WARREN-HAMILTON
COUNTIES ACEO, INC.
2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the Executive Director

If you spend any amount of time in the Community Action pantries and happen to have been around for a few years, as I have been, you notice trends that are usually indicative of how people are faring in the general population. Beginning in 2017, demands for our services began to fall. The economy was improving and there were jobs to be had. The number of food baskets that the agency provided along with the number of families accessing the weekly free bread and produce fell an average of 15% from 2017 to 2019. Similarly, the unduplicated number of households receiving agency services declined from 1736 in 2017 to 1500 in 2019. Another positive indicator was the number of persons stating that they had health insurance. In 2017 1074 out of 1736 households had health insurance compared to 1446 out of 1649 and increase of 26% things were looking up or so they appeared. However, circumstances change quickly and other trends were also becoming apparent. In 2017, there were 48 individuals/households presenting themselves as being homeless when seeking assistance. By 2019 that number has risen to 66, representing a 15% increase. Similarly, the number of individuals/households presenting themselves as being employed was 744 in 2017 but had dropped to 659 in 2019, a 13% decrease. Guess what? Traffic in both pantries is once again increasing and since there is now no penalty for not having health insurance the number of families reporting that they have coverage dropped from 1446 in 2018 to 1074 in 2019.

The economy has definitely improved but once again not for everyone. Housing and the cost of housing are real concerns for many and unfortunately an improved economy seems to help housing costs rise instead of fall. As I write this, sitting in the pantry, a steady stream of people walk in and then walk out with bags of food in their hands. Obviously, Community Action continues to provide much needed assistance to many area residents who would without a doubt have a much harder time making ends meet without us. Us, it is definitely a group effort. From the Board to the staff to the volunteers, even those who have to be here, my sincerest appreciation.

Sincerely,

Lynn Ackershoek
Executive Director

Indian Lake Pantry
Donated flowers and vegetable
Message from the Board President

Warren County  932 sq. miles  Warren-Hamilton Counties  867 sq. miles of land  65 sq. miles of water
Population  65,620

Hamilton County  1,808 sq. miles  1718 sq. miles of land  90 sq. miles of water
Population  4,836

Lynn Ackershoek—Executive Officer
The Central Office is a busy place - 19 employees  14 Board Members

A review of the Executive Director’s evaluation for 2019, 15 items shows a 92% evaluation
Above average/Commendable rating-
Congratulation Lynn

9/20/19 shows a 28 item budget totaling $ 2,045,953 - Some items, Transportation, Salary and Operational
items, Lynn works with these items on a daily basis.

Monthly Program Report - Pounds of Food  722,570 361 tons Indian Lake (Hamilton County) also receive
some of this, food is unloaded from trucks, sorted and provided to pantry visitors. Summer lunches, food bask-
ets, clothing. Monthly items covered Housing, Handyman, Food pantry, Neighborhood Centers, Transporta-
tion, Weatherization.

Yes Lynn has a full plate maintaining many operations. Her years of employment have made her a key per-
son in this Agency.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph R. Sullivan, Board President

Ryan St. Amour

Queensbury Hockey Players annual food drive
You know how many say “A few bad apples spoil the pie!” Well I guess you could say we have had our share of rotten apples. As quickly as one might cast these apples aside; we try to handle our apples as gently as possible in order to prevent further damage. Not everyone handles or sees a situation in the same way. What we see as being everyday experiences another may see it as being catastrophic. Until you walk “in someone’s shoes” you should never assume things are OK. By taking the time to actively listen you’ll have a better understanding of the vulnerability one is experiencing and offer guidance.

Our agency in Hamilton County, may not always have the manpower, funding, or the ability to provide the proper guidance necessary for individuals to move forward. Many of those who come to us feel broken, insecure and even being all alone. Networking with other agencies offers us the ability to increase the chances to engage our clients to make informed decisions and offer education.

This year we have become more interactive with those who are in need of guidance. They often come into the office; finding themselves in an uncomfortable position and leave with some sense of dignity. Without the advantage of computers, with programs which can instantly bring up information pertaining to consumers, we must go through each individual file. By doing so we are familiarized with family dynamics, which vary greatly, and can interact with each household member. Often preventing anyone from falling through the cracks.

This past year our community and others have become more united than ever. The food pantry has always been viewed as the primary focus; especially with those unfamiliar with Community Action. Therefore food donations and holidays (Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter) are often what donors believe can make the greatest difference.

However, poverty and food insecurity is a year round problem. This is why we do our best to educate donors, that in addition to food, holidays, and emergency assistance (housing, heat, electric or medications) we provide many other services. Clothing, shoes, and winter boots; household items, furniture, and bedding; toiletries, feminine products, and toilet paper; school supplies, gifts for birthdays, and offer specialty food items for those who have health issues or dietary restrictions.

As a council member to the Regional Food Bank of NENY I’ve become more familiar with their programs/services, and been able to offer suggestions in which the food bank could possibly help us better serve the less fortunate. Council members also provide feedback and support to one another, thereby making sure a bad apple or two don’t make us lose sight as to why we do what we do. Sometimes it can be daunting, to put others before your own personal needs; yet we must remember, individuals are more than just a product of numbers and stats.

Deborah Ameden
Client Service Director

Debby Ameden
Hamilton County
Client Service Director
Staff Members

Lynn Ackershoek - Executive Director
Kathy French - Fiscal Officer
Michael Lajeunesse - Case Manager/Emerg. Servs
Stephanie Gulick - ASP Director
Chad Colegrove - Warren Cty NOC Worker
Deborah Ameden - Hamilton County Director
Darci Swieten - Hamilton Cty NOC Worker
Susan Sawn - Program Assistant
Theresa Whiting - NOC Worker / Driver
Pete Flewelling - Driver

Andrew Pritchard - Weatherization Director
John Miller - Wx Admin. Assistant
Andy McMurray - Energy Auditor
Robert Petty - Weatherization Foreman
Anthony Helm - Weatherization Foreman
Ryan St. Amour - Weatherization Laborer
Mike Vetrano - Weatherization Laborer
Jim Gregory - Weatherization Laborer
Jennifer Monroe - PT Energy Auditor

Some 2019 client

Age

Education ages 25+

Housing

2018-19 Funding Sources

NYS Department of State - Community Service Block Grant
NYS Homes and Community Renewal - Weatherization
NYS Department of Education - Summer Lunch Program
NYSERDA - Empower New York
Warren County Office For The Aging - Handyman Program
Warren County Probation & Youth Bureau - Alternative Sentencing Program

Warren County Townships - Senior Transportation
Glens Falls Community Development - Project Option
Regional Food Bank of NENY, Charles Wood Foundation, Stewarts, National Grid, Local private Corporations & Local Retailers, Service Organizations, Farmers and Individuals

Thank You!
## 2019 Board of Directors

### Public
- Jim Campinell
- John Strough
- Bill Loew
- Claudia Braymer
- Frank Thomas - Treasurer

### Private
- Joseph Sullivan - Pres.
- Viki Anderson
- Alice Sullivan - Secretary
- Daniel Belden - V. Pres.

### Low-income
- Roberta Bly
- Shari Marci
- Hanna Hall
- Christina Maresco
- Peter Woznack

## Alternative Sentencing

The Alternative Sentencing Program has seen 267 participants so far in 2019. Out of the 267 participants that have been here, 210 of them have completed their community service satisfactorily. This leaves fifty-one participants not completing their hours and eight participants were incarcerated. Forty-three of these participants had one-hundred or more hours to complete. Another look into the statistic: I found that most of the participants were white males. I believe this year was the first I saw a rise in traffic violations. Such as, driving without a license or driving with a suspended license. Also, boating while under the influence and driving under the influence were other big offences.

Habitat for Humanity remains my top facility to send participants. They have the need for the most help and the facility offers Saturday hours to do community service. The participants have a few new facilities to consider. These facilities are: The Literacy Program of New York. One of the participants was tutoring two individuals to help them acquire their GED's. Another facility is Freedom Machines. This facility works very closely with the Felony Drug Court of Warren County. The other newest facility is Hope in Healing. This program is in place for individuals to go to and remain SOBER. One of the participants I currently have is “teaching” an Art class to sober individuals! It is my hope to find some facilities that Veterans could benefit from.

In the last year the Alternative Sentencing Program has been working more closely with the two drug court programs. The first program is with Judge Hobbs, Glens Falls Court; he is in charge of the misdemeanor drug court Diversion Program. The other drug program is with Judge Hall, Warren County Court. He is in charge of the felony drug program. These Judges will sanction the participants for not making their groups on time, not calling in on time and breaking basic rules of drug court. The community service is in lieu of the participant sitting in jail for the weekend. A second chance, if you will, to make the right choice. Hence the meaning of the Alternative Sentencing Program!

Stephanie Gulick  
Alternative Sentencing Director

## Some 2019 Highlights

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Warren</th>
<th>Hamilton</th>
<th>Additionally in Warren County</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Food Baskets</td>
<td>1,531</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>Halloween Costumes provided to 43 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Pantry Visits</td>
<td>27,750</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>School supplies provided to 42 Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Depot Visits</td>
<td>6,446</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>839 Summer Lunches served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weatherization Units</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7,470 Volunteer hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Services</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>253 Successful Alternative Sentencing Completions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors Transported</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Handyman Jobs completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Trips made</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
<td>722,570 pounds of donated food received</td>
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Weatherization

Warren-Hamilton Counties Weatherization Assistance Program had another successful year completing its 2018-19 contract. We weatherized 99 homes with an average cost per unit of $6134. We were able to leverage funds from NYSEDA’s Empower Program and National Grid’s Fuel Conversion Program. Our Weatherization Program also participated as a contractor in Warren & Hamilton Counties Cooling Emergency Program.

The weatherization Assistance Program helps income qualified homes receive energy saving measures to their homes and provides some health and safety measures.

After a client has been determined eligible the client is put on a small wait list before an Energy Auditor schedules to perform an energy audit at their home. An energy audit is a thorough inspection of the home’s structure, insulation levels, mechanical appliances, and health and safety issues that may already exist in the home. The energy auditor will measure and draw the home’s footprint to get the home’s actual heated square footage. Walls, windows, and doors are also measured to help create the model of the home’s efficiency. The home’s heating system is tested with a combustion analyzer for efficiency, draft, and carbon monoxide. The home is also tested for air leakage. This is done with a blower door. The blower door has a manometer which quantifies air leakage in Cubic Feet per Minute (CFM). All of these measurements are gathered and entered into New York State’s software called TIPS (Targeted Investment Protocol System). After entering all the data gathered the software tells the energy auditors which measures will have good energy savings. This is how the workscope is created.

Here is a list of some of the things the weatherization assistance program does. Attic and basement airsealing, spray foam on basement rim joists, attic insulation, weatherstripping & door sweep to doors, hot water heater blankets, pipewrap, exhaust fans (bath, kitchen, whole house, & humidity), sealing up duct work, replacing furnaces when necessary, installing LED light bulbs, installing energy star fridges when warranted.

Most of the weatherization work is performed by 1 of our 2 crews. We also use subcontractors to perform heating installs and sometimes home performance measures.

After the work is completed the home is revisited by one of our Quality Control Inspectors (QCI) for a thorough post inspection. This ensures that the work is completed and meets the industry standards. When work is missed or deficient a punch list is made and a crew is sent back to take care of it. Generally punch list corrections take 2 – 4 hours.

Once it’s determined by the inspector and the homeowner that the home has been completed to a satisfactory standard the homeowner and the inspector will sign off on the job. The job is then presented to the State for payment. This is done monthly.

This year’s 2019-20 funding allows us to weatherize 91 homes between April 1st of 2019 and March 31st of 2020. Every year is new challenge. I believe one of our biggest challenges is getting enough applicants before we near the end of each contract. Somehow the Weatherization Assistance Program is still the best kept secret. However we really want to get the secret out that we’re here and that we want to help everyone that’s eligible. We work year round and are always accepting applications.

The Weatherization Assistance Program is a free program for income qualified homes. If a household receives HEAP or SNAP, that automatically makes a household income eligible for these services. Proof of income through pay stubs is also an acceptable form of income. To find out more about the Weatherization Assistance Program please call us at (518) 793-0636. We mail or email applications out M-F or they can be picked up at Community Action Agency at our 190 Maple Street address here in Glens Falls. They can also be picked up at our Community Action Agency location next to the Town Movie Theater at 726 Main St, Indian Lake, NY 12842.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is administered in NY State by Homes & Community Renewal (HCR). HCR receives funding from the US Department of Energy (DOE), and Health and Human Services (HSS).

Andrew Pritchard
Weatherization Director

Robert Petty installs a window
Project Option

The Project Option case manager advocated for 47 households in Warren County during the previous year. Of that total, 22 homeless families obtained safe, affordable housing, which is a significant increase from previous years. These households contained a total of 19 children, 16 of which were under the age of 10. When required, case manager advocated with local school districts to keep children in their home district, citing the McKinney-Vento Act. The case manager completed employment applications, resumes and cover letters for 10 individuals who were unemployed and gained employment. A total of 6 Project Option clients maintained new jobs for more than 90 days. In addition, the case manager researched certified childcare providers and advocated with Warren County Department of Social Services to secure subsidized child care for clients who obtained employment. One Project Option client achieved a living wage income. Additionally, 5 individuals who lacked health insurance obtained coverage through New York State of Health or Warren County Department of Social Services. One Project Option client was enrolled full-time at SUNY Adirondack, while 2 others pursued their TASC (High School Equivalency Exam). The case manager determined that working as a “partner” with clients resulted in the highest probability of successful outcomes. Client motivation results from pursuing their own goals, with guidance from the case manager, not being told “what to do.”

Michael Lajeunesse
Project Option Case manager

Emergency Services

The Warren-Hamilton Counties Community Action Agency provided financial assistance to 11 households that were homeless the previous year. This included 3 households with single female parents and children ranging from newborns thru 7 years old. In addition, the agency housed 3 single males, 3 single females and 2 couples. The primary cause of homelessness was a lack of income: 9 of the households had zero income. Contributing factors included domestic violence, functional illiteracy, mental illness, substance abuse and discharges from correctional facilities and other institutions. The head of household for the majority of these homeless families was under the age of 30. In addition to emergency housing, the agency provided financial assistance for 2 households with utility emergencies. The first included a female with 2 children, who had their National Grid disconnected. Community Action restored their power. The second family requested assistance in February. HEAP filled their tank with kerosene, but within 2 days it had been stolen. The family filed a police report and contacted Community Action, who put 100 gallons in their tank. Community Action advocated for an additional 10 households who had a final disconnect notice from National Grid. This included contacting the utility and establishing affordable payment agreements on past balances. Warren County residents often lack the financial resources to overcome emergencies and Community Action provides a safety net for those in need.

Michael Lajeunesse
Emergency Services Director
The tradition of BOCES Culinary Arts students gleaning apples for the pantry continues. 1,697 pounds of apples were gleaned / donated at Hicks Orchard.

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