

CANI Fighting Poverty. Building Hope.

Chronicles

AmeriCorps: Fighting Poverty Through Service

CANI is always looking for new ways to maximize its impact in the community. But it cannot do it alone. The agency relies on support from donors and grantors to turn vision into reality.

Fortunately, for CANI and the community, the agency has been awarded a three-year grant from the Indiana Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) to fund 10 AmeriCorps members. That means CANI will receive \$130,000 each year to run the program, which covers the members' living stipends, and part of their insurance. CANI is responsible for other related expenses.

AmeriCorps is a service opportunity for adults of all ages and backgrounds who serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups. AmeriCorps members will serve at one of two Host Sites: CANI and Lutheran Social Services of Indiana (LSSI). This year CANI will partner with LSSI, with the hope of working with other agencies in the future.

So how exactly did CANI come to have an AmeriCorps program? A lot of work was done over the past year to plan and write the grant that would bring the program here. CANI's AmeriCorps Program Supervisor Ashley Kostelnik used research about the community's needs to determine the four focus areas: financial literacy services, early childhood education, healthy

futures, and outreach and volunteer coordination. CANI is currently involved in all areas, but the grant will help to strengthen and/or expand these areas.

Overall, the grant will enable the agency to increase awareness about its programs and services, foster expansion of its offerings, and expand into underserved counties. AmeriCorps members will serve in at least 10 of the 12 counties CANI serves.

Once the agency received confirmation of the award in June, the focus shifted to member recruitment. Ashley, who is responsible for overseeing the management of the program, works with staff and members to develop a plan, professional training, and monthly service opportunities. Members will have several opportunities to work together on focused community-wide projects throughout the year.



Photo courtesy of the Corporation for National and Community Service

AmeriCorps members will assist CANI and LSSI staff with achieving agency goals, while learning and gaining meaningful experience in the nonprofit sector.

The AmeriCorps service positions allow for a great deal of learning. Ashley says potential members should not be intimidated by a lack of prior knowledge about working with a nonprofit organization.

"We bring people in and want them to learn," she says. What's more, she stressed that AmeriCorps service is an opportunity to gain professional training, enhance one's resume, and perhaps most importantly, "create a proactive ripple effect on the community."

Story continued on page 3

CONTENTS



AmeriCorps: Fighting Poverty Through Service

Learn how CANI's new AmeriCorps program will make a difference in our community.

page 1



CANI Head Start: Not Just For Kids

A Head Start mother is thankful for the program and the opportunities it has provided her and her family.

page 3



Grant Fosters Entrepreneurship

Read how a federal grant is helping promote entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency in refugee families.

page 4



Fighting Rural Poverty

Additional funding has made it possible for CANI to expand its reach and fight the causes and conditions of rural poverty.

page 5



JAG Internships Boost Students, Employers

This summer, local employers partnered with CANI's JAG program to provide real-world experiences.

page 6

September/October - 2012

Published six times a year by

CANI (Community Action of Northeast Indiana, Inc.)
P.O. Box 10570, Fort Wayne, IN 46853-0570

Vol. 7, No. 5

All articles and photographs by CANI
Public Education & Outreach Coordinator, Lauren Caggiano,
unless otherwise noted. Subscriptions are free.
For more information call (260) 399-4109.

CANI Mission

CANI helps communities, families, and individuals remove the causes and conditions of poverty.

CANI Board of Directors

Mr. Todd Fleetwood - **President**
Ms. Dawn Gallaway - **Vice-President**
Mr. Randy Holler - **Treasurer**
Ms. Karma Austin - **Secretary**
Mr. Chip Adams, Mr. Peter Adams, Ms. Madeleine Baker, Mr. Jay Brown, Ms. Laura Dwire, Ms. Kathy Heuer, Mr. Tony Jeffers, Ms. Gina Kostoff, Mr. Karl Kostoff, Mr. Mike O'Keefe, Ms. Alisa J. Pearson, Esq., Ms. Kelli Pursley, Ms. Misty Zent.

CANI Management Team

Steve Hoffman **Executive Director**
Pamela Brookshire **Director of Community Services**
Sherry Early-Aden **Director of Administration & Development**
Mary Lee Freeze **Head Start Director**

CANI Offices

Allen
227 E Washington Blvd
Fort Wayne, IN 46802
423-3546
or **800-589-2264**

DeKalb
209 N Jackson St.
Auburn, IN 46706
927-0162

LaGrange
109 E Central Ave, Ste 4
LaGrange, IN 46761
463-5276

Noble
119 W Mitchell St.
Kendallville, IN 46755
349-0713

200 S Cavin St.
Ligonier, IN 46767
894-3048

Steuben
1208 S Wayne St.
Angola, IN 46703
665-1160

Whitley
1340 S Governors Drive
Columbia City, IN 46725
248-4887

The following offices only provide childcare assistance...

Elkhart
23631 US 33, Suite D
Elkhart, IN 46517
574-830-5376

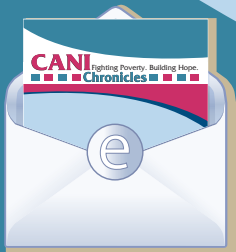
Kosciusko
1515 Provident Drive
Warsaw, IN 46580
574-267-2817

CANI Hours of Operation

7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday - Thursday

7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Friday

CANI WILL BE CLOSED SEPT. 3RD, IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY, AND OCT. 8TH IN OBSERVANCE OF COLUMBUS DAY.



To
RECEIVE
UPDATES FROM
CANI IN YOUR INBOX

CONTACT LAUREN CAGGIANO AT
LAURENCAGGIANO@CANIHELP.ORG



CANI HEAD START: NOT JUST FOR KIDS

CANI Head Start helps prepare preschoolers for kindergarten, but the benefit to the parents should not be understated.

Gladys Paz is a great example of someone who has taken advantage of opportunities afforded to her through the CANI Head Start program. Gladys, born in Mexico, came to the U.S. with her husband to be with her family already in the States. But knowing little English proved to be a challenge in obtaining employment.

Luckily a blessing came her way in the form of CANI Head Start, a pre-school program for low-income children ages 3 to 5. She first heard about the program about four years ago, through friends and family members. She enrolled her children Ania and Geronimo, now 4 and 5 respectively, at CANI Head Start at Hanna-Creighton.

Over the years Gladys, who lives in the Hanna-Creighton neighborhood, has reaped great joy from the Head Start program. She is actively involved in school activities and her children's education.

"It's a very good program and a good school," she said, speaking through an interpreter. "My children have learned a lot. I have enjoyed all the activities they do here."

Her bilingual Family Advocate, Jesus Escobedo, has been a major asset to her family as well. Family Advocates serve as a go-to person for families of children enrolled or

potentially enrolled in the Head Start program.

"He's always been there for any particular needs," she said. Whether it's translation, or questions about documents or school activities, he is always willing to lend a hand.

Jesus is quick to point out her contribution to the Family Advocate-client relationship: "She has volunteered often at the Hanna-Creighton Head Start in many activities. She has enjoyed seeing her children learn and develop and has often told me

that their interest is the health and development of their children."

While her children are busy learning, Gladys is trying to better her own life. She is in the process of applying for a visa to obtain a Social Security number, which will ultimately allow her to pursue a driver's license and work permit. She also wants to learn more English.



CANI Head Start is a preschool program and so much more! Gladys Paz and her family have all benefitted from the program.

Specifically in regards to learning, Gladys appreciates the program's focus on learning English. Gaining a command of the language at a young age is important, she said. The structured nature of the classroom has helped her with discipline at home. Children learn rules at school, and that makes it easier to enforce them at home.

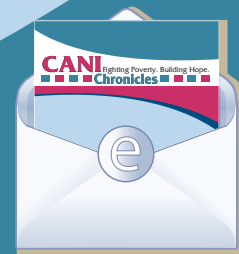
Story continued from page 1

"These AmeriCorps members will be serving the community each day, touching thousands of lives within their term of service. If even half of the people they come in contact with decide community service is worthwhile, imagine the sense of community that would grow."

Members must commit to an 11-month time period. They will receive a regular stipend, as well as an educational award upon completion of service. Applicants must be 18 or older, have a high school diploma, and be

a U.S. citizen. The positions will start Sept. 17. For more information about the AmeriCorps program, contact AmeriCorps Program Supervisor Ashley Kostelnik, (260) 423-3546, ext. 227.

To
RECEIVE
UPDATES FROM
CANI IN YOUR INBOX
CONTACT LAUREN CAGGIANO AT
LAURENCAGGIANO@CANIHELP.ORG



GRANT FOSTERS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Imagine moving to a new country with a foreign language. What challenges might you face? Finding gainful employment might be at the top of the list.

Fort Wayne has seen an influx of refugees in the past few decades, particularly Burmese and African families. Upon arrival in the United States, they want to start their new life via employment, but are often unsure how or where to begin.

CANI, along with other community partners, is working to address the issue of refugee unemployment, through a grant from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). As the fiscal agent, CANI was awarded a one-year \$135,000 grant in fall 2011, by way of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children & Families' Home-Based Child Care Microenterprise Development Program. (The renewal application for a second year is pending.)

CANI is part of a collaboration of local partners including the Early Childhood Alliance, the American Red Cross of Northeast Indiana and the Burmese Advocacy Center. The Home-Based Child Care Microenterprise Development Program is designed to assist refugees (primarily women) in becoming economically self-sufficient. The grant fosters learning and implementing the basic federal and state standards and eligibility requirements to become certified child care providers.

According to CANI Head Start Director Mary Lee Freeze, the goal of the first year of the grant implementation was to serve 15 providers, which amounts to 75 children. In addition to these metrics, there was a qualitative piece, she noted. The agency partners work with providers to address any problems they might encounter along the way. Translation and interpretation services are provided as needed, too.

"They need support to supply quality childcare," she said. "If you (help them start),

mentor and sustain them, then by that second year they can go on their own."

Another way the providers are supported is through sub awards of \$3,000 each. Funds can be used for capital expenses, like toys, carpet, fencing—anything that might make a home more suitable for children.

The secondary objective of the program is to expand home-based child care business options for other refugees. This allows parents to enter the workforce with confidence that their children are cared for by individuals with an understanding of the children's cultural background, as well as the ability to communicate in the children's native language.

As Mary Lee, explained this program helps to fight poverty because it encourages self-sufficiency for both the provider and the working parent(s). Employed families are less likely to rely on government programs like TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), because of their earning potential, she noted.

A program is only as good as its participants' success, however. And Manal Elzeen is among those who have been successful. Manal and her family left Sudan to seek asylum in the U.S. resettling in Fort Wayne. Before leaving her country, Manal taught high school economics and accounting. Many things have been difficult for her family and Manal says that it has been a challenge to help her family adjust to all the changes that life has brought to them. However, Manal has an insatiable desire to learn and improve herself even though it has meant starting over. She is now using her financial background and expertise to operate her own family child care business.

Offering child care in her home allows her to be with her four children while she supports them financially. Manal hopes to care for children from her neighborhood, as well as those from her religious community. She is already teaching children at a nearby mosque



Photo Submitted by Early Childhood Alliance

Through a grant from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, CANI and area partners are helping women like Manal Elzeen better integrate into American society through self-employment. In 2012, there were 13 grantees in 13 states that received grants totaling \$2.225 million.

and hopes to provide religious training, as well as to teach Arabic to the children in her child care.

Manal worked with the Burmese Advocacy Center to complete certification requirements. American Red Cross provided CPR and First Aid training--two of the necessary requirements. She has completed business classes provided through Early Childhood Alliance as well as ordered materials and equipment to use with the children. She hopes to provide a rich outdoor play experience for children and was able to purchase a sandbox and swing set, plus many other materials that can be used indoors with children.

Manal said, "If you want to get anywhere in this life you need to work hard and learn more. This is an opportunity to receive the support needed to be successful. I want to make my business great!"

CANI HEAD START NOW ENROLLING

CANI Head Start is now enrolling children ages 3 to 5 in a FREE pre-school program in Allen, Noble and Whitley counties. CANI Head Start is a free, comprehensive development program. It meets educational, health, nutritional, and social service needs of low-income preschool children, ages 3 to 5, and their families in Allen, Noble, and Whitley counties. To qualify, families must be at or below 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, with an exception that 10 percent may be enrolled who are considered over-income.

**For more information, contact
CANI Head Start**

227 E. Washington Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46802 • (260) 420-2833



FIGHTING RURAL POVERTY IN NORTHEAST INDIANA

National trends indicate a shift in demographics. Poverty is not just an urban or minority problem, but rather one plaguing predominately white and less populated areas as well.

The percentage of people living in poverty was higher in rural America than in either exurban or urban counties in 2010, according to the U.S. Census. Exurban areas are regions or settlements that lie outside a city and usually beyond its suburbs. An urban area comprises a densely settled core of census tracts. Whatever is not urban or exurban is considered rural.

Rates of rural poverty have increased since the recession began in 2007 when 15.8 percent of those living in rural counties had incomes below the poverty line. Three years later, that rate in rural counties had increased to 17.8 percent.

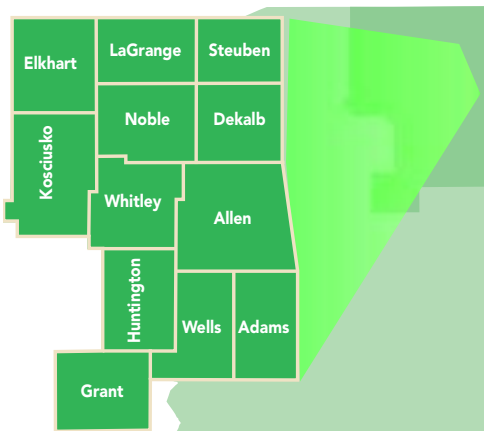
The bad news: rural poverty is on the rise. The good news: CANI is doing something about it.

“There is a new emphasis on rural poverty. There are large pockets of poverty in rural areas, yet they are overlooked,” said Director of Community Services Pam Brookshire.

“We’re trying to get as many services out to the rural counties as we can,” says Pam. However, it can be challenging to have enough resources to serve all eligible families there.

But new and increased funding is making it possible for CANI to provide services in rural areas. Recent funding from the United Way of Kosciusko County has enabled CANI to bring its hallmark Family Development program to that county. CANI Family Development fights poverty by helping families achieve goals through increased knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which then leads to improved behaviors, long-term outcomes, and an increase in the family’s overall self-sufficiency.

While in Family Development, families are referred to other CANI programs like Child Care Assistance and Covering Kids & Families (CKF).



CANI Service Area
Community Action of Northeast Indiana serves Adams, Allen, Dekalb, Elkhart, Grant, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wells and Whitley counties.

And speaking of CKF, connecting individuals to healthcare insurance is another area of priority in terms of rural poverty. CANI has recently received a \$6,000 grant from the Kosciusko County Community Foundation for CKF outreach. The agency also received funds from the K21 Health Foundation, MDwise, and MHS, for this cause.

The logic behind CKF outreach is that by providing options to access affordable health care, families do not have to choose between basic needs and paying for healthcare.

And of course with regular health care usually comes better overall health. And when people receive the medical attention that they need, they are more likely to stay employed because they will not be missing work due to health related conditions.

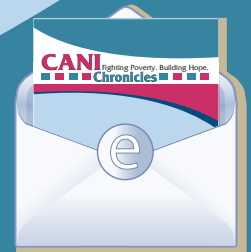
But the work doesn’t end with Kosciusko County. CANI and other partners are trying to grow the CKF coalition in Elkhart County. Growing the coalition would mean reducing the number of uninsured children and adults there by establishing coordinated outreach and enrollment strategies using a coalition model. This approach calls for partnerships with schools, community agencies, health clinics and hospitals.

Noble County is also on CANI’s radar. Noble County has a high number of uninsured and qualifies as a medically underserved community. It is estimated that for every primary care facility, there are 1,900 patients served. With limited options for care, it can be hard for low-income families to access consistent healthcare.

CANI has recently employed a CKF Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator in Noble County through funding from the Dept. of Health and Human Services’ Health Resources & Services Administration.* The Coordinator is charged with the development, implementation and retention of outreach with school-based outreach as a primary focus. By the end of the three years, the goal is to enroll 450 children and their parents in the state-funded health insurance plans, in Noble County. The Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator position is made possible through a consortium of partners: Indiana Rural Health Association, CKF Indiana, Parkview Noble Hospital, East Noble Schools, ASK, and Neighborhood Health Clinics.

*Funding for this project was made possible by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Office of Rural Health Policy’s Rural Health Care Services Outreach Grant Program HRSA-12-083, CDEA No. 93.912. The views expressed in written materials, websites, or publications do not necessarily reflect the social policies of the Department of Health and Human Services nor does imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

To
RECEIVE
UPDATES FROM
CANI IN YOUR INBOX
CONTACT LAUREN CAGGIANO AT
LAURENCAGGIANO@CANIHELP.ORG



JAG INTERNSHIPS BOOST STUDENTS, EMPLOYERS

They worked in places like nursing homes, media departments, physical therapy offices, and summer camps. The surprising part: they are in high school or newly graduated.

“They” are JAG participants, involved in on-site, paid internships. Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) is a school-to-career program that has a mission to keep young people in school through graduation. The focus is on providing work-based learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities or to enrollment in a post-secondary institution that leads to a rewarding career.

JAG Indiana has implemented this multi-year program locally to target high school juniors and seniors. The JAG effort in Northeast Indiana is directed by CANI and is located at the following high schools: Huntington North, Marion, Mississinewa, New Haven, North Side, Northrop, Snider, South Side and Wayne.

Young people need an opportunity to better transition from the classroom to the workforce after graduation. That is why internships are so important to their post-graduation employability. This summer, local employers partnered with CANI’s JAG program to provide real-world experiences in the form of internships. The assignments “ran the gamut from nursing, to multimedia services, to cosmetology,” according to JAG Program Manager Rachel Bryant.

“The point of the program is to help them gain employment skills, and help students have a better understanding of expectations (in the workforce),” she said.



Kersten Barnfield interned at Ivy Tech Community College’s media services department as part of the JAG summer internship program. He plans to attend Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW) to study telecommunications.

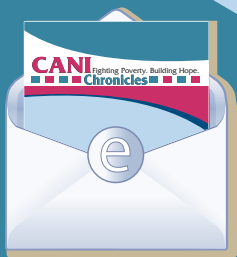
“The point of the program is to help them gain employment skills, and help students have a better understanding of expectations (in the workforce).”

Students worked 30 hours at the site over a two-week period, at an \$8.00 per hour wage. But perhaps more important than the paycheck were the connections made and lessons learned. Two students gained employment as a result of their internship experience. And one Northside High School JAG student who interned at the Euell Wilson Center internalized a valuable lesson: “(N)o matter what you have done in the past, you can still help change kids’ lives.”

Changing employers’ perceptions is a way to open doors for youth. It’s also a way for business to give back, she added. But the relationship doesn’t have to end with the internship. Employers have the opportunity to come into the JAG classrooms as guest speakers and talk to a larger audience about what steps to take to get their job, Rachel explained.

CANI thanks the following employers for their participation in the 2012 JAG internship program:

- Orthopedics NorthEast (O.N.E)
- Boys and Girls Club (Fort Wayne, Marion & Huntington)
- Lutheran Life Villages
- Euell A. Wilson Center
- Ivy Tech Community College (Media Services Department)
- 21st Century Scholars Program
- Renaissance Pointe YMCA
- Habitat for Humanity (Huntington)
- V.A Medical Center (Marion)
- AA Rents (Mississinewa)
- Hometown Vet Clinic (Mississinewa)
- PowerHouse



**To
RECEIVE
UPDATES FROM
CANI IN YOUR INBOX
CONTACT LAUREN CAGGIANO AT
LAURENCAGGIANO@CANIHELP.ORG**

CANI Thanks Our Donors

We'd like to thank the individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations that have recently supported CANI. Your financial gifts and in-kind contributions help us fight poverty and build hope - thank you for all you do!

The following donations have been received since our last issue.

Private Foundations/Grants

Hero (\$10,000 & up)

United Way of Kosciusko County
English, Bonter, Mitchell Foundation
Parkview Hospital
Parkview Whitley Hospital

Visionary (\$1,000-\$9,999)

Kosciusko County Community Foundation
PNC Foundation
United Way of Allen County

Cash Donations

Hero (\$10,000 & up)

MDwise

Ambassador (\$500-\$999)

Frontier Employees

Advocate (\$100-\$249)

Maria and Thomas Curfman
Sally and Ned Edington
Fire Police City County
Federal Credit Union

Friend (\$1-\$99)

Mr. Pat Ashton and
Ms Roxana Rockwell
Spiro and Anne Kostoff

In-Kind Donations

Ambassador (\$500-\$999)

Classic Café

Friend (\$1-\$99)

Ms. Tiann Aughinbaugh
Ms. Lynette Calloway
Ms. Collette McConnell
Ms. Fantashia Miles
Ms. Ann Reidenbach
Tobacco Free Allen County
Ms. Terri Roberts
Wal-Mart, Apple Glen

2nd Annual

Small Business Conference



Thursday, Nov. 1 • 7:30am-2pm

Public Safety Academy

7602 Patriot Crossing, Fort Wayne, IN 46816

Cost: \$25 adult; \$10 Youth (21 & under)

**Registration is from 7:30 to 8am
Conference begins at 8am**

Lunch is provided.

**For more information go to
www.canihelp.org**

CANI Kudos

“(A)fter two years in the JAG program I know exactly what I want to do, and what I have to do in order to get where I want to be in life.”

DeMetra Taylor
Northrop High School
JAG graduate

CANI Fighting Poverty.
Building Hope.
COMMUNITY ACTION OF NORTHEAST INDIANA
227 E. Washington Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FORT WAYNE, IN
PERMIT NO. 1107

 **Yes,** I would like to give to CANI so I can help fight poverty and build hope!

Name _____ Phone number _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email address _____

_____ \$10 _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other

Your name will be published in CANI's annual report and newsletters.

I would like my gift to go toward CANI's Endowment, (for gifts of \$50 or more.) Contact Jennifer Renner at (260) 399-4103 for more information.

CANI Fighting Poverty.
Building Hope.
COMMUNITY ACTION OF NORTHEAST INDIANA

Please mail this completed form to:
CANI
PO Box 10570
Fort Wayne, IN 46853-0570
Or you may donate online at www.canihelp.org.