**Tentative Sessions**

**All sessions are subject to change**

**Breaking Down Barriers: Decriminalizing people experiencing homelessness and/or mental illness**

*Heather Alden, SPPS Project REACH*

Join us to break down barriers erected to criminalize those who live with mental illness and experiencing homelessness through a dialogue with Heather Alden, Supervisor of Project REACH with St Paul Public Schools. She works with adults and families in navigating systems and is passionate about finding ways to better serve those who are struggling to navigate the private sector.

**Approaching Conflict with Curiosity**

*Terri Allred, Allred Coaching & Consulting*

Conflict is an inevitable part of organizations and can be an important growth opportunity for individuals and teams. Your team will identify and understand their own conflict management styles to enable them to approach conflict in the workplace with curiosity. During this “no blame, no shame” workshop, participants will learn concrete and actionable strategies to communicate effectively when tension is high. Your team will also create an organizational structure around curious communication that will enable the learnings from this workshop to be implemented immediately. Participants will identify and understand their own conflict management styles, allowing them to approach workplace conflicts with self-awareness and curiosity. -Participants will learn actionable communication strategies to navigate high-tension situations during conflicts, promoting empathetic and productive dialogues. -Participants will understand steps to take to create an organizational structure that encourages and enables the immediate application of the workshop's learnings, fostering a "no blame, no shame" environment for conflict resolution in their teams.

**Resilience in the Middle Part 1 and Part 2**

*Sandy Anderson, Sandy Anderson Consulting & Coaching*

*Julie Kiehne, Winona State University*  
The current challenges and disruptions we face each day can lead to exhaustion, fatigue, and apathy both professionally and personally. Often the experience is dismissed, and we settle for pushing through, leaving leaders vulnerable to burnout and showing up in ways that sabotage the very thing we desire more of capacity, clarity, connection, confidence, and the necessary compassion toward others and ourselves, especially in the middle of challenges. This interactive session engages participants in conversations that identify the impact of challenges unchecked and then guides the focus to three components that build and restore resilience: inward strength and stability. Participants receive practical tools for processing a real time challenge, that offer soul-filling strategies to build resilience from the inside out, even in the middle. Learning Objectives/Takeaways: Participants will be able to: § define resilience and burnout, why attention to them matters and what sabotages resilience in our day to day living and leading, leaving us vulnerable to burn out § identify three components that can build resilience and how to leverage them during challenges. § engage in practicing concepts discovered in the three components and utilize additional practical tools with a self-identified challenge in real time.

**Proactive Cybersecurity Threat Management**

*Charles Brandt, Marco Technologies*

Current and Emerging Threats An overview of common cybersecurity challenges and real-world threats facing organizations today. After reading headlines from around the country, many who thought they weren't at risk are reconsidering… they're right to do so. We'll review the methodology used by attackers, common attacks, and also emerging threats related to artificial intelligence and machine learning. Critical Safeguards for Prevention, Detection, Containment, and Recovery We'll review critical controls from NIST Cybersecurity Framework and the Center for Internet Security (CIS) that all companies should be evaluating for their environment to reduce the likelihood of a successful attack and reduce potential impact. These have been shown time and again to drastically reduce the risk of an incident and reducing the impact should one occur. Future State Roadmapping Understand the core components companies need to review and document to identify their current security posture, identify gaps, and build a roadmap that quickly addresses high impact cybersecurity vulnerabilities in the environment. This includes a review of techniques used by industry pros to stress test your environment and make sure that your tools and safeguards are functioning as expected.

**Succession Planning: Identifying and Developing Talent Part 1 and Part 2**

*Sheena Burt, Insight Consulting*

Succession planning is crucial for the sustainability and growth of any organization, particularly in the non-profit sector where resources are often limited. In this session, we will discuss the intricacies of identifying and nurturing potential leaders within your organization. This session will explore the essential components of effective leadership development and succession planning. Join us as we discuss strategies for transitioning individual contributors into leaders, assessing existing employees for leadership potential, and cultivating a culture of leadership development within your organization. Attendees will gain practical insights and actionable strategies to enhance succession planning efforts, ensuring a pipeline of capable leaders to drive success.

**Socio-Historical Scans: How Understanding History Improves CAA Responsiveness Today**

*Katherine Castille, Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County*

*Monica Cruz Zorrilla, Imagine Deliver*

Each Community Action Agency (CAA) conducts a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) every three years as part of Community Action’s organizational standards. This ensures that CAAs understand and address the specific factors that cause and reinforce poverty in the geographic areas they serve. Many of the ways poverty manifests in communities today are informed by our history. A socio-historical scan—a comprehensive review of relevant historical events, cultural norms, and systemic factors that have shaped the current situation—can help us understand where we’ve come from and how we can make thoughtful decisions in the future. In this session, learn how Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County (CAP-HC) partnered with Imagine Deliver to conduct a socio-historical scan of Hennepin County, how the scan provided equity-centric insights, and how the scan was used to inform CAP-HC’s CNA, Strategic Plan, and more.

**Communicating and engaging with legislators**

*Valerie Dosland, Ewald Consulting*

*Josh Ney, Ewald Consulting*

Participants will learn effective tools to engage with and to build long-lasting relationships with state legislators. This session will also cover ways to communicate and help participants craft their elevator pitch.

**Strengthening Our Foundation: A Strategic Approach to IT Governance and Security for Community Action Agencies**

*Paul Evans, Verus Corporation*

In an era where technology underpins every aspect of our operations, understanding and implementing robust IT Governance and security practices has never been more critical. This enlightening session is designed specifically for board members and executive directors of Community Action Agencies, offering a strategic overview of IT Governance and security tailored to the unique needs and challenges faced by non-profit organizations. As leaders in community action, your role in guiding and overseeing effective IT governance cannot be overstated. This session will demystify IT Governance and security, breaking down their components into strategic actions that align with your agency's mission and objectives. We'll explore the essential role of leadership in fostering a culture of security awareness and in steering the organization towards a comprehensive IT Governance framework that ensures technology investments deliver maximum value while minimizing risks.

**Fieldtrip! Housing Development Basics on site at Brewery Creek**

*Chris Flood, Three Rivers Community Action*

Everybody loves a fieldtrip. This session allows you to travel to Brewery Creek, a new affordable housing property, in downtown Duluth. Three Rivers Community Action partnered with One Roof Community Housing to build this 52-unit, 5-story building. In addition to seeing the building, you will explore the impact of housing development on communities and learn about what it takes for a CAP to work in the world of housing development.

**From Poverty to Prosperity**

*Jen Forsberg, Inter-County Community Action Council*

Jen will share her success story of how community action transformed her life from poverty to prosperity. Community Action provided a hand up and encouragement for her to finish her bachelor’s degree, move into home ownership, end generational poverty, and encourage others to strive for more. The relationship with her local community action agency also expanded her leadership skills, developed her public speaking skills, and blossomed connections with staff and the community. The goal of this session is to share a success story to encourage staff who may be feeling a bit burned out or feel like they aren’t making a difference when the systemic issues of poverty are so difficult to overcome. Community Action staff are vital to the success of individuals, families, and communities!

**Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Collaboration in Community Action Programs**

*Jason Foy, TriCounty Community Action Partnership*

Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Collaboration in Community Action Programs is a targeted session dedicated to exploring the pivotal role of inclusive leadership in Community Action. This brief yet impactful session will delve into strategies and practices that promote diversity, equity, and collaboration within community action programs and staff. Participants will gain valuable insights, share experiences, and acquire practical tools to enhance their leadership skills, fostering an inclusive environment that drives meaningful collaboration and positive outcomes for their communities.

**Wages, Poverty, and the Labor Market**

*Carson Gorecki, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)*

In the past few years, we have seen historic wage growth. This has largely been in response to rising costs as well as a very tight labor market. While many workers have benefitted, rising poverty shows that this is not the case for all families or individuals, and disparities persist. In addition, many people remain out of the workforce due to a number of barriers. This session will address recent workforce trends and their interplay with measures of poverty.

**Leading Through Change**

*Dana Haagenson, MN State Community and Technical College*

Participants will create a strategy for working through a current transition, using effective communication strategies. Session Outcomes: Distinguish the difference between change and transition; Identify stages in the transition process and explore techniques for effectively coaching yourself and others through each stage; and Explore a strategy for effectively and consistently communicating change across your organization

**Using 1:1 Meetings to Build Team Engagement**

*Dana Haagenson, MN State Community and Technical College*

Participants will discover the impact that regular 1:1 meetings have on employee engagement, as well as questions and topics that help uncover an employee motivation and strengths. Session Outcomes • Identify the key needs of followers and how they relate to 1-on-1’s; Review 5 conversations that drive performance and engagement; Articulate best practices for 1-on-1’s; Explore and practice using 1-on-1 coaching discussion guides

**Staying Safe Online in 2024**

*Roger Hagedorn, Alt Key, Inc.*

In a world of uncertain politics, endless breaches, and an ever-growing reliance on artificial intelligence, how can a person stay safe in 2024? This action-packed session discusses best practices for securing your online accounts, good internet browsing habits worth developing, when and why you should use a VPN, how to safeguard your finances, deal with harassing phone calls and texts, and avoid scams and online trackers. Let’s all be safer in 2024.

**Designing an Innovative Father Engagement Strategy**

*Sharmain Harris*

During this comprehensive workshop, attendees will: Explore Fatherhood Dynamics: Gain a deep understanding of the challenges, concerns, and aspirations of fathers involved in family service programs; Effective Communication Strategies: Learn proven techniques to enhance communication and build positive relationships with fathers, even in complex and sensitive situations; Best Practices and Case Studies: Explore real-world case studies and best practices from Sharmain’s experience working with fathers and family service programs across the country; Interactive Activities: Participate in innovative design exercises to sharpen your skills in handling diverse scenarios when engaging fathers. Attendees will leave this workshop with the ability to Enhance and engage fathers effectively, Contribute to healthier family dynamics and child well-being and Build a network of professionals dedicated to father engagement.

**Navigating the Benefits Bridge: When Career Advancement Hurts Workers**

*Monica Haynes, University of Minnesota Duluth*

A benefits cliff occurs when career advancement puts an individual or family above the income threshold for one or more public assistance programs and makes the family financially worse off. This session will discuss the benefits cliff and educate attendees on the CLIFF Portal, a tool created by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta to estimate the financial impacts of a career change. Representatives from the University of Minnesota Duluth and St. Louis County’s Economic Services and Supports will talk about their research on the benefits cliff, their partnership with the Atlanta Fed, and future efforts on this important topic.

**Understanding the Social Determinants of Health**

*Angela Howell, SA Howell, LLC*

Explore the intersection of health and poverty in this training, led by a seasoned RN with 20+ years of experience working with senior citizens and school-aged children. Understand the complex ways in which social determinants impact community well-being and discuss strategies to address these challenges effectively.

**Mental Wellness in the Workplace**

*Angela Howell, SA Howell, LLC*

In today's fast-paced work environment, prioritizing mental wellness is crucial for both employees and organizations. This training offers a comprehensive approach to managing one’s own mental wellness in addition to supporting coworkers and employees in the workplace. Participants will begin with reflection on personal attitudes and feelings towards work and life then see the impact of the pandemic on mental well-being with highlights on the groups that have been most affected. Through this training, employees will be equipped with knowledge to improve their own mental wellness and organizations will be provided tools to create a supportive workplace culture that prioritizes mental wellness.

**The Mission Aligned Data Driven Approach to Community Assessments**

*Shawn Howell, SA Howell, LLC*

True mastery of the community assessment process necessitates a balanced use of qualitative and quantitative data, coupled with a deep understanding of poverty and the social determinants of health. This session is designed to address not only the data itself but also the broader implications it has for families and communities, pinpointing the barriers that may prevent organizations from achieving their purpose. Under the guidance of Shawn Howell, with his extensive 25-year track record in Community Action, participants will dive into the Mission-Aligned Data-Driven (MADD) methodology for community assessment development. As a Six Sigma Black Belt, Nationally Certified ROMA Master Trainer and Implementer, and a Certified Data-Driven Decision-Making Specialist, Shawn will direct participants in processes for gathering, examining, and ranking data to discover family and community level needs.

**The Mission Aligned Data Driven (MADD) Approach to Organizational Excellence**

*Shawn Howell, SA Howell, LLC*

The Mission Aligned Data Driven (MADD) Approach to Organizational Excellence is a leadership mentality that focuses on the achievement of organizational success as measured by the agency mission, with a heavy emphasis on the use of data for decision-making on all levels. The process includes integration of ROMA with principles and tools from Six Sigma, Lean, PMP, Hoshin Kanri, Scrum, and other well known and respected business processes.

**Leading vs Managing**

*Tammy Jelinek, Wipfli*

A great yet often subtle difference exists between leading and managing. All leaders must be effective managers; however, not all managers need be leaders. What distinguishes one from another? What qualities do great leaders have in common? How does an organization establish leadership capacity? This session helps members uncover the fundamentals of strong leadership and discusses “best practices” in leadership development.

**Performance Coaching**

*Tammy Jelinek, Wipfli*

Performance management is the process of creating and maintaining an environment of accountability to enable employees to perform to the best of their abilities. It is a process that begins when an individual starts the employment relationship and ends when the individual leaves. In this session, we will explore what prevents an employee from achieving effective levels of performance and how managers can engage in effective coaching to assist employees in achieving personal and professional success

**Recruiting (and Keeping) Great People**

*Tammy Jelinek, Wipfli*

Join our session to explore the full strategies in the recruiting process. Together, we will explore how the job descriptions from the past need to change for the future. We will talk through the hiring process. We will explore future advertising trends for job openings. Discuss connecting applicants with organizational culture and results. Explore the interview process and where we bring in our personal bias to the process – even when we do not mean to. And once we get people hired, we will explore best practices in welcoming them into our culture and keeping them.

**Community Connectors- The best kept secret in the world of DEI**

*Heather Jeseritz, United Community Action Partnership*

The Refugee/Immigrant/Migrant (RIM) communities often encounter obstacles and barriers within the social determinants of health that affect their ability to meet basic needs, receive needed health care services, establish and maintain safe and stable housing, and experience equity and inclusion within the larger community. In this session you will hear about the process of learning what the needs are, strategies, systems and staffing used and programs that help improve the standards of living for the Hispanic/Latino, Sgaw/Karen, and East African/Somali communities of the Willmar and Marshall areas. Through this work, we want to ensure basic needs are met and services are accessible in such a way that recognizes diversity, inclusion, and equity as necessary components to each RIM community and community member’s success.

**Examining Homelessness: Critical Discourse Analysis as a Tool for Equitable and Inclusive Practice**

*Isaac Karikari, University of North Dakota*

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) fosters innovative insight into ways dominant sociocultural and political views shape policy and practice. This skill-building presentation will demonstrate the application of CDA in uncovering underlying power asymmetries and disparities in definitions and conceptions of homelessness. Attendees will gain insights into CDA’s theoretical foundations and explore its use for equitable and inclusive practice.

**Whole Family Approach – Why the Time is Right**

*Liz Kuoppala CCAP, MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

*Dan Duhamel CCAP, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies*

*Katie Boone, Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families*

*Sixty years into the Community Action journey, some organizations are fully embracing a Whole Family Approach, others are testing the water, and a few are waiting to see if this is simply a passing fad. This session will share perspectives from philanthropic, governmental, and practitioner sectors on how Whole Family work is at the root of what Community Action was at the beginning and how returning to our roots can improve outcomes, energize staff, and keep the Community Action Movement relevant for the next 60 years. Learn how funders and policy makers are increasingly looking for solutions rooted in family voice, equity, and upward mobility. This fun and engaging session will meet you where you’re at and provide insights to take your work to the next level.*

**Student Debt: LBJ Dream Gone Awry**

*Liz Kuoppala CCAP, MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

President Johnson is rightly lauded for his vision of the War on Poverty. Another 1960's program (federal student aid) aimed at bringing low-income people into the middle class was corrupted into a system of private gain and led to today's student debt crisis. This session will provide a historical overview and connect participants with opportunities to view student debt through the lens it was originally intended: a hand-up rather than a crushing barrier to progress. Gain critical insights into one of the most controversial public policy debates of our time.

**Poverty as Public Policy: The Intersection of Class, Gender, and Race in the United States**

*Terry Glenn Lilley, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin - Lacrosse*

The history of the US response to need has been marked by emphases on personal responsibility and distinctions of worthiness. In this session, participants will learn the historical origins of these emphases, how they inform current responses. and how they have worked to shape and maintain racial, gender, and class inequality. Participants will also learn advocacy, policy, and practice strategies to help re-imagine our responses at the organizational and structural levels.

**Frauds and Scams and the Minnesota Senior Safe Program**

*Lisa Lovering, Minnesota Department of Commerce*

The presentation will include information about the common types of financial exploitation and scams, who is targeted and why, the scope of the problem, and tips on how to avoid becoming a victim. You will also learn about tricks that scammers use, signs to watch out for, where to report fraud, and who to contact if you, a family member or friend are targeted by scammers. We will also discuss the Senior Safe Program that is unique to Minnesota.

**Trauma-Informed Approach in Financial Education**

*Dung Mao, University of Minnesota Extension*

*Tonia Brinston, University of Minnesota Extension*

*Sharon Powell, Ph.D, University of Minnesota Extension*

Inflation, student loans, the housing crisis, and the copious ongoing uncertainty and instability have significantly disrupted people’s lives and mental well-being. In our session, we will discuss our work addressing our community's financial and mental health stress using trauma-informed pedagogy and its application to teaching and learning.

**The Blunt Truth: Today's Marijuana Part 1 and Part 2**

*Don Marose, CD Training Consultants, Inc.*

Today's marijuana is not your parents' marijuana. Learn about the new types and types of marijuana and the signs and symptoms of impairment

**Whole Family Ethics and Roots as it Relates to Community Action**

*Alice Meyer, MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

*Dawn van Hees CCAP, Lakes and Pines Community Action Council*

*Mollie Monson*

Learn about the whole family journey in 3 Community action agencies highlighting successes and challenges and how it relates to the Ethics of Community Action.

**SNAP Employment and Training in Rural MN**

*Alice Meyer, MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

MAHUBE-OTWA is a new provider for SNAP ET. Learn how to serve clients in rural MN to support upward mobility with employment. This session includes Client Voice and Coaching strategies by direct service staff as well as a brief overview of being a SNAP ET provider.

**Stress Reduction Techniques and a Personal Stress Survey**

*Dr Mike Monroe Kiefer, Powermind Systems, Inc.*

Take the in session survey and see where your major stressors lie? Then gain specific tools and techniques to help you reduce your daily stress. Become a healthier more energized, self-confident person! Do you have hobbies, fun, a movement program? What about nutrition? Are you living on a daily diet of caffeine and anxiety? Learn how to take charge of your stress instead of it controlling you!

**Customer Service Excellence: Principles and Techniques**

*Dr Mike Monroe Kiefer, Powermind Systems, Inc.*

Learn the basics of customer service and the principles will serve you well for the rest of your life. This session covers customer service at work, with clients, with coworkers and with your manager. How can you provide everyone in your circle with excellent customer service? Techniques such as: the CPR technique, going the extra mile everyday, underpromise/overdeliver, creating surprise and delight, speed of service and more! Boost your personal reputation at work!

**Marketing/Public Relations and Community Development; How a CAP Agency should Invest**

*Dominick Olivanti, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency*

Marketing and PR are seemingly understood in the Non-Profit world. Most executive teams understand they are important, however, this session will go into the intricacies of Community Development and how to curate your online presence, where to invest your marketing dollars, and when to communicate and when not to communicate with the general public.

**Organizational Standards in Minnesota - a Deep Dive**

*Amy Parker, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity*

*There will be one other presenter*

The team at the Office of Economic Opportunity will cover all 58 Organizational Standards, discussing how agencies can achieve not just meeting these standards, but understanding why they exist and how meeting and appreciating the standards helps agencies to perform to their highest potential to eliminate poverty in their communities.

**Leveraging Your Data as an Asset**

*Ryan Peasley, Wipfli*

In this session, we’ll explore how agencies can harness their existing data using cutting-edge business intelligence (BI) and analytics tools. By unlocking insights, agencies can better understand their clients, measure their impact on the community, and streamline reporting processes. Join us to discover practical strategies for data-driven decision-making!

**The AI-Powered Community Action Agency**

*Ryan Peasley, Wipfli*

In this session, we’ll delve into the exciting world of artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential impact on your agency. Discover real world use cases, explore how AI tools can enhance community outcomes, and empower agencies to achieve more - even with limited staff. Join us to unlock the power of AI in your agency.

**Pushing Back Against Ageism**

*Brenda Shafer-Pellinen, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging*

*Shayla Drake, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)*

Ageism affects people of all ages, but what is it exactly, where does it come from, and what can we do about it? In this session, you will learn about definitions of ageism, how to dispel common aging myths, and how to become more aware of your own biases. Armed with this knowledge, you will gain effective communication strategies to help you become a more effective professional who values people of all ages. By learning to reframe aging in your work and community, you will also prepare for your own successful aging.

**Recruiting and Retaining Staff of Color**

*Marc Perry, Community Action, Inc. of Rock and Walworth Counties*

It is one thing to recruit staff from increasingly diverse backgrounds, and it can be quite another undertaking to purposefully recruit, retain, and promote diverse staff members, particularly staff of color. Even the notion that efforts will be futile because available pools of qualified candidates are scarce can contribute to a chilly climate through the underlying message that scarce availability is a function of group deficit. According to the deficit model, there just are not enough qualified minorities, and those few who might be qualified won’t come to our organization, and if they do come, they won’t stay here, and if they’re here, they’ll soon be snatched away. By contrast, some staff of color will say, if asked, that they will come if their qualifications are seriously valued and they feel wanted, and they will stay if they feel welcome and supported. Qualified, diverse applicants do exist and can thrive in our organizations, with active and purposeful action. The basic premise is that any effort to hire teachers of color, if it is to be successful, must coincide with steps to become an inclusive organization. It is not just a matter of bringing in a Latino and an Asian- American teacher, say, and announcing that your work is done. It is a matter of carefully restructuring the organization climate and culture — from the board of directors down— to fulfill the stated mission of the organization. And then being ready to discuss and debate the relative value of your organizations diversity efforts — to continuously take one’s pulse, like a long-distance runner. Doing so, organizations have discovered, creates an atmosphere and culture inviting employees of color. This workshop will provide best practices for recruiting, and more importantly, retaining staff of color. The workshop will also address the myth of the unqualified minority as well as assist you in identifying the explicit and implicit barriers that make it difficult for staff of color to thrive in a given workplace.

**Privilege, Power and the Dominant Culture**

*Marc Perry, Community Action, Inc. of Rock and Walworth Counties*

Privilege is defined as a right or immunity granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor: prerogative; especially such a right or immunity attached specifically to a position or an office; an advantage that only one person or group of people has. “Privilege exists when one group has something of value that is denied to others simply because of the groups they belong to, rather than because of anything they’ve done or failed to do. Access to privilege doesn’t determine one’s outcomes, but it is definitely an asset that makes it more likely that whatever talent, ability, and aspirations a person with privilege has will result in something positive for them.” ~Peggy McIntosh~ The dominant culture in a society is the group whose members are in the majority or who wield more power than other groups. A group does not have to be a majority to be a dominant culture. In South Africa, there are four times as many Black Africans as white Africans of European descent. Yet under a system of racial segregation and domination called apartheid, which was legally in effect from 1948 to 1991, the white population managed to hold political and economic power. To continue moving forward, individuals and organizations must acknowledge and understand that privilege exists; and the hardest part, acknowledging that if you are an individual who is part of the dominant culture, you benefit from it. The goal of exploring privilege is not to make people feel guilty or ashamed for having privilege or to acknowledge privilege so that it can be taken away. Instead, the goal is figuring out how to level the playing field so that everyone can experience it. Then it is no longer a privilege, it is simply life as we all know it. This workshop will explore privilege as it exists, especially as it pertains to the dominant culture in any given situation or society. We will work as individuals to identify and acknowledge and own our privilege, as well as best practices for implementing equity.

**Moving from Allyship to Leadership: Agency, Accountability, and Emotional Intelligence Part 1 and Part 2**

*Anne Phibbs, Strategic Diversity Initiatives*

As organizations continue to build practical knowledge around addressing microaggressions, minimizing implicit bias, and developing allies, it won’t be enough to just create as many allies and champions as possible. Changing entrenched, biased systems and practices requires leadership at every level of an organization. And leadership around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) will require more than management skills. As DEI leaders (whatever our organizational role may be), we will be required to build agency for social change among our colleagues and model how to hold ourselves – and others – accountable. This can feel challenging when we are among friends, but even more daunting in a work setting. Using a frame of Emotional Intelligence (EQ), we identify how we’re already showing up as allies – and how we can develop as relational and brave DEI leaders. With an interactive focus, participants will practice having the challenging – and necessary – conversations that mark DEI work.

**Energize and Engage Employees**

*Kristin Phillips CCAP, CAPLP*

This session will present ideas for cross-division collaboration to engage and energize employees. Learn about how agency committees and communication work to break down silos, build employee resilience, and connect staff across divisions to create a fun and supportive work environment at Community Action Agencies. Get tools for your toolbox to build a culture of belonging and trust through employee engagement activities.

**Building Strong Families Through Stable Housing**

*Samantha Roth, University of Minnesota Extension*

*Dung, Mao, University of Minnesota Extension*

*Sara Croymans, University of Minnesota Extension*

Housing is more than just shelter; it's a cornerstone of strong families. Studies reveal that stable housing not only provides security and safety but also fosters social connections, aids children in academic success, supports parental employment stability, contributes to credit building, and mitigates homelessness. This session will share research about the challenges and benefits of stable housing. We will also explore the University of Minnesota Extension RentWise program and Renter 101 online course, and engage in discussions on collaborative strategies for statewide tenant education initiatives. Learning Objectives/Takeaways: Session participants will ● Discover what research says about the challenges and benefits of securing stable, safe, accessible, and affordable housing. ● Become familiar with the University of Minnesota Extension RentWise program and Renter 101 online course. ● Discuss strategies to collaborate to provide tenant education across the state.

**Dynamic Board Meetings = Dynamic Opportunities**

*Chuck Rowe, Midwest Studies Group*

"Rinse and Repeat" is the fashion so many boards run their meetings by. Same agendas, same committee reports, same updates. Midwest Studies Group will share some tips and experiences on how to bring some excitement and change to your board meetings so they can not only be more dynamic and exciting but also bring more opportunities.

**Creating a Foundation for a DIY Strategic Planning Process**

*Chuck Rowe, Midwest Studies Group*

There are times in which an organization might consider doing a strategic plan on their own. What should you talk about? How to create dialogue? How to keep the flow moving? Midwest Studies Group will share some tips and strategies to consider when trying to lead this important goal setting and team building process.

**PSLF: Practical Steps to Achieve Loan Forgiveness**

*April L Sanderson, Lutheran Social Services*

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) is a federal student loan program that forgives the remaining balance of any federal student loan after 120 months for borrowers who are working in the public sector while making qualifying payments. Up until recently very few have successfully achieved loan forgiveness through this program due to a lack of understanding of the policies and processes guiding it. This workshop is designed to teach public sector employees how to: Start the payment count towards loan forgiveness. Understand how to ensure payments qualify. Define qualifying employment.

**Professional Boundaries in Community Action Work**

*Lori Schultz CCAP, Minnesota Community Action Partnership*

*Debi Brandt, United Community Action Partnership*

Have you ever felt so badly for a family's situation that you just want to keep giving and giving? Have you ever been in a client home setting and personally disagreed with some of the decisions the person you are working with has made? Have you ever felt like a client is overly dependent on you? These types of situations are ones where professional boundaries come into plan. This interactive session will provide information on how we, as Community Action professionals can maintain professional boundaries in some very tough situations within our work.

**Community Action - 60 Years of Legacy**

*Lori Schultz CCAP, Minnesota Community Action Partnership*

*Michelle Peterson, TriCAP*

This session will explore everything about Community Action and more. From the grassroots history of how Community Actions came to be through how they operate today. This interactive training will define the anti-poverty mission and strategies to address those needs.

**Promising Practices Panel**

*Dr. Catherine Solheim*

*MVAC, UCAP, CAPLP, Mahube-Otwas*

Moderated by Lori Schultz

**Branding - Do They Know You**

*Fellicia Smith, Minnesota Community Action Partnership*

MinnCAP

What is a brand? Do you or others know yours? Branding is important. Learn how to brand your agency and see the returns branding can bring

**Social Media - It's More Thank a Post**

*Fellicia Smith, Minnesota Community Action Partnership*

Examining how social media can be used to help promote agency’s programs and services and can serve as resource and a way to get noticed for its excellence.

**Getting the Most out of FAIM: Innovations with Vehicle Purchase, New Partnerships and an Advocacy Framework for 2025"**

*Dave Snyder, West Central Minnesota Communities Action*

We will give an overview of FAIM for beginners and answer questions about the program, share an example of innovation that blends funding sources and allows FAIM participants to step into a new car on day one of their 2 year savings & learning journey, and give a teaser overview of an advocacy and leadership development curriculum module that we plan on launching in the fall to prepare our coaches and participants to share powerful stories with the legislature and the public in 2025 as we make the case for sustaining and expanding FAIM.

**Strategies and Activities to Build and Strengthen Relationships within Native Communities**

*Wayne Somes, MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

In this session, attendees will learn about the strategies and activities MAHUBE-OTWA is implementing to enhance their services to Native peoples. Additionally, attendees will also learn more about what MAHUBE-OTWA has done to build and strengthen relationships with the native communities in the area. MAHUBE-OTWA serves a 5,000 square mile area which includes Mahnomen County, home to the White Earth Nation.

**Helping People. Changing Lives. Through relationship and family goals.**

Jennifer Soule CCAP, *MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

Building relationships is the key to helping people and changing lives. Through solid relationships between staff and families, goals can be set and accomplished. At this session, we will discuss the importance of building strong and healthy family/coach relationships and “meeting families where they dream.” Focusing on solid family goal setting, we will discuss ways to coach families to success and ultimately, upward mobility.

**Managing Risk to Avoid Litigation**

*Susan Stokes, Lind, Jensen, Sullivan & Peterson, P.A.*

*Michelle Peterson, Tri-CAP*

Managers who supervise employees need tools on how to manage employees in a way that both supports the employees and holds them accountable. Doing so can be challenging, given the myriad federal, state, and local laws that govern workplace conduct. This session will cover frequently occurring workplace challenges, such as ADA issues (including mental health issues), managing performance, discipline, and accusations of bias and/or retaliation. The session will provide best practices for maintaining a workplace culture that helps avoid employment-related lawsuits.

**Introduction to CCAP and Excellence in Community Action**

*Tawny Stottlemire, CCAP, National Community Action Partnership*

Join Tawny Stottlemire for this overview of NCAP's signature program opportunities for Community Action Network members. Participants will hear about the purposes and benefits of both the Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) program and the Pathways to Excellence program. Enrollment processes will be explained and there will be time for questions.

**Making the Most of Your Digital Badges**

*Tawny Stottlemire, CCAP, National Community Action Partnership*

Training organizations like NCAP are beginning to use digital badges to document and honor the achievements and service of members. Participants in this session will hear what "digital badging" means and explore how they can be used. This session may be of particular interest to those who have received NCAP digital badges, including current CCAPs and representatives from agencies recognized through NCAP's Pathways to Excellence program.

**Boards and executive directors working together related to finances**

*Denes Tobie, Wipfli*

This session explores the many areas of fiscal responsibility that boards and CEOs/EDs need to address when working together. Topics covered include fiscal responsibility, roles, budgets, fundraising, risk and approvals. Both new and experienced board members will benefit.

**Agency-wide Budgeting**

*Denes Tobie, Wipfli*

Agency-Wide Budgeting is critical for financial planning and ongoing monitoring. This session will address the nuts and bolts of building one and even more important, will address the role the agency-wide budget plays in agency planning and ongoing fiscal health.

**What's Allowable**

*Denes Tobie, Wipfli*

The cost principles cover the costs that a grant-funded program can charge to federal grant awards. General principles, allowable costs, unallowable costs, and costs that require prior approval will be discussed.

**Leading Multigenerational Teams Part 1 and Part 2**

*Russ Turner, People Incorporated*

Organizational staffing is shifting rapidly with the influx of Gen Z into the workplace. In addition, some older workers are staying in their positions for longer than is traditional. These workers’ diverse life experiences bring different work styles onto your team. For the leader, creating an atmosphere of inclusion and acceptance of each other requires some specific strategies and an understanding of where core values overlap.

**Delivering Effective Feedback Part 1 and Part 2**

*Russ Turner, People Incorporated*

Communicating feedback to team members in a way that motivates them to improve can be a difficult challenge. Most people dread feedback and automatically think it will be negative. However, given effectively, feedback can help people grow, which is a key part of the supervisory function. This session presents a simple feedback model for managers to use every day. Learning objectives • Describe the role of feedback in the supervision process • Examine supervisor reluctance to giving feedback • Outline a simple feedback model with examples

**Upward Mobility Through a Whole Family Approach: Partnerships between Community Action & Community Colleges**

*Alli Ward, CAPLP*

*Dana Haagenson, Minnesota State Community and Technical College*

*Amy Hochgraber,*

Staff from both CAPLP and MSTATE both located in Moorhead, MN will present on the incredible opportunities provided when CAP agencies and Community Colleges partner to support individuals and families with upward mobility, specifically through a Whole Family Approach.

**Blending & Braiding Funding for Enhanced Services**

Michelle Wilkowski CCAP, *MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

Dana, *MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

Sam Amundson CCAP, *MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership*

Wondering how to use Early Learning Scholarships? Come to this session to learn how to blend and braid Federal, State, and Scholarship funding. Hear from ELS, HS, and Fiscal experts from MAHUBE-OTWA for real life example using these funding streams to enhance Head Start services for children and families.

**Microsoft Outlook Tips & Tricks**

*Lori Yecoshecko, Lake Superior College*

Most of us know how to check our email and use the calendar functions in Microsoft Outlook. Come learn about other features that can help you maximize your workday productivity.

**Microsoft Excel Advanced Techniques, Tips & Tricks**

*Lori Yecoshecko, Lake Superior College*

If you have already mastered the basics of Excel and are looking for some advanced techniques, tips and tricks, this session is for you.

**Big Changes come from Small Moments**

*Ray Young, Training Institute at People Incorporated*

For over 30 years, addiction professionals and human services workers of all types have been trying Motivational Interviewing (MI) to help people make positive change in their life as quickly as possible. This proves frustrating to caring professionals as well as their struggling clients because personal growth is hardly ever accomplished quickly. In this session, we will explore opportunities in which workers can utilize MI to empower individuals and foster sustained progress in brief moments and discuss examples of Motivational Interviewing that can be effective in minutes.

**A Legacy of Healing: planting seeds for a Trauma-Informed Future**

*Ray Young, Training Institute at People Incorporated*

Recognizing the role of historical and intergenerational trauma in shaping our present and future, is the key to cultivating a legacy of healing. The session will equip attendees with practical tools and strategies to integrate Trauma-Informed principles into their daily work environment. By nurturing a Trauma-Informed approach, all staff members can help plant the seeds that grow through people’s healing journey, and helps communities thrive. Bring your passion for your Mission as we share and adapt practical strategies for a Trauma-Informed future that starts today.

**Understanding the policymaking/legislative process**

*Valerie Dosland, Ewald Consulting*

*Josh Ney, Ewald Consulting*

In this session, participants will learn about budget and policymaking process, how a bill becomes law, understanding the role of elections and political giving, as well as the role associations play in educating policymakers.

**Overdose Response Training: Learn to Save a Life with Naloxone (Invited to present)**

*Steve Rummler, Steve Rummler HOPE Network*

After taking a Steve Rummler HOPE Network naloxone training, you’ll learn: Key info on opioids and current data on the opioid crisis; How to recognize signs of an opioid overdose; What naloxone is, and how it works to reverse an opioid overdose; The action steps when responding to an overdose; How to administer intramuscular (IM) and nasal naloxone; Protections provided by Steve’s Law (MN’s Good Samaritan/Naloxone Law); Where and how to get naloxone