



OUR HISTORY

Ulster County Community Action Committee, Inc., (UCCAC) was incorporated in October 1965, and designated by the Ulster County Legislature as Ulster County's official anti-poverty agency, received an initial planning and development grant in the Spring of 1966, one year after signing of the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) of 1964.

The original mandate was to provide resources and services which promote peoples' dignity and self-sufficiency.

The first phase of the program development was identification of those areas in the County where there was a particular concentration of poverty families. About one-third of the poverty families were in the Rondout and Ellenville areas. In order to be able to serve people throughout the County with their problems, Community Action developed a network of outreach service centers.

In 1966, Ellenville and Rondout outreach offices, were opened and in 1967, offices were opened in Saugerties, Highland, Phoenicia and Wallkill. Through our Outreach offices, we started a countywide survey that pointed out the large number of hidden poor in Ulster County, particularly senior citizens. Our agency started the Nutrition Program in 1970 with the opening of one site in Rondout. Over the years, the program increased to six meal sites, located in Ellenville, Highland, Kingston, Phoenicia, Rosendale, including home-bound. Approximately 575 meals were served daily.

Presently, there exist five (5) Outreach Centers, three (3) located in Ulster County in Kingston, Highland and Ellenville. The remaining two (2) sites are in Sullivan County located in Monticello and Liberty.

Our full year Head Start Program opened at St. Mark's Parish House on Wurts Street in Kingston in September 1967, with an enrollment of 34 children. It grew from one center to six centers spread out over the county. The centers were located in Ellenville, Saugerties, and Plattekill.

Currently, Head Start and Early Head Start have five (5) Centers located in Ulster County in Ellenville, Plattekill, Saugerties, Rondout and Kingston.

In 1971 the Outreach staff began organizing the youth and formed the first Youth Councils. In Saugerties, the first drug hotline in our area was started by volunteers from UCCAC. Also, in 1971, we organized the first Emergency Food Closets (Pantry). The pantries are still functioning today at each Outreach Center.

Each area of the County has its own specific problems. In Highland, there were serious problems with the Migrant Farm Worker Program. We applied and received a grant to run the Ulster County Migrant

Program in 1971. UCCAC ran this program until such time the program was re-organized at the State level in 1974.

Our Outreach programs continued and grew until 1974, when the first barrage of program cuts hit us. That was the year we were forced to close two Outreach Centers. Since the future of Community Action was uncertain, we initiated meetings within the Mid-Hudson area of other CAP agencies. From these meetings came the developmental of the Multi-County Community Development Corporation. Additional Agencies were created and broke off with UCCAC; Resource Center for Accessible Living (RCAL), RUPCO and Legal Aide Services of the Hudson Valley.

In 1974, UCCAC formed the first County-Wide Energy Council consisting of Town Supervisors, Fuel Dealers, the Red Cross and the Department of Social Services. This Council helped reduced the number of fuel and utility cut-offs long before the State-Wide Council was formed.

In 1976, the Weatherization Assistance Program was created under [Title IV of the Energy Conservation and Production Act](#) to assist low-income families. Not only has the Program helped millions of families, but the techniques and technologies developed by it over the years helped launch today's home performance industry. UCCAC introduce this additional service in 1977 to Ulster County residents. Their energy saving programs continues to this today. Now DOE's Program has evolved into a sophisticated residential program that addresses whole-house energy efficiency and promotes a whole-community approach.

In 1978, we updated our county-wide needs assessment, and decided to relocate our New Paltz office back to Highland. We also started a Hispanic Outreach Program. From the Hispanic Outreach Program we opened a Head Start Program, a Senior Nutrition Program and an Outreach Office in Plattekill. These three sites served a large Hispanic population.

Since funding was still a major problem, we decided to close the Rondout Office and move the Community Coordinator into the Administrative Office located at Lindsley Ave. Despite budget cuts and reduction in staff size, UCCAC continues to serve low-income families and remains a strong voice in the community.

Jump to 2013, UCCAC partnered with NYSERDA to introduce EmPower to its' list of services available to Ulster County residents. Since then, EmPower works closely with Weatherization to maximize energy efficient in homes throughout Ulster County. EmPower provides Energy Reduction options as well has overall home performance audits.

And officially in September 2018, UCCAC became a two (2) county agency now serving Sullivan County residents with Outreach Services. This grant was made possible by NYS Department of State.

MISSION STATEMENT

Serving those in need, Ulster County Community Action Inc. is dedicated to assisting the disadvantaged in the Community, including the poor, the elderly, families, children and people with disabilities in order to enable them to live in dignity. Our services are designed to increase self-sufficiency and to empower those we service to meet human needs adequately.

Our programs services are designed to respond to changing community needs, strengthen families, to foster opportunities for education and training, to increase employability, to initiate opportunity for work, to reduce the living costs of economically disadvantaged so that they have more resources to meet their basic needs, to remove obstacles to independence, to alleviate poverty and to respond to emergency needs that are often a condition of life in poverty.

Taking Action Improving Lives