



Arizona Community Action Association

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**ACAA Mission:**  
Advocating, Educating,  
and Partnering to  
Prevent and Alleviate Poverty

**ACAA Vision:**  
Arizona: A Thriving Community  
for All

### Letter from the Director

Welcome to Arizona Community Action Association's (ACAA) first electronic newsletter. It is our intention that this newsletter replace the printed Outreach newsletter, be circulated more frequently, and provide information that is useful, interesting, and relevant to all of you. Please let us know what you would like included as additional newsletters are circulated, and please provide us with information about you, your community, your agency, and how you are succeeding in efforts to end poverty, including all the pieces that go into this effort - homelessness, affordable housing, hunger, transportation, and child care. In the future, we hope to expand this effort by providing updates on Federal and State legislative issues.

ACAA is eligible for the State Charitable Tax Credit. ACAA assists the low-income community throughout Arizona through advocacy and education efforts, the publication and dissemination of the People's Information Guide, utility rate case interventions realizing deeper discounts on utility bills and no rate increase for the low-income community, food stamp outreach and enrollment, and many other ways.

To help support our programs with the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit:

1. Itemize your charitable donations
2. Establish a baseline year of giving (as early as 1996)
3. For 2006:

married couples filing jointly may donate a maximum credit up to \$400

single and head of household may donate a maximum credit up to \$200

4. Send your check to ACAA, and reference our **Tax ID # 86-0311619**

Thank you, and Happy New Year!

*Cynthia Zwick*  
Executive Director

## Upcoming Events

### Augusta



ACAA invites you to a very special production of *Augusta*. Middle-aged Molly and twenty-something Claire are caught in the working class vise, desperately clinging to low-wage jobs that barely allow them to make ends meet. The pay stinks, the corporate system's oppressive, and the boss is a jerk. How can a pair of blue-collar gals angle their way toward a slice of the American Dream? A company retreat in *Augusta* may hold the key. The first play in a proposed trilogy on happiness in America (working class, middle class and upper class), you'll be among the first in the nation to experience this hilarious new play from the master of hitting corporate America "below the belt".

Please save the date and plan to join us on **Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>**, for a special showing benefiting ACAA. For more information, please contact Cynthia Zwick at [czwick@azcaa.org](mailto:czwick@azcaa.org).

### ACAA 2007 Annual Conference

Please mark your calendars and save the date for the ACAA 2007 Annual Conference.

**When:** May 10-11, 2006

**Where:** Crowne Plaza San Marcos Golf Resort, Chandler, AZ

**More details to come!**

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## Energy Assistance Program (EAP) Update

Great joy was experienced across the land as our contract with the Department of Economic Security (DES) was finalized on Friday December 8<sup>th</sup>.

Much groundwork was laid toward establishing the EAP. In September, ACAA received a start-up grant from the Stardust Foundation which allowed us to hire Jeff Jameson to assist in contract negotiations and lay the groundwork for program structure.

In October the ACAA Board established an initial Board of Directors to oversee the formation of the program. Betsy Bolding of Tucson Electric Power, Deanna Jonovich with the City of Phoenix CAA and a representative from the InterTribal Council of Arizona were the appointees. The Board is meeting on a regular basis, committees are forming, by-laws are being established and considerations for board membership expansion are being made.

Energy Assistance Program branding is also under way. We have launched a grassroots naming contest. The idea is to come up with a program title which be descriptive of the work and move the public to support the program and/or seek benefits. Forms have been distributed to all CAA's and allies. For more information or contest forms please contact Jeff at [jjameson@azcaa.org](mailto:jjameson@azcaa.org).

Technology is a vital element to establishing the EAP. We are going to create a state-wide, internet based application and data management system to make it as easy as possible for clients and caseworkers to access benefits. A technology advisory committee is meeting to help frame the structure and functionality of new system. If you have specific thoughts and suggestions, please contact Jeff Jameson at [jjameson@azcaa.org](mailto:jjameson@azcaa.org) or 602-604-0640.

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## Southwest Gas Bill Assistance Program

ACAA has entered into a new partnership with Southwest Gas to administer a Bill Payment Assistance Program which is part of Southwest's Low-income Energy Conservation programs. The contract runs from 2006 through 2009 and provides a total of \$200,000 for assisting income qualified customers who are facing bill payment hardships. There are 9 ACAA affiliates involved in the program:

- Maricopa County CAP
- City of Phoenix CAP
- WACOG
- SEACAP
- Gila County HCS
- Tucson Urban League
- Pima County CSD
- City of Mesa
- CAHRA

If you are interested in volunteering to serve on a committee, please contact:

**Program Committee:**  
Deanna Jonovich  
[deanna.jonovich@phoenix.gov](mailto:deanna.jonovich@phoenix.gov)

**Fund-Raising/Sponsorship Committee:**  
Marty Loredo  
[marty.loreto@swgas.com](mailto:marty.loreto@swgas.com)

**Registration Committee:**  
Katie Kahle  
[kkahle@azcaa.org](mailto:kkahle@azcaa.org)  
Karen Lockhart  
[klockhart@azcaa.org](mailto:klockhart@azcaa.org)

**Awards/Gifts Committee:**  
Malissa Buzan  
[mbuzan@co.gila.az.us](mailto:mbuzan@co.gila.az.us)

**Logistics Committee:**  
Fran Tropea  
[fran.tropea@phoenix.gov](mailto:fran.tropea@phoenix.gov)

**Marketing/Media/Communication Committee:**  
Beth Fiorenza  
[bethf@tcaainc.com](mailto:bethf@tcaainc.com)

**Volunteers Committee:**  
Bonnie Temme  
[bftemme@srpnet.com](mailto:bftemme@srpnet.com)

If you would like Food Stamp brochures or are interested in becoming a future partner, please contact Katie Kahle at [kkahle@azcaa.org](mailto:kkahle@azcaa.org).

Give back to ACAA every time you shop for groceries, with the **Bashas' Thanks a Million! Card**. Signing up is simple. The next time you shop at Bashas' and use your Thanks a Million! card, simply ask the cashier to tie your card to the Arizona Community Action Association. **Our ID# is 24432**. Once you sign up, every purchase you make will count toward Bashas' contribution to ACAA.

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## ACAA Receives USDA Food Stamp Outreach Grant

The Arizona Community Action Association has been awarded a \$74,937 grant from the USDA to fund a two year Food Stamp outreach project. ACAA will develop a network of 11 community and faith-based partner organizations in Maricopa County, who will participate in a train-the-trainer model to teach staff and volunteers to conduct Food Stamp prescreening and application assistance. Partner organizations will also participate with ACAA in Food Stamp mini-fairs at community sites, including Farmer's Markets and retailers.

This project will raise awareness of and increase participation in the Food Stamp Program among non-participating eligible people in Maricopa County. The Food Research and Action Center's *State of the States 2006* report showed a 64% statewide participation rate among Food Stamp eligible people in FY2005, with 809,708 Arizonans in poverty. One-third of individuals living beneath the poverty level in Arizona do not currently receive Food Stamps. In Maricopa County in April 2006, 62.8% of people in poverty were receiving Food Stamps. Maricopa County's estimated poverty population is 422,419, leaving almost 160,000 individuals in poverty in Maricopa County who are not receiving Food Stamps. ACAA is confident that we can bridge this gap through this unique and exciting project.

We would like to extend a special thank you to the USDA for funding this project, and to our partners: The Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness, Area Agency on Aging, City of Phoenix and City of Phoenix Faith-Based Initiatives, City of Mesa, Collaboration for a New Century, Maricopa County Human Services Division, and the Washington Elementary School District.

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## AZSecure Update

Think you might be eligible for Food Stamps, Medicaid, or TANF cash assistance? Looking for an easy way to find out? With the new AZSecure program, help is here!

ACAA has partnered with the Governor's Office for Children, Youth, and Families (GOCYF), the Department of Economic Security (DES), the Government Information Technology Agency (GITA), and the Foundation for Senior Living on a new program that makes determining eligibility and applying easier than ever!

Three CAP offices and three Foundation for Senior Living offices throughout Arizona are serving as pilot sites and currently taking appointments for screenings. Call today to meet with a caseworker trained to help low-income seniors, families, and individuals determine if they are eligible and, if qualified, apply with one easy appointment.

Community Action Human Resources Agency (CAHRA)

## **ACAA Board of Directors**

**Moises Gallegos**  
President  
City of Phoenix

**Margarita Leyvas**  
Vice President  
Maricopa County Human  
Services Department

**Susan Dempsey-Spurgeon**  
Treasurer  
Western Arizona Council  
of Governments

**Bonnie Temme**  
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Project Help/Outreach  
Salt River Project

**Miquelle Scheier**  
Executive Committee Member  
Coconino County  
Community Services

**Brian Babiars**  
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Western Arizona  
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Gila County Housing Services

**Jesus Duran**  
District II Representative  
Pima County  
Community Development

**Beth Fiorenza**  
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Tempe CAP

**Verna Fischer**  
CAA Director  
Coconino County  
Community Services

**David Fletcher**  
CAA Director  
Gila County CAP

**Norma Gallegos**  
CAA Director  
Pima County CAA

**Pat Gilbert**  
CAA Director  
MesaCAN

311 N. Main St.  
Eloy, AZ 85231-2511  
520-466-1112

Southeastern Arizona Community Action Program (SEACAP)  
283 West 5th Street  
Safford, AZ 85546  
928-428-2872

Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG)  
224 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Yuma, AZ 85364  
925-782-1886 x 161

For more information on AZSecure, please contact Katie Kahle  
at [kkahle@azcaa.org](mailto:kkahle@azcaa.org).

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## **People's Information Guide**

The People's Information Guide, affectionately known as PIG is being updated in order to be reprinted and distributed in early 2007. Our thanks to Southwest Gas and PacifiCare for their sponsorship of this valuable publication. If you would like to participate in the review of the People's Info Guide or have suggestions or additions, please contact Karen Lockhart at [klockhart@azcaa.org](mailto:klockhart@azcaa.org), or Mary Lou Rosales at [mlrosales@cahrapinal.org](mailto:mlrosales@cahrapinal.org).

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## **Arizona Self Help Enhancements**

ACAA established the Arizona Self Help (ASH) website, [www.arizonaselfhelp.org](http://www.arizonaselfhelp.org), in 2003, and has since added additional services and features to enhance the site. ACAA's latest additions include 5 Senior Programs and a pre-filled Food Stamp application that can be downloaded from the site.

ASH is an on-line prescreening tool, which quickly and confidentially determines potential eligibility for 19 social service programs including TANF, Food Stamps, EITC, and utility discount programs. Now seniors can prescreen for Social Security, SSDI, SSI, In-Home Services, The CoppeRx Card, Medicare, Medicare Savings Plans, and Medicare Part D. This prescreening tool can be accessed through any computer with an internet connection, and approximately 50% of its users access it from home.

Arizona Self Help directs users to the local agency providing the service needed in their community. ASH also includes a list of documents to bring to an interview, a summary report of the questionnaire, and downloadable Food Stamp, AHCCCS, TANF, Child Care Assistance, and utility discount applications. It was created to provide an easy way for individuals to get program information for themselves and their family members. ACAA hopes that by continually expanding and enhancing the website, we can keep it as a viable and useful tool to help people help themselves.

**Roberta L. Howard**  
**Board Appointee**  
**NAZCARE**

**Gloria Hurtado**  
**CAA Director**  
**City of Phoenix Human**  
**Services Department**

**Deanna Jonovich**  
**District I Representative**  
**City of Phoenix Human**  
**Services Department**

**Marty Loreto**  
**Board Appointee**  
**Consumer and Community**  
**Affairs**  
**Southwest Gas**

**Librado M 'J R' Ramirez**  
**CAA Director**  
**Southeastern AZ**  
**Community Action Program**

**Mary Lou Rosales**  
**CAA Director**  
**Community Action**  
**Human Resources Agency**

**Frank Solomon**  
**District VI Representative**  
**Ombudsman**  
**SEACAP**

**Ken Sweet**  
**CAA Director**  
**Northern Arizona**  
**Council of Governments**

## **Honorary Members**

**Joe Montoya**

**Robert Reed**

**Travis Williams**

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## **ACAA Staff**

**Cynthia Zwick**  
**Executive Director**  
[czwick@azcaa.org](mailto:czwick@azcaa.org)

**Jeff Jameson**  
**Director of Utility**  
**Programs**  
[jjameson@azcaa.org](mailto:jjameson@azcaa.org)

ACAA provides free training sessions in order to help organizations learn how they can integrate ASH for their clients. For more information on the Arizona Self Help website, or to set up a training event at your organization, please contact Katie Kahle at 602 604-0640 or [kkahle@azcaa.org](mailto:kkahle@azcaa.org)

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## **Staff Updates**

2006 was a year of growth and change for ACAA, and this is reflected in our most recent staff changes.

### **Jeff Jameson - Director of Utility Programs**



Jeff joined ACAA in mid-September to direct the implementation of our new state-wide utility assistance program. Jeff and his wife, Gayle, recently relocated from Pittsburgh Pa. where he was the Director of Development for the \$1 Energy Fund, Inc. While at \$1 Energy, he was responsible for fundraising, grant writing, special events, business development, corporate relations, and media and public relations.

He has over 20 years of non-profit leadership experience working in utilities, non-profit hospitals, community mental health, and childrens' services. He has a Master's Degree in Human Resources Management and has been active in electoral politics, environmental and conservation efforts and other community affairs.

### **Katie Kahle - Program Manager**



Katie joined the ACAA team in August as Program Manager. Katie graduated from Arizona State University with a Bachelor's in Social Work and a minor in Justice Studies. She also completed her Master's in Social Work at ASU, with an emphasis on Planning, Administration, and Community Organizing.

Her professional and volunteer experience includes community organizing, advocacy, fund-raising, and public education through non-profit and volunteer organizations. As Program

**Katie Kahle**  
**Program Manager**  
[kkahle@azcaa.org](mailto:kkahle@azcaa.org)

**Karen Lockhart**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
[klockhart@azcaa.org](mailto:klockhart@azcaa.org)

Manager, her responsibilities include Food Stamp Outreach, AZSecure, and the Arizona Self Help website:  
[www.arizonaselfhelp.org](http://www.arizonaselfhelp.org).

### **Karen Lockhart - Administrative Assistant**



Karen joined ACAA in November as the Administrative Assistant. Karen provides support for the ACAA office team in a variety of capacities. She also assists callers by providing referral information to ensure those in need of services connect with an appropriate provider.

Karen served as a non-profit board member for two years. Her background is in computer hardware and software, office administration, grant and contract writing and customer support.

[www.azcaa.org](http://www.azcaa.org) | 602.604.0640