to promote healthy family functioning.

The program did not serve its funded enrollment and sites did not provide the funded hours of planned instruction for its full-day classrooms due to COVID-19 restrictions and safeguards. The program implemented a hybrid model to provide a combination of face-to-face and remote learning. Remote instruction was implemented to minimize the spread of COVID-19 during times when the risk of transmission was elevated based on the number of positive COVID-19 cases in a center or classroom.

Although the structure of the program was different, CCA Head Start and Early Head Start continued to make progress towards achieving program goals.

## Head Start

282 preschoolers received high-quality Pre-K education at no cost to the family, 96% were at or below poverty guidelines

24 children received disability services

278 participants received preventive and primary oral health services

23 fathers/significant males were involved in the child's development experiences

17% decrease in families receiving TANF services because of participation

215 participants received at least one family service

## Early Head Start

51 infant and toddlers received high-quality EHS services at no cost to the families

100% of participants were living at or below 100% of poverty guidelines

51 participants received preventive and primary oral health services

42 participants received at least one family service

13 fathers/significant males were involved in the child's development experiences

The social emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy developmental domains saw gains of 35%-62% in the percentage of children meeting or exceeding expectations. The percentage of children assessed at enrollment below each domain decreased by an average of 41%. Mathematics, science, and technology, social studies, and arts development saw gains of 20%-49% in the percentage of children meeting or exceeding expectations.

# Financial Information

## 2020 Revenue and Expenses by Agency Programs \$12,157,791

|                        |             |       |
|------------------------|-------------|-------|
| Head Start (HS)        | \$5,207,487 | 43%   |
| Early Head Start (EHS) | \$628,299   | 5%    |
| LIHEAP                 | \$3,124,310 | 26%   |
| CSBG                   | \$1,147,324 | 9%    |
| Weatherization (WAP)   | \$322,073   | 3%    |
| USDA                   | \$333,223   | 3%    |
| *In-kind Contributions | \$1,382,436 | 11%   |
| Non-Federal Share      | \$12,639    | .001% |

## 2021 Revenue and Expenses by Agency Programs \$14,512,892

|  |             |       |
|--|-------------|-------|
|  | \$4,796,189 | 33%   |
|  | \$851,832   | 6%    |
|  | \$5,378,785 | 37%   |
|  | \$1,574,258 | 11%   |
|  | \$370,241   | 3%    |
|  | \$113,746   | 1%    |
|  | \$1,392,160 | 9%    |
|  | \$35,681    | .002% |

In 2020, CCA's overall administrative cost was 6%. 94% of CCA's funding directly benefited our service users. In 2021, CCA's overall administrative cost was 5%. Ninety-five percent of CCA's funding directly benefited our service users.

CCA received an unqualified audit opinion for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

# Volunteer Highlights

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Lisa makes herself available to assist whenever and wherever for the Avery Lake Head Start Center. All three of her children are enrolled in the Head Start Program. Lisa was the center's first reading volunteer for virtual story time.



Maurice White is Avery Lake Head Start Center's Volunteer Friday Fitness Coach. He is a second year Head Start parent. Each Friday, the staff dresses in fitness gear to work out virtually with Mr. White to remain active and fit.

# Impact Stories

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## DG (CSBG Self-Sufficiency Program – Union County)

DG came to the Carolina Community Actions (CCA) office in Union, SC during December 2021 seeking assistance. DG shared she was terminated from her employer due to excessive absences that were related to her breast cancer surgery and follow-up appointments. DG disclosed to the case manager (CM) that she was “stressed” due to the unemployment and the inability to pay her rent and utility bills. Her arrearages totaled \$1,650. After determining her eligibility for services, Carolina Community Actions paid her rent and utility bills in the amount of \$2,416.50. After receiving assistance through CCA, DG stated that her stress was reduced as she was able to remain in her home. The staff also referred DG to the Department of Social Services for to apply for food stamps. To assist DG with her employment search, she was provided information regarding Job Fairs and employers that were hiring. She eventually obtained employment with another entity closer to her county of residence as a result of the assistance provided. DG became self-sufficient and is continuing to thrive. DG stated she was grateful for the assistance from CCA during her time of need.

# Impact Stories

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## NW (CSBG Self-Sufficiency Program – York County)

NW informed Carolina Community Actions' case manager she loves helping people who can't care for themselves. As a result of her passion to help people, she believes nursing is her calling.

She explained to CCA's staff that while living in Columbia, South Carolina, she became interested in enrolling in Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA) Training. However, as a result of NW's past history and criminal record, the only school in which she could enroll for CNA training was located in Charlotte, North Carolina. She demonstrated determination to accomplish her dream to work in the medical field by commuting from Columbia to Charlotte each Saturday until she completed her training. Her determination was also evidence by her arrangement with the school to make payments in installments to cover the cost of her CNA training. After successfully completing CNA training she enrolled in Phlebotomy Training and completed it successfully as well. Upon completion of those trainings, she desired to become a Medical Assistant and continue to work at an urgent care facility. NW enrolled in Carolina Community Actions Self – Sufficiency Program on April 13, 2021 for financial assistance with the cost of her medication and Medical Assistant Training. Carolina Community Actions sponsored her training at Next Level Health Institute where she successfully completed the training program. She passed the state board exam on September 23, 2021 and obtained employment at a doctor's office in Charlotte at a rate of \$20.00 per hour.

NW eventually wants to earn a RN or LPN degree. She stated that she refuses to give up and is willing and ready to take the necessary classes to pursue her goals. She indicated that her ultimate goal is to work in a hospital emergency room or doctor's office.

# Impact Stories

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## NF (Weatherization Assistance Program)

Weatherization client NF and his wife are an elderly, disabled couple living on a fixed income. They use wood and propane to heat their home. The rising price of wood and propane created financial hardship for the couple. They stated that some days they would not heat their home or go without purchasing medication or food so they would heat the home. CCA's Weatherization Field Inspector and Coordinator conducted an audit of the house and discovered some health and safety issues with the heating source. One of the issues was the placement of the propane tank, which was directly beside the fireplace. CCA's staff also noticed that the refrigerator leaked water from the bottom. The home had very little attic insulation and the ductwork had holes. Upon the completion of the energy audit, a work order was created with the intent of making the home more energy efficient, comfortable, and safe. The couple received a new HVAC system and the propane tank was moved to a safe location. New ductwork, attic, and floor insulation were installed. The couple also received a new refrigerator.

NF and his wife were absolutely pleased with the work performed. The couple was overjoyed about their new refrigerator and the icemaker. They stated that they could tell the difference in the temperature of their home with the new insulation and HVAC system.