

2017 - 2019

Strategic Plan



Charting our Course ... Reducing Poverty

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The Strategic Plan Summary

I. Introduction



The Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency (CAA) adopted a modified strategic planning process to update its existing 2010-2014 Strategic Plan. The CAA leadership, Board of Directors, Management Team, and selected staff participated in charting the future direction of the organization.

A Nonprofit Management Consultant was selected to facilitate the strategic planning process. The effort was launched in May 2015 under the direction of its Chief Executive Officer. The initial planning session was conducted by the consultant in July 2015 with the Board of Directors and Management Team during an offsite retreat location.

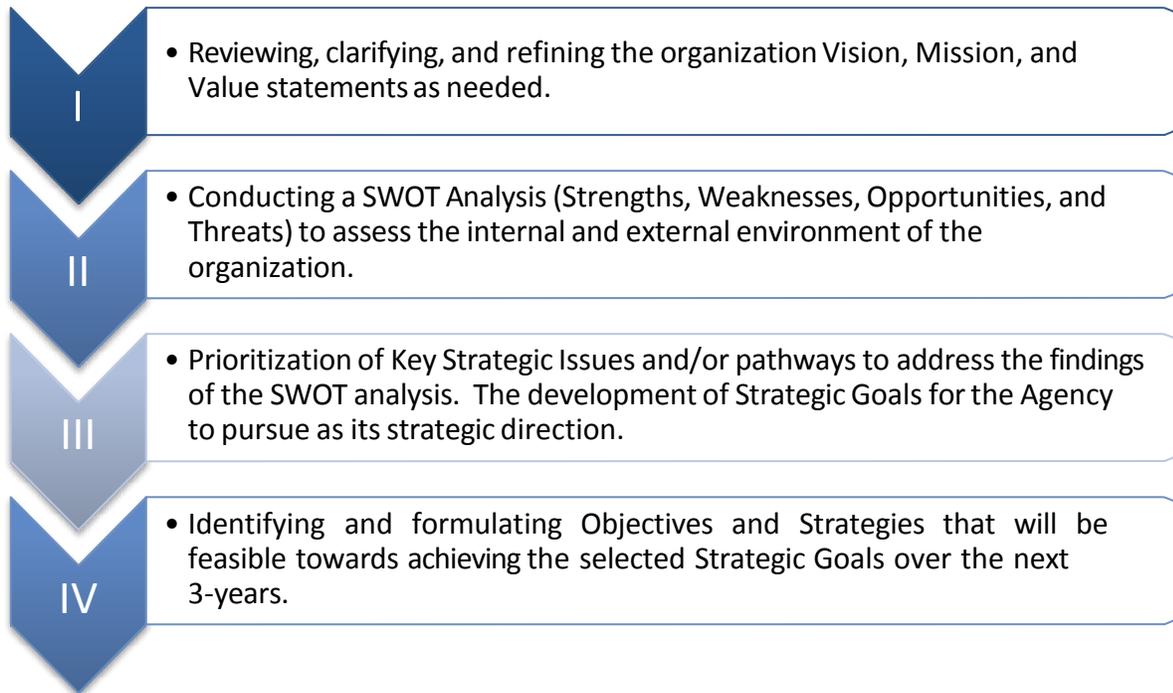
In this strategic plan, the CAA outlines critical community characteristics and needs which will guide development and innovation of the agency's anti-poverty programming over the next three years. The overall goal of this strategic plan is to identify resources which will improve the quality of lives for the citizens in the communities of Anne Arundel County being served by the CAA. The goals, objectives and strategies presented in the plan focus on improving the agency's overall effectiveness and efficiency toward serving the County and its at-risk families, individuals and youth.

The CAA strategic planning process began in May 2015 and included; five strategic planning committee/management team meetings; member/client surveys, and staff input. In addition, community stakeholders were approached for their perspective on the agency's approach, deployment, and community impact results in light of its stated mission. The process was intentional about gathering information from a variety of sources to help provide insight into charting CAA's future direction.

From this input emerged a strategy to move the Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency toward having a greater community impact and ability to sustain high performance in an ever-changing and increasingly uncertain economic, social, and political environment.

II. Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

The process adopted by the CAA Board of Directors in the development of a 3-year Strategic Plan for implementation from 2017-2019 included four phases:



Phase I included the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee. The planning process started with initial working sessions with the Management Team identifying CAA strengths and weaknesses while the Board reviewed the Vision, Mission and Value statements. The Board refined the vision and mission statements and overwhelmingly reaffirmed the Core Values.

Phase II was modified for the external review of the SWOT due to an existing 2014 Community Needs Assessment Report included with the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan and a 2015 Community Needs Assessment, *Poverty Amidst Plenty V* published by the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County. Both of these reports contributed significantly to the assessment of the external environment of the CAA.

Phase III involved the identification of critical issues facing the agency after careful review of the findings from both the Needs Assessment Report and the SWOT Analysis. Representation from the CAA Board of Directors framed strategic issues to address what potentially may affect the Agency's mandates, its mission, and values in effective delivery of its programs and services.

Phase IV the Management Team drafted the Strategies and Objectives as the final component of the Strategic Plan and presented their recommendations to the Board for approval to complete the planning process.

III. Overview of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan

A. Vision and Mission Statements

The Board of Directors adopted its vision statement and a revised mission statement in September 2015 that will guide the agency's work over the next three years.

OUR VISION

The Community Action Agency will be the recognized leader in addressing poverty and improving the quality of life in the communities of Anne Arundel County.

OUR MISSION

The Community Action Agency empowers people in reducing poverty and building resilient communities.



Why Do We Exist?

Our MISSION articulates our reason for being and provides the inspiration and direction for doing the work – “a guiding star on the horizon”.

Our VISION states the future we want to create for our community in making a difference.

B. Core Value Statements and Guiding Principles

*Affirmed by the Board of Directors during its Board Retreat in July 2015.

OUR CORE VALUES – The Principles that Guide Us

Commitment to Community

- We believe in working together, sharing ideas, bringing change and open communications with our community residents, partners and stakeholders.

Excellence in Customer Service

- We believe in treating our clients, vendors and employees with the highest degree of dignity, equality and trust.

Dedication to Staff

- We believe in building strong relationships by respecting one another and valuing each other's needs, time and contributions.

Integrity

- We believe in being honest, trustworthy, respectful and ethical in our actions

Stewardship of Resources

- We believe in being dedicated to building a better, stronger and more durable agency for future generations, meeting our commitments to stakeholders, developing our people and helping improve our communities.

C. Organization Environmental Scan

The strategic planning process includes a key component which is designed to give recognition to the organization's strengths and weaknesses and its opportunities and threats. The method by which to ascertain this data is conducting a **SWOT Analysis** (*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats*) to assess the environment of the organization for its health, vitality and sustainability.

The CAA Board of Directors and the CEO/Management Team participated in the conduct of a SWOT Analysis between September 2015 and February 2016. The information gathered on the strengths and weaknesses are the *internal factors* of the organization and the opportunities and threats are the *external factors* to the organization. Additionally, the CEO/Management Team

surveyed a sampling of the clients, stakeholders, and volunteers aligned with CAA. This data was synthesized into key themes and issues needing to be addressed in the development of the goals and objectives in order for the organization to accomplish its mission and vision. The key themes included; Community Familiarity about CAA, Program/Services Quality, CAA Signature Program(s), Funding Capability, and State/County Leadership Support.

The Board and staff engaged in appreciative inquiry discussions that revolved around the external realities having an impact on CAA, its customers, and the community in general. Key insights included:

SWOT Analysis Summary

S trengths	W eaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government Funding 2. Staff Experience/Dedication 3. Strong & Committed Board 4. Programs/Services Credibility 5. Executive Leadership 6. Admin Procedures & Policies 7. Financial/Budget Management 8. Community Relations 9. Management/Board Operations 10. Community Outreach 11. Program Depth 12. Main Office Location 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CAA Exposure/Public Relations 2. Customer Feedback/Satisfaction 3. Board Financial Support 4. Lack of Imagination & Innovation 5. Lack of Entrepreneurship 6. No Succession/Long Range Plans 7. Facility Space Issues 8. Reliance on Government Funding 9. Vision for YSB 10. Technology Capabilities 11. No Risk Management Plan 12. Fund Development Infrastructure
O pportunities	T hreats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Revenue Streams/Donors 2. Corporate Partners/Sponsors 3. Client Expansion – new groups & geographical areas 4. Partnerships/Collaborations – public & private Sector, faith-based orgs 5. Community Needs Alignment –youth services programming 6. Increase Visibility/Engagement 7. Infrastructure Upgrades 8. Website/Social Media Utilization 9. Launch Social Enterprise 10. Staff Development/Capacity Building 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loss of Financial Support 2. Attracting Partners/Supporters 3. Gov't Budget Cuts/Economic Shifts 4. Complacency 5. Nonprofit Competition 6. Non-traditional Ally support 7. Grant Funding Reliability & Stability 8. Program Participants Leaving 9. Loss of Head Start Funding 10. Volunteer Program/Recruitment 11. Other Organizations w/ Similar Services

D. Strategic Priorities

The findings, environmental scan, and stakeholder surveys/interviews were analyzed to determine the Strategic Issues the CAA are facing. The agency-wide SWOT Analysis revealed key strengths and the external environmental changes impacting the agency’s ability to sustain high performance and measurable community impact. As a result, The Board identified **Strategic Priorities** that the agency will address over the next three years are outlined below:

Top 5 Strategic Priorities
1. Reorganization/Restructure and Realignment of CAA
2. Invest in Fund Development Infrastructure
3. Harness Marketing & Communications (Strong Brand Identity)
4. Increase Organizational Capacity
5. Leverage Technology and Information Management

E. Strategic Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The Strategic Goals outlined in the CAA Strategic Plan are consistent and align with the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act and the six broad anti-poverty goals developed by the Community Services Network. These ROMA (Results Oriented Management and Accountability) Goals provide a framework for continuous growth and improvement for community action agencies across the nation, touching on all levels of need: Family, Agency and Community. The six National Goals include; two family, two agency, and two community level goals which are listed below:

1. Low income people become more self-sufficient. **(Family)**
2. The conditions in which low-income people live are improved. **(Community)**
3. Low-income people own a stake in their community. **(Community)**
4. Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income are achieved. **(Agency)**
5. Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results. **(Agency)**
6. Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems. **(Family)**

The CAA Board of Directors and Management Team developed four Strategic Goals that will strategically move the agency towards achieving its vision and mission. Each department/program area within the agency will develop specific operational action plans focusing on the tactics of meeting the Objectives and Strategies associated with each Strategic Goal.

The Management Team and staff within each program/service area will develop an action plan for their department, clients and customers using the established Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. Departments will develop a three-year action plan with annual operational plans that will lead toward the achievement of the agency-wide Strategic Plan. Both the three-year action and operating plans will be reviewed quarterly and approved by the Agency Leadership Team.

OUR 2017-2019 STRATEGIC GOALS

By 2020, We Aim To:

- GOAL 1: Build a sustainable and financially viable/secure Agency.**
- GOAL 2: Enhance Board oversight and effective governance of the CAA.**
- GOAL 3: Increase the capacity and awareness of the CAA in building its reputation and brand identity.**
- GOAL 4: Position CAA as the most effective human services organization lifting people from poverty and empowering them to become self-sufficient.**

Provided next are separate tables identifying the four Strategic Goals with Objectives and Strategies which are aligned with the Strategic Priorities and the related ROMA Goal(s).

GOAL 1: Build a sustainable and financially viable/secure Agency.

ROMA GOALS 1, 4, 6

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2

Fund Development Infrastructure

Objectives	Strategies
<p>1. Establish a strategic infrastructure for Resource/Fund Development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a full-time Director of Development/ Marketing. • Develop and implement a Fund Development Plan/Fundraising Strategy. • Establish fundraising goals, targets, and a donor stewardship program. • Develop an ongoing schedule to research funding prospects, pursue, and acquire unrestricted funding sources • Identify, educate, and train on Board financial/fundraising commitments. • Activate and utilize a Board Development/Fundraising Committee • Increase Board involvement with resource development and fundraising activities.
<p>2. Secure 15% in additional revenue from non-government funding sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for and secure non-government grants and create a funding mix that increases revenue by \$200,000. • Establish an integrated donor base (individuals, corporations, businesses, faith-based organizations, etc.) to increase funding sustainability. • Canvass and solicit support for resources from businesses, municipalities, government agencies, organizations and individuals to achieve CAA mission. • Increase visibility/marketing of CAA to a broader population and potential donors.

GOAL 2: Enhance Board oversight & effective governance of the CAA.

ROMA GOAL 5

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4

Organizational Capacity

Objectives	Strategies
<p>1. Develop and implement a comprehensive Board development plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regular/on-going Board education and training opportunities for strategic leadership, compliance, financial oversight, and policy development. • Equip the Board to actively advocate for the work of CAA. • Raise the fiduciary profile of the Board of Directors as responsible trustees of the organization assets. • Formalize and schedule Board Orientations. • Conduct annual ROMA training.
<p>2. Retain, attract, and develop a highly involved Board of Directors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement a recruitment plan/process. • Obtain and maintain 100% engagement of Board members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities in governance, oversight, planning, and policy development. • Develop highly selective recruitment and screening measures. • Conduct annual Board Assessments and Evaluations.

GOAL 3: Increase the capacity and awareness of the CAA in building its reputation and brand identity.

ROMA GOALS 4,5

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3

Brand Identity & Marketing

Objectives	Strategies
<p>1. Build, communicate, and promote a CAA Brand that is relevant and vibrant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the possibility of investing in a part-time communications/marketing position. • Develop and implement an integrated Communications and Marketing Plan. • Create a video to showcase CAA programs and services. • Design a social media and internet media strategy that will target individuals under 40 years of age. • Design and develop state of the art logo, marketing tools and collateral (brochures, rack cards, posters) for distribution/media kits. • Enhance external communications with a modernized Website and an improved Newsletter, Annual Report, Facebook page, Twitter site, and e-News.
<p>2. Raise and improve community outreach and education about CAA range of services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate externally through PR/marketing outreach campaigns with “Impact Stories” for the media. • Utilize social media, website, radio, and newspaper to tell our story and market our services. • Access current programming to determine new or expanded program opportunities or partnerships. • Host an Open House for the community to learn about Agency programs and services. • Participate in at least 25 community events throughout the year. • Have a presence in every community of the county, impacting eligible people living in poverty through direct service, collaboration, or advocacy.

GOAL 4: Position CAA as the most effective human services organization lifting people from poverty and empowering them to become self-sufficient in AAC communities.

ROMA GOALS 2,3,4,6

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1, #4

Restructure & Realignment / Organizational Capacity

Objectives	Strategies
<p>1. Refine CAA core competencies and streamline services to maximize community impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically restructure & realign CAA to maximize agency effectiveness and efficiency in serving low-income people. • Review core programs/services for alignment with agency restructure and CAP best practices; ensure all programs address key levers of poverty reduction and community resiliency. • Provide services that reduce barriers to stability for vulnerable populations. • Work with key nonprofits to publish a Community Needs Assessment identifying service gaps to avoid duplication of efforts. • Address unmet or underserved needs in the community through committed resources and strategic partnerships (<i>e.g. housing, employment, finance, food, transportation, health, education, and childcare</i>).
<p>2. Build and leverage a network of collaborative partners, stakeholders, and donors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and foster positive relationships with new and existing partners to maximize the continuum of services. • Become a model for collaborative processes as advocates and champions for significant poverty related issues. • Expand community understanding of poverty issues and self-sufficiency. • Increase/strengthen at least five community partnerships annually through MOUs or letters of support. • Get more involved with the business community and obtain their commitment and support of CAA mission.

Objectives	Strategies
<p>3. Establish an Information Technology (IT) strategic plan and facilities maintenance schedule to improve the Agency operational capacity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review agency IT system infrastructure to ensure that it is stable and secure (i.e., servers, internet, internet provider, domain, web and email host, firewalls, network printers, wireless routers, workstations, virus protection, virtual private networks and cloud computing). • Ensure system capabilities and performance capacity is efficient and effective to deliver mission-critical outcomes (i.e., up to date software, hardware life cycle, technology support, professional staff development, written technology policies and procedures). • Agency invest in necessary IT system additions and/or improvements to keep current with technology needed to provide effective programming/services (i.e., hardware/software upgrades). • Implement recommendations resulting from the building systems evaluation.

IV. Strategic Plan Implementation

Rather than a final product, the Strategic Plan will be a roadmap for the continuous improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of the agency's operations to deliver high quality services, advocacy and commitment of resources to citizens. Agency leaders will use this information to steer the organization toward the fulfillment of its mission. Changing economic, political and cultural climate will require the review and re-evaluation of the plan on an annual basis.

The CAA's annual Board Retreat will be the designated time to reflect and assess the agency's Strategic Plan and core strategies. At this time, The Board and staff will meet and discuss if any external and/or internal contributing factors have contributed to the need for a shift or change in priorities, long-term goal(s), objective(s) and/or core strategies. The annual Board Retreat will also serve as the time to discuss the operational action plan items and provide the Board with progress status updates with particular attention to outcome and output measures.

The Strategic Plan is a working document intended to reflect current needs and conditions of the Agency and community. Revisions to the plan will be made as needed to reflect environmental changes and incorporated directly into the Plan. The Agency will evaluate, update and record progress made toward implementation of the Plan for relevancy as follows:

- Monthly:** Progress Reports, Scorecards, and/or Dashboards – *CEO, Management Team/Staff*
- Quarterly:** Operational Action Plan Reviews – *CEO, Management Team/Staff*
- Bi-annually:** Operational Action Plan Reviews & Progress Reports – *Board of Directors*
- Annually:** Performance Reviews – *CEO, Management Team, and Staff*
- Annually:** Strategic Plan - *Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer and Management Team*

Timeframes associated with the implementation of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan is aligned with the Agency's Fiscal Year calendar from July-June:

Year 1: January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017

Quarter 3 – March
Quarter 4 & Bi-Annual – June/July
Quarter 1 – September
Quarter 2 & Bi-Annual – December

Year 3: January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

Quarter 3 – March
Quarter 4 & Bi-Annual – June/July
Quarter 1 – September
Quarter 2 – December

Year 2: January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018

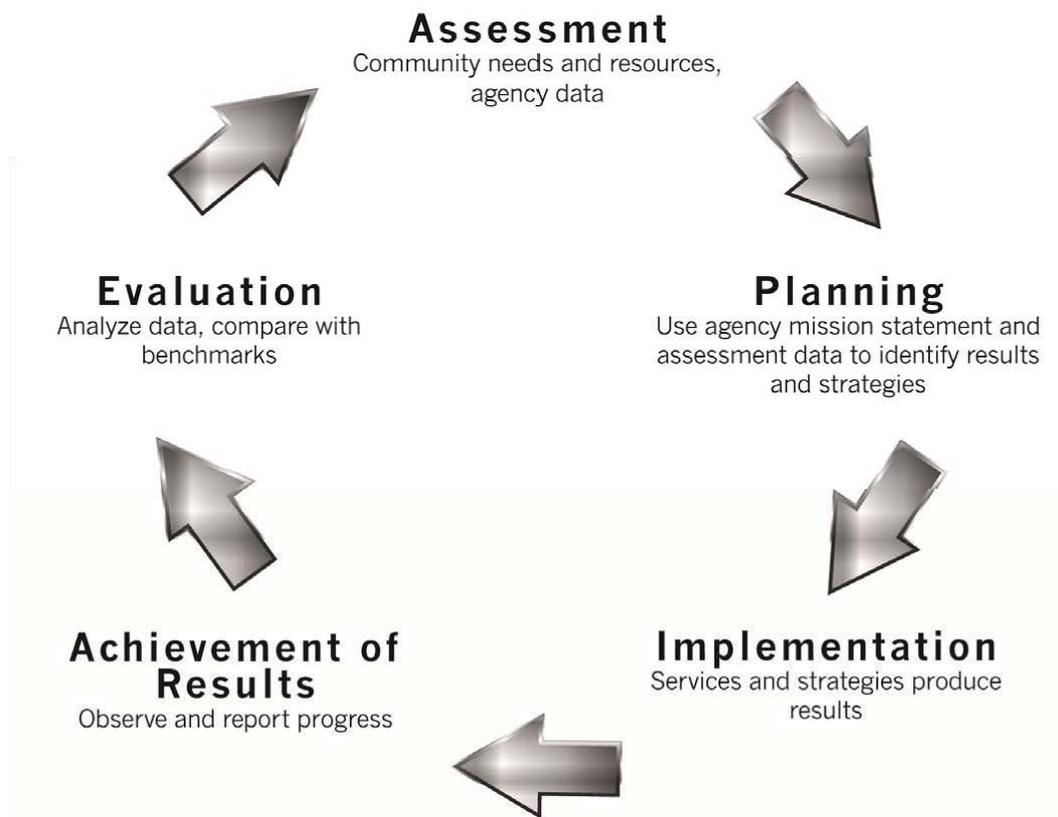
Annual Plan Review – January
Quarter 3 – March
Quarter 4 & Bi-Annual – June/July
Quarter 1 – September
Quarter 2 & Bi-Annual - December

Year 4: January 1, 2020 – March 31, 2020

Annual Plan Review & Update
Strategic Planning Process Kick-off

This Strategic Plan recognizes and utilizes the tenants from Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA). ROMA is a performance based initiative designed to preserve the anti-poverty focus of Community Action Agencies to promote greater effectiveness among entities receiving CSBG funds. At the center of ROMA is its lifecycle, which strategic planning lies within its second phase. In the implementation and appropriately maintaining the CAA’s Strategic Plan, each phase of the ROMA cycle will be explored at various times during its lifecycle.

The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle



The ROMA Cycle graphic was developed by the National Peer to Peer (NPTP) ROMA Training Project, based on guidance regarding Core Activities for States and CSBG Eligible Entities provided by OCS Information Memo 49. From Planning for Results © 2006, J Jakopic and B. Mooney, Community Action Association of PA. Curriculum developed with funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Community. Use is permitted with this footer. All other rights reserved.

V. Acknowledgements

Completion of the Anne Arundel County *Community Action Agency 2017-2019 Strategic Plan* would not have been possible without the Strategic Planning Committee and the input of key stakeholders; CAA participants/clients, partners, volunteers, CAA's Board of Directors and dedicated staff. Staff members were integrally involved in the plan development, sharing of information at focus/community groups and participating in strategic planning sessions that developed the plan's objectives and strategies.

We are very grateful for all contributions to the plan and for ongoing stakeholder support. A big *Thank You* goes to individuals, donors, foundations, local government, companies, businesses, consultants and other organizations that have supported CAA over the years. Your support continuously inspires us.

Board of Directors

The Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency has a tripartite Board of Directors, which includes one-third representation from the low-income community, one-third representation from the private sector, and one-third representation from the public sector.

Low-Income

Cynthia Carter, *President*
Amy Siegal
Robert Costa
Lenora Reddon
Vacant

Private Sector

Leslie N. Stanton, *Vice President*
Jacqueline Boone Allsup, *Secretary*
Phil Reynolds
Shawn Ashworth
Debbie Langer

Public Sector

John E. Morrison, *Treasurer*
Donna Belt
Deneice Fisher
Annie Hillary
Joe Hudson

Strategic Planning Committee

Cynthia Carter, *Board Member*
Leslie N. Stanton, *Board Member*
Donna Belt, *Board Member*
Annie Hillary, *Board Member*
Gretchen Huntley, *Chief Executive Officer*
Arlene Jackson, *Empowerment Services Director*
Carmelia Hicks, *Early Head Start Director*

Erica Matthews, *Energy Services Director*
Hasan McMillan, *Property & Procurement*
Michele Giedel, *Human Resources Manager*
Heather Lalor, *Finance-Fiscal Supervisor*
Julie Snyder, *Programs/Grant Administrator*
R. Michelle Phelps, *Executive Assistant to CEO*
Corwin T. Macklin, *Strategic Planning Consultant*

The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes Anne Arundel County a better place to live. We care about the entire county and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.