

*****SPAM*** NCCAA September 2025 | Empowered Newsletter ☆**



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Blue Ridge Community Action Executive Director Stephanie Ashley, her employees and community leaders celebrated BRCA's Grand Re-opening & Ribbon Cutting.

Meet Our NCCAA Board Member: Dione Adkins

Meet
The NCCAA
Board of Directors

“Every day at Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, I see how the right support can break down barriers and empower families. My commitment, grounded in 14 years of service and the values of the Community Action movement, is to create pathways for self-sufficiency and ensure that every person has the chance to thrive. I am honored to serve our community as a new board member of the NCCAA.”

Dione Adkins
Chief Executive Officer
Salisbury-Rowan Community
Action Agency, Inc.

Dione as a Head Start student,
Salisbury-Rowan Community
Action Agency, Inc.

www.nccaa.net/our-board

Meet Dione Adkins, Chief Executive Officer of **Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc.**, and Secretary of the NCCAA Board of Directors.

Dione's family carries a legacy of faith and service in the Salisbury community, and she is in fact a "legacy" in a different way: she's a graduate of the Head Start program she now guides.

"Community service is woven into the fabric of my life," says Dione. "I grew up surrounded by role models—my grandfather, a Pentecostal Holiness Church Bishop, and my grandmother, an evangelist—who taught me the power of faith, generosity, and compassion."

"My grandfather believed in sharing the harvest of his garden with anyone in need in the community," she continues, "and my mother was not only our family's first college graduate, but also participated in the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program through SRCAA, Inc. I am blessed and honored to carry forward a tradition of hope and service."

We are grateful to Dione for sharing her family's legacy of generosity and kindness with her clients, with her community, and with the NCCAA Board of Directors.

[Visit NCCAA LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) to see additional board profiles.

Commitment to Community: NCCAA Leaders Earn CCAP Credential



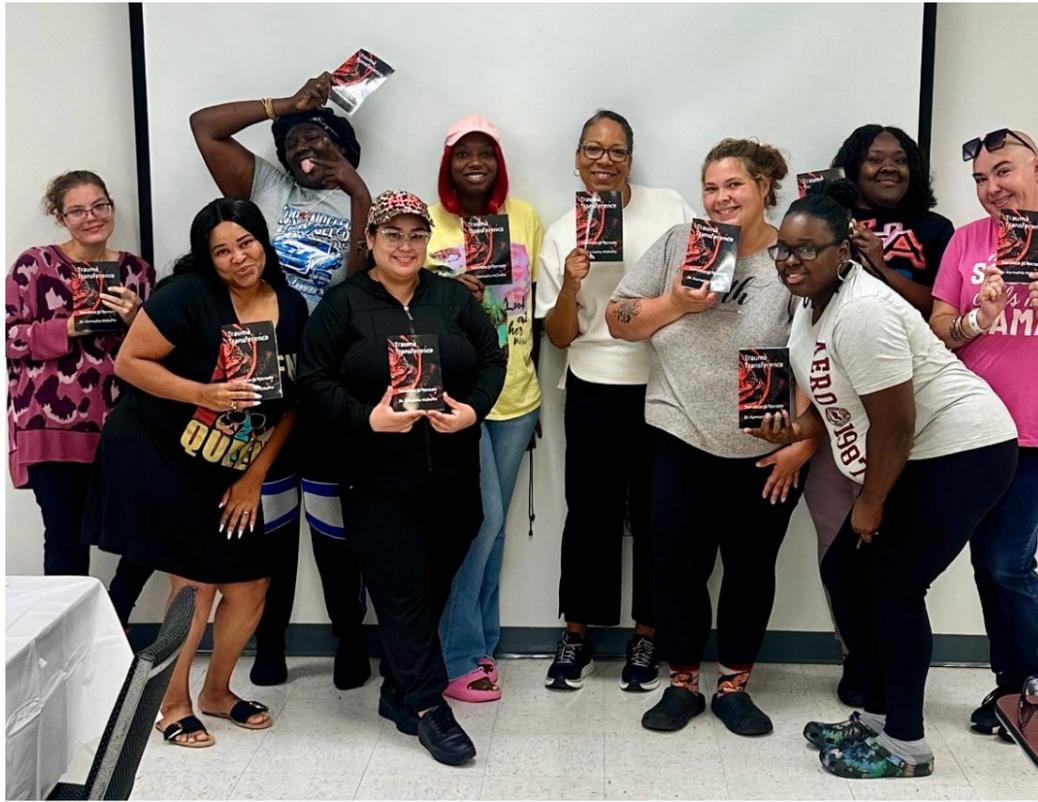
Pictured at the NCAP convention in Detroit are, from left, Nick Wharton, CEO of Charlotte Area Fund, NCCAA board member Bryan Duncan, Executive Director of I-CARE, board member Stephanie Ashley, Executive Director of Blue Ridge Community Action, Kathleen Lowe Jacobs, CSBG Director at Southeastern Community Action Partnership, Stephanie Cox, CSBG Director for Coastal Community Action, SCAP CEO Dr. Ericka J. Whitaker, NCCAA CSBG Liaison Sheryl Andrews, NCCAA Executive Director Sharon Goodson, NCCAA Housing and Energy Specialist Frankie Miller and NCCAA Energy Programs Manager, Cesar Carmona.

NCCAA is proud to share that **Southeastern Community Action Partnership** CEO Dr. Ericka J. Whitaker and CSBG Director Kathleen Lowe Jacobs, as well as Stephanie Cox, CSBG Director of **Coastal Community Action**, have earned the **Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP)** credential at the **National Community Action Partnership** Convention in Detroit.

Of the more than 200 professionals worldwide who received the designation this year, only three were from North Carolina. The CCAP is the premier credential in the Community Action Network, recognizing leaders who embody the knowledge, values, and strategies essential to advancing Community Action's mission.



HEAL NC Hosts Empowering Event in Goldsboro



On August 12, **HEAL NC** participants gathered in Goldsboro for a day of creativity, resilience, and connection. Attendees created *Affirmation Mirrors* with uplifting messages and learned stress-management tools through the Community Resiliency Model (CRM).

Guest speaker Dr. Karmashia McDuffie, CSBG Program Director at **WAGES**, shared her personal journey and insights from her book *Trauma Transference: Transform to Recreate*, gifting each participant a copy.

The event highlighted HEAL NC's mission to build community, foster healing, and celebrate the strength of local families.

Learn more about HEAL NC at <https://www.nccaa.net/heal-nc>.



CSBG Success Story: I-CARE & Cha-Nye Sanders



In October 2024, Cha-Nye enrolled in **I-CARE, Inc.** with the goal of building a career in healthcare after completing certification as a Medical Assistant.

Prior to I-CARE, she worked part-time at Little Caesars earning \$10 an hour. "My budget was extremely tight, and I had to prioritize my spending," Cha-Nye shared. Seeking higher earnings, she was encouraged to contact I-CARE, Inc., for education and employment support.

Through CSBG funding, I-CARE provided tuition assistance for her to attend Stepping Stone Medical in July 2024, along with books and training supplies. As part of her enrollment, Cha-Nye participated in monthly self-sufficiency sessions focused on financial literacy, soft skills, and work readiness.

In December 2024, she completed her training and became a Certified Medical Assistant.

She soon accepted a full-time position at FastMed, starting in March 2025. I-CARE also provided employment supports to help her start on schedule. "I couldn't afford scrubs at the time, and I-CARE helped me get scrubs, shoes, a jacket, and shirts," she said.

Now, several months into her new career, Cha-Nye is thriving. "I get a chance to use my skills to help patients receive quality care. Each day builds my confidence to provide excellent customer services. Most importantly, I've been able to plan for my future by increasing my savings."

Reflecting on her journey, she added, "Without I-CARE, I'm not sure I would have achieved my goal. I encourage others to pursue their dreams and not be afraid to ask for help, it can happen."

News from Around The Network



BRCA Head Start Homecoming Celebrated & Featured in EdNC

Blue Ridge Community Action celebrated its Grand Re-opening & Ribbon Cutting on August 22, nearly a year after Hurricane Helene's floodwaters forced its closure.

The organization's homecoming was featured recently on the education news website **EdNC**, with a focus on the Quaker Meadows Head Start Center.

Tina Kyes, family and child development director at BRCA, described the event to EdNC reporter Liz Bell: "Seeing those little faces walk in and how excited they were, especially the kids that were here before the hurricane, to just walk in and their little eyes see the new playgrounds and the new equipment. It was just — it closed the circle."



[Click here to read the full story.](#)



Watch: "We never stopped serving"

In response to the flood, staff relocated classrooms to temporary sites, coordinated relief efforts, and began rebuilding. Months later, the doors reopened, committed to the same mission, yet even more resilient for the families they serve. Amazing teamwork at BRCA - we are deeply proud of your team's incredible resilience! [Visit the BRCA website](#)

Video produced by [Bujoy Media](#)



Dozens of businesses and organizations supported BRCA's recovery from Hurricane Helene



FWW Breaks New Ground for a Brighter Future

Last month **Franklin Vance Warren Opportunity, Inc.** proudly broke ground on the \$2.7 million Jubilee Center, a new 12-month development that will serve as a hub of empowerment, opportunity, and progress for Franklin, Vance, and Warren counties.

CEO Abdul Rasheed was joined by local, state, and federal leaders, including USDA State Director Robert Hosford, N.C. Representative Bryan Cohn, and the Honorable Congresswoman Eva M. Clayton.



The Jubilee Center will be a vital space for services, support, and economic advancement — helping our communities thrive for generations to come.



Road to Empowerment Financial Literacy Series



Experiment in Self-Reliance recently welcomed Bertha and Jennifer from **First National Bank** to lead a session on banking services, loans, different account types, and how to protect yourself from scammers.

ESR's **Road to Empowerment (R2E) Financial Literacy Series** is designed to help participants build confidence and pursue their financial goals. Sessions cover budgeting, saving, debt management, life insurance, and more—equipping attendees with practical tools to strengthen their financial future.



The Dog Days of Summer



WAMY Community Action and the **Town of Boone Police Department** teamed up to bring a special event to residents at Deerfield Ridge and Glenbridge Health and Rehabilitation.

WAMY grilled up hot dogs, and residents were invited to "Dunk a Cop" at the dunking booth. **Watuaga Humane Society** also brought furry friends to visit with the residents.

These partnerships make our community stronger, and there's nothing better than bringing people together!



Johnson-Lee-Harnett Initiative Honors the Legacy of E. Marie Watson



The North Carolina Community Action Association (NCCAA) recognizes a special initiative by Johnston–Lee–Harnett Community Action to honor the legacy of Mrs. E. Marie Watson, who devoted more than 45 years to Community Action - “Helping People...Changing Lives” and “Waging War on Poverty.”

A tireless advocate and true dragon slayer, Mrs. Watson transformed lives and championed families even in the face of personal challenges.

Rooted in strong partnerships across Johnston, Lee, and Harnett counties, Mrs. Watson’s leadership shaped trusted relationships with local officials and community stakeholders. To carry her legacy forward, the Board of Directors has proposed naming the Johnston County Headquarters the E. Marie Watson Building and is seeking financial support to advance the renaming and raise unrestricted funds for urgent community needs across the three counties.

Learn more and participate: Scan the QR code above to read about the initiative, make a contribution, or share the campaign with organizations, corporations, faith communities, and civic groups.

New Donation Gives Circles Program a Boost





Mountain Projects, Inc. is excited to share that **Circles Cashiers Glenville** has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the **Church Of The Good Shepherd** Outreach Program in Cashiers, NC.

This donation will support the Circles Car Repair Initiative — helping participants keep reliable transportation so they can get to work, school, and essential appointments.

Circles is a community-driven program that empowers individuals and families to overcome poverty. It connects participants (“Circle Leaders”) with supportive volunteers (“Allies”), resources, and training to help them achieve financial stability, career goals, and long-term success. Learn more about Circles at www.circlescashiersglenville.org/.



FWW Head Start Promotes Employee Wellness



Franklin Vance Warren Opportunity, Inc. Head Start recently welcomed **AIM High: Purpose Driven Company** for an uplifting session on employee and workplace wellness. Guest speaker Jessica Rice Hawkins inspired staff to prioritize well-being and continue striving to be the best versions of themselves. Special thanks to Head Start Director Naima Bobbitt-Mosley for coordinating this impactful event, which received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the team.

Lonnie Atkinson receives Fatherhood Award



Left to right: Javier Murillo, WAGES CSBG Case Manager / WAGES Head Start Male Involvement Coordinator, Lonnie Atkinson, WAGES CSBG success story, and Shurod Hieke, WAGES Operations Director.

Congratulations to Lonnie Atkinson for receiving a National Fatherhood Award at the 27th Annual **International Father and Family Practitioners Conference** (NPCL 2025) earlier this summer!

Through the **WAGES, Inc.** CSBG program, Lonnie and his wife received critical support, including funding for his tuition and textbooks for a drug and alcohol counseling course at Randolph Community College. Lonnie is currently on track to graduate with an associate's degree in human services early next year and plans to attend UNCW online to earn a bachelor's degree. We are so proud of Lonnie, and the WAGES team!



Wharton Discusses Mentorship at Board Retreat



Nicholas Wharton, CEO of **Charlotte Area Fund**, recently facilitated a discussion on mentoring and workforce development for the 100 Black Men of America, Inc. National Executive Board of Directors Retreat.

100 Black Men of America is a mentoring organization dedicated to improving the quality of life within communities and enhancing educational and economic opportunities for all African Americans. Wharton shared, "I was humbled and honored to address the nation's preeminent leader in empowering Black boys to men."

[Click here for the video](#)

Pickleball 'FOUR' a Purpose is back

Four Square Community Action, Inc. is gearing up for its second annual Pickleball 'FOUR' a Purpose Tournament to raise both awareness and funds to support its mission of helping families in Cherokee, Clay, Graham, and Swain counties achieve self-sufficiency.



The Murphy Tournament will be held Saturday, September 27, and the Stecoah Valley Tournament is set for Saturday, October 4, 2025. Both events will feature round-robin play with winners advancing to a playoff. Registration is open to adults 18+ and closes Sept. 19, 2025.

[Register / Learn more](#)



A Milestone in Early Childhood Education

Congratulations to Dorthia Hedden and Lexi Simonds, Head Start teachers from **Macon Program for Progress**, for graduating and receiving their associate's degree in early childhood education from **Southwestern Community College**.





2025 SEACAA Conference is Coming to Charlotte

The **Southeastern Association of Community Action Agencies (SEACAA)** will host its 2025 Annual Conference in Charlotte, NC, October 14–17, with **Charlotte Area Fund, Inc. (CAF)** serving as host. Representing 181 agencies across eight states, SEACAA members serve more than 15 million people annually through programs in workforce development, housing, health, and early childhood education.

This year's theme, "**Resilient in Action: Strengthening Communities, Empowering People,**" will spotlight innovative approaches to poverty reduction, celebrate community partnerships, and equip agencies with new tools to expand their impact.

As Charlotte's story of resilience and economic mobility continues to grow, the city provides a fitting backdrop for this gathering of Community Action leaders. Learn more at www.charlotteareafund.org or www.seacaa.org.

SAVE THE DATE: 2025 RPIC IV CBQI Virtual Symposium is Sept. 11



Join Community Action leaders for a powerful morning of inspiration, strategy, and collaboration. The **2025 RPIC IV CBQI Symposium** is a focused convening of Community Action Agencies, State CSBG Leads/Offices, and State Associations from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

This virtual event will unite leaders, practitioners, and innovative thinkers from across the Southeast to strengthen our collective impact and drive community transformation. Attendees will engage with peers in interactive work groups designed to spark new ideas around leveraging resources, fostering innovation, embracing technology, and building powerful partnerships. You will learn practical skills with workshops in grant writing and storytelling, learn how to craft compelling proposals, and create high-impact short videos that spotlight community success. The virtual event will be held on Thursday, September 11, 2025, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Door prizes and drawings will take place throughout the event.

[Register here](#)

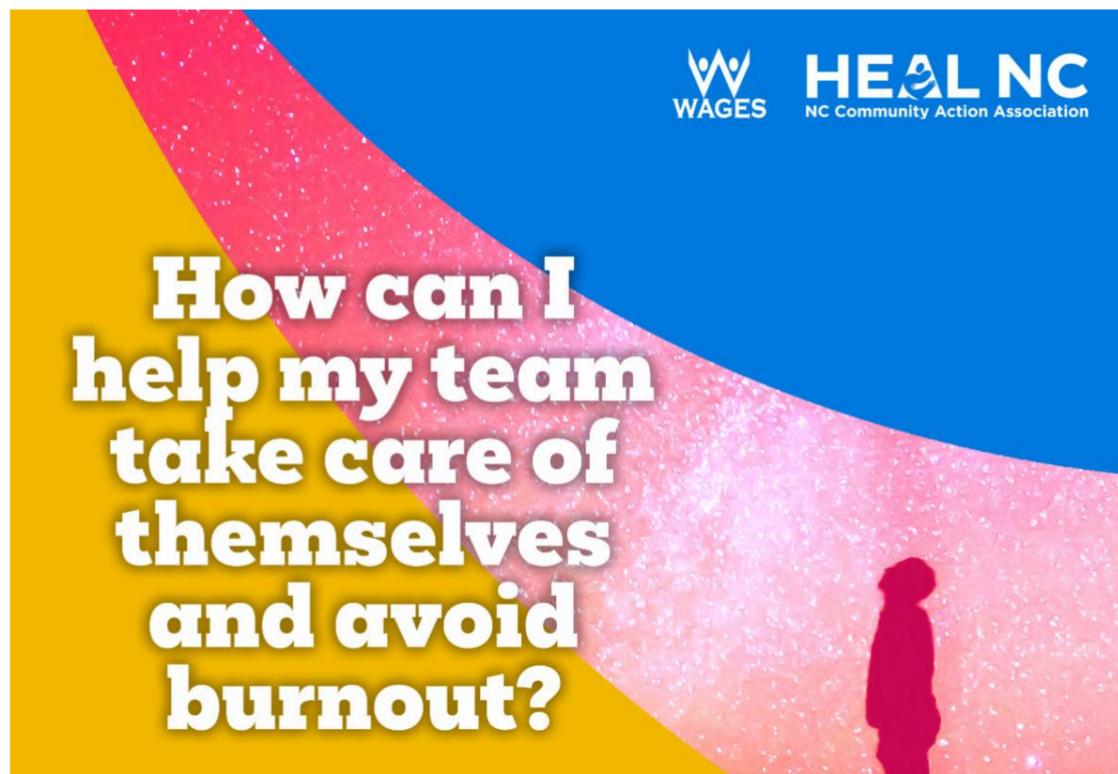
News From NCAAP



Join the **National Community Action Partnership** on Wednesday, September 10, at 12 PM ET for a resource-packed session designed to help your agency plan and act with confidence. This fall roundup will highlight practical guides and toolkits on scenario planning, board engagement, and messaging strategies to keep your team prepared for the months ahead.

[Register here](#)

WAGES and HEAL NC Host Workshops to Help Team Members Avoid Burnout



WAGES and HEAL NC are offering workshops in Wayne County based in the Community Resiliency Model (CRM), which teaches participants to re-set the natural balance of the nervous system with easy-to-understand concepts that bring reliable relief. CRM helps people help themselves and others. Beneficial to small teams and the general public, CRM helps navigate life's difficult situations.

More Information

Christina Watts
WAGES Community Engagement Coordinator
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Phone: 919-734-1178 ext. 212

Career Spotlight

[Links to Career Pages in the NCCAA Network](#)

(Link goes to home page when career page isn't offered)

Far West

Blue Ridge Community Action, Morganton
Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission Inc., N. Wilkesboro
Catawba County, Hickory
Community Action Opportunities, Asheville
Four Square Community Action, Inc., Murphy
Macon Program for Progress, Franklin
Mountain Projects, Waynesville
WAMY, Watauga, Avery, Mitchell and Yancey Counties

West

Charlotte Area Fund, Inc., Charlotte
Davidson County Community Action, Lexington
Experiments in Self-Reliance, Inc., Winston-Salem
Gaston Community Action, Inc., Gastonia
I-Care, Inc., Statesville
Salisbury-Rowan Community Action, Salisbury
Sandhills Community Action Program, Southern Pines
Union County Community Action, Monroe
Yadkin Co. Economic Development District, Boonville

Central

Alamance Co. Community Services Agency, Burlington
Franklin-Vance-Warren Opportunity, Inc., Henderson
Johnston Lee Harnett Community Action, Inc., Smithfield
Passage Home, Raleigh
Southeastern Community Action Partnership, Lumberton
Welfare Reform Liaison Project, Greensboro

East

Action Pathways, Fayetteville
Choanoke Area Development Assoc., Rich Square
Coastal Community Action, Newport
Economic Improvement Council, Edenton
Eastern Carolina Human Services Agency, Jacksonville
Greene Lamp, Inc., Kinston
NEW Community Action, Rocky Mount
Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency (WAGES), Inc., Goldsboro

Share your community action career opportunities on our web page and have them distributed to 7000+ emails through the NCCAA newsletter! Send your job listings to communications@nccaa.net.

Send us your Stories!

Working together to share the impact of Community Action

Does your Community Action Agency have impactful content to share? Let's collaborate. The NCCAA develops creative content year-round to celebrate, educate and inform. Let's amplify the voices of organizations in our network! Let's share the impactful work of community action and tell the stories of our clients! **Reach out for collaboration:** communications@nccaa.net.

Share Community Action News with a Friend

As a member of the NCCAA community, we work to empower low-income families, change people's lives for the better and improve the communities we serve. We are all dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other. Please take a moment and forward this news to a co-worker and grow the community of professionals dedicated to this important work.

Click to Sign Up

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