



Community Action Partnership Expands to Serve Minneapolis
*Former Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin County
Relaunches; Now Serving Low-income Minneapolis Residents*

ST. LOUIS PARK, Minn., May 1, 2017 – A newly evolved [Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County](#) (CAP-HC) emerged after the former Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin County (CAPSH) received Governor Dayton’s official recognition as the Community Action Agency serving the City of Minneapolis. CAP-HC now offers all of its services and programs to all income-eligible Hennepin County residents.

CAP-HC is dedicated to assisting clients throughout the new service area and providing opportunities to community members. With nearly 22 percent of Minneapolis residents experiencing poverty, CAP-HC has worked to increase access to services for Minneapolis residents, opening three year-round Minneapolis locations – at the Minneapolis Urban League, Sabathani Community Center and the newest offices at the Minnesota Council of Churches. In addition to these permanent locations, CAP-HC offers regularly scheduled appointments and outreach in conjunction with local community partners across the county. CAP-HC now serves 63,507 Hennepin County residents, a 40 percent increase prior to the expansion.

To ensure that the agency is adequately prepared to serve Minneapolis as well as suburban Hennepin, CAP-HC engaged Wilder Research to conduct a community needs assessment for all of Hennepin County, completed a long-range strategic planning process, a staff re-structuring and organizational rebranding. In addition, the CAP-HC Board of Directors expanded to 21 members to include Minneapolis representation. CAP-HC’s board is comprised of a tripartite governance structure. One third of its membership is drawn from elected officials in Hennepin County, one-third is drawn from the private sector, and one-third represents the low-income communities and neighborhoods of Hennepin County.

“Regardless of this expanded footprint for our organization, we understand every community in the city and county has its own unique challenges, initiatives, needs and opportunities,” said Scott Zemke, executive director. “It’s our job to work with individuals, local leaders and partner organizations to close gaps

and increase the quality of life for all of our neighbors. We are ready and excited to meet these challenges to ensure that our neighbors can achieve stability and thrive.”

To establish partnerships and to ensure that basic and pressing community needs are met, CAP-HC initiated a one-time sub grant process. A volunteer committee, made up of CAP-HC board members, City of Minneapolis representatives, and community partners, reviewed and evaluated the applications. As a result, CAP-HC distributed over \$960,000 to Minneapolis nonprofit organizations that serve low-income residents. “CAP-HC is committed to serving all of Hennepin County in a thoughtful and strategic manner, and to continue to develop our partnerships with existing Minneapolis organizations,” said Zemke.

The agency hired an outreach coordinator who will focus on community and school events and job and resource fairs throughout Minneapolis to help identify ongoing resident needs. In addition, a community developer will join the team to create partnerships focused on economic inequality in the city.

These new positions, in addition to new programs and a growing program staff, are a part of a long-term effort to make sure that our services to low-income residents of Hennepin County are responsive to the changing needs of our community. CAP-HC is dedicated to strengthening local communities, and providing opportunities for families and individuals to achieve economic stability.

CAP-HC’s relaunch comes as community action agencies prepare to celebrate Community Action Month in May, as a way to highlight their work, and the achievements of the families and communities they serve.

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About CAP-HC

Created in 1986, Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County (CAP-HC) works to establish services, programs and partnerships that address poverty and increase family and economic stability in Hennepin County. The agency offers services that include energy assistance, food support, free legal services, free tax assistance, financial literacy, and full-cycle homeownership services. CAP-HC is one of 25 Community Action organizations in Minnesota.