



VACAP NEWS

May 2023

Inside this Issue

- It's National Community Action Month!
- VACAP 2023 Regional Meetings: Celebrating all Community Action Staff
- Save the Date: VACAP Summit October 10-11, 2023 (Richmond, Virginia at the Virginia Housing Center)
- VACAP President and CEO Erik Johnston Gives Remarks to DSS Board
- Good Reads and Newsworthy Updates
- Abatement Academy- Free Webinar Series on Best Use of Funds from Opioid Litigation
- Webinars
- Virginia Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Award
- Funding Opportunities Available to VACAP Members
- Enroll Virginia: Medicaid Updates
- Weatherization Updates

It's National Community Action Month!

On behalf of the VACAP team, we thank you and your staff for all of the hard work you do every day to make the lives of low-income Virginians better and prosperous. Share with us any Community Action celebrations or activities, we would love to hear from you (info@vacap.org)!

VACAP 2023 Regional Meetings: Celebrating all Community Action Staff

VACAP is celebrating Community Action Month by gathering together in regional meetings. The highlights of these meetings include hearing from key strategic sponsors, breaking into small peer group sessions and celebrating the winner of the Mark Grigsby Selfless Leadership Award.

All Community Action staff in Virginia are being recognized for their selfless service as pandemic first responders by the VACAP Board of Directors for the Mark Grigsby Selfless Leader Award. This is the highest honor and award given annually by VACAP. The award is being presented to teams representing each agency at regional meetings being held on May 17 in Hampton, May 24 in



Wytheville and May 31 in Fredericksburg. Local events will also take place to recognize these pandemic heroes.

“On behalf of the VACAP Board, we thank all Community Action staff for their tireless efforts day in and day out, but especially during the pandemic” said Annette Lewis, VACAP Board Chair.

“Community Action staff really leaned in and stepped up to the challenge to assist many low-income families in the Commonwealth and their efforts should be commended.”

“We would like to honor all Community Action staff in the Commonwealth for deploying millions of dollars in emergency pandemic services,” said VACAP President and CEO Erik Johnston.

“Community Action staff have exemplified selfless leadership in serving their neighbors throughout the pandemic while also investing in long term solutions to ending poverty.”

Save the Date: VACAP Summit October 10-11, 2023 (Richmond, Virginia)

VACAP’s second annual Pathways from Poverty to Prosperity Summit will continue to include networking, encouragement, and hearing about key opportunities from strategic partners and funders. VACAP has confirmed October 10-11, 2023 at the Virginia Housing Center in Richmond. Please note this is a slight day change from the original tentative date. We hope you will save the dates so you can join us for this keystone VACAP event!

VACAP President and CEO Erik Johnston Gives Remarks to DSS Board

Erik Johnston, Virginia Community Action Partnership, President & CEO provided updates on the work of Virginia’s 31 community action agencies to the Virginia Department of Social Services Board on April 19, 2023. Commissioner Danny Avula provided an update on Medicaid unwinding in the Commonwealth. VDSS Board chair Bucky Boone mentioned how critical community action is to the state and loves to hear updates from all the lives changed through his local CAA (People, Inc). Below is the update Erik Johnston gave to the VDSS board:

Many community action agencies are partnering with VA DHCD on the Commonwealth’s broadband opportunity planning efforts. These regional plans will be submitted in the summer and help inform the state’s overall plan on ways to increase access and adoption efforts. VACAP has joined the Virginia Funders Network to increase partnerships between community action agencies and philanthropy. VACAP appreciates the bipartisan support of proposed increases during the General Assembly for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance network. VACAP is partnering with VDSS on leadership training and peer groups for CAA leaders and frontline workers. May is Community Action Month and VACAP will be hosting regional meetings throughout the month. VACAP will hold its second annual Summit on October 10-11 in Richmond.



Good Reads & Newsworthy Updates

Bristol's Shelton named health commissioner

By DAVID MCGEE, Bristol Herald Courier (Metered Paywall - 15 articles a month)

Dr. Karen Shelton of Bristol was chosen Thursday as the new Virginia Commissioner of Health, Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced in a written statement. Shelton returns to the public health field after nearly two years serving as vice president and chief medical officer of Bristol Regional Medical Center and Smyth County Community Hospital, in the Ballad Health System. For five years before that, Shelton oversaw the Mount Rogers Health District and later managed both the Cumberland Plateau and LENOWISCO Health Districts through the COVID-19 pandemic.

[https://vpap.us15.list-](https://vpap.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=e22ce4105f&e=7588e1d3d1)

[manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=e22ce4105f&e=7588e1d3d1](https://vpap.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=e22ce4105f&e=7588e1d3d1)

More Southwest Virginia families turn to food banks with end of extra SNAP benefits

By JANAE BLAKENEY, VCU Capital News Service

A single mother wheeled her cart around a Roanoke Food Lion on a recent Saturday night, plucking a few staples off the shelves for her and her daughter to eat. She selected some eggs, milk, frozen Kid Cuisines and other items for the week and headed for the checkout line. She swiped a plastic card for payment, like most customers do, but unlike other customers she used an electronic benefit transfer card, known as food stamp benefits. The card does not have as many funds on it now as it did two months ago, since a COVID-era support program ended in early March.

[https://vpap.us15.list-](https://vpap.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=37e302b9ce&e=7588e1d3d1)

[manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=37e302b9ce&e=7588e1d3d1](https://vpap.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=37e302b9ce&e=7588e1d3d1)

Del. Glenn Davis resigns to take on new role at the Department of Energy

By KATIE KING, Virginian-Pilot

Del. Glenn Davis, R-Virginia Beach, resigned from the House of Delegates on Monday and is taking on a new role with the Virginia Department of Energy. The former legislator said Wednesday that he accepted an offer from Gov. Glenn Youngkin to serve as the department's director. "I had already announced that I was not running for reelection and the governor asked if I would take on this new opportunity," Davis told The Virginian-Pilot.

[https://vpap.us15.list-](https://vpap.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=5e0cee8042&e=7588e1d3d1)

[manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=5e0cee8042&e=7588e1d3d1](https://vpap.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=5e0cee8042&e=7588e1d3d1)

Changes to SNAP Benefits in 2023

By Cassie Edner, VPLC

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides monthly funds that help low-income individuals and families put food on the table. Every dollar spent through the SNAP program brings \$1.50 to the local economy — so when individual families access this important resource, it introduces additional money into the community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government made several changes to SNAP, including an extra monthly benefit amount for most recipients to help with food costs. Some of these COVID-related provisions have already



expired, and more changes are coming in the next few months that could affect your SNAP benefits. This article will discuss these changes and how they can affect individuals' benefits.

<https://vplc.org/changes-to-snap-benefits/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=e669161b-ab13-4171-a1e4-caf81921f66c>

Anti-poverty programs may help reduce disparities in brain development and mental health symptoms in children

By National Institute of Health

States that provide stronger social safety nets have lower socioeconomic disparities in the brain development and mental health of children 9 to 11 years old, according to research supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health. The disparity in brain structure between children from high- versus low-income households was more than a third lower in states with greater cash assistance than in those offering less, and the disparity in mental health symptoms was reduced by nearly a half.

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/anti-poverty-programs-may-help-reduce-disparities-brain-development-mental-health-symptoms-children>

Report details poverty in Fredericksburg area

By ADELE UPHAUS, Free Lance-Star

Federal poverty measurements continue to undercount the number of Virginia families living in economic instability, the latest ALICE report shows. Ten percent of Virginia families were living in poverty in 2021, according to the federal poverty level set each year by the Department of Health and Human Services — but more than twice as many families were unable to maintain basic household survival budgets in the communities where they live.

<https://vpap.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ff263b31cd155e10062269b86&id=b843178396&e=7588e1d3d1>

Governor Youngkin Announces More Than \$59.5 Million in Virginia Telecommunication Initiative Grants

Governor Glenn Youngkin announced on 5/11/23 more than \$59.5 million in grants through the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) for 14 projects serving 20 localities throughout Virginia. The VATI program provides targeted funding to extend service to areas that are presently underserved by any broadband provider.

<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2023/may/name-1002786-en.html>

To see progress of these grants and coverage, please reference this map and project dashboard:

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/virginiadhcd/viz/VATIDashboard/Overall>

Abatement Academy- Free Webinar Series on Best Use of Funds from Opioid Litigation

The Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) and the Virginia Institute of Government (VIG) are pleased to announce the launch of the new “**Abatement Academy**” for 2023. The Academy is composed of a series of FREE, bi-weekly webinars to highlight examples programs that align with nationally recognized principles for the use of funds from opioid litigation. The intended audience



includes local government representatives, state agency professionals, and groups or individuals who provide services or support to people suffering from opioid use disorders.

The Abatement Academy will also include one-day in-person workshops on September 7 (Abingdon) and October 19 (Charlottesville).

The first webinar in the series will be held on Thursday, April 27 and will feature Ms. Ginny Lovitt from the Chris Atwood Foundation (CAF). Ginny will tell the story of how her brother's death from an overdose led her to create one of the leading harm-reduction programs in Virginia. The CAF is a peer-driven community organization in Northern Virginia providing free harm reduction and recovery support services and advocacy for people impacted by substance use.

Register here for the first three sessions:

<https://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=7HsJy&m=3kBiXXKirUNJRGuA&b=dActVs5bBnm5TftgOXNs3w>

Future webinars will be held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month starting on May 25 and ending on December 14. The sessions will be broken down based on the following nationally recognized five principles:

- Principle 1: Spend the Money to Save Lives
- Principle 2: Use Evidence to Guide Spending
- Principle 3: Invest in Youth Prevention
- Principle 4: Focus on Racial Equity
- Principle 5: Develop a Fair and Transparent Process for Deciding Where to Spend the Funding

Full list of webinars:

<https://www.oaa.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/oaa/pdf/Abatement-Academy-News-Update.pdf>

Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority information

- Website: yoaa.us

Free Webinars for VACAP Members

VACAP and OEO are partnering with the Region 3 Regional Innovation and Performance Consortia (RPIC) to offer a variety of trainings over the next several months. These trainings are open to any staff or board member who may be interested, please forward as needed.

- **Authentic Communication, Part III: Collaborative Communication**
May 25, 2023, 10-11am
Identify key financial choices your Board should explore and develop strategies to present



the information needed to evaluate options. We'll explore multiple strategic decisions, including setting cash reserves targets and strategies to achieve them, purchasing/redeveloping facilities, expanding/contracting services, compensation strategies, improving compliance (for CAAs with audit findings or difficulties with monitors), Board composition and role, and building unrestricted contributions.

[Register](#)

- **Cost Allocation**

June 8, 2023, 2-3pm

Cost allocation is the organization's method of allocating costs to its programs and supporting services to the extent each program or service bears its fair share in accordance with the relative benefits received. The organization's defined method of allocation should be simple, straightforward, and comply with its approved policies and procedures. Using the Uniform Guidance regulations, we will review allowable methods of cost allocation including direct costing and indirect cost rates and discuss suggestions on how your organization may use cost allocation to run more efficiently and effectively.

[Register](#)

- Full list of upcoming trainings: <https://vacsbg.learnworlds.com/blog/regional-webinars-2023> and on the VACAP Events and Training Calendar <https://www.vacap.org/events/>

OEO Workshop

Thriving and Finding Joy in the Workplace

June 13, 2023 1:30pm to 3:00pm

This is an interactive workshop emphasizing "pillars of happiness" at work such as balance, integrity, meaning and compassion that can be strengthened through a more intentional focus on personal values. When our values are evident in our workplace, professional joy is enhanced.

Our presenters will be Drs. Tammy Gilligan and Michele Kielty, professors at James Madison University and owner of Barrenridge Consulting LLC.

Register Here: <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=qeUKYsFOoE-GQV2fOGxzCQfYf5fmHG1NiXcciHaYHspUQkNWRDQ2T0NPWIU3UzIyUDE5RlpCSEFESS4u&web=1&wdLOR=c31E51CAF-0169-9D43-8679-03EBB8AEDAFA>

Virginia Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards

These awards annually recognize the significant contributions of Virginia citizens to the life and welfare of the Commonwealth and its people. One award is presented in each of 10 categories. These outstanding award winners represent the millions of generous Virginians who offer their time and talents to others each year. **The nomination period for the 2023 Virginia Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards is open now, until June 19, 2023!** The nominations are open from April through June annually. Read about previous honorees here: <https://virginiainservice.virginia.gov/volunteering/governors-volunteerism-awards/volunteer-award-winners/>



Have questions? Reach out to Alex Vanik at alexander.vanik@dss.virginia.gov.
More info: <https://virginiaprogram.virginia.gov/volunteering/governors-volunteerism-awards/frequently-asked-questions/>

Funding Opportunities Available to VACAP Members

The No Kid Hungry Community Nutrition Grant Opportunity

The No Kid Hungry Community Nutrition Grant Opportunity will provide funding to community organizations and government entities to maximize the federal child nutrition programs to ensure children and families have access to healthy meals at school and at home during the year and/or summer months. This is flexible funding intended to add capacity to existing or new food access programs. Funds are intended to support organizations as they adapt to meet the changing needs of students and families. This is wonderful opportunity to consider as it is a good way to build partnerships with school districts and/or other local community-based organizations (nonprofit organizations, farmers/food producers, local governments, etc.) to implement and increase access to meal programs. Funds can be used for meal service supplies and equipment, staff (new or existing) including incentives, technology requests and program outreach, benefit enrollment assistance (SNAP, WIC, etc.), and marketing costs. Transportation costs associated with delivery are also eligible uses of funds.

See attachment at end of VACAP News.

Enroll Virginia: Medicaid Updates

Medicaid Renewals: Resources for Families and Advocates

Medicaid renewals restarted last month, and state Medicaid agencies are now engaged in a 14-month process of reevaluating eligibility for all members. Virginia will be spreading out renewals over this 14-month period, so all enrollees will not receive information about their coverage at the same time. Some may have already completed a renewal, while others may not receive their renewal package or notice of renewal in the mail for several months. Virginia plans to complete the last round of renewals by April 2024. It's important for Medicaid enrollees to check their mail every day and act before deadlines.

DMAS has shared additional information online about the return to normal enrollment (<https://default.salsalabs.org/T38b0a31b-7fc2-442a-bb70-03609e86993e/b67ffb6c-f5a7-4d63-8a8a-df8ac5c057ed>) and other COVID-19 provisions like emergency waivers (<https://default.salsalabs.org/T75ddc054-dc0e-48a8-a372-b4b55438f8b8/b67ffb6c-f5a7-4d63-8a8a-df8ac5c057ed>).

Remind any enrollees to: 1. update their contact information with Virginia Medicaid (<https://default.salsalabs.org/T01f08ce9-ea7f-40fb-8ee4-bcf9d33fa658/b67ffb6c-f5a7-4d63-8a8a-df8ac5c057ed>) and 2. watch for and respond to notices about their coverage.



Enroll Virginia navigators are here to support enrollees along the way with everything from completing a renewal to exploring new coverage options (<https://default.salsalabs.org/T2448dca4-b4d2-4a08-8683-b2c96a36d6e3/b67ffb6c-f5a7-4d63-8a8a-df8ac5c057ed>).

Click below to see answers to frequently asked questions and additional resources (including flyers, fact sheets, and webinar recordings) about the return to normal enrollment processes. Additional Resources and FAQ: <https://www.enrollva.org/get-help/faqs/>

Weatherization Updates

WAP Improvements Act 2023

The latest version of the "Weatherization Improvements Act," S.1005, was introduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Susan Collins (R-ME) along with co-sponsors Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Chris Coons (D-DE). This legislation lifts the Average Cost Per Unit (ACPU) to \$12,000, authorizes Weatherization Readiness Fund (WRF) spending, raises the cap on renewable energy installations, and eliminates some of the heavy reporting requirements for braided funds.

NCAF is gathering support to move the bill quickly in the Senate as well as working to secure DOE's enthusiastic engagement in achieving its passage. The battle over future funding for nearly all CAP programs is heating up as Congress begins consideration of appropriations in June following the debate on defaulting on the National Debt this month.

Click [here](#) to follow the bill.

WAP Workforce Development Listening Sessions

Monday, May 22, 2023 - 8:30 PT / 9:30 MT / 10:30 CT / 11:30 ET

Tuesday, May 23, 2023 - 1:00 PT / 2:00 MT / 3:00 CT / 4:00 ET

IREC invites WAP stakeholders to a virtual 90-minute interactive conversation to help shape deployment of their Enhancement & Innovation Award-funded project: a multimedia, multi-audience outreach toolkit and engagement platform designed to assist Subgrantees in streamlining recruitment and hiring processes of WAP professionals, while increasing access and diversifying the talent pipeline. Register to share what tools or resources would be helpful to have on-hand when recruiting for WAP positions.

To register, provide written feedback, or subscribe to updates on this program:
<https://irecusa.org/wapei/>

COMMUNITY NUTRITION GRANT OPPORTUNITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

VIRGINIA



The No Kid Hungry Community Nutrition Grant Opportunity will provide funding to community organizations and government entities to maximize the federal child nutrition programs to ensure children and families have access to healthy meals at school and at home during the school year and/or summer months.

No Kid Hungry knows that community organizations and government entities play a key role in ensuring children receive access to nutritious meals and food they need to learn, grow, and thrive to reach their full potential. These flexible grants will allow organizations and government entities to respond to the growing needs and emerging opportunities to provide food and resources to kids and families.

NO KID HUNGRY GRANTING PRIORITIES

No Kid Hungry is committed to addressing the systemic and structural health, social, and economic inequities that disproportionately impact historically under-resourced communities. No Kid Hungry will prioritize funding school districts impacting the following communities:

- Communities where 50% or more of the population identifies as Black, Latino, Indigenous Peoples, Asian, Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander
- Rural and urban communities where schools/school districts face unique challenges in addressing hunger
- Communities experiencing extreme economic hardship, determined through multiple data points
- Communities where members experience intersecting social and environmental inequities

Please visit the No Kid Hungry website to learn more about [No Kid Hungry's grantmaking beliefs and values](#), as well as how [No Kid Hungry prioritizes grant funds](#).

Funds will be prioritized to support school districts applications with a strong and sustainable plan for maximizing participation in the child nutrition programs and/or increasing federal nutrition program enrollment.

USE OF FUNDS

Funds are intended to support organizations as they adapt to meet the changing needs of students and families. Strategies may include:

- Ensuring maximum student participation and improving meal quality in federal nutrition programs, including expanding access to non-congregate summer meals in rural communities.
- Promoting awareness of meal availability to students and families, especially for free and reduced-price eligible students.
- Promoting and supporting enrollment of SNAP, WIC and Pandemic-EBT programs as well as the Child Tax Credit.
- Supporting partnerships with school districts and/or other local community-based organizations (nonprofit organizations, farmers/food producers, local governments, etc.) to implement and increase access to meal programs.

APPLICATION DUE DATE

June 2, 2023

GRANT AMOUNT

Grant amounts will vary, depending on size and need of each applicant. Average grant amounts typically range from \$5,000 - \$30,000.

Budget requests may include:

- Meal service supplies and equipment.
- Costs of hiring additional staff positions, increasing hours for existing staff, and providing incentives for staff retention, recruitment and training.
- Technology requests, including point of service machines.
- Cleaning supplies/equipment, including hand washing stations and PPE.
- Program outreach, benefit enrollment assistance (SNAP, WIC, etc.), and marketing costs.
- Transportation costs associated with meal delivery such as refrigerated trucks or fuel.
- Additional expenses as needed.

TO NOTE

Grants may be funded through corporate partners working with Share Our Strength. You will be notified upon receipt of the grant award if a corporate partner is sponsoring the grant award.

Additionally, we understand that programming may vary and change throughout the grant year. Please submit your application with your current thinking for how your organization plans to increase or improve access to emergency food and federal nutrition programs throughout the year and any potential emergency service plans. If you are awarded funds, you will be required to submit quarterly progress reports that accurately describe your project implementation, as well as changes in participation and/or meal service delivery as programming adjusts to the evolving operating environment.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Visit the No Kid Hungry Grants Portal at <https://nokidhungry.force.com>. Please do not use Internet Explorer or Microsoft Edge when registering or working within the portal.
2. To create a new account, click "New User." If you have previously used the Portal, log into your account with those existing credentials.
3. Click "Start a New Application" on the Home page of the No Kid Hungry Grants Portal.
4. Input the following access code to gain access to the application:
VACommunityNutrition2023. Click "Start Application" to begin.
5. Be sure to input all required answers and save frequently as you are inputting information.
6. Once all questions are completed, click "Review Application."
7. Download your application as a PDF and then click "Submit."

To view a sample application, please [click here](#).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will be required to provide the following information:

- Reporting and authorized signature contact information.
- Demographic information such as estimated free and reduced eligibility and service locale.
- Information about your current and planned food and nutrition programs during the grant year.
- Detailed description of grant funding program objectives.
- Detailed budget of anticipated use of funding.
- Demographic makeup of your organization's leadership, board, staff, and volunteers.

QUESTIONS?

Program related: Amy Biestek, abiestek@strength.org

Technical or portal-related: GrantsHelpDesk@strength.org