

# **FREDERICK COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY**

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## **Introduction**

Through a wide array of programs and services, the Frederick Community Action Agency (FCAA) provides food, shelter, medical care, housing, and other forms of assistance to families and individuals who are lower-income or homeless. Started in 1968, the FCAA is sponsored by the City of Frederick and the Friends for Neighborhood Progress, Inc. The agency director, Mike Spurrier, reports directly to Mayor Michael O'Connor and to a 15-member Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Frederick. The Board of Directors provides oversight and assists with all aspects of agency planning and operations. The major programs and services operated by the FCAA can be categorized into six (6) broad program areas: Food and Nutrition Programs; Outreach and Transportation Programs; Health Care Programs; Homeless Service Programs; Housing Counseling and Weatherization Programs; and Energy Assistance Programs.

## **Brief Description of the History of the FCAA**

The Frederick Community Action Agency (FCAA), originally called the Frederick Community Center, was started in 1968 as a private, non-profit agency. The "Community Center" was initiated to provide social and recreational programs for lower-income residents living in the south-end of Frederick (a neighborhood with a higher incidence of poverty and related social problems). As social problems increased, two of the founding members of the Community Center, Lord Nickens and Seaven Gordon, worked closely with former mayor Ronald N. Young to address the issue of poverty in downtown Frederick. In 1979, under the leadership of Mr. Young, the City of Frederick purchased the historic B&O railroad station that houses the Community Center and took over the operation of the programs. In addition, Mr. Young was successful in obtaining a federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to help fund the operation of the Community Center.

The early 1980's saw an increase in homelessness in Frederick and the Community Center responded by opening a Soup Kitchen, a Foodbank, and a Drop-In Center. The federally-funded Health Care for the Homeless Program was initiated in 1989 to provide primary health care and related services. In 1993, through a creative partnership with the Frederick County Government, the Frederick Community Center was designated the "Community Action Agency" for all of Frederick County and the organization was renamed the Frederick Community Action Agency (FCAA). Former mayor Paul P. Gordon and former county commissioner Ronald Sundergill

were instrumental in passing the joint resolution that supported the "Community Action" designation. Construction of the transitional shelter, built adjacent to the FCAA, started in 1992 and the 31-bed facility opened in April of 1994. The Frederick Transitional Shelter provides transitional shelter and serves approximately 60 families on an annual basis. As an addition to the local continuum of care, former mayor James S. Grimes and Mr. Spurrier negotiated the lease of a vacant, State-owned townhouse in downtown Frederick and converted the facility into the Frederick Transitional Apartments; the facility has been fully rehabilitated and now provides three-units of long-term transitional housing for homeless families. Former mayor Jennifer P. Dougherty transferred administration and oversight of the City Youth Center to the FCAA and Mr. Spurrier oversaw a \$130,000 renovation of the facility and grounds. In 2006, former mayor Jeff Holtzinger and Mr. Spurrier entered into an agreement with the Boys and Girls Club of Frederick County to operate programs at the City Youth Center. With the support of Mayor Randy McClement, the FCAA absorbed the operation of the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) in 2014 and has worked to expand the provision of energy assistance services to income-eligible residents. In August 2015, the FCAA was awarded federal funding to establish a Community Health Center and received designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).

The Mission Statement of the Frederick Community Action Agency is:

***The Frederick Community Action Agency (FCAA), the federally designated Community Action Agency for Frederick County, Maryland, administers programs and services to assist disadvantaged and low-income people, thereby, ameliorating the causes and effects of poverty.***

The FCAA is organized into nine (9) program teams supervised by four (4) supervisors who report to Mike Spurrier, CCAP, Director of the agency. The supervisors are: Brad Petersen, CCAP, Assistant Director of Community Services; Janet Jones, MHA, Assistant Director of Medical Services; Sarah McAleavy, Supervisor of Food and Nutrition Services; and Michele Ott, Supervisor of Administrative Services. Prior to working at the FCAA, Mr. Spurrier served as a VISTA volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at Morningside Emergency Shelter in Brattleboro, Vermont. The thirteen-bed emergency shelter served homeless families and individuals. Mr. Spurrier was responsible for a variety of tasks including fundraising and shelter operations. He has also been employed as the Kitchen Coordinator for the Keene Community Soup Kitchen in Keene, New Hampshire and the Outreach Project Director for Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc. in Bellows Falls, Vermont. During his tenure at the FCAA, he has received several awards for community service including an award from the Maryland Association of Realtors for Outstanding Community Service and an award from the Maryland Governor's Advisory Board on Homelessness for Outstanding Public Service; he was nominated for the second award by Dr. Jacqueline H. Rogers, the former Secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Mr. Spurrier was subsequently appointed to the Governor's Advisory Board on Homelessness by former Governor William Donald Schaefer and was re-appointed by former Governor Parris Glendening. In 1996, Mr. Spurrier earned certification as a Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) from the National Association of Community Action Agencies (NACAA) and has been re-certified every four (4) years. In 2017, Mr. Spurrier was

presented with a Life Time Achievement Award from the Frederick County Human Relations Commission.

The following are major accomplishments achieved by the Frederick Community Action Agency:

- 1968 -- FCAA opens as the Frederick Community Center
- 1972 -- FCAA becomes a member agency of the United Way
- 1979 -- FCAA becomes an agency of City Government
- 1984 -- FCAA establishes a Soup Kitchen and a Foodbank
- 1989 -- FCAA establishes a Health Care for the Homeless Program
- 1992 – FCAA receives award from Governor's Advisory Board on Homelessness
- 1992 – FCAA establishes the PATH Program
- 1993 – FCAA designated countywide Community Action Agency
- 1994 – FCAA opens newly constructed transitional shelter
- 1997 – City/FCAA receives award from Maryland Municipal League
- 1997 – FCAA opens long-term transitional housing facility
- 1997 – City/FCAA receive HUD *Best of Practice* award
- 1999 – FCAA receives an Exemplary Program Award from CMHS/SAMSHA
- 2002 – FCAA receives an Award from Fred. Co. Human Relations Commission
- 2002 – FCAA takes over administration of a City Youth Center
- 2005 – FCAA receives national grant for Community Land Security Program
- 2006 – FCAA purchases and opens a new foodbank facility
- 2006 – FCAA receives a Governor's Citation from former Gov. Robert Ehrlich
- 2006 – FCAA establishes a HUD-funded *Housing First* Program
- 2007 – FCAA enters partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Fred. County
- 2008 – FCAA designated to administer city-wide housing programs including the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) Program, House Keys for Employees (HK4E), and the Community Partners Incentive Program (CPIP)
- 2011 – FCAA absorbs the operation of a School-Based Health Center Program
- 2012 – FCAA awarded a grant to establish the Green Jobs Supportive Employment Program
- 2013 – FCAA receives an award from the United Way of Frederick County as the *Outstanding Community Impact Partner* for 2012-2013
- 2014 – FCAA absorbs the operation of the Office of Home Energy Programs
- 2015 – FCAA awarded federal Community Health Center funded and designated as a Federally Qualified Health Center
- 2015 – FCAA renames the primary health care clinic to the Community Action Health Center
- 2017 – FCAA Director presented with Life Time Achievement Award by the Frederick County Human Relations Commission
- 2018 – FCAA receives a HRSA Supplemental Award for Quality Improvement

## **Board Activities and Responsibilities**

In accordance with the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act, the FCAA Board of Directors is a Tripartite Board comprised of one-third elected officials, one-third lower-income citizens or representatives of the low-income community, and one-third other citizens. The FCAA has a very dynamic Board that meets quarterly for 1½-hour meetings. As delineated in both the City Charter and the Board Bylaws, the Board is responsible for hiring and supervising the agency director, establishing overall missions and goals, developing strategic plans, reviewing program activities, monitoring reports, and reviewing annual budgets and expenditures.