

Moving. Building. Growing.



Annual Report 2018 - 2019



From the desk of the Executive Director



Since becoming Executive Director for Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc., the best words to describe this experience is humbling. This agency embodies the spirit of compassion, selflessness, prayerfulness, and love. The services that we provide to the Rapides Parish area gives our residents a sense of hope and appreciation. There comes a time in our lives when even the best of us need a little help along the way.

We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty.
Mother Teresa

Cenla CAC provides services that are designed to meet people where they are and help them to get to a better place. When we as a people begin to embrace those who lack the basic necessities of life by providing effective resources and education, we can begin to see a change in our community. When we can see ourselves in a better place, we begin to work towards that goal. It gives us something to reach for. The staff at Cenla CAC work together as a team to ensure that those goals are attainable for the residents of Rapides Parish.

Our successes may seem small or insignificant to some; but to see the smile that lights upon a person's face, tears of joy in relief that a need was met, and having a listening ear to a voice crying to be heard. That is what drives Cenla CAC to do what we do.

We are committed to serving our community by partnering with our local governing bodies, local businesses, and supporters to help our residents to become more economically stable. We are helping people, changing lives!

Sally C. Cowan

Agency Staff

Sally C. Cowan, MBA

Executive Director

Pamela Ballott

General Community Programs Director

Tony Alonzo

Finance Manager

Carolyn Dixon

Financial Assistant

Elisa Smith

Accounting Clerk (Temporary)

Shirley S. Coutee

Executive Secretary/
Board Administrative Assistant

Tina Guidry

Neighborhood Service Center
Coordinator

Gwendolyn Groves

Neighborhood Service Center
Coordinator

Quanita Walker

Neighborhood Service Center
Coordinator

Clayton Williams

Neighborhood Service Center
Coordinator



About Cenla CAC

Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc. (Cenla CAC) was incorporated as the anti-poverty agency for Rapides Parish in 1965. The objective and purpose for this corporation was and still is to promote and develop economic opportunities in the community comprising all of the Parish of Rapides in the State of Louisiana; the provision of services directly and indirectly to those in need of increased economic opportunities; to act as a liaison between Public Housing Authorities, Private Sector Landlords and low-wealth to moderate income individuals and the homeless; to provide housing counseling services designed to enable clients to obtain, retain and/or maintain ownership or rental rights of acquired housing; and to link clients with other available resources to combat poverty and economic instability in Rapides Parish.

The roots of Community Action's work are in intervention to alleviate the most immediate, destabilizing effects of poverty in the lives of individuals and families, as well as in the larger community. Over the years we have come to interpret our mission broadly to include, not only people who have lower incomes, but others who are marginalized, such as youth and members of minority groups. Our desire to secure our community's future health and prosperity, and our sense of ethical practice, compelled us to offer primary prevention services in order to get ahead of the need for intervention. While many of our programs are targeted to intervene with specific issues or populations, many also incorporate prevention practices and are open to all who meet state income guidelines.

Cenla CAC currently operates under the administration of Executive Director Sally C. Cowan. She oversees a managerial staff that includes Finance Manager, General Community Programs Director and Executive Secretary/Board Executive Assistant. Cenla CAC is governed by an 18 member Board of Directors, representing a cross-section of the public, private and low-income sectors of Rapides Parish. The volunteer board serves as the legal entity of the organization.

Mission Statement:

To alleviate immediate suffering caused by poverty and to stop the cycle of poverty from generation to generation by working to make Rapides Parish citizens self-sufficient.

A Year of Accomplishments

The 2018—2019 Program Year marks a year of remarkable change and growth for Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc. Listed below are samplings of the many accomplishments achieved and milestones met during this program year:

- Relocation of Central Office from 4008 Parliament Drive to a more spacious location at 2011 MacArthur Drive.



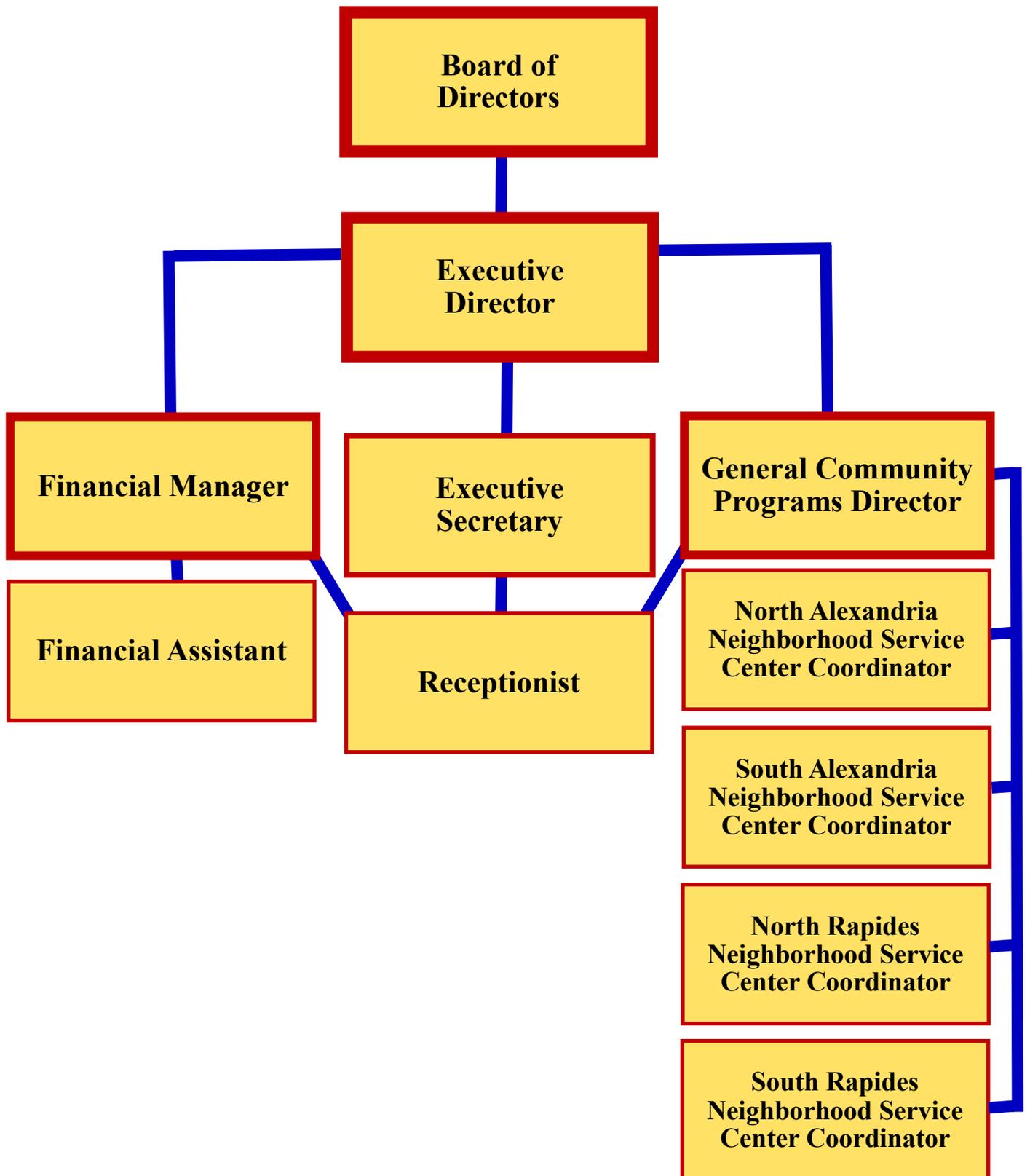
- Relocation of Neighborhood Service Centers into their service areas. These moves are being implemented to provide better access for clients and make a more visible presence in the community. Currently, we have secured locations for North Alexandria NSC at Rapides Business and Career Solutions Center, South Alexandria NSC at the Martin Luther King Center and North Rapides NSC at Boyce Town Hall (Tuesday and Thursday). We are seeking facilities in Pineville, Lecompte, Cheneyville and Glenmora.

Staff Development

Pamela Ballott, General Community Programs Director, completed the HUD Certified Housing Counselor's course of study and successfully completed the HUD Certified Housing Counselors examination. This certification was obtained to comply with HUD's Final Rule on Housing Services, which mandates that all agencies providing services through their housing programs must have at least one (1) HUD Certified Housing Counselor on staff by August 1, 2020. As a result, Cenla CAC has obtained some prestigious rankings including being one (1) of only four (4) HUD Approved Counseling Agencies in the state of Louisiana to date to achieve this goal as well as being in the first 23% of agencies in the nation to comply with this measure.

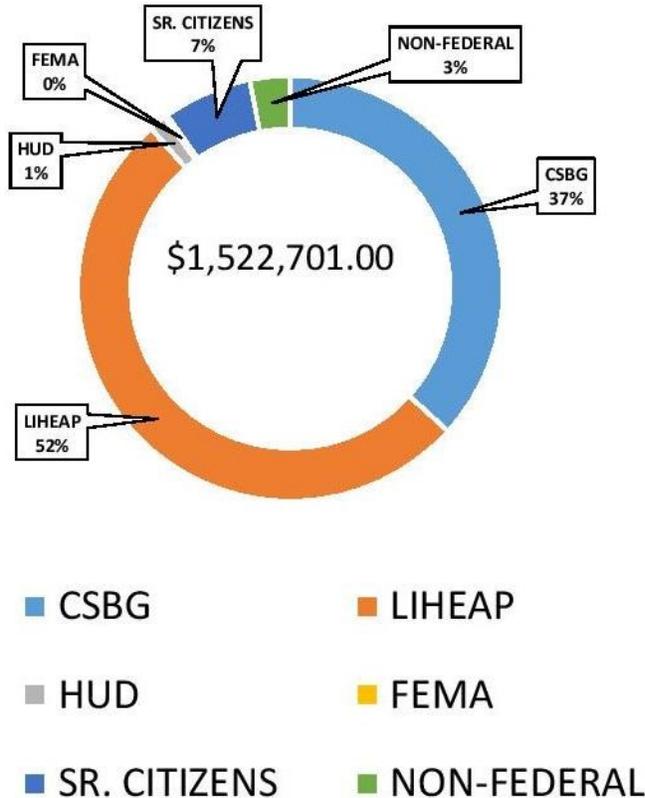


Organizational Chart



Statement of Functional Expenses for Program Year 2018-2019

How We Spent Each Dollar



Louisiana Workforce Commission Community Service Block Grant Administrative	\$344,793.00
Program/Client Assistance	\$214,254.00
Total CSBG	\$559,047.00
Louisiana Housing Corporation LIHEAP Administrative	\$64,381.00
Program/Client Assistance	\$725,599.00
Total LIHEAP	\$789,980.00
Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): Administrative:	
Program/Client Assistance	\$19,790.00
Total HUD	\$19,790.00
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Unity Way of Central Louisiana - EF & SP	\$3,933.00
Total FEMA	\$3,933.00
Rapides Parish Emergency Assistance Programs: Rapides Parish Police Jury Senior Citizens Assistance	\$103,045.00
Total Local Emergency	\$103,045.00
Non - Federal	
Total Non - Federal	\$46,906.00
Total Functional Expenses	\$1,522,701.00

DIRECT CLIENT ASSISTANCE VS OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

- DIRECT CLIENT ASSISTANCE
- OPERATIONAL EXPENSES



Cenla CAC Programs & Services

The following are brief summaries of Cenla CAC's programs and services provided throughout our Rapides Parish service area

CSBG Emergency Assistance Program

Provides assistance with utilities, rent/mortgage, prescription drugs, must have disconnect, termination of services or eviction notice, high medical bills and some sort of income.

LIHEAP

Provides assistance with utilities, must meet Federal Income Guidelines and have not been assisted in the last 6 months.

LIHEAP Crisis

Provides assistance with utilities, must have disconnect or termination of services notice and have not been assisted in the last 12 months.

Senior Citizens Assistance

Provides assistance with utilities, rent/mortgage, prescription drugs, must be 59 1/2 years or older, meet Federal Income Guidelines and have not been assisted in the last 6 months.

Food for Families/Food for Seniors

Seniors receive 40 pounds of food monthly, must be 60 years or older and meet USDA Income Guidelines.

Adopt-A-Senior

Seniors receive 50 pounds of food monthly, must be 65 years or older, meet USDA Income Guidelines and have a sponsor. The sponsor is responsible for paying The Food Bank \$150.00 that will entitle recipient to receive the food box for 12 months.

ATMOS

Provides assistance for ATMOS Energy customers, must have a disconnect notice, reduction in income or an increase in necessary expenses. Priority shall be given to the elderly, families with young children and persons with disabilities.

HUD Housing Counseling

Receive free counseling in the areas of first-time homebuyers, reverse mortgage, budget/money management and renter's rights.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Free Income tax preparation with automatic EITC determination and e-filing for clients earning up to \$54,000 annually.

DHS Medicaid and Food Stamp Application

Provides assistance with online completion of applications for services provided through the Department of Human Services. These services include Medicaid and Snap Benefits.

FEMA

Provides assistance with emergency food purchase, must meet Federal Income Guidelines, demonstrate a need for food and receive little or no food stamps.

HiSet Exam Reimbursement

Reimburse students who have successfully completed the Adult Education Course at CLTCC and passed the HiSet (GED) test. These students must be referred from CLTCC.

One-Stop Drop-In Child Care Information and Referral

Provides free on-site child care for participants who are accessing services at Workforce Center. These services include job/employment related training, job fairs, applying for jobs, job testing, resume building, filing for unemployment benefits and interview coaching. Child care services available Mon.-Thurs. from 7:30 to 12 noon, parents must remain on site while their child is being cared for.

Services Provided Program Year 2018-2019

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Program	Families Served	Aggregated Dollar Amount
CSBG Emergency Rent/Mortgage	61	\$22,997.72
CSBG Emergency Utility	113	\$40,827.26
CSBG Emergency Prescription	1	\$147.07
LIHEAP Non-Crisis Assistance	1,652	\$656,600.00
LIHEAP Crisis Assistance	172	\$58,474.40
Emergency Food & Shelter Program	68	\$7,865.00
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance	825	\$1,057,907.00
ATMOS	49	\$11,143.51
Finger Printing	66	Not Applicable

HOUSING SERVICES

Program	Families Served
HUD Housing Counseling Services	875

SENIOR SERVICES

Program	Families Served	Aggregated Dollar Amount
Senior Citizens Rent/Mortgage	39	\$14,669.30
Senior Citizens Utility	167	\$56,079.53
Senior Citizens Prescription	2	\$579.86
Food for Families/Food for Seniors	843	Not Applicable
Adopt A Senior Food Boxes	28	Not Applicable

EMPLOYMENT/EDUCATION SERVICES

Program	Families Served
HiSet Exam Reimbursement	2
Information and Referral	21

When Client's Succeed, So Do We!!!!

A young mother was referred to our agency by a local utility vendor. Her husband had recently left her along with their four (4) children, one (1) of whom was diabetic. She was unaware that her husband had not been paying the household bills until she received a shutoff notice from her utility company. Making matters worse, the last payment that he actually paid resulted in a NSF check and the utility account was currently three (3) months past due. The husband's departure from the home left a tremendous reduction in household income and the mom was now faced with trying to bring bills current without his help. We were able to provide her with LIHEAP assistance which put a halt to the disconnection. As part of the LIHEAP process, the mom was given Energy Conservation Education to aid in reducing her monthly energy usage thus reducing the overall household energy cost. We also utilized services from other programs to provide for other needs, such as food for her diabetic son. Lastly, the mom is currently working with a counselor to establish a household budget and a monthly spending plan to aid in managing her income and expenses. Had it not been for the collaborative efforts of both our community action agency and the utility company, this family could have slipped through the cracks and found themselves in a state of complete disrepair. Due to the fact that the utility company had total confidence in our agency and the LIHEAP program, they were willing to work with us as we provided this family with much needed assistance!

Highlights from Open House



**Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc.
2018-2019 Board of Directors**

Private Sector Representatives

**Irene Thomas, President
Eunice Fuller, Vice President
Bettye Dekeyzer
Flora Keys
Schurndrika Dorsey Haynes
Roxane Barnes**

Public Sector Representatives

**Patsy Peterman, Treasurer
Attorney Walter P. McClatchey, Jr., Parliamentarian
Janice Johnson
Jennifer Lewis
Mary Wardsworth
Raymond Jack**

Low-Income Sector Representatives

**Anita Faye Hayes, Secretary
Howard Shaw, Jr.
Yalanda Jones
Stephen Fontenot
Charles W. Allen
Tobey Bowie**