

**BROC Community Action**

TOM DONAHUE

tdonahue@broc.org

*Serving Rutland and Bennington Counties*

**Capstone Community Action**

SUE MINTER

sminter@capstonevt.org

*Serving Washington, Orange and Lamoille Counties; Granville and Hancock in Addison County; Pittsfield in Rutland County; Barnard, Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge in Windsor County*

**Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity**

PAUL DRAGON

pdragon@cvoeo.org

*Serving Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle and Addison Counties except for the towns of Granville and Hancock*

**Northeast Kingdom Community Action**

JENNA O'FARRELL

jofarrell@nekavt.org

*Serving Orleans, Essex and Caledonia Counties*

**Southeastern Vermont Community Action**

STEVE GELLER

sgeller@sevca.org

*Serving Windham and Windsor Counties, except for Barnard, Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge in Windsor County*

# VCAP Annual Report 2020

VERMONT COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP





The Vermont Community Action Partnership (VCAP) has been at the forefront of the community response to Covid-19 throughout Fiscal Year 2020. VCAP was immediately available throughout our state to offer swift action, leadership, innovation and flexibility to respond to emergent needs. Our staff are essential workers and while having to close some of our doors, we opened technology to meet acute and essential needs of food, housing and economic support and assistance. Each Community Action Agency brings different strengths and programs to make this happen. We work side by side with the Vermont Legislature, the Agency of Commerce & Community Development, the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity, our neighbors and collaborators to solve problems and offer hope.

VCAP REACH  
**100%**  
 of Vermont cities,  
 towns and peoples



**VCAP PROVIDED SERVICES TO**

- 52,499** Vermonters with low income
- 25,758** Vermont households
- 4,590** Vermonters of color
- 1,070** Vermont Veterans
- 2,936** Vermont seniors
- 9,059** Vermonters with disabilities
- 3,241** Vermonters employed full time
- 1,516** Vermonters experiencing homelessness

*Data is taken for 125% of poverty matching those served by VCAP*



**THE VERMONT NEED**

- 90,794** Vermonters live in poverty
- 16,282** Vermont children are living in poverty
- 18,703** Vermonters of color are disproportionately affected
- 8,356** Vermonters 65 or over are living in poverty



“I feel like I’m a completely different person than I was when we first started. I would not be anywhere close to where I am without you. I’m so proud of all this work that I’ve done!”

CARES ACT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

Vermont Community Action Agencies helped thousands of individuals and families improve their economic stability. During 2020, with the help of the Vermont Legislature, we stemmed the tide of disintegrating micro-businesses, provided direct personal business counseling, offered educational workshops and helped Vermonters increase their financial capacity and hold on to and add to their savings accounts. We provided essential assistance with tax preparation and strategies in building a stronger future.

### THE VERMONT NEED

**22.6%** of Vermonters have income volatility

**20%** of Vermonters have low financial well-being

**21%** of Vermonters own micro-businesses

### VCAP REACH

**2,663** received coaching to build assets and increase financial skills

**728** attended financial capability classes

**4,033** received tax assistance

**436** Vermont micro-businesses received stimulus grants from VCAP's CARES Act program



### VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

**295** Vermonters increased their savings

**956** micro-business and development start-up classes

**\$4,490,809** in tax refunds were brought back into the Vermont economy through the VITA Program

**78** New Americans participated in financial coaching, house parties and classes

**61%** of CARES micro-business applicants were female or minority owned businesses

**84%** of VCAP micro-business owners rely on self-employment for household income

## Head Start | Early Head Start | Parent Child Centers

Head Start, Early Head Start and Parent Child Centers promote early learning in children ages birth to 5 for families with low-income including children with disabilities. They are a strong segment of the Vermont childcare network. Health, dental, education for pregnant women and family services were delivered throughout the pandemic.

“I knew that Head Start would be good for my son. But I really didn’t know that it would be good for me.”

KAREN SHEARER

## THE VERMONT NEED

**4,482** of Vermont children between the ages of 0–4 live in poverty

**12%** of children of color live in poverty

**36.4%** of Vermont children are eligible for free and reduced lunch

## VCAP REACH

**786** children received dental assessments

**1,064** children received physicals and/or various health screenings

**1,568** children were served

**1,310** home visits were made

## VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

**1,320** parenting classes addressing barriers to stability were attended by Vermont families

**1,557** parents improved family functioning skills

**930** Head Start children became school ready



Community Ambassadors | VOICES | Fair Housing | VT Tenants  
Mobile Home Program | Thrift Stores | Community Justice

Vermont Community Action staff advocate for our vulnerable neighbors, ensure that the voiceless and oppressed receive support through Community Justice programs and obtain basic necessities. Vermonters find security and relief from discrimination in housing and safety from domestic and sexual violence.

“Partnerships not only require us to think expansively about our own organizations, but also in the ways in which we can all grow together to strengthen our work in building safe, healthy and happy communities.”

JENNA O'FARRELL

THE VERMONT NEED

**7.4%** of adults do not have high school diplomas

**1,986** of youth ages 16-19 are not working or in school

**13.8%** of Vermonters have poor or fair health status

VCAP REACH

**720** attended Fair Housing workshops to learn about housing discrimination

**452** were helped with low or no-cost clothing, furniture and household items by NEKCA, SEVCA and BROCC

**78** asylum seekers, New Americans, immigrants and refugees found a path to offer their support to other Vermonters at CVOEO

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

**304** Vermonters avoided evictions

**285** individuals improved their leadership skills through engagement in VCAP communities

**523** improved self-employment skills to provide for themselves and their families

**605** found safety in domestic and sexual assault intervention programs at CVOEO



Food Shelves | Community Kitchen Academy  
Everyone Eats | Covid-19 Relief

The Community Action Agencies were some of the first on the scene to address the ever growing food insecurity brought on by Covid-19. They were able to do this because of more than 50 years of experience of feeding the hungry and promoting nutrition and the well-being of Vermont individuals and families with low income. We are the front line.

THE VERMONT NEED

**71,600** Vermonters are food insecure

**18,560** children are hungry

**31,101** households are receiving 3Square VT benefits

VCAP REACH

**14** regional hubs were established by Everyone Eats to keep restaurants in business feeding the homeless and hungry. Led by SEVCA, the effort partnered with **30** non-profit businesses and coalitions, over **125** restaurants and **60** farms and food producers

Community Kitchen Academy employed graduates to feed the hungry during the pandemic

**4,630** individuals were assisted in applying for 3Squares VT benefits

VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

**105,419** hot meals were made and distributed to those who were hungry

**21,256** boxes/bags of groceries were distributed



“I used to come to the food shelf to pick up fresh vegetables for my son and me; if my business is successful, someday I’d like to give 10% of my profits to the Food Shelf.”

FORMER FOOD SHELF CLIENT & FOOD ENTREPRENEUR

## Homeless Housing | CARES

In the midst of a pandemic, when shelters needed to reduce for the safety of all staff and residents, VCAP agencies provided a shelter for Covid positive Vermonters, homeless hotel services and expanded housing to victims of domestic and sexual assault. This was made possible with CARES funding, the support of the Vermont Legislature and the leadership of the Vermont Agencies of AHS, DCF and OEO.

## THE VERMONT NEED

**1.3%** vacancy rate for housing

**1,481** unsafe and unsanitary occupied Vermont housing units

**80,481** renter occupied households in Vermont

**46.7%** of renters have an unmanageably high housing cost burden

## VCAP REACH

CVOEO opened a Covid-19 Recovery Center with the help of OEO in a matter of several weeks

VCAP agencies provided direct service to the homeless in hotel settings

**1,516** homeless were helped to find permanent housing during the pandemic



GLEN RUSSELL/VT DIGGER

## VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

**1,227** Vermonters experiencing homelessness found temporary housing

**1,729** Vermonters obtained safe, affordable and permanent housing

**1,675** received housing navigation support

**897** received security deposits

**840** received rental assistance

“It is not an understatement to say this is lifesaving work, particularly at this time of Covid-19...I would not have been able to navigate this on my own. Thank you for your dedicated work.”

EMERGENCY HOUSING PROGRAM GUEST

“I don’t know how I heard about you folks. Maybe it was fuel or public assistance. It doesn’t matter. I needed it and you were absolutely great. Thanks so much.”

WEATHERIZATION HOME OWNER

Weatherization | Emergency Home Heating | Crisis Fuel Warmth Program | CARES Utility

VCAP gives Vermonters with low income, especially older Vermonters, people with disabilities and families with children the ability to save fuel and money by improving the energy efficiency, safety and health of their homes. Vermonters are warmer, safer, healthier and have an increased ability to face the ravages of a pandemic in the midst of rising job loss, isolation and cold.

#### THE VERMONT NEED

**16%** of annual income spent on energy costs by Vermonters with low income

Vermont has some of the oldest housing stock in the nation

**15.4%** of adult Vermonters suffer from asthma

#### VCAP REACH

**464** units/homes were weatherized by VCAP

**\$903,090** was spent on labor, materials and replacement systems through the Emergency Heating Repair and Replacement program

#### VCAP ANNUAL IMPACT

**1,529** Vermonters are safer, healthier and warmer because of the work of weatherization

**1,365** Vermont homes were kept warm, safe and comfortable

**10,494** were served through the Crisis fuel program for short term emergency assistance

**1,422** Vermont households have improved energy efficiency and energy burden reduction



# VCAP LEADERSHIP



**CVOEO**  
CHAMPLAIN VALLEY OFFICE  
of ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY  
**PAUL DRAGON**



**CAPSTONE**  
COMMUNITY ACTION  
**SUE MINTER**



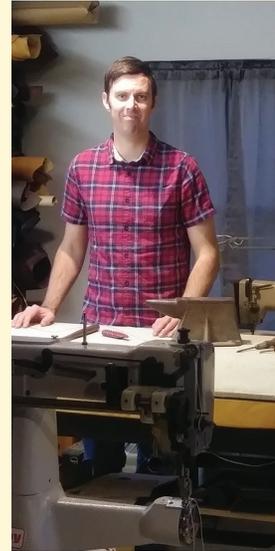
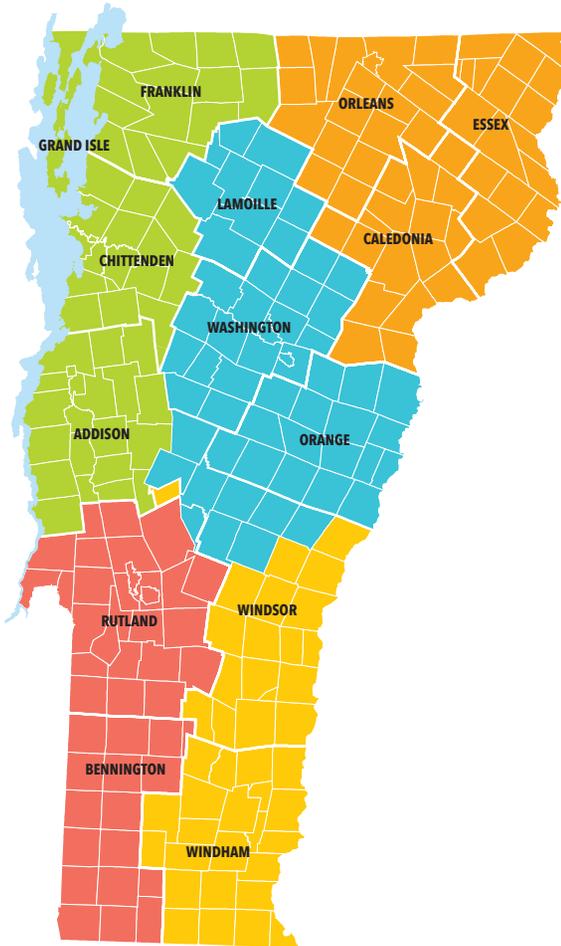
COMMUNITY ACTION  
**NEKCA**  
Together We Grow  
**JENNA O'FARRELL**



**BROC**  
COMMUNITY  
ACTION  
**TOM DONAHUE**



Meeting Needs | Changing Lives  
**SEVCA**  
PROVIDING THE LEADERSHIP OF COMMUNITY ACTION  
**STEVE GELLER**



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