



# April 2026 CSBG Newsletter

## A Purpose Fulfilled: Honoring Legacy

### Congratulations, Amy Turner, CCAP

The Community Action Network prepares a heartfelt “see you later” to a titan of the movement. In March, Amy Turner, Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP), retired from her role as Executive Director of the Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency (MVCAA), marking the end of a remarkable four-decade journey.

Recently accepted for induction into the 2026 Community Action Hall of Fame, Amy leaves behind a legacy.

Amy’s journey began in 1985 at Cayuga Seneca Community Action. By her own admission, she was a “lost soul with a young child” who didn’t fully grasp what Community Action was. It was her mentor, Gloria Griffin, who saw a spark in her and instilled a foundational truth that Amy has carried for 40 years: “Nobody chooses to be poor.”



After a decade at PEACE, Inc. (CAA for Onondaga County) in Syracuse, NY, Amy spent the last 30 years at the helm of MVCAA. Under her guidance, the agency became an anchor institution for Oneida and Herkimer Counties. She balanced federal mandates and CSBG administration with an empathetic, client-centered approach. Amy, never one to be intimidated by red tape, often used federal regulations as a springboard for advocacy, sometimes pushing the boundaries.

While her technical expertise in governance and strategic planning is known throughout the Network, Amy’s most enduring impact is found in the people she mentored. She created a culture at MVCAA that defied the typical nonprofit burnout, encouraging her staff to “embody the spirit of hope” and keep the mission of Community Action close.

As Amy transitions into retirement, she is content that she found her purpose and never wavered from it. Her 40 years of service have not only strengthened the Mohawk Valley but have also provided a blueprint for what value-driven leadership looks like.

Congratulations, Amy, on your Hall of Fame induction, and **enjoy retirement!**



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## Highlights Around the Network

### EOP of Chemung County Receives Funding for Renovations!



The Economic Opportunity Program, Inc. of Chemung County (EOP) was awarded **\$7.51 million** from the NY BRICKS grant to support the renovations of the Ernie Davis Community Center. The project will expand space for community programming and essential services that residents rely on every day. For more information on the Ernie Davis Community Center and EOP of Chemung County, [visit \*\*cseop.org\*\*](https://www.cseop.org).

The NY BRICKS (Building Recreational Infrastructure for Communities, Kids and Seniors) program awarded 30 grants totaling \$100 million across 22 counties. The awards will benefit nearly 400,000 New Yorkers through free or low-cost programming and services. More than 90 percent of statewide funding supports projects in underserved communities. [Click here to read the full press release.](#)

### 2025 Report: DCS Financial Literacy Training Initiative

In February 2023, the New York State Department of State (DOS), Division of Community Services (DCS), issued a Request for Application (RFA) to use Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) discretionary funds to support eligible organizations to provide financial literacy training and education to low-income individuals and families within New York State.

The purpose of the New York State Financial Literacy Training Initiative was to assist and educate low-income individuals and families to engage financial resources, which would allow them to address and manage the challenges of long-term and situational poverty.

Through this initiative, a total of 7 Community Action Agencies and 4 Community-Based Organizations worked with participants to provide financial education programs and tools to increase money



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management skills, fiscal knowledge, and connect to banking institutions to access affordable banking options. By providing low-income individuals with increased knowledge, understanding, and skills in how to manage money and strive for financial stability, participants were better able to navigate economic challenges, avoid costly situations, reduce financial stress, and build a foundation for future financial security.

Although the dedicated funding for financial literacy has ended, several subrecipients noted that, due to the value and need for the services, they would integrate aspects of the curriculum into other existing programs, such as their housing and workforce development programs.

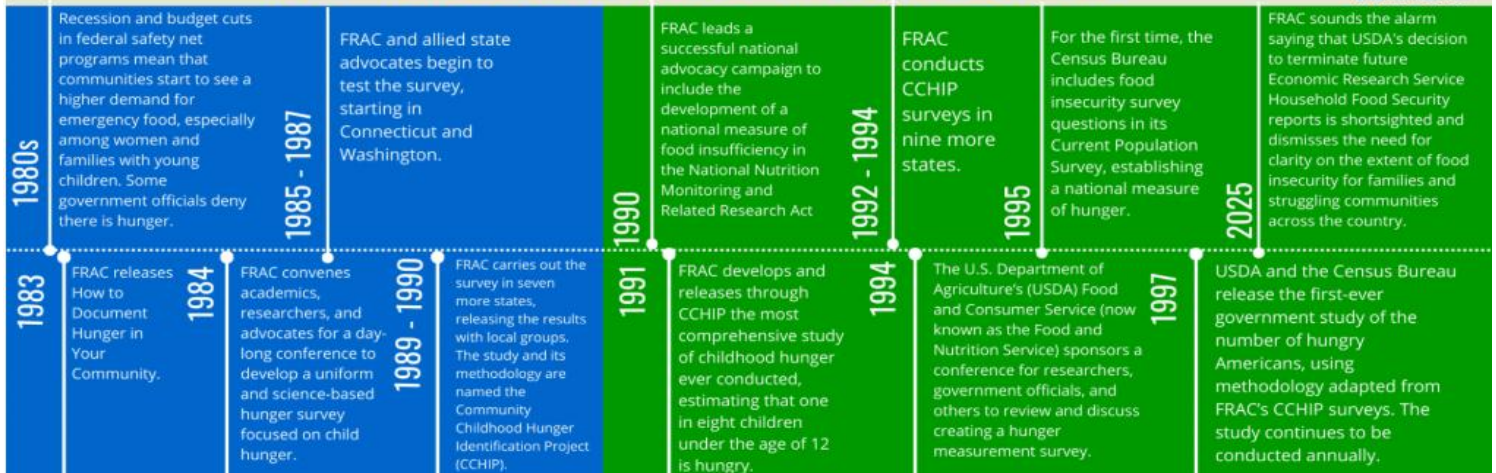
To read the full report [Click Here](#) or visit the [Division of Community Services](#) website.

## General Resources and Information

### National Food Security Data is Critical to Anti-Hunger Policies

[Click here to read the report](#) and to see a snapshot of the National Hunger and Emergency Food Studies (1982-1984).

## MEASURING HUNGER





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## Healthy Eating Research Released an Impact Report (2005-2025)

Healthy Eating Research (HER) is a national program whose mission is to support and disseminate research on policy, systems, and environmental strategies that promote healthy eating among children and advance nutrition and health equity. HER is committed to health equity, meaning everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Other social determinants of health include education, access to good jobs with fair pay, income, housing, and social support networks. Click on [Impact Report \(2005-2025\)](#) to view the full report. Visit [Health Eating Research](#) for [current funding opportunities](#) and other [research and publications](#).

## NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets

The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets' mission is to promote agriculture and its high-quality and diverse products, foster agricultural environmental stewardship, and safeguard the state's food supply, land, and livestock to ensure viability and growth of New York's agriculture industries. Visit the [Department of Agriculture and Markets](#) website for more information and for [current funding opportunities](#).

In 2007, the first Food Policy Council was developed through an executive order in New York State. In 2016, the Council evolved into the New York State Council on Hunger and Food Policy, by providing guidance to state policymakers on how best to address hunger and improve access to healthy, locally grown food for all residents. The New York State Council on Hunger and Food Policy released its [2025 Annual Report](#). For more information on the Council, resources, and meetings, [visit their website](#).

## Homelessness and Housing Program Trends by State

On any given night, hundreds of thousands of people across the country do not have a safe and stable place to sleep. Each year, federal and local agencies report data at the local, state, and national levels. With this information, policymakers and the public can track progress in their community and nationwide, identify gaps in homelessness response, and ensure resources are reaching those most in need.



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This tool monitors the most recent state data on homelessness and housing inventory, illustrating the scale of the issue and the resources dedicated to addressing it. With this data, users can understand how different populations are affected and how federal policy and resources shape the response.

[Click here to use an interactive tool](#) mapping homelessness trends and how much your state relies on federal funding for housing programs. Want to see how much you know about homelessness in America? [Click here to take the quiz.](#)

## State of the Safety Net

For people and families with low incomes, help may be available from one or more of the government programs that make up the US “safety net” — programs that either provide cash or that support specific needs like food, housing, or health care. But many who are eligible for benefits do not receive them. In 2023, across six programs providing monthly cash aid or help with expenses for food, housing, heating, and cooling, participation rates ranged from under 20 percent to a high of 58 percent, with wide variation across states.

The map below shows poverty rates with current levels of benefit receipt. It also shows how the number of people in poverty would decline if all eligible people received support. Looking deeper, this tool breaks down—by state, program, and demographic group—who is eligible for the major safety net programs, the portion of eligible people who receive those benefits, and the gaps in take-up.

[Click here to learn more](#) to learn more and explore [safety net program data](#).

## Cooling Rental Markets, But Affordability Crisis Deepens for Renters

Despite a recent softening in rents for new leases and a cooling construction pipeline, rental housing in the US remains unaffordable for households across the income spectrum, according to [America’s Rental Housing 2026 Report](#).

The report highlights important policy innovations, including zoning reforms, new revenue sources for rental assistance, expanding tenant protections, and mixed-income affordable housing development models. And despite headwinds, there is a growing recognition across the political spectrum that safe, stable, affordable housing is fundamental to families’ well-being and to a strong economy. [Click here to read the full report](#) released by [The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University](#).



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## State and National Partner Resources & Training Opportunities

### Senior-Friendly Manufactured Housing Presentation

This spring, students from the [University at Buffalo Department of Architecture](#) have been working with a committee formed by the [Rural Housing Coalition of New York](#) to tackle one of the most overlooked design challenges in the state: How do we create dignified, safe, climate-ready, and universally designed homes for older adults living in manufactured housing?

This is a critical issue because many mobile homes are aging, unsafe, energy inefficient, and not accessible. Through a Community Change Grant from AARP, the Rural Housing Coalition partnered with UB to rethink the future of low-cost housing for rural seniors—and working directly with manufacturers and advocacy organizations to help make those ideas happen.

The UB students will be presenting their designs on **Friday, May 1st from 9:30 am to noon** at the University at [Albany's ETEC Building](#), room B007, State Office Harriman Campus.

If you are interested in attending this final presentation, please RSVP to Nicholas Rajkovich: [rajkovic@buffalo.edu](mailto:rajkovic@buffalo.edu)

### WAPPro 3.0 Leadership Institute Application Open

The Weatherization Professional Leadership Development Institute (WAPPro) was developed to strengthen leadership across the Weatherization network through shared learning, practical problem-solving, and peer connection. Applications are now open with spots available for up to 40 participants. If you or someone you know is interested in participating, please [apply online](#) by April 30, 2026 or contact [kjohnson@communityactionpartnership.com](mailto:kjohnson@communityactionpartnership.com) for more information.



Department of State  
Community Services

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## Division of Community Services Updates and Reminders

### Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Advisory Council Meeting

Meeting scheduled Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, 10:00AM

The following locations will be open to the public and via videoconferencing:

1. **Albany:**  
One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Ave, **15th Floor Room 1510, Albany**, NY 12210
2. **Buffalo:**  
295 Main Street, 8th Floor, **Suite 821 - Room 803, Buffalo**, NY 14203
3. **New York City:**  
123 William Street, 2nd Floor, **Room 231, New York**, NY 10038

The public has a right to attend the meeting at any of the locations or can attend remotely.

To attend remotely, please use this Registration Link:

<https://meetny-gov.webex.com/weblink/register/rd8d95359985be2812590fdceb2fa1c53>



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## Save the Dates!

### Our 2026 Meeting Schedule

- Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, 10:00AM
- Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 10:00AM

Locations and meeting links will be posted on [dos.ny.gov](https://dos.ny.gov) prior to the meetings.

#### Division of Community Services Online Resources

The Department of State has a YouTube channel: [YouTube.com/@nysdos](https://www.youtube.com/@nysdos)

Check out the Division of Community Services' YouTube playlists:

- [CSBG Public Meetings](#)
- [CSBG Training](#)

Please reach out to your Program Analyst or [dos.sm.dcs@dos.ny.gov](mailto:dos.sm.dcs@dos.ny.gov) for more information.

#### CSBG Eligibility Guidelines continue at 200% Federal Poverty Level

[Click for the 2026 Federal Poverty Guidelines](#)

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