



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

e-news

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## 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:**

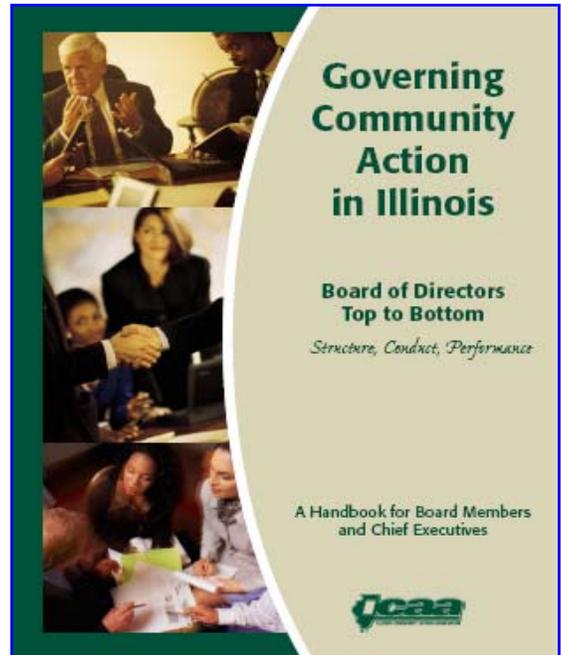
The training will cover several aspects of the Board Training Manual developed by ICAA. Topics include board responsibilities, financial management guidelines and strategic planning. Each board member will receive a personal copy of the Board Training Manual, *Governing Community Action in Illinois*,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



## FCD Update

ICAA was awarded \$200,000 in the State's Budget to continue its Family and Community Development program (FCD). In previous years, FCD funding has been used to provide a limited number of grants to CAAs. The CAAs used the grant funds to supplement their existing FCD programs. In an effort to extend the benefit of the FCD program to a larger percentage of CAAs, ICAA has proposed using FCD funds for the support of FCD specialist training for the entire Illinois CAA network

In an analysis of FCD specialist training participation, ICAA has identified two barriers that prevent participation of more staff in the FCD training. The first barrier is the overall cost of training, including travel costs. The second barrier is the lack of available training time, i.e. CAA staff are

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# FCD Update continued

very busy managing their caseloads across multiple programs making twelve days away from the office a large deterrent to attend the training.

## FCD Specialist Training

To overcome these barriers, ICAA proposes the following:

- A subsidy to underwrite tuition costs for FCD specialist students. This subsidy will reduce the cost of training to \$250.00 per student. Our goal is to train 120 students utilizing this subsidy in 2006-2007.
- Continue our collaboration with the University of Illinois-Springfield to move portions of the FCD specialist training to online training. Not only will this minimize time out of the office for the FCD specialist student but travel costs will be reduced as well.

## Advanced Training and Accreditation

FCD specialist graduates have expressed their interest in obtaining additional training to enhance their professional capacity to effectively work with their clients. In response, ICAA is proposing to create specialized curriculum tracks that will be offered to FCD graduates. The concept will be similar to that of graduate school in the traditional collegiate setting.

As with any new initiative, ICAA proposes to pilot the concept with a single track. The pilot track will be named "Early Childhood Development". The rationale for selecting this track for the pilot is that the Illinois Head Start Association (IHSA) has expressed its desire to partner with ICAA to begin offering a tailored version of FCD to Head Start staff.

ICAA will collaborate with the University of Illinois and the IHSA to develop the curriculum for the FCD Graduate Training. ICAA anticipates offering the training to 25 FCD graduates by the third quarter of this contract. If the pilot is successful, ICAA will begin making arrangements to develop another track. Possible other tracks include mental health, interviewing skills, and other areas identified through periodic focus groups.

In the United States, accreditation is a non-governmental, peer review process that ensures educational quality. Educational institutions or programs volunteer to periodically undergo this review in order to determine if certain criteria are being met. The process is an assurance that a program or institution meets established quality standards.

An alternative to seeking accreditation for the FCD training is the Continuing Education Unit (CEU). CEU is a nationally recognized method of quantifying the time spent in the classroom during professional development and training activities. Ten hours of instruction = 1.0 CEU. One hour of instruction = 0.1 CEU. The primary purpose of the CEU is to provide a permanent record of the educational accomplishments of an individual who has completed significant non-credit educational and career enhancement trainings.

ICAA is interested in obtaining accreditation or CEU status for the FCD specialist training program. However, the process of becoming accredited or obtaining CEU status is rigorous and must be repeated periodically. ICAA proposes to conduct a cost/benefit analysis to determine which approach is best suited for the FCD training by the completion of the third quarter. If the cost/benefit analysis indicates it will be worthwhile for ICAA to pursue accreditation or CEUs, ICAA will begin the process of implementation in the fourth quarter.

## Evaluation and the Future

While ICAA has utilized surveys and focus groups to evaluate the FCD specialist training program, there is a desire to develop a more formalized, structured tool. ICAA anticipates that the tool will assist in capturing useful feedback on the format, content, and usefulness of the FCD training program. The evaluation will also assist in identifying measurable outcomes that are realized as a consequence of CAA staff participation in the training. This information will be helpful as ICAA and the Department of Human Services (DHS) report on the successes achieved as a result of the FCD funding.

ICAA will partner with the University of Illinois to build an evaluation tool that will encompass surveys, the convening of focus groups, and other evaluative methods deemed appropriate. ICAA will also incorporate recommendations from the evaluation into future FCD trainings.

And finally, ICAA plans to develop two FCD brochures, both informational and as a marketing piece to potential students. The first brochure will target potential participants of the FCD training. The content will include what the FCD training is, why FCD training is beneficial, when and where the training will be offered, how much the training will cost with the subsidy, and testimonials from FCD graduates. The second brochure will target current funders, potential funders, and the general public.





# Legislative Issues

## Senate Budget Committee Proposes Measure to Drastically Reduce Federal Discretionary Spending

Last Wednesday, (on a strictly partisan vote) the Senate Budget Committee narrowly approved a budget measure introduced by Senator Judd Gregg (who also serves as the committee's chairman) intended to make deep cuts in domestic spending programs while allowing tax cuts to be approved without similar fiscal discipline. Among the major provisions included in the Gregg bill are:

- **Funding caps would be imposed on discretionary programs** (that is, programs funded on an annual basis). These caps would be set at the same spending levels as those proposed in the President's most recent budget, which proposes \$66 billion in domestic discretionary cuts over the next three years. Some of the discretionary programs that could be slated for cuts include CSBG, Head Start, and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), among others.
- **Mandatory cuts to the deficit which, if unmet, would be enforced by across-the-board cuts in all entitlement programs except Social Security:** Entitlement programs that would be vulnerable to these across-the-board cuts include Medicaid, Medicare and unemployment insurance.
- **Tax Cuts Would Not Be Subjected to New Rules:** The measure includes a pay-as-you-go provision that requires any increases in entitlement spending to be offset by cuts in other entitlement programs, but the budget impact of new tax cuts would not require a similar offset.

To read a comprehensive analysis of the proposed Gregg bill from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, <http://www.cbpp.org/6-19-06bud.htm>

### Next steps

The Gregg bill is expected to come to the full Senate floor sometime after the fourth of July recess. It is unclear how this single measure will move forward in light of the Senate Budget Committee's very comprehensive budget reform package and the strong Democratic opposition to that package.

## Governor Approves \$5.2 million new dollars for LIHEAP

In the final days of the Spring General Assembly session, the transfer of \$5.2 million gas revenue taxes from GRF to the LIHEAP Supplemental Fund was approved. Recently the Governor signed this bill into law making the money immediately available to this LIHEAP program. According to IDHFS – OEA staff, the money has already been allocated to CAAs operating LIHEAP as a part of the supplemental funding increases that were approved earlier this spring. The measure is effective for this year only.

# RCAP Statewide Training a Success

The first of four 'RCAP "Funding Roundtable" training sessions was held in Carlinville on May 31 and the second on June 15 in Ottawa. At both events we were quite pleased with the turnout and presentations were given by the USDA-RD and by RCAP. The community representatives in attendance had very good questions. The best part of the "Roundtable" was when the audience (community leaders) interacted with each other. The forum provided an opportunity for them to share similar problems and solutions, regarding water and wastewater issues, with each other.

The focus of these "Funding Roundtable" trainings is to discuss community needs for financing drinking water and wastewater projects. However, they also provide an opportunity for communities to meet directly with representatives from the USDA-RD Area Offices, the Illinois Finance Authority and RCAP.

We are looking forward to our final two "Roundtable" discussions in Effingham and Carbondale (see details below).

June 29            Effingham  
                      Knights of Columbus  
                      1501 W. Fayette Road  
                      6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

July 12            Carbondale  
                      Carbondale Civic Center  
                      200 South Illinois Avenue  
                      (Located between Rt. 13 East & West on South Rt. 51)  
                      6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

# Homeless Issues

U.S. Department of  
Housing and Urban  
Development

*Eighth Annual*

## **HUD Peer-to-Peer Homeless Provider Conference**

**Holiday Inn Collinsville**  
1000 EASTPORT PLAZA DR  
COLLINSVILLE, IL 62234  
888/465-4329  
(HUD Peer-to-Peer block-\$69.95 +  
11% tax per night)

*SAVE THE DATE!*

**September 13-14, 2006**

Homeless Providers will present sessions that address issues and concerns common to projects that serve homeless individuals and families.

HUD's goals for the conference are:

- Homeless providers will learn from their peers
- HUD will understand grantee issues and concerns
- Build and maintain relationships within the homeless provider community in Illinois

There is no registration fee for this conference.

For further information contact **Darrel Bugajsky** at **312/353-1696 ext. 2716** or go to the Illinois Community Action Association website [www.icaanet.org](http://www.icaanet.org).

HUD Peer-to-Peer  
Homeless Provider  
Conference Registration  
Materials will be  
available in July

## 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](mailto:sratcliffe@icaanet.org), or fax, 217-789-0139 by the 15th of each month for inclusion in the ICAA E-News.

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

[www.icaanet.org](http://www.icaanet.org)