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IMPACT Advocate

A New Hope for a Changed Man

Haggai 2:9 reads “the latter glory of this house will be greater than the former, and in this place I will give peace.” Most of my story is about my past. At the time of my release, I spent 71% of my life incarcerated; but as I live, the quality of my future will outweigh my past. I truly believe that it is not how a man falls but what he does when he gets back up.” Mr. Eddie Slade



At the age of six, I watched in horror the arrest of my father on the news. I recall the anger and the hatred that he had in his eyes. I was too little to know that he was trying to look fearless for my sake, yet I was haunted by this image. I made up a glorified gangster image of my dad and

decided that I wanted to be just like him. The streets became my father and the dope dealers and hustlers raised me. I became the classic troubled youth and the heaviness on my mother’s heart.

The army was supposed to save me but before I could go to Germany as ordered, I got news that my mother had been in a car accident. As she laid in a coma, everything that I had done that broke her heart surfaced in my emotions. I thought to myself my father is in prison and my mother might die, I have nothing to lose. I “caught my first case” and was sentenced to 10 to 50 years reformatory time.

No one gives you a survival guide for hell. Surrounded by men in cages, we acted like animals utilizing the basic primal instinct of survival of the fittest. Prison cultivated the darkest part of my soul. Somehow upon release I took the prison mentality back to the streets. I had 11 months of freedom and then caught a capital offense. I was sentenced to life.

Like the scene from “Star Wars (A New Hope)” when Darth Vader tells Luke “I am your father,” I was living the life of the false image that I had

created of my father. Now imprisoned like he had been, I gained a deeper understanding. I’m 37 years old and I’d aged in prison. I watched the younger generation come in scared with hateful attitudes that got them brutalized. Sometimes I feel like a fatherless child becomes the excuse for being angry that you did not have a father to raise you or teach how to be a man. I listened to all of their excuses and heard the same pleas for help that I had, which no one understood.

For them I became the father that they didn’t have. Some of the other OGs (Original Gangstas) and myself wrote a program called “Choices.” Our three day program made the news. Inmates were teaching youth from the Juvenile Detention Center as prevention from further criminal activity. Even if I could not get out, I survived the next 16 years by helping them.

In 2012, I was released to a world that was like a sci-fi movie. Computers, cell phones, ATMs, debit cards, scan cash registers— these were all foreign objects on a planet where I was the alien. I was released to the Bell Center where I could adjust. Long-term inmates tend to withdraw from society, and distrust the justice system.

I heard there were stipends connected to IMPACT’s programs so honestly, I came for the check; but I completely underestimated the value of this opportunity. I never anticipated the deliverance from my past or the revival of my spirit, my mind and my purpose. Through deep introspection, the Re-Entry Work Readiness Program freed me. Now anything was possible. After successful completion of the Employment Plus Program, I applied for a job at IMPACT as a part-time Custodian/Security Assistant. My first day on the job I’d found my happy place. I was employed and earning a livable wage. Since then I’ve met and married my wife Taneya. I’ve acquired Creating Lasting Family Connections/ Fatherhood certifications through IMPACT and the Urban Minority Alcoholism Drug and Abuse Outreach Program which has enabled me to facilitate re-entry workshops inside Ross Correctional Institute alongside my mentor Dr. Lewis Dodley. I want people to know that IMPACT saved my life. My pledge to the community is to never let anyone hold their head down because of me. I will not go back to jail and I will not bring shame on this organization.

Taking a Bite Out of Winter

IMPACT's Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) seeks provides energy solutions for low – income households throughout Franklin County.



HWAP is designed to lower utility bills through air sealing, insulation, furnace replacement and repair, and other energy related measures.

Services include air leakage testing, attic and sidewall insulations, tips on energy conservation and furnace and hot water tank inspection. Our knowledgeable staff will also provide quality referrals for any services they don't provide. Home weatherization has proven to be a cost-effective way to lower energy bills.

On average, customers who receive these services can anticipate saving up to 30% on their energy bills. Franklin County renters and/or homeowners who are at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines are eligible for HWAP. Households using HEAP or the PIPP PLUS programs are already determined income eligible. Landlords are encouraged to learn how they can improve their property and save money with these cost-effective measures. These measures help end the cycle of poverty for low-income households. Based on recent analysis commissioned by the U.S. Department of Energy, for every dollar invested to weatherize

homes for low-income households in cold climates, such as Ohio, produces \$2.04 in savings.

Roughly 400,000 Ohio households seek help paying their utility bills each year through the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) which reduces the likelihood of service interruption and establishes an affordable payment plan for their energy bills. By lowering utility bills, HWAP reduces financial stress on low-income families and enables them to allocate more of their income to towards other necessities such as food, medication and transportation.

IMPACT's HWAP team serves households in the following zip codes: 43201, 43202, 43203, 43204, 43205, 43210, 43211, 43212, 43214, 43215, 43216, 43218, 43219, 43220, 43222, 43224, 43226, 43227, 43228, 43231, 43234, 43235, 43236, 43251, 43260, 43265, 43266, 43268, 43270, 43271, 43272, 43279, 43287,

For more information, call McLain Davis Jr. at 614.453.1603.

Energy Bills Too High?

IMPACT Community Action's Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) offers services that improve energy efficiency and reduce energy costs.

Free Services Include:

- Air Leakage Testing
- Attic & Sidewall Insulation
- Carbon Monoxide Detector Insulation
- Consumer Tips on Energy Conservation
- Furnace & Hot Water Tank Inspection
- Health & Safety 50% Matched Cost For Landlord

Eligibility Criteria:

- Franklin County Renter / Homeowner
- Mobile Homes (seasonal)
- Must Be Income Eligible
- Zip Code Confirmation



To schedule an appointment call: 614.453.1603 or 614.453.1691
To learn more about HWAP visit: www.impactca.org
Landlords Encouraged to Inquire!

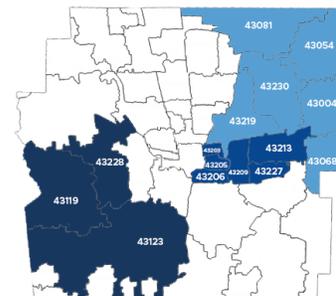
General Election Scheduled To Fill Board Vacancies

IMPACT seeks qualified candidates for Low-Income Representative on its Board of Directors. The election will be held on March 28.

The openings are in the Northeast, Near East & Southwest Sectors. The Northeast includes Gahanna, New Albany, Reynoldsburg, Somerset and Westerville. The Southwest includes Galloway, Grove City, Lincoln Village, and Galloway. The Near East includes King Lincoln, Old Towne East, Driving Park, Bexley, Whitehall and Livingston.

Candidates must be a low-income resident or a service provider for low-income residents in their respective sector, must be a legal resident of the United States, must be 18 years old or older and be nominated by (10) or more self-proclaimed residents of their sector. Eligible candidates must also not be an employee of an organization that could present a conflict of interest with IMPACT Community action as determined by its board.

IMPACT has a tri-partite board made up of three equal numbers of private sector, public sector and democratically-elected low-income representatives. For nomination material visit www.impactca.org/who_we_are. Nominations are open now through March 17.



Success Within REACH

In the first year of the REACH Program (Re-engage, Empower, Affirm, Challenge and Honor), we were able to provide some great opportunities for youth and young adults to get valuable education and career



training. Ninety customers completed the Bootcamp with 80 placed in Employment/Education and 75 finished with increased literacy and numeracy scores. The 10-week Bootcamp provides comprehensive case management, financial coaching, supporting services and paid incentives. Participants also have the opportunity to receive training or education payment assistance as well as paid on-the-job training. The program continues to look for new participants that are interested in taking control of their future. Eligible candidates must be between the ages of 16 and 24, and not currently employed or enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education. Applicants may come by the REACH offices Monday – Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm to apply. No appointment is needed. They may also call 614.453.1597 or e-mail reach@impactca.org for more information.

Join the Ripple Effect

You can join the Ripple Effect by volunteering. Volunteers are an important part of our organization and strengthen our capacity to service families and individuals who are in need. The Volunteer Engagement Program drafts, develops, and deploys individuals who support the mission and vision of IMPACT Community Action, and volunteers may serve in a variety of ways. Program Assistance includes supporting programmatic and operational duties and special events; Strategic Assistance supports advocacy efforts as well as programmatic and operational duties; and Professional Assistance includes business professionals and other partners who lend their knowledge and expertise as in-kind contributors to the agency. To get involved visit http://www.impactca.org/what_you_can_do/volunteer

I AM PART OF
THE RIPPLE EFFECT



IMPACT at a Glance

The **Emergency Assistance Department** has changed its walk-in policy to better serve its HEAP customers. Walk-in tickets will be distributed daily at 7 a.m. This provides better access for customers who may work during the day. Additionally, Emergency Assistance is offering extended hours on Wednesdays from 5-7 p.m. through February. An appointment for extended hours must be made on Tuesdays before by calling 614.525.2799. The department will offer Super Saturday service in March.

IMPACT's **Financial Services Department** is providing FREE tax preparation! Franklin County households with income less than \$64,000 can jump start their savings by filing their taxes for free.

IMPACT Community Action is a partner with \$Tax Time. Tax Time is a collaborative effort of more than 80 community



organizations lead by the United Way of Central Ohio. Together these organizations provide 600 volunteers and 70 tax sites throughout Franklin County. IMPACT hosts tax clinics on Tuesdays (8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.), Wednesdays (8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.) and Fridays (8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.). Participants must call 211 (614-221-2255) to schedule an appointment.

You can support IMPACT just by buying groceries. The **Kroger Community Rewards Program** is designed to make your support of non-profit



organizations, like IMPACT Community Action, simple and easy by using your Kroger Plus Card.

Visit www.kroger.com/communityrewards to enroll. IMPACT's Non-Profit Organization Number is 83865. Participation does not affect your Kroger Plus Rewards perks.

For more information, call 614 453.1708 or visit www.impactca.org

Creating the Ripple Effect



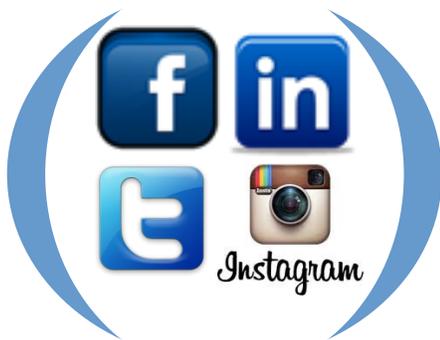
700 Bryden Road
Columbus, OH 43215

www.impactca.org

Phone: 614.252.2799

Fax: 614.453.1453

E-mail: communications@impactca.org



Key Events

Re-Entry Class #57 Begins	3/31/17
REACH Program Cohort Begins	3/6/17
Mobile Medical Unit at IMPACT	3/7/17
Employment Plus Class #91 Graduation	3/10/17
Board Nominations Close	3/17/17
Low-Income Board Election	3/28/17
Re-Entry Class #57 Graduation	3/31/17

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

~Senator Robert F. Kennedy, 1966

Community Action was founded 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 is one of 48 Community Action Agencies in Ohio that is on the front line in the War on Poverty. Our mission is “to reduce poverty by providing hope-inspiring help and real opportunities for self-sufficiency.”

Despite tough economic times and increasing demands for our programs and services, Community Action will never back down or shy away from its commitment to the community.

Message from the Chief Executive



Greeting friends and supporters of IMPACT Community Action. Welcome to 2017, a year of transition ...

Post-election, it appears that 2017 has the makings to become one of the most controversial times in our nation’s history. This year has brought a new president with a bold agenda. It has also brought social upheaval, civil unrest and a people divided between national security and global humanity. As we soldier on in the midst of uncertainty, my faith in humanity remains steadfast. It is written in Hebrews 11:1 “... faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Now, more than ever, I affirm our mission to provide hope-inspiring help and real opportunities for self-sufficiency.

According to a recent report by Policy Matters Ohio, “Still Struggling: State of Working Ohio 2016,” the official unemployment rate in Ohio is 5 percent; however, wages are stagnant because the largest growth sectors and our most common jobs pay low wages. Of our 13 most common occupations, only two pay more than 200 percent of the official poverty line for a family of three. Nine of these most common jobs pay less than \$30,000 a year with full-time, year-round work. Given these statistics, there’s little wonder why families are still struggling. These are the working poor. They often work multiple jobs, yet still find it difficult to make ends meet. It is clear that this next road out of poverty must be paved with support.

That is why I am so excited about our new Vocational Training and Certification (VTAC) Program. This program will create opportunities for people to earn certifications or licenses that will help them to obtain and maintain higher-wage employment. While these customers are pursuing careers, they will be supported through comprehensive case management by a team of professionals who will help bridge service gaps, and provide specific tools and techniques to help these customers reduce barriers to their self-sufficiency.

As part of our poverty-fighting strategy, we will enlist your feedback through a Community Needs Assessment and focus groups. We will continue to look at what’s trending, what’s valuable, what’s doable and we will capture what’s most important to you as we continue to fight poverty. IMPACT’s mission is to reduce poverty by providing hope-inspiring help and real opportunities for self-sufficiency. It is embedded in our hearts not only for our customers but for ourselves. We value your support and look forward to sharing our continued efforts to fight poverty and encourage you to help us fight for the impoverished in Franklin County.

Twenty-Seventeen need not be a year of controversy. It can be a year of consciousness, care and commitment. Let’s not talk about it. Let’s be about it.

Robert “Bo” Chilton, CEO
IMPACT Community Action