



Our Mission

Capstone Community Action provides comprehensive services to help people achieve economic well-being with dignity and develops partnerships to strengthen Vermont communities.

Our commitment is:

- To alleviate the suffering caused by poverty;
- To work with individuals and families to move out of poverty; and
- To advocate for economic justice for all Vermonters



Top: Participants and community partners join staff at Capstone's Morrisville office for a 50th Anniversary open house.

Middle: CED's Mary and Margaret take micro business development seriously at the Barre 50th celebration. **Bottom:** Local duo Jennings and McComber serenade guests at Capstone's 50th celebration in Randolph.



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Capstone Community Action Board of Directors

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Executive Team

Dan H. Hoxworth, Executive Director

Sarah McMullen, Deputy Director

Sharon Bernard, Finance Director

Marianne Miller, Director, Head Start and Early Head Start

Mary Niebling, Director, Community Economic Development

Eileen Nooney, Director, Transportation Programs

David Rubin, Director, Integrated Services

Kevin Wiberg, Director, Program Development

Paul Zabriskie, Director, Weatherization

Capstone Community Action, Inc. 2015 Annual Report



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2015 marked Capstone Community Action's 50th year of alleviating poverty and creating economic opportunity for Vermonters. In September and October, agency staff and community members held celebrations in Barre, Morrisville, and Randolph. *Photos (clockwise from upper right: 1) Dan H. Hoxworth, Capstone's new executive director, is flanked by former agency executives Hal Cohen and Gus Seelig; 2) child care provider Linda P. shares how Capstone's Child Care Food Program benefits both her business and the children in her care; 3) John R. testifies about how Head Start helped him retain custody of his three children at a time when the family was facing an uncertain future; 4) Lt. Gov. Phil Scott and his company Dubois Construction were honored with a Capstone Champion Award for their Wheels for Warmth fundraiser that has contributed thousands of dollars to home heating fuel assistance; 5) celebration attendees included participants, staff, board members, many agency partners and representatives from Vermont state agencies and congressional offices; 6) Nancy Brooks Williams masters the art of cotton candy making at the Barre festivities. Nancy retired this year after 24 years with the Capstone Weatherization Program.*

Photos throughout this report courtesy of Lexi Eichhorn, Ramsey Papp, and other Capstone staff.

Director's Message

“The world is forever changing, and yet eternally the same.”

William Enfield, Natural Theology

This is a fitting quote for 2015—a year of tradition and change. This year Capstone celebrated its 50th Anniversary of stabilizing and transforming lives and moving to more sustainable communities in Lamoille, Orange, Washington, and upper Windsor counties.

Capstone traces its history back to 1964 when President Johnson declared in his State of the Union, an “unconditional war on poverty” in response to a national poverty rate of 19%. What followed was a series of legislative acts that established such programs as Food Stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, Legal Services, VISTA, Job Corps, and the Office of Economic Opportunity which led to the creation of Community Action Programs, such as Capstone, around the country. Today, Capstone is part of a national network of more than 1,000 grass roots based organizations dedicated to alleviating the suffering caused by poverty and creating economic opportunity.

Throughout its history, Capstone has developed great leaders for the State of Vermont and for other organizations. For example, Sarah Phillips, a former staff now directs the Office of Economic Opportunity with Geoff Wilcox heading up the Weatherization Program within OEO for the State of Vermont. Carol Flint, after 20 plus years of service in both Community Economic Development and Family Community Support Services, took the leadership post at BROOC, our sister agency in southwestern Vermont. Then the agency's long-time visionary leader of 18 years, Hal Cohen, was called upon by the Governor of Vermont to take over the crucial post of Secretary of the Agency of Human Services. And most recently, Integrated Services Director Dave Rubin, after 18 years of service to Capstone, was hired by the Vermont State Colleges to establish a statewide system of partnerships and collaborations to secure grants in support of higher education.

Fortunately, Hal left behind a talented team and a dedicated Board of Directors. Sarah McMullen and Sharon Bernard stepped forward to serve as interim Co-Executive Directors. Board Chair Lori Belding tapped former staff David Tucker to lead a national search with five board members and five staff on the Search Committee. After an exhaustive search, I was fortunate to be selected to continue the tradition of leadership and program innovation that is embedded in the culture at Capstone.

Despite the change of leadership in the organization, what has stayed the same is the exemplary service and commitment to our participants. This past year we were able to provide hungry families with an astounding 260,148 pounds of food to supply 3 days' worth of groceries to 5,731

people through 12,327 visits. We were able to provide 3,304 Central Vermonters with fuel assistance to keep warm and another 1,704 community members who faced homelessness secured shelter through the dedicated efforts of our staff. Our health navigator connected 624 Vermonters to health insurance to improve their health and well-being. We provided weatherization assistance to 419 homes to conserve fuel and nonrenewable resources. Yet, stabilizing lives is only one part of the story at Capstone.

Our real goal is to *transform* the lives of our participants. What has truly amazed me at Capstone is the both the diversity and the excellence of programs dedicated to moving people from dependency to self-sufficiency. Our Early Head Start and Head Start programs provide evidenced-based early childhood development to 378 children giving them the best start in life possible with wraparound assistance and support for their parents to continue this developmental framework in their homes.

Our staff worked with 321 adults to boost their financial management skills and trained and oversaw volunteers who assisted 1,070 participants and helped them secure \$2,110,505 in returns to be re-invested in their communities. The micro business staff trained 181 potential entrepreneurs and attracted \$296,205 in financing for 18 of them. And finally, 22 unemployed or underemployed workers completed a 13 week training course at Capstone, the Community Kitchen Academy, and secured a job in the culinary field, thus beginning their new career.

So, clearly while change is a constant both for Capstone and our participants, what never changes is Capstone's commitment to improving the lives of its participants and building stronger, sustainable communities.

It is truly an honor and privilege to lead this amazing organization. My team at Capstone invests its talents and hearts each day in the lives of participants. And with the support of our communities, our funding partners and donors, and the many agencies and organizations with which we partner, together we are lifting Vermonters up to achieve economic security and become engaged in their community. Thank you for joining us on this journey.



L to R: Speakers at the Randolph Office's 50th celebration included: Board member Jennifer Wallace, Dan H. Hoxworth, Susan Jacobs, Rep. Patsy French, and Rep. Sandy Haas.

Ready for Kindergarten

At Capstone Head Start we believe that school readiness means children are ready for school, families are engaged in supporting their children's development and well-being, and receiving schools are ready for children. The *PY 2015-2016 Capstone Head Start School Readiness Goals* serve as a guide for staff and families while preparing young children, birth to five years, for school. From the time families are enrolled in Head Start, school readiness is a priority.

Throughout the program year, staff partner with parents to prepare young children for school. Staff facilitate parents' understanding of their children's development and together, staff and parents, implement a broad range of strategies that lead to positive child outcomes. Capstone Head Start recognizes play, both facilitated and child initiated, as the primary mode of learning for young children. We use the “*I am Moving, I am Learning*” curriculum to incorporate physical development in all program options.

In addition, our program is committed to improving systems and experiences that engage and support families in order to strengthen their skills as educators of their young children.

By articulating school readiness goals linked to the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*, *Capstone Head Start Program Goals*, the *Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Goals* as well as the *Vermont's Early Learning Standards*, we create a culture of educators, caregivers, and families that work together to prepare children for school.

This is the fifth year our program is using a birth to age five observation-based assessment called *Teaching Strategies GOLD* to measure children's progress in learning and our program's progress in meeting school readiness goals. The Office of Head Start recently revised the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*. The program will use the framework to address the five developmental domains for school readiness.

Preschool teachers are observed using a research-based tool (CLASS). This tool assesses teacher interactions in the domain areas of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support.

School Readiness Goals 2015-2016

The five developmental areas for school readiness are:

- Social Emotional
- Physical Development and Health
- Approaches to Learning
- Language and Literacy
- Cognition

The school readiness meeting will be held in December following the period 1 baseline *Teaching Strategies GOLD* data collection from September to November. At that time the committee will establish school readiness goals for the 2015-2016 program year based on the data and prioritize key indicators that need continued support in order for children and families to be prepared for school.

The committee will also review the revised *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework* and engage in meaningful dialog regarding its implementation.

A full *Teaching Strategies GOLD* report and School Readiness Plan is available upon request.

Head Start Program Sources of Funds

\$3,881,311—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 \$ 38,681—U.S. Department of Agriculture (Child and Adult Care Food Program)
 \$ 26,762—State of Vermont
 \$ 17,415—Northeast Delta Dental Foundation

Statement of Expenditures

	FY 2014 Proposed Budget	FY 2014 Actual
Expenditures		
Direct		
Personnel	\$ 1,871,682	\$ 1,881,932
Fringe	660,531	582,464
Travel	18,820	14,817
Contractual	114,432	17,150
Supplies	179,374	168,409
Other	500,537	633,140
Indirect	<u>535,935</u>	<u>583,399</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 3,881,311</u>	<u>\$ 3,881,311</u>

Program Review Results

Financial and Compliance Audits (Federal Uniform Administrative Requirements) are conducted annually by the certified public accounting firm of Leone, McDonnell & Roberts. The results of the most recent audit (FY2014) found that financial statements were presented fairly and identified no significant material weakness. Auditors have identified the agency as a low-risk auditee.

Our most recent Head Start triennial review reported the following: “Based on the information gathered during our review, it was determined that your Head Start and Early Head Start programs are in compliance with all applicable Head Start Performance Standards, law, regulations, and policy requirements.



Head Start and Early Head Start 2015 Annual Report



Message from the Director

Head Start's 2014-2015 program year was one of planning for the new opportunities and challenges in Vermont early education as well as celebrating Head Start's 50th anniversary. There was drama, uncertainty, triumph, and despair. In the end our commitment to children and families inspired us not only to persevere, but to excel in our support of families. Parents and children deserve nothing but the best that we can offer them.

Capstone won the competitive Early Head Start Child Care Partnership grant and began building a program to serve 34 children who receive care in family child care or licensed centers. Act 166, Vermont's universal preschool legislation, provides 3 and 4 year old with 10 hours of high quality early education during the school year regardless of family income. A few schools in our area were "early implementers"; all schools will implement the legislation as of July 1, 2016. The state of Vermont won a U.S. Department of Education PreK Development Expansion (PDE) grant that provides 4 year old children at or below 200% of poverty with 6 hours of high quality early education during the school year, and, after protracted negotiation, Capstone was funded to serve 30 children. Capstone weighed in on the rules governing Act 166 and proposed changes in child care licensing regulations.

Capstone developed four new classrooms in Johnson, Twinfield, Washington/Orange, Williamstown Elementary Schools in response to Barre Supervisory Union's decision to reduce preschool hours and end our 20 year partnership. PDE allowed us to increase our hours of service at the Boltonville and Chelsea sites and to support additional preschoolers at the Learning Together Center in Barre. While the outcome of these changes has been positive, it was preceded by weeks and months of uncertainty for the staff affected.

We are well into the rhythm of a new program year and change continues to be the constant in our work. The difficulty of hiring qualified staff has meant that we closed one classroom and transferred children to our school partner in one community and cut hours of operation in another. We will expand our home visiting program in Lamoille and Orange Counties in the next months. Despite all, children continue to grow and progress and families build on their strengths to work toward realizing their goals. The children and families continue to inspire and sustain us.

Marianne Miller,
Director of Head Start and Early Head Start

Parent Engagement

Our birth to five Head Start/Early Head Start program encourages parent engagement in every aspect of the program. In our 2014-2015 program year we had 121 Head Start and 101 Early Head Start parents volunteering their time.

The program offers family outing opportunities at least monthly for families which contain three components: a shared meal or snack, a parent training, and a structured activity designed both to enhance parent/child bonding and to help parents learn how to interact with their children and how to promote their child's development. Parent training topics are those that participant parents have indicated are of interest to them through a survey and include topics such as: family literacy, preventing child abuse and neglect, social emotional development, family budgeting, and why well child visits are important. The structured activities for parent and child always include fun, physical activities to strengthen the parent/child relationship. Special efforts are made to welcome and engage fathers and father figures. Family outings are a great opportunity for our participants to meet other parents with children of the same age.

Parents also participate in several program leadership opportunities such as planning committees, Policy Council, staff hiring committees, Vermont Head Start Association and New England Head Start conferences and meetings. Families participate in field trips to apple orchards, elementary schools for dramatic play, local libraries, maple sugaring operations, and farms.

Head Start

214 children ages 3-5 and 194 families served

- Average monthly enrollment: 95%
- Medical Exams: 89%
- Dental Exams: 75%

Early Head Start

164 children birth to 3 and 158 families served

- Average monthly enrollment: 90%
- Medical Exams: 87%
- Dental Exams: 50%

50% of eligible children served, based on US Census poverty data reported in Capstone's Community Assessment.



In FY2015, 18,187 Vermonters in 8,895 households benefitted from our programs and services, including:

- 5,731 were fed through our food shelves which distributed 260,148 lbs. of food.
- 3,304 were kept warm through fuel assistance.
- 178 child care providers served nutritious meals and snacks to 1,699 children in their care.
- 1,704 who were homeless or precariously housed secured shelter.
- 1,070 had their taxes prepared and filed by IRS certified volunteer tax preparers bringing \$2.1 million back into the local economy.
- 378 children were enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start benefitting an additional 253 family members.
- 624 were received information and assistance from our Health Navigator to access insurance.
- 419 benefitted from weatherized homes saving money and staying warm.
- 321 boosted their financial capabilities skills, reducing debt and improving credit and 53 accrued assets in a matched savings account.
- 181 entrepreneurs received training and technical assistance to start or expand their own business; \$296,205 in loans were leveraged.
- 54 children and parents benefitted from a safe supervised visitation program for custodial and noncustodial parents.
- 51 Reach Up or Voc Rehab participants accessed reliable transportation to help them transition into the workforce.
- 22 unemployed or underemployed workers gained the skills they needed to secure jobs in Vermont's food industry sector.

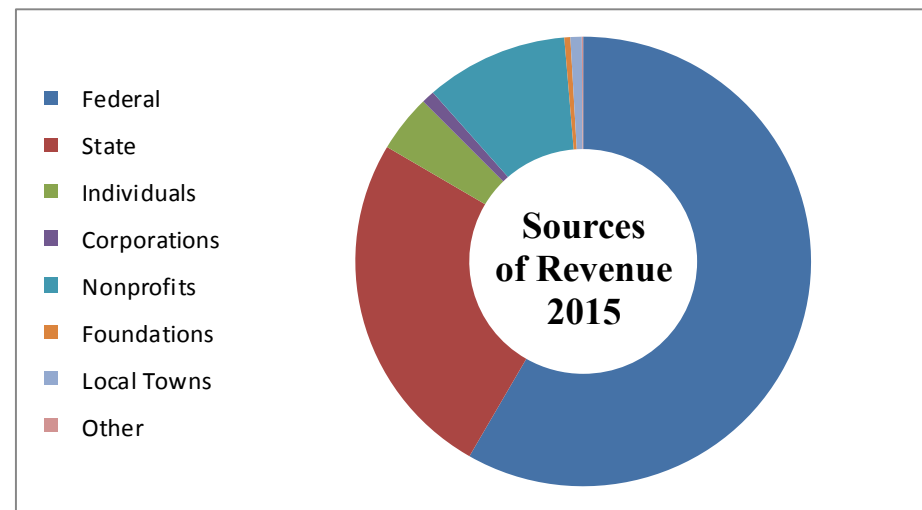
CAPSTONE COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

Comparative Financial Statements
Fiscal Years Ending September 30, 2015 and 2014

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2015	2014
ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 1,617,764	\$ 1,227,557
Receivables	1,080,101	1,387,787
Capital Campaign Pledges Receivable	27,559	107,423
Prepaid Expenses	63,002	77,765
Inventory	102,073	152,081
Construction in Process	-	4,000
Property, Plant, & Equipment	5,858,758	6,031,622
Restricted Cash	373,081	397,973
Other Assets	15,368	13,960
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 9,137,706	\$ 9,400,168
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	1,105,938	1,200,153
Refundable Advances	632,689	674,753
Notes Payable	2,414,881	2,511,600
TOTAL LIABILITIES	4,153,508	4,386,506
NET ASSETS	4,984,198	5,013,662
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 9,137,706	\$ 9,400,168

Revenue	
Federal	58.3%
State	25.2%
Individuals	4.1%
Corporations	0.9%
Nonprofits	10.1%
Foundations	0.4%
Local Towns	0.8%
Other	0.1%
Total Revenue	100%



Capstone Community Action honors community diversity and does not discriminate in hiring or providing services on the basis of race, color, culture, language, national origin, religion, creed, political affiliation, family composition, marital status, sexual orientation, class, gender/gender identify, age, and mental/sensory/physical abilities. Capstone is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	2015	2014
REVENUE		
Grants and Contracts	\$ 13,330,203	\$ 13,091,721
Fees, Rents and Other	950,305	985,626
Donations	382,360	467,269
TOTAL REVENUE	14,662,868	14,544,616
EXPENSES		
Program Services:		
Housing	114,507	148,715
Early Childhood and Family Development	3,833,952	3,642,468
Family and Community Support Services	2,199,733	2,862,404
Community Economic Development	2,951,591	1,873,957
Weatherization	3,614,387	3,698,945
Workforce Development	172,127	219,504
Car Transportation Initiative	96,384	110,906
Community Services/Plant Fund	202,241	227,909
Total Program Services	13,184,923	12,784,808
Supporting Activities:		
Fundraising	18,539	11,145
General and Administrative	1,541,190	1,636,595
TOTAL EXPENSES	14,744,652	14,432,548
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS PRIOR TO GAINS/ (LOSSES)	(81,784)	112,068
Insurance Proceeds for Prior Year Losses	45,395	
Gains/(Losses) on Sales or Disposal of Property	6,925	(13,456)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ (29,464)	\$ 98,612

*Note: Amounts for the year ending September 30, 2015 are preliminary numbers, prior to the annual audit. Final audited financial statements will be available at Capstone's main office at 20 Gable Place, Barre, VT 05641; (802) 479-1053. Amounts for the year ending September 30, 2014 are based on audited financial statements.



Head Start's 50th Anniversary Celebration in Lamoille County featured fun family activities including "pumpkin painting." War on Poverty legislation created the national Head Start program in addition to the Office of Economic Opportunity and many other poverty relief and economic development programs that continue today.

