

Local NEK-CAP Earns National Recognition

(MSC News)--Northeast Kansas Community Action Program is one of four Community Action Agencies (CAAs) working to alleviate poverty in America to receive the 2013 Community Economic Development Entrepreneurship and Innovation Award. The awards, administered by the Community Action Partnership, were presented August 29 at the organization's Annual Convention in Chicago to recognize NEK-CAP's collaborative efforts with the Brown County Healthy Food Coalition.

In order to be selected, the winning projects were evaluated based on its effectiveness in job creation, asset building, and economic impact on low-income communities in three categories: Entrepreneurship, Protégé, and Master Innovator. NEK-CAP Inc.'s support of the Brown County Healthy Food Coalition was selected as a winner in the Protégé category.

The BCHFC project involves more than 30 community agencies, businesses, and organizations focused on achieving greater access to healthy foods and healthy life-styles. "Community Action Agencies are THE go-to organization for helping people, creating jobs and improving communities-and this role increases during challenging economic times," said Jeanette Collier, Executive Director, Northeast Kansas Community Action Program. "That's why we supported the extensive collaborative efforts of this program, and we're proud of the partnership with the Hiawatha Foundation for Economic Development, the Community Foundation of Northeast Kansas as well as all of the organizations involved. Not only has this project been cited as one of the best in the country, but it's making a considerable positive impact on our neighbors, both financially and personally."

The Protégé award, created in 2010, honors Community Action Agencies for exemplary leadership and innovation in creating change for low-income people and families-specifically in economic development. It is part of the Partnership's Community Economic Development Exemplary Practice Initiative, funded by the federal Office of Community Services/Administration for Children and Families/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"Despite the fact that CAAs are under increased pressure due to budget cuts and growing requests for services, they are still leading the way in terms of novel approaches that are really helping low-income people and communities thrive," said Stacy Flowers, Director of Community Economic Development at the Community Action Partnership. "The award winners highlight CAAs' unique ability to spearhead programs that promote economic security and reduce poverty."

Based in Washington, DC, the Community Action Partnership provides training and other services to more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies across America that are helping low-income people and families improve their lives, strengthen their communities and embody the spirit of hope.

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