



3435 Liberty Drive
Springfield, IL 62704
217-789-0125
www.icaanet.org

e-news

July 2006



Online FCD Training

ICAA TO LAUNCH ONLINE LEARNING FOR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Starting in the fall of 2006 we will create a "blend" of face to face and online training units for the Family and Community Development Training program. You asked for it and we heard you. In this age of technology, high gas prices and busy lives this move to make our training more accessible and affordable makes sense.

The University of Illinois at Springfield has an almost 10 year track record with online learning at the BA and MA levels. One of the ICAA trainers, Dr. Jan Droegkamp, developed her first online course in 1998 and has worked with hundreds of degree seeking students in the Liberal Studies online program at UIS. www.uis.edu/liberalstudies. She is working with ICAA to develop a "blend" for units. The blended curriculum means that some of the units will be offered face to face and others online thus the blend of methods of training.

Online learning at its best uses sound teaching and learning fundamentals to design, deliver and evaluate the training material. Here are some of the principles that will be used in the online training:

1. The *training content* will be the same as participants would get in the face to face training. In fact the training will be enhanced because we can use up to date web sites to supplement the current course materials.
2. The *training will be asynchronous* which means that the learner can log on any time of the day or night to complete the work. Like to work in your pajamas when the children are in bed? You will be happy with this.
3. *You will have trainers* who work with you while you are engaged in the online unit. The trainers will have discussions with your group, will help you with key concepts and ideas and will be present during the period you are online.
4. Some of the materials will be sent to you to enhance the online units. You might get videos to view and most of the handouts will be in the Handbook you will get the first session. In this way you will be *using materials familiar* to you.
5. *You will have deadlines and time frames* to complete your work. One unit builds on the next so you must complete one set of ideas before progressing to the next idea.



Most people ask whether they have the skills to be an online learner. Here is a self assessment to determine whether you or your staff is ready.

Do you or will you have access to a computer and an internet connection? We are hoping that employers will allow participants to use office equipment and access during breaks and before and after work. Public libraries, community colleges and even coffee shops have internet access so you will have to locate a place near you if you do not have internet at home.

Are your technical skills adequate?

Along with having access to a computer and not being overwhelmed by typing, online learners should be comfortable with internet browsing and searching, email, sending and reading attachments and word processing



Online FCD Training continued

Are you self-directed and motivated?

Most of online learning happens on your schedule. You'll need to be self-directed and motivated to complete activities on schedule and initiate the communication required to be successful. You'll be responsible for creating the structure to finish each course.

Do you have good reading skills?

Reading can play a large part in any class, and especially online. The ability to read and comprehend subject matter without it being a chore is critical to your success.

Does written communication come easily for you?

In most cases writing is the primary method of communication in online classes, so you should be at ease with writing to express your thoughts, share ideas, and ask questions.

Will you ask questions when you need to?

If you typically don't hesitate to seek help when you need it you'll do fine. Since you'll be in an online environment it's important to let your instructor and classmates know when you need help. Remember that they won't be able to see your looks of doubt, confusion, or other body language to tell when things aren't going well.

Will you miss the social interaction?

Interaction with instructors and classmates in online learning is often an integral part of the learning experience. Absent is the in-person contact - being able to see facial expressions, hear reactions, and speak. Campus life may be different or non-existent too.

Do you know how to manage your time effectively? You will not be sitting in class, away from home and work, for 8 hours and will have to budget this time in your busy schedule. Most students choose to block out the time in their schedule-make an appointment with you! Like a traditional school you'll need to set aside adequate time for study. You may discover that you need to be online frequently to complete assignments or communicate with classmates and instructors. You can plan to spend at least as much time working assignments and studying as you would with a traditional course, and you'll be setting your own pace in many instances.

Thousands of students are studying online all over the world. Soldiers in Iraq, working mothers, people with disabilities, police officers working third shift and countless others are working online. Please join us in the first of several trainings online.

RCAP

RCAP conducted four statewide training sessions from May – July. Each session exceeded our expectations in terms of attendance, questions and group discussion. This would not have been possible if it had not been for the strong support we received from the ICAA membership, USDA-Rural Development, and the Illinois Finance Authority. Thank you one and all!

RCAP will soon be offering two new services to rural communities with water systems, water board training and water rate studies. Board training will offered to new and experienced water board officials. Training will focus on the technical, managerial and financial capacity of their water systems. It is designed to help officials understand their role and responsibilities for the smooth operation of their system.

Staff will soon complete financial training through the Great Lakes Regional RCAP, with Illinois specific training from the IL USDA-Rural Development. This will allow RCAP to offer rate studies to rural community water systems. Helping communities seek sound financial standing will aid them with planning for future maintenance of their system. And it will help them when seeking funding for new or expansion projects to their system.

Both services have received support from USDA-Rural development. We anticipate that these new services will be available by late fall.

Agency Corner

If you have something you would like to report to the Membership please submit it to Sara Ratcliffe via email, sratcliffe@icaanet.org, or fax, 217-789-0139 by the 15th of each month for inclusion in the ICAA E-News.

Pathways to Excellence Training

It is easy to be so involved with individual programs, fighting for funding, meeting unfunded mandates and servicing a growing impoverished population, that community action agencies spend little time in assessing their agency, less raising the standards of performance. Yet in this political climate just meeting the requirements is no longer good enough; all funders are raising the bar of accountability and performance.

In seeking to assist agencies, ICAA received funds to offer the Pathways to Excellence training sponsored by the National Community Action Partnership. The training includes an agency self-assessment that measures an agency's performance in seven categories.

- organizational leadership
- strategic planning and direction
- customer, constituent, and partner focus
- measurement, analysis, and performance management
- human resource focus
- organizational process management
- organizational results

This opportunity for self-assessment will enhance each agency's capacity to evaluate the overall delivery systems and, hopefully, diminish the ongoing threats to funding. Those CAAs that operate Head Start understand the wide scope of systems that are reviewed and adjusted to run a successful program.

The format of the two day session encourages agencies to bring a team of staff that will be instrumental in implementing the self assessment process. The assessment itself will take an agency a minimum of six months to complete.

Why would an agency go through this process?

This is the first step in being considered for the National Award of Excellence by the National Community Action Partnership. While Illinois has outstanding agencies, no agency from Illinois has ever applied for recognition.

Pathways to Excellence will provide agencies the means to evaluate all their programs and systems plus view their operations from a wider perspective. Even if your agency is not interested in competing for the award, the benefits of doing the self assessment are immense. It will allow the agency to identify weaknesses and find solutions.

If you are interested in participating in the training and the self assessment process, please contact Michelle Pulce or Christine West-erlund at 217-789-0125. An agency can begin the self assessment at any time after the training, so it is possible to begin next year. ICAA will be scheduling the training before the end of the 2006 calendar year.

Board of Directors Training

ICAA Board of Directors Training is Underway!

What:

ICAA is offering individual board training for Community Action Agency Board of Directors.

When:

Each Agency identifies their preferred date and Time. The Training can take place in the evening, on the weekend or during the Day.

How long:

The Training lasts no more than 3 hours, but it can be customized and focused on particular areas if requested.

What will be covered:

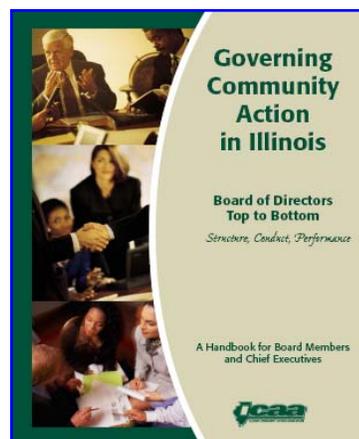
The training will cover several aspects of the Board Training Manual developed by ICAA. Topics include board responsibilities, financial management guidelines and strategic planning. Each board member will receive a personal copy of the Board Training Manual, *Governing Community Action in Illinois*, for attending the training.

Cost:

The cost depends on the travel expenses of the trainer(s) and if the consultant, Michael Ayers is requested. To reduce costs, ICAA has organized a cadre of directors with experience in training to facilitate the session. Each session will have an individual budget but will cost no more than \$2,150.

How:

Please contact Michelle Pulce at 217-789-0125 to set up a training date for your board of directors.



Illinois Fan Club

The Illinois Community Action Association announced the kickoff of a special energy assistance project called the Illinois Fan Club. The project is the result of a partnership between ICAA, Lt. Governor Patrick Quinn and the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services. The Illinois Fan Club is designed to provide relief to senior citizens and people with disabilities who need fans.

At a Springfield news conference, held at the home of a recipient of one of the fans, the Lt. Governor Quinn said, "This is a 'fan club' everyone should join. We are hoping the funds donated can be matched with individual and corporate donations to bring some precious relief to our neighbors who may be sweltering behind closed doors. Let's heed the lessons learned from Illinois' killer heat wave eleven years ago when more than 700 people died from heat related illness."

Quinn announced a \$10,000 grant from the Office of Lieutenant Governor to ICAA. ICAA in turn will distribute the resources to participating Community Action Agencies. Quinn said the \$10,000 grant is seed money from the Governor's Rural Affairs Council - which he chairs - to enable ICAA to get the Illinois Fan Club program up-and-running. John Colgan said, "ICAA will also be receiving \$10,000 from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services for the Illinois Fan Club. We hope this total of \$20,000 will trigger additional donations from people all over the state of Illinois."

Eligibility is based on financial and health needs. The local agencies provided free fans to the needy in downstate Illinois communities. He also appealed to Illinois residents to donate to the Illinois Fan Club, and to take time to check in on elderly family members and neighbors.



Martha Daily, Lt. Governor Pat Quinn and John Colgan at a press conference at Ms. Daily's home in Springfield



Lt. Governor Pat Quinn Presents Martha Daily with a fan

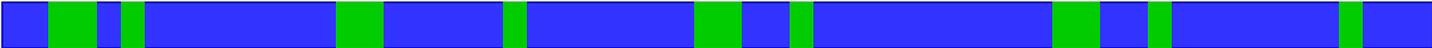


Sharmin Doering, Martha Daily and Lt. Governor Pat Quinn

The Executive Director of Sangamon County Department of Human Resources, Sharmin Doering said, "As the local agency providing energy assistance to needy people, we are very pleased to be part of this partnership. We understand the need, and we are always eager to help our local community."

"This summer we've already experienced several days over the 90 degree mark here in Illinois and the dog days of summer are yet to come," Quinn said. "Join the Illinois Fan Club and a grateful senior citizen will become a member of your fan club. The Illinois Fan Club exemplifies the good neighbor spirit needed to prevent suffering during these brutal summer months. No elderly person should be sitting alone in a suffocating room without a fan and a good neighbor who drops by every day."

For up to the minute information, please
visit the Illinois Community Action
Association website:



Peer-to-Peer Homeless Provider Conference

September 13-14, 2006
Holiday Inn, Collinsville, Illinois

Workshop Tracks: Homeless Services (HS)
Housing Development and Management (HDM)
Continuum of Care Issues (CoC)

Wednesday, September 13

8:30am-9:15am Registration & Continental
Breakfast

9:15am-10:15am Opening Session

- Joe Galvan, HUD Regional Director, Chicago
- Ray Willis, Community Planning and Development Director, Chicago
- Dalitso Sulamoyo, President/CEO, Illinois Community Action Assoc.
- Rep. Wyvetter Younge, East St. Louis

10:15-10:30am Break

10:30-11:30am Breakout Sessions

HS Consumer Panel
HDM Universal Design and Persons with Disabilities
HS Social Entrepreneurship

11:30am-1:00pm Lunch on your own

1:00-2:00pm Breakout Sessions

HS Consumer Panel
HDM Eviction Prevention
CoC Prisoner Release into the Shelter System

2:00-2:15pm Break

2:15-3:45pm Breakout Sessions

HS Framework for Understanding Poverty
HDM Layered Financing
CoC HUD Technical Issues

3:45-4:00pm Break

4:00-5:00pm General Session

Nan Roman, President, National Alliance to End Homelessness, Washington, DC

5:30-7:00pm Reception

7:30pm Dinner on your own

Thursday, September 14

7:30-8:00am Continental Breakfast
8:00-9:00am General Session

Illinois Rental Housing Support Program Implementation - Illinois Housing Development Authority

9:00am-9:15am Break

9:15am-11:30am Tours
(descriptions in brochure)

Tour Registration:

The tours run concurrently. Only sign up for one. Registration limited to the first 30 people to register for each tour.

- Call for Help Jobe Center & the Family Living Center
- Bethany Place & Chestnut Health Systems Fairview Heights HUD III Supervised Living
- Theodoro Place Apartments & Good Samaritan House & Chestnut Health Systems Mainstay Center

9:15-10:15am Breakout Sessions

HS Harm Reduction Approaches in Permanent Supportive Housing
HDM Eviction Prevention
HS Social Entrepreneurship

10:15-10:30am Break

10:30-11:30am Breakout Sessions

HS Harm Reduction Approaches in Permanent Supportive Housing
HDM Housing Development in Rural Areas
HS Clients with Disabilities, Information and Referral and Advocacy

11:30am-12:30pm Lunch on your own

12:30-2:00pm Breakout Sessions

HS Making it Work: Coordinating Clinical Care and Housing
HDM Collaborative Supportive Housing
CoC Crisis Intervention Teams/Law Enforcement and Continuum of Care: a Great Partnership

2:15pm-2:30pm Closing Remarks

* Registration Required *

Registration brochure and form are available at www.icaanet.org

Hotel Information

Holiday Inn Collinsville
1000 Eastport Plaza, Collinsville, IL
62234
618-345-2800 or 800-551-5133

* Room Block expires on August 29 *

Room rates are \$69.95/single and \$79.95/double + 11% tax, call 618-345-2800 or 800-551-5133 for reservations under the HUD Peer-to-Peer block.

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