

WHAT'S {HAP}PENING

WINTER 2021



STILL HERE, STILL HELPING

Our doors may be locked to the public, but our staff is still navigating roaring waves of activity. If the pandemic were a storm at sea, Community Action would be inflating and tossing the life rafts.

Staff at HAPCAP have been weathering this storm with their typical ingenuity and resourcefulness. The Home Relief Grant program worked to administer CARES act funds directly to the people who needed it. It propelled Ohio's Community Action agencies into a deserved yet unfamiliar spotlight, since much of our work is

done in the wings, with little applause or accolades. But that's the culture of Community Action. We don't do this work for the attention. We do this work because it's the right thing to do. This culture, combined with Appalachia's values in humility and generosity, can make a spotlight feel very uncomfortable for us.

Yet the Ohio Governor trusted Ohio's Community Action agencies with the task of administering 50 million dollars in home relief funds. We have over 50 years of experience helping those who have reached the end of the line, and we know the community because we are the community.

Legacy and culture aside, this was a daunting ask. Processing hundreds of thousands, even millions of

At HAPCAP, our Community Services Division took this challenge in stride, immediately implementing a workflow and a strategy to connect residents with the money provided to Hocking, Athens, and Perry Counties.

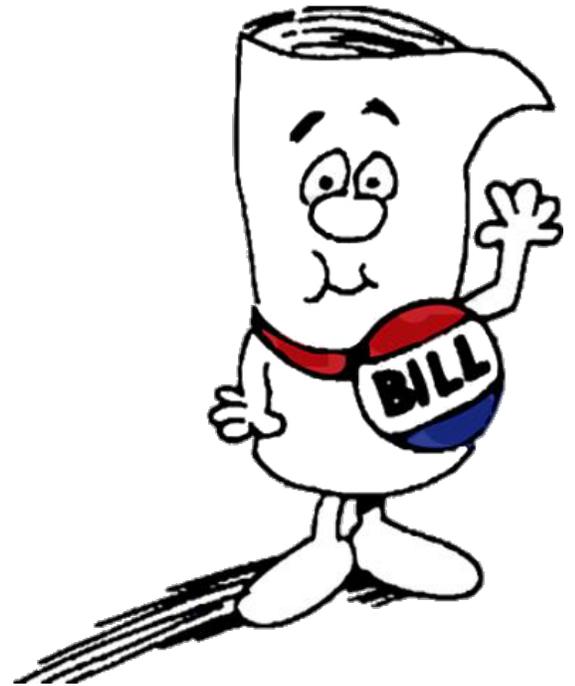
Our Community Resource Navigators worked tirelessly to bring relief to families facing hardship. Within 23 calendar days, all of our Home Relief Grant funds were obligated to residents behind on their rent or mortgage payments. Yet many are still facing uncertainty in meeting their basic needs.

On December 27, a 900 billion dollar stimulus package was signed into law, including 25 billion dollars for additional rent and utility assistance. Ohio is estimated to receive around 778 million dollars in funds, which Community Action Agencies are expected to administer through 2021. Certainly, our well-seasoned staff are suited for the task.

SO WHAT'S IN THE BILL?

Here's what's in the latest round of COVID-19 relief legislation, according to National Public Radio:

- \$600 direct payment checks for every adult and child earning up to \$75,000.
- Enhanced unemployment benefits for jobless workers, who may receive up to \$300 per week through mid-March. Self-employed people and gig workers will also receive extended assistance.
- SNAP assistance: The measure includes an additional \$13 billion for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. HAPCAP and the Ohio Association of Foodbanks have heavily advocated for this increase!
- Child care centers: The measure includes \$10 billion for child care centers to help providers safely reopen.
- The agreement includes some \$68 billion to purchase and distribute COVID-19 vaccines and help states conduct testing — \$20 billion of that funding will make the vaccine available at no cost for anybody needing it.
- \$7 billion to increase access to broadband Internet, also encouraged by local advocates
- \$13 billion in the measure for farmers, including money under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program for growers and livestock, dairy and poultry producers.
- \$82 billion in funding for schools and universities to assist with reopening



There is so much more included in this round of legislation! Stay tuned to your trusted media sources for updates on how Ohio agencies plan to distribute their funds. Not sure where to begin? The Ohio Public Radio Statehouse News Bureau is a great place to start!

HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Glen just applied for a new Housing Assistance Grant Program. This program if funded will be for approximately \$181,000 and would assist 22 households within our three county service area. Fingers crossed.

We have just started taking applications for the Athens County Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program (CHIP). This program is a partnership between the City of Nelsonville, City of Athens, and Athens County. We have already filled the owner home repair slots for Athens County but still have openings for residents in the City of Athens and City of Nelsonville. We also have one slot available for someone looking to purchase a home through our down payment assistance and rehab activity. The CHIP program will also be assisting with building two new homes in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity of SEO within Athens County so if you know someone interested in building a new home in Athens County please have them get with Habitat for Humanity. This Athens County CHIP grant is \$1,050,000.

Emergency Housing Assistance funds were transferred from other activities within the previous CHIP grants for Perry and Athens Counties. Unfortunately we have expended all funds in the Athens County Program. We currently still have approximately \$47,000 more left to spend in Perry and Hocking Counties. If you know any residents behind on their rent or mortgage, please have them give the housing office a call (740) 753-3062.

With House Bill 6 not being repealed we no longer have funds through the American Electric Power Community Assistance Program. **We still are able to perform energy audits and replace light bulbs, freezers, and refrigerators when able to through the Electric Partnership Program.** You must be an AEP Ohio customer, have 12 months of electric usage, be PIPP income eligible, and the bill must be in your name. Clients can call Beth at the housing office to see if they are eligible and get an appointment.

- Jeremy Boggs



Clients Served with Emergency Housing Assistance through HAPCAP's Housing Office

- Athens County - 50 households
\$111,900.00
- City of Athens - 14 households
\$10,749.50
- City of Athens Utilities - 4 households
\$1849.41
- Perry and Hocking County - 58 households, \$124,602.00

A NEW Habitat for Humanity home on a former Athens County Land Bank property - right here in Glouster!

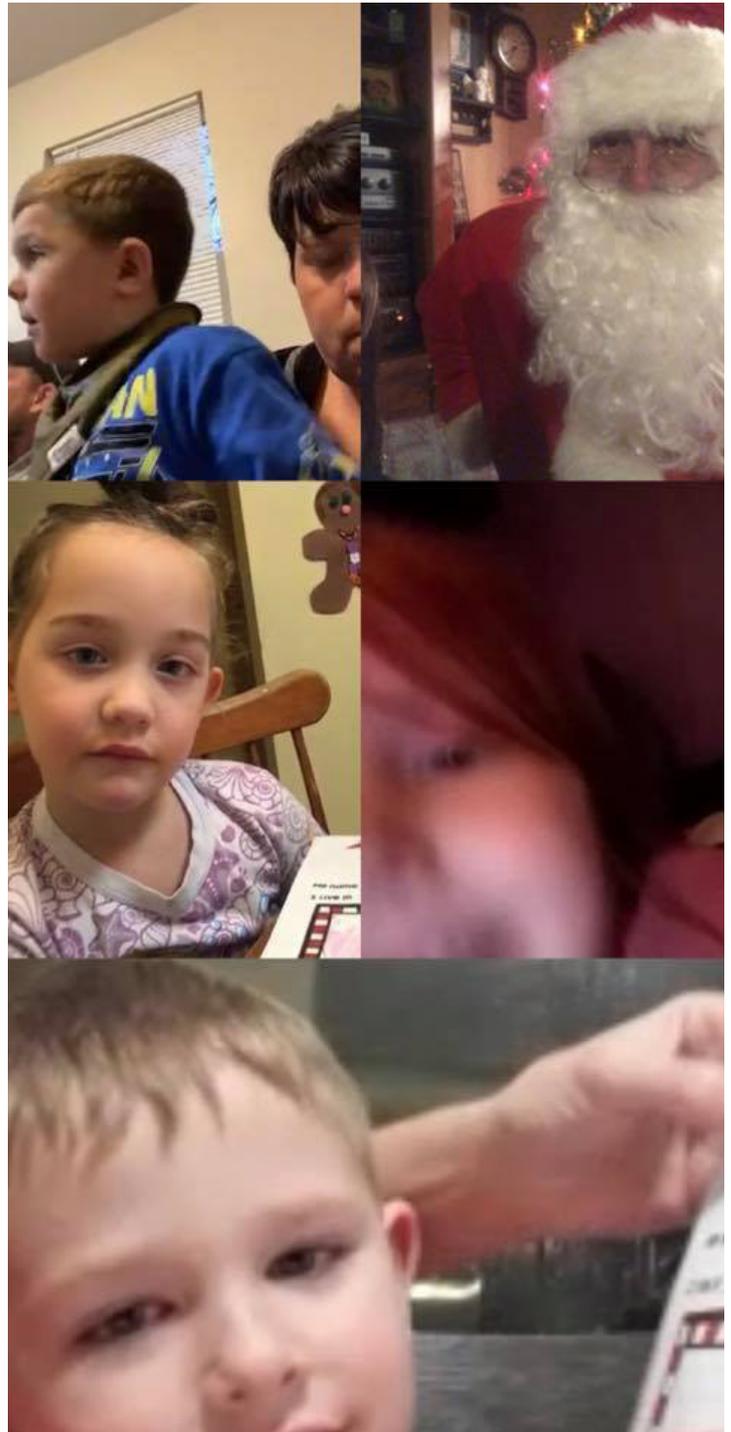
CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Children and families have settled into the new normal of attending school only a couple days a week or receiving visits outside or virtually. We continue to purchase items to help families that are receiving our services in a home or porch setting. We just received an order with some puzzles, trucks, dinosaurs, safari animals and other items to share with families. We send out books each month and are able to assist with other family needs as well. Staff also worked individually with families that needed assistance to make sure that Santa is able to visit those who celebrate.

We received the air quality test results and were cleared to begin services in Nelsonville and Laurelville. Staff, children and parents were all very excited to finally start the year. We had hoped to receive an estimate for the repairs to the facility by now but it looks as if we won't have that information for a while. We are going ahead with the budget revision for the other projects and will address funding the building repair at a later time.

We recently found out that we will be receiving coats and shoes for our children through Operation Warm. While we won't have enough for all children, we hope to provide them to most. We began receiving coats this week but the shoes aren't expected to ship until February or March. Our plan is to get applications completed the first couple weeks of January and get the coats distributed as quickly as possible. The last time we received these coats we didn't have many of the sizes that most of our children needed. We were assured this shipment will include the smaller sizes.

- Chris Delamatre



A screenshot of a virtual socialization...featuring a special seasonal guest!

COMMUNITY SERVICES



Kristen, a Perry CCMEP participant, poses with her GED. For her success story, visit hapcap.org/news/!

HEAP: The Winter Crisis Program will continue to run through March 31. The WCP program can assist eligible households threatened with disconnection, have been disconnected, or have less than 25% of bulk fuels. Due to Covid-19 we are only taking phone appointments. You can schedule an appointment by calling 740-868-1908. If you have a disconnect scheduled for today or tomorrow, or if you are out of firewood or bulk fuels, you can call the agency for an emergency same day appointment. We will also continue taking appointments for Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). We would like to welcome 3 new seasonal intake staff, Leah Whitmore, Brittnee Bush, and Kay Johnson, and would like to welcome back Miriam Wolfe as a full time Community Services Worker.

Community Resource Navigators: HAPCAP was awarded \$806,000 to help with rent, mortgage, water and sewer assistance. We refocused Amanda, Clarissa and Angle to operate this program and were very excited to bring on Vickie McFadden and Denisha Blair to help with this project. In addition, HEAP staff and Accounting staff all took on extra work and duties to help. This grant started on November 2nd and by November 25th all the funding was obligated. This has been a herculean effort for everyone involved and we could not have done it without the support of the accounting office, front desk staff and HEAP. Thank you so much to everyone involved in this project! We are still operating the waterbill assistance program and trying to help people with general resources.

Flood Programs: All the flood programs came to an end in October and November after a year of hard work. The crew members worked hard to prevent flooding in our area by removing blockages in local streams. In total, they removed 141 tons of brush, 214 tires, 5 tons of steel, 8 tons of miscellaneous debris, and 60 55-gallon bags of trash. They also received invaluable training including, OSHA Safety Training, First Aid/CPR certification and chainsaw training. Even though the programs have come to an end, many of the staff will be continuing on with

HAPCAP. We would like to congratulate the following staff members on their new positions within the Housing and Community Development Division: Philip Self, Jason Hudson, Tyler Dennis, and Bob Hollingshead.

Perry CCMEP: We've Moved! We are now located at the Hocking College Perry Campus. CCMEP Staff provided participants with Back to School/Back to Work Goodie bags that included a planner, face mask, thermometer, COVID-19 CDC Literature, personal hygiene products, and a copy of the CCMEP Cookbook that was written during summer employment. Two subsidized employment participants worked as Tech Assistants for the Technology Engagement Program for Seniors and Older Adults Senior Connections and Engagement Program hosted by Perry County Job and Family Services (PCJFS). Our Tech Assistants helped seniors strengthen their connection to family, friends and community by advancing their technology skills. Staff continue to secure participant technology needs as we continue to move towards virtual case management. Participants are attending virtual Academy for Leadership Abilities (ALA) classes, a program through Perry County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Our Home Visiting Program has started and staff will be meeting with clients at their homes and virtually.

Athens SEP: We've moved! We took over the former Athens Flood office and are now at the end of the building in Glouster. We held numerous socially-distanced in-person Workshop Wednesdays throughout the Fall. Participants received both a professional and personal skill workshop each Wednesday. Our participants continue to work at their in-person worksites with increased safety measures. We had a couple participants gain permanent unsubsidized employment. Alexis Howland now works at McDonald's. Denisha Blair received employment through HAPCAP working with the Community Services Managers. Congratulations to the both of them! We permanently hired on Morgan Llewellyn as our job coach! Morgan helped us out during the summer as our temporary driver and clerk. Congratulations, Morgan! Lydia Dippre, our employment program specialist, finished her Master of Legal Studies degree in Indigenous Peoples Law from Oklahoma University. Congratulations, Lydia!

Hocking CCMEP/WIOA Youth: Our participants continue to work hard at reaching their education and employment goals even with all the COVID-induced challenges that are being thrown their way. Our high school and post-secondary students are learning how to switch back and forth between in-person and virtual lessons, and our employed participants, many of which work in the medical field, continue to show up every day even though they are putting themselves in harm's way. We have had four participants pass the state test to become certified nursing assistants within the past three months, and one participant earned her GED. As a program, we also continue to adapt as needed—we have held client meetings over the phone, over the video calls, in parking lots, on porches, and any way that will allow us to safely support participants as they take steps towards their goals.

- Jessica Stroh

DO YOU HAVE COMMUNITY UPDATES TO SHARE?

Send local resources to Claire at info@hapcap.org by 4 p.m. on Mondays to be included in the Resource Wednesday Newsletter. Examples include (but are not limited to) public meetings, classes, new programs, and legislative updates. Anyone outside of the agency can subscribe to Resource Wednesdays by clicking "subscribe" at the bottom of the newsletter.

FOOD & NUTRITION



Volunteers at the Greater Marietta Community Food Pantry

Our Meals on Wheels program has wrapped up its third annual Secret Santa program! Our tags went mostly virtual this year due to the pandemic, and our community really came together with funds to ensure we could purchase what our seniors had asked for.

We are continuing our waitlist removal program for MoW to serve roughly 100 seniors who have been on the waitlist prior. Ben has taken the lead on this from developing routes to registering new clients. He has been a kitchen all-star!

In December, we ran an on-site pantry to provide food for any person in our region who wanted to come to the foodbank from 10-12. Lindsey Hackworth took the lead. She put information out to the public, organized food orders with warehouse, and so much more!

We also have been doing mobile distributions about twice a month. Lindsey has been organizing the warehouse, NG, and groups to go to different countries to serve families directly. She is a Foodbank all star!

Lastly, we'd like to welcome Lauren Flum, our media & communications VISTA. If you see a tall girl walking around with a camera who isn't Claire, it's probably Lauren. So give her a wave!



Posing with a pet food donation! Thank you, Blue Cross Blue Shield!

TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Athens-Hocking County Mobility Management: The AHMM program hosted the first Hocking County Transportation Advisory Committee meeting virtually. With a diverse group of stakeholders attending the meeting we're excited to see how the new committee grows! The program was also able to purchase 5000 reusable cotton masks for local organizations, businesses, and community members. .

Logan Public Transit: Logan Public Transit was able to create a new position, a Transit Aide, to help meet the system's current needs and to keep riders and drivers safe. The Transit Aide will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting vehicles and will also ride along with drivers if a passenger requires extra assistance!

Athens on Demand Transit: Like Logan Public Transit and Athens Public Transit, Athens on Demand Transit continues to see a slow increase in ridership. The vehicles continue to be cleaned and sanitized regularly throughout the day and both drivers and passengers are required to wear face coverings in an effort to keep everyone safe. AODT's vans were also equipped with cameras this month and are working towards implementing improved dispatching software as well.

Athens Public Transit: Athens Public Transit's fleet is now equipped with cameras! The cameras were part of our 2020 grant and will provide added safety for both passengers and drivers and help to ensure we are providing quality service to the public. Athens Public Transit was recently awarded a \$122,891 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone Program (HOPE) Grant. With this grant, APT is going to explore three topics:

- **Regionalized Medicaid Transportation:** Looking at a regional system to better help Medicaid recipients access medical treatment.
- **Advanced Fare Systems:** Investigate innovative technologies for an integrated, advanced fare payment system.
- **Electric Bus Planning:** Explore if and how an electric fleet could operate in the Athens area. The study would look at infrastructure needs, types of EV available, and EV route modeling.

GoBus: GoBus continues to keep passengers and drivers safe by keeping bus capacity at half in order to maintain proper social distancing on the bus. With some changes to the schedules GoBus was able to improve service and increase communities' access to urban centers!

- *Jessie Schmitzer*





MARY IS A GRAND OLD NAME

It is with heavy hearts as we bid farewell to Mary Dailey, the Athens Public Transit Coordinator, who served her community for decades. Mary initially started at Athens Public Transit as a driver and worked her way up to the Coordinator of the entire program. She cared deeply about her staff, her colleagues, and the successful operation of the program over the years. As our Executive Director, Kelly Hatas, stated, Mary truly was ‘the heart and soul of APT’. As a member of our HAPCAP family, keep her family and the Transportation Division in your thoughts as we navigate through a new world without our kind and thoughtful friend.

- *Jessie Schmitzer*

Mary was never a personality who hogged the spotlight. She treated her staff like family. In passenger transportation there is a continual tension between offering consistent service and accommodating the surprise and uncertainty in the lives of the people keeping it running, but she squared that circle with grace and creativity. I remember the spreads she laid out for drivers at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and on the most dreaded day of the transit calendar, the night of the Halloween Block Party.

She had a warm sense of humor, and she was both determined and patient. She had a corgi picture for every occasion. She was never shy about calling a bad idea by its name. She was resourceful; she led the staff in to find creative solutions to everyday problems, often with limited resources. “We’ll finagle it one way or another,” we’ll use it up, wear it out, make do, or do without.

When I think of Mary, I don’t want to be fumbling for the words of a eulogy - I want to be sitting with her in the office, talking over the latest in the endless string of operational hiccups, hearing stories of weekend dune buggy rides and the shenanigans of dogs and donkeys, basking in her common sense and wry humor. To say that I miss her doesn’t capture the extent of the loss, for our local transit community and for those of us lucky enough to have known her.

- *Michael Lachman, former APT Coordinator at HAPCAP*

RACIAL JUSTICE: LISTEN AND LEARN

PODCASTS



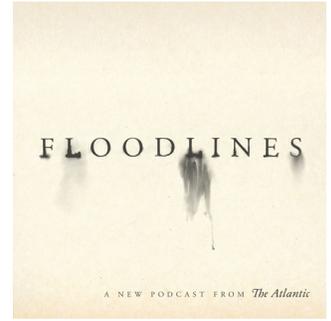
1619

An audio series on how slavery has transformed America, connecting past and present through the oldest form of storytelling.



CODE SWITCH

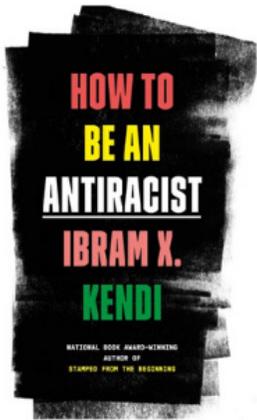
Tackling the subject of race head-on, and how it impacts every part of society — from politics and pop culture to everything in between.



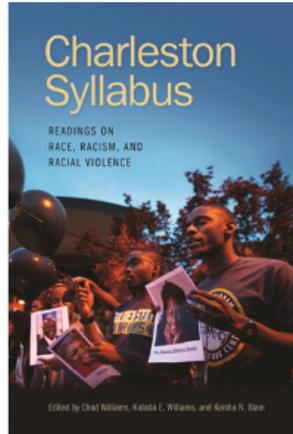
FLOODLINES

An 8-part series exploring the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and the day the levees broke.

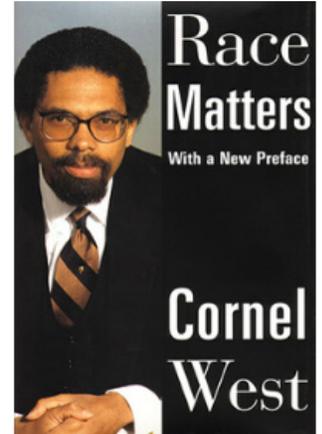
BOOKS



HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST by **IBRAM X. KENDI**



CHARLESTON SYLLABUS by **CHAD WILLIAMS, KIDADA E. WILLIAMS, and KEISHA N. BLAIN**



RACE MATTERS by **CORNEL WEST**

BUT THE BOOKS ARE NOT ENOUGH.

“When you read those books, to yourself or to your kids...what are the discussions that are going with them?”

The books are the discussion starters but they are NOT ENOUGH. It is an action to be anti-racist. Not a statement. We must continually work to confront white supremacy.”

- Adapted from “[Inclusive Storytime.](#)”

GET INVOLVED

For more information on giving or volunteering opportunities, visit our Web site at www.hapcap.org. We also encourage you to follow us on our social media accounts:



Hocking Athens Perry Community Action



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