



IMPACT Community Action
700 Bryden Road
Columbus, OH 43215-1097
Phone: (614) 252-2799
www.impactca.org

For more information, contact Kenneth L. Wright, Director of Community Outreach at 614.453.1624.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 10, 2018

Rising Poverty Rates in Suburban Communities Unite IMPACT and WARM

COLUMBUS, Ohio — In recognition of National Community Action Month (May), IMPACT Community Action (IMPACT) and the Ohio Community Action Training Organization (OCATO), in partnership with the Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM), will host a Poverty Simulation on Thursday, May 10, from 3-6 p.m. at Westerville North High School, located at 950 County Line Road in Westerville, 43081.

The poverty simulation will help the participants to understand the struggles of low-income families and individuals who are trying to survive from month to month. Participants will have four 15-minute sessions, each representing one week, in which they will simulate real-life situations experienced by those living in poverty. In the simulation, 20 to 85 participants assume the roles of up to 26 different families facing poverty. Some are newly unemployed, some are recently deserted by the “breadwinner,” and others are recipients of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), either with or without additional earned income. Still others are senior citizens receiving Social Security, and others are grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. The experience will last from two to three hours, which includes an introduction and briefing, the actual simulation exercise, and a debriefing period, during which participants and volunteer staffers will share their feelings and experiences, and discuss what they learned or discovered during the simulation.

According to “The Ohio Poverty Report (2018)” by the Ohio Development Service Agency, poverty in Westerville has nearly doubled since 1999 (from 3.5 percent to 6.5 percent); and the biggest spike occurred during 2007-11 (+2.8 percent), which coincided with the economic recession and its aftermath. Armed with this data, and results from its Community Needs Assessment, IMPACT selected Westerville as the location for its poverty simulation. “More than 50 years ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson challenged this nation to tend to the least of its citizens. His vision outlined a Great Society, where poverty didn’t exist and all citizens had equal access to economic opportunities,” said Robert “Bo” Chilton, CEO of IMPACT Community Action. “We have seen firsthand a steady increase in the ‘working poor’ over the past few years, including a rise in service inquiries from residents in many suburban communities, including areas in and around Westerville -- an area not typically associated with poverty. We’re working with WARM and other local organizations to host this poverty simulation at Westerville North, with the hopes of educating this community, including its high school students, college students, senior citizens, and other residents who may be unfamiliar with poverty (generational and situational), about the real world experiences of low-income families and individuals,” said Chilton.

“Suburban poverty is on the rise in Franklin and Delaware counties, and in neighboring communities,” said Scott Marier, Executive Director of WARM. “Helping others who experience poverty remains our mission and the purpose of WARM. We remain committed with laser-like focus to advance this mission. Our partnership with IMPACT builds ‘local ownership’ of these issues, and helps our efforts to build a network of ‘second responders’ who remain committed to the cause when the spotlight is turned off.”

IMPACT’s Poverty Simulation is free and open to the public. To register for the Poverty Simulation, visit the special events page at www.impactca.org/povertysimulation.

- more -

Our mission is to reduce poverty by providing hope-inspiring help and real opportunities for self-sufficiency.

Westerville Poverty Simulation
 April 10, 2018
 Add One

We're pleased to host this poverty simulation in our district because we want to do our part, through education and participation, to remove any stigma that may be associated with poverty in our community," said John R. Kellogg, Ed.D, superintendent of Westerville City Schools. "This mission of our school district is to prepare students to contribute to the competitive and changing world in which we live. Times change, and schools should too, particularly when it comes to addressing potential barriers for our students and their families. "Thirty-eight percent of students in our district, roughly 5,557 students, were eligible for free and reduced lunches last school year. This was a slight increase from the 37 percent of student eligibility during the previous school year, and we see the trend continuing to rise."

Following are excerpts from "The Ohio Poverty Report – February 2018" by the Ohio Development Services Agency. <https://www.development.ohio.gov/files/research/p7005.pdf>

Table A6: Percentage of Poor Persons in Selected Ohio Areas for Selected Years

2012-2016 (ACS)	2007-11 (ACS)	1999 (DC)
Columbus (21.2)	Columbus (21.8)	Columbus (14.8)
Delaware (9.8)	Delaware (10.1)	Delaware (10.3)
Gahanna (6.3)	Gahanna (4.5)	Gahanna (3.7)
Westerville (6.5)	Westerville (6.3)	Westerville (3.5)

Notes: ACS – American Community Survey; DC – Decennial Census

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – ACS (2017c, 2017c); U.S. Bureau of the Census – DC (2002)

Prepared by: Office of Research, Ohio Development Services Agency

Table A7b: Ratio of Income to Poverty Level for Persons in Selected Ohio Areas, 2012-2016

Under 100%	Under 125%	Under 150%	Under 175%	Under 185%	Under 200%
Columbus (21.2)	Columbus (26.4)	Columbus (31.2)	Columbus (36.6)	Columbus (38.5)	Columbus (41.3)
Delaware (9.8)	Delaware (14.1)	Delaware (17.1)	Delaware (21.8)	Delaware (23.8)	Delaware (27.3)
Gahanna (6.3)	Gahanna (8.6)	Gahanna (11.0)	Gahanna (13.4)	Gahanna (14.2)	Gahanna (16.2)
Westerville (6.5)	Westerville (8.3)	Westerville (10.0)	Westerville (12.4)	Westerville (14.1)	Westerville (15.1)

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census – ACS (2017c)

Prepared by: Office of Research, Ohio Development Services Agency

Community Action began in 1964 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Vision for A Great Society that ushered in Civil Rights reform, economic opportunities for all citizens, and began the War on Poverty. IMPACT Community Action, which serves more than 15,000 low-income residents of Columbus and Franklin County annually, is one of 48 Community Action agencies in Ohio. For more information on the poverty simulation or IMPACT, contact: Kenneth L. Wright, Director of Community Outreach and Engagement at kwright@impactca.org or 614.453.1624.

#