

45 Year History of Community Action

1964 – 2009

- 16 March 1964** President Lyndon B. Johnson submits message on poverty to the U.S. Congress.
- 29 June 1964** Omnibus Civil Rights Bill, banning discrimination in voting, housing, and public accommodations is signed by the President.
- 7 August 1964** Congress passes Tonkin Bay Resolution, authorizing presidential action in Vietnam.
- 20 August 1964** The Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) is passed by Congress and signed into law by President Johnson.
- 23 September 1964** Robert Sargent Shriver, Director designate of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), is confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Sargent Shriver is sworn into the office on 17 October 1964.
- 29 January 1965** President Johnson appoints a 14-member National OEO Advisory Council, designating Director Shriver as its honorary chairman.
- 11 August 1965** Los Angeles, CA, riots in Watts results in death of 34 persons and property damage estimated at \$200 million.
- 20 February 1966** Eighteen months after passage of the EOA, over 1,000 community action agencies (CAA) are granted funds by OEO.
- 17 March 1966** Representative Albert H. Quie (R-Minn) urges CAA governing boards be composed of at least one-third representing the poor.
- 1 July 1966** Medicare, federal program to pay part of elderly's medical expenses, begins.
- 30 September 1966** During debate, House accepts Rep. Quie sponsored language enforcing legislative mandate of maximum feasible participation.
- 2 November 1966** U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) expected to receive three OEO programs, suggesting decline in Schriver's authority.
- 9 January 1967** Republican members of House of Representatives offer bill to abolish OEO, shift programs to other federal departments.
- 17 January 1967** CAAs must reorganize boards by 1 March 1967 to give one-third of seats to representatives of the poor.
- 12 July 1967** Riots occur in Newark, NJ, and Detroit, MI, resulting in 36 dead, 3,500 injured.

- 9 September 1967** Congress agrees to stopgap measure to meet OEO financial obligations.
- 2 October 1967** Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first black U.S. Supreme Court Justice.
- 15 December 1967** American Farm Bureau urges OEO abolition with functions shifted to other departments.
- 23 December 1967** President Johnson signs amendments to EOA Act into law including the Green Amendment.
- 30 January 1968** Vietnamese Communist troops attack Saigon and thirty province capitals during Tet offensive.
- 22 March 1968** OEO Director Sargent Shriver steps down from post, appointed U.S. Ambassador to France. Bertrand M. Harding appointed acting director of OEO.
- 4 April 1968** Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, TN.
- 5 June 1968** Senator Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated in Los Angeles, CA.
- 21 June 1968** OEO is accused of funding a grantee, the Woodlawn Organization, which allowed gangs to stockpile weapons.
- 4 September 1968** Director Designate Bertrand Harding's confirmation held up in Senate. Harding promises Senator Robert Byrd (D-WVA) OEO will not try to rehabilitate Chicago gangs through OEO funding.
- 13 October 1968** Senate fails to confirm Director Designate Harding prior to Senate adjournment.
- 5 November 1968** Richard M. Nixon defeats Hubert H. Humphrey by 510,000 votes in Presidential election.
- 12 January 1969** President Nixon appoints high level commission. The commission proposes gradual dismemberment of OEO and transfer of most of its functions to other federal agencies.
- February 1969** Daniel Patrick Moynihan criticizes community action component of OEO program in his book Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding.
- 19 February 1969** President Nixon's first message to Congress recommends one-year extension of OEO, transfer of Head Start, Comprehensive Health Center, and Foster Grandparents to HEW, Job Corps to DOL.
- 20 February 1969** President Nixon states OEO will be retained as a source of experimental programs.

- 9 April 1969** The Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) establishes Office of Child Development to receive Head Start Program.
- 21 April 1969** Representative Donald Rumsfeld (R-IL) is appointed OEO director, pledges to continue OEO as experimental laboratory of new initiatives.
- 3 May 1969** Republican Governors Association urges OEO programs be administered through executive agencies in each state, thereby eliminating ten OEO Regional Offices.
- 27 May 1969** Director Designate Donald Rumsfeld confirmed by U.S. Senate as OEO Director, sworn into office.
- 8 August 1969** President Nixon proposes reorganization of OEO, states it has suffered from a confusion of roles, that OEO "should be free to concentrate on breaking new ground."
- 13 October 1969** President Nixon states he has "provided OEO with the new director, a new structure, and added responsibilities as the R&D arm of the nation's efforts to deal with problems of the poor." Nixon proposes two year extension, stating "that OEO has a major and continuing role in our national life."
- 15 November 1969** Antiwar demonstration brings 250,000 to Washington, D.C.
- 5 March 1970** President Nixon signs OEO appropriation bill at \$1.948 billion level.
- 22 April 1970** Millions of Americans participate in anti-pollution demonstration in nation's first Earth Day.
- 11 December 1970** OEO Director Rumsfeld named as Counselor to President.
- December 1970** Governor Ronald Reagan (R-CA) vetoes \$1.8 million grant to California Rural Legal Assistance Program.
- 2 January 1971** President Nixon appoints Frank Carlucci as OEO director.
- 10 January 1971** Howard Phillips is appointed as assistant director to Carlucci.
- 15 January 1971** President Nixon proposes to combine Peace Corps and VISTA and to establish new federal agency.
- 30 January 1971** OEO Director Carlucci continues California Legal Service Program while three-member commission investigates Governor Reagan's charges.
- 4 May 1971** President Nixon appoints Phillip V. Sanchez as assistant OEO director; he is confirmed by U.S. Senate.

- 3 June 1971** Congress gives approval for Office of ACTION. VISTA is transferred. Thirteen other OEO programs are transferred to other federal departments.
- 28 July 1971** Frank Carlucci is transferred to Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- 3 September 1971** Phillip Sanchez is appointed to succeed Carlucci as OEO director.
- 18 September 1971** Nixon Administration discusses severing CAAs from OEO, and transferring component to HUD.
- 9 December 1971** President Nixon vetoes OEO extension because of objections to comprehensive childcare program and its "family weakening implications."
- 10 December 1971** Funds to keep OEO functioning are appropriated by Congress even though the legal and fiscal authority for OEO expired 30 June 1971.
- 1972** The National Community Action Agency Executive Directors Association (NCAAEDA) is formed.
- 25 January 1972** Phillip Sanchez, confirmed by U.S. Senate as director of OEO, is sworn into office.
- February 1972** Bert A Gallegos is nominated to be assistant director of OEO.
- 15 May 1972** Governor George Wallace is shot and seriously wounded while campaigning for president.
- 17 June 1972** Five men are arrested for breaking into the office of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in Washington, D.C.
- 26 June 1972** House and Senate conferees agree to OEO bill, then recommit to conference after receiving warning of presidential veto.
- 21 September 1972** President Nixon signs two-year extension of OEO, which includes controversial Legal Services Program.
- 11 January 1973** Five of seven defendants plead guilty to DNC break-in at Watergate office complex; two others are convicted on 30 June 1973.
- 13 January 1973** Phillip Sanchez is appointed U.S. Ambassador to Panama.
- 27 January 1973** OMB Director Roy Ash confirms Nixon Administration plans to abolish OEO.
- 27 January 1973** Howard Phillips is named acting director of OEO by President Nixon to oversee the Office's dismantlement.
- 29 January 1973** Acting Director Phillips advises ten OEO Regional Offices of Section 221 (CAA) funding termination.

- 3 February 1973** Acting Director Phillips suppresses report favorable to CAAs.
- 4 February 1973** Acting Director Phillips states antipoverty program based on "Marxist notion."
- 26 February 1973** Several CAAs and labor unions file suit to stop dismantlement.
- 2 March 1973** President Nixon in State of Union Address says CAAs no longer necessary or desirable.
- 13 March 1973** Acting Director Phillips announces the 10 OEO Regional Offices should be prepared to close by April 28.
- 15 March 1973** Acting Director Phillips issues OEO Instruction 7630-3. Instruction announces CAA funding will cease as of 30 June 1973. CAAs must submit timetables for phase-out and are forbidden to use OEO funds for any other purpose than closure.
- 8 April 1973** Community Nutrition Institute, an OEO funded educational unit, returns OEO funding rather than submit to its censorship.
- 12 April 1973** Judge William B. Jones of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia brands Nixon Administration's efforts to dismantle OEO "illegal." Jones orders OEO Acting Director Phillip to immediately halt his termination of OEO programs as such action is "unauthorized by law, illegal and in excess of statutory authority."
- 13 April 1973** Nixon Administration says impact of Judge Jones' decision that stops plan to dismantle OEO will be minor; Acting Director Phillips believes dismantling will be completed on schedule.
- 19 April 1973** Nixon Administration decides not to appeal federal District Court Judge Jones' ruling against OEO dismantlement
- 30 April 1973** Top Nixon aides H. R. Halderman, John D. Ehrlichman, John Dean and Attorney General Richard Kliendienst resign amid charges of White House efforts to obstruct justice in the Watergate matter.
- 11 June 1973** Judge Jones rules that Acting Director Phillips can no longer serve as OEO acting director because he has not been confirmed.
- 15 June 1973** Nixon Administration appeals Judge Jones' ruling that Phillips has illegally served as OEO acting director.
- 22 June 1973** U.S. Court of Appeals upholds Judge Jones' ruling regarding Phillips' service as acting director.

- 26 June 1973** President Nixon appoints Alvin I. Arnett to succeed Phillips.
- 10 October 1973** Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns and pleads nolo contendere to charges of tax evasion.
- 12 October 1973** Representative Gerald R. Ford becomes first appointed vice president under the 25th Amendment, sworn in on 6 December 6 1973.
- 20 October 1973** Attorney General Elliot Richardson resigns, his deputy William D. Ruckleshaus and Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox fired by President Nixon
- 20 December 1973** Job Corps is transferred to U.S. Department of Labor.
- 9 May 1974** Impeachment hearings opened against President Nixon by the House Judiciary Committee.
- 16 June 1974** President asks for and receives OEO Director Arnett's resignation. Bert A. Gallegos named to succeed Arnett.
- 24 July 1974** House Judiciary Committee recommends three articles of impeachment against President Nixon
- 25 July 1974** President Nixon signs legislative bill transferring Legal Services from OEO to an independent agency
- 9 August 1974** President Nixon resigns office. Vice President Ford sworn in as 38th President.
- 8 September 1974** Ex-President Nixon granted unconditional pardon for all federal crimes he committed or may have committed while president
- 13 December 1974** U.S. Senate confirms Bert Gallegos as OEO Director
- 5 January 1975** President Ford signs legislative bill creating Community Services Administration (CSA), successor agency to the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity
- 23 April 1975** Ford Administration drafts plans to place CSA under Department of HEW.
- 25 April 1975** Saigon falls, ending U.S. involvement in Vietnam.
- 16 March 1976** OEO Director Gallegos is ousted; Samuel Martinez is nominated to office.
- 7 April 1976** Samuel Martinez is confirmed as CSA Director by U.S. Senate.
- 29 September 1976** President Ford vetoes HEW appropriation bill on budgetary grounds. Bill included funding for CSA.

- 30 September 1976** Congress votes by a wide margin to override President Ford's veto of HEW appropriations bill.
- 2 November 1976** Governor Jimmy Carter defeats President Gerald Ford.
- 18 January 1977** Congressional Budget Office concludes that federal social service programs reduced poverty by 60% in decade of 1965-75.
- 5 April 1977** President Carter appoints Graciela Olivarez as CSA Director.
- 4 May 1977** President Carter signs supplemental appropriations bill to fund the Emergency Energy Conservation Program. Appropriated funds to help poor pay utility bills and insulate their homes.
- 20 August 1979** President Carter issues Proclamation commemorating the 15th anniversary of the Economic Opportunity Act.
- 11 June 1980** Richard J. Rios is nominated to be director of CSA.
- 4 November 1980** Governor Ronald Reagan defeats President Jimmy Carter.
- August 1981** The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation (OBRA) is passed replacing the Community Services Act. Title II of the EOA is included in OBRA's Services Block Grant (CSBG) section.
- 30 September 1981** The Community Service Administration closes. There no longer exists a federal level antipoverty agency.
- 1984** President Reagan proposes merging CSBG with the Social Services Block Grant. Congress rejects the proposal.
- 1984** OBRA approves the Human Services Reauthorization Act PL 98-558.
- 6 November 1984** President Reagan carries 49 states in reelection.
- August 1986** Board approves name change to National Association of Community Action Agencies as well as conversion from individual to agency membership.
- 22 July 1987** The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act passes, providing Emergency Community Services Homeless Grant Program to CSBG grantees.
- 5 November 1987** The highest unemployment rate since 1940, 10.8%, is recorded with 11 million unemployed individuals.
- 8 November 1988** George H.W. Bush is elected President.

- 6 January 1989** Labor Department reports a 14 year low (5.3%) in unemployment. By 1 July 1992, it has risen to 7.8%.
- September 1992** National Association of Community Action Agencies inducts first class of Certified Community Action Professionals.
- 3 November 1992** Governor William Jefferson Clinton is elected President.
- October 1994** NACAA/American Cancer Society agreement.
- October 1994** Newt Gingrich announces GOP Contract with America reducing the federal role in transferring authority and resources to governors.
- 8 November 1994** Republicans capture majority of seats in House and Senate.
- March 1995** NACAA publishes Myths and Facts About CAAs and the Poor.
- May 1995** NACAA initiates plans for the State Technical Assistance Program (STAP) to strengthen state assistance.
- May 1995** NACAA initiates plans for National Dialogue of Poverty.
- 5 September 1995** NACAA hosts first Dialogue on Poverty Leadership Day.
- 13 October 1995** Statement of Understanding on Disaster Relief signed between NACAA and the Red Cross.
- 5 November 1996** President Clinton is re-elected.
- April 1977** First National Dialogue on Poverty is conducted by NACAA and the CAAs.
- 19 April 1977** NACAA hosts its first Annual National Policy Forum
- May 1997** First Community Action Week.
- May 1998** First Community Action Month.
- 27 October 1998** Community Opportunities, Accountability, and Training Educational Services (COATS) Act of 1998 enacted, providing for five-year reauthorization of the Community Services Block Grant.
- April 1999** NACAA publishes first issue of the Community Action Digest.
- 20 August 1999** 35th Anniversary of the signing of the Economic Opportunity Act.
- September 1999** NACAA launches Dialogue 2000.

September 1999 35th Anniversary Conference in Chicago. Sargent Shriver joins us to present Sargent Shriver and Jayne Thomas Awards.

December 1999 First “live” 2000 dialogue on poverty takes place at the NACAA Fall Conference in San Diego.

January 2000 Dialogue 2000 year begins: “Leading America to Community Action”.

15 June 2000 National “Town Hall” Meeting, Washington, DC. Late Senator Paul Wellstone speaks. Juan Williams facilitates panel discussions.

September 2000 NACAA Conference in San Antonio. Luci Baines Johnson accepts Lyndon Baines Johnson Legacy Award honoring the work of her father.

21 November 2000 NACAA hosts special Information Technology Briefing on the digital divide in Washington, DC.

December 2000 Governor George W. Bush is elected President.

February 2001 NACAA launches research on Housing and Faith-Based initiatives and sends surveys to network.

April 2001 NACAA begins branding assessments.

1 May 2001 National Policy Forum convened on Capitol Hill.

July 2001 Dialogue on Poverty wins national “Associations Advance America” excellence award from American Society of Association Executives (ASAE).

August 2001 NACAA unveils new web site.

August 2001 Based on results of brand assessment research, Community Action Promise is created.

11 September 2001 Largest terrorist attack ever on American soil.

December 2001 NACAA “unofficially” changes name to Community Action Partnership and uses new logo.

February 2002 Duane Knapp leads first of many Community Action branding seminars.

August 2002 Award of Excellence program officially launched.

September 2002 Membership votes to officially change name to Community Action Partnership.

September 2002 Annual Conference in New York City, draws record attendance and commemorates 9/11/01.

September 2003 First Award for Excellence presented to four Community Action Agencies at Annual Convention.

January 2004 40th Community Action Anniversary year begins.

2004 The Pathways to Excellence program is created.

September 2004 40th Anniversary Convention and No Room for Poverty Rally take place in Washington, DC.

2 November 2004 President George W. Bush is re-elected.

March 2005 The first issue of The Promise, the new magazine of the Community Action Partnership, is published.

21 July 2005 The Unity Summit is held in Boston.

August 2005 Hurricane Katrina devastates Gulf coast, cancelling the Partnership's annual convention in New Orleans.

December 2005 The network comes together with Mobilizing in Miami: Building Leadership to End Poverty, the annual fall management and leadership conference.

January 2006 Planning for the 2007 National Poverty Symposium gets underway.

November 2006 Poverty Symposium Task Force, chaired by James Norman, makes decision to hold the National Poverty Symposium in May, 2007.

May 2007 National Symposium on Poverty and Economic Security in Bethesda, MD.

June 2007 Don Mathis hired as President and CEO of Community Action Partnership.

January 2008 "Rooting out Poverty" report, an outgrowth of the National Symposium on Poverty and Economic Security, launched in New Orleans at the Community Action Partnership Management and Leadership Conference.

May 2008 Community Action Partnership kicks off two-year Racial Equity and Economic Security, supported by the Ford Foundation.

August 28, 2008 45th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

August 28, 2008 Senator Barack Obama accepts nomination of the Democratic Party for President of the United States. Community Action watches live speech from Chicago at Community Action Partnership Annual Convention.

November 4, 2008 Senator Barack Obama elected as first African-American President of the United States.

January 20, 2009 Barack Obama inaugurated as 44th President of the United States.

August 20, 2009 45th Anniversary of the signing of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

September 1, 2009 Community Action Partnership Annual Convention celebrating 45 years of Community Action.

February 17, 2009 The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) economic recovery package is essential for our nation's economy, for its infrastructure, and for our energy, health, and education needs -- and now it's the law.

March 2009 Juan Williams officially announced as the Partnership's national honorary chair and spokesperson for our Rooting out Poverty campaign.

April 2, 2009 Partnership hosts Rooting Out Poverty media event at the National Press Club.