



2021
Annual Report



2021: PROGRESS IN A PANDEMIC

Letter from the Executive Director, Vanessa Gibson

The year began like any other, filled with hope, optimism and Mardi Gras parades. Soon a mysterious virus discovered a world away would change our lives forever. The world began shutting down borders, schools, and businesses in March of 2020. Travel ceased. Head Start and Senior centers closed. Agency employees worked from home and learned how to use Zoom and Go to Meeting. Four Head Start classrooms at the Pascagoula Center reopened during the summer of 2020 to serve transitioning children, all others remained closed until August. When they reopened, class sizes were reduced from 20 to 8 children per room while maintaining a teacher and assistant in each room. Parents learned how to use online platforms like SeeSaw and private Facebook pages to access classroom information and share what their children were working on at home. Many chose home-based services and learned to access Ignite by Hatch and Waterford digital learning platforms.

The pandemic wreaked havoc on us all. Each of us was touched in some way by tragedy and loss during this time. Our seniors experienced loneliness and isolation as they were not allowed to participate in congregate meals and transportation services were halted. Staff shortages became commonplace as Covid-19 spread throughout our community and the world. Each week, a new classroom was shut down for 10 days as we struggled to provide services to parents who needed to work. Each month, we thought this will be over soon, only to see the timeline extended into an indefinite future. Although the community was warned not to gather for Thanksgiving and Christmas, the increased number of cases in the following weeks indicated that the warning went unheeded.

Light at the end of the tunnel arrived in December 2020 when a new type of vaccine proven to be highly effective against Covid-19 was given Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA. In February of 2021, appointments for vaccines began for the 65+ population and those with underlying health conditions.

During it all, Community Action of South Mississippi continued to provide services. Agency staff become frontline workers due to the necessity of the services we provide. Staff delivered meals to grateful seniors who just wanted to talk, get a hug and a little companionship. Parents with children in the home-based option picked up meals from Head Start centers. Information and education packets, toys, books, crayons, and other instructional supports were distributed weekly to families. Dental and health appointments were encouraged and community partners did their best to ensure that children received services.

Vaccine and mask hesitancy were a disappointing setback to recovery, but we look forward with hope, and perseverance to a return to normalcy or a new norm in the very near future.

PASSIONATE LEADERSHIP AND A LASTING LEGACY



Former Executive Director, Diann Payne

After serving the agency for 37 years, Diann Payne announced her retirement in 2021. Diann began her tenure at Jackson County Civic Action April 16, 1984 as the Deputy Director/Finance Director. She served in that role until 1997 when the Board selected her to lead the agency as the Executive Director. Under her leadership, many positive changes and new programming occurred. Head Start facilities were renovated, new facilities were built, and public school partnerships were formed. One of Mrs. Payne's proudest achievements was the Volunteer Income Tax Initiative. Thousands of clients

have saved money by allowing the agency and its IRS certified preparers file their taxes each year. Clients also benefited from the sound tax advice shared with them by knowledgeable community volunteers. Through return clients and word of mouth, the agency now prepares the most returns in the VITA network for Mississippi.

Mrs. Payne served on many boards including M&M Bank, Pascagoula Rotary, and the Red Cross. When Hurricane Katrina devastated the community, she was on the Red Cross board. She ensured that the agency partnered with Red Cross to distribute emergency funds. The agency's main office became the central location for mental health services, cleaning supplies, water, and daily meals supplied by the Marine Corp.

In the aftermath of Katrina, Mrs. Payne obtained America's Promise funding that helped to launch several programs including Men Making a Difference and Pathways to Possibilities. She received several awards including the United Way Community Impact Award and the Innovation award from the MS Department of Human Services Division of Community Services. She always led with passion and left a lasting legacy.

LEADERSHIP TEAM



Vanessa Gibson
Executive Director



Priscilla Edwards
Interim Director of Children
and Youth Services



Lee Ann Kendrick
Director of Adult Services



Tiffany Bradley
Director of Finance



Kelli Green
Human Resource Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MISSION

It is our mission to serve culturally diverse communities by providing quality services that promote human development and self-sufficiency.

VISION

Community Action of South Mississippi:

- Will be the standard of excellence in developing, providing and delivering quality, responsive services to the elderly, children and families.
- Will be a model agency that provides quality services that meet the individual needs of clients.
- Employees will be dedicated to the continuous improvement of in-service delivery to clients.
- Board of Directors, Policy Council and management will ensure that we have a participative work environment that fosters teamwork, mutual respect, dedication and opportunities for personal growth and development for all employees.

PUBLIC SECTOR



Cynthia Black
Chairperson of
Board of Directors



Thomas Lett
Chairperson of Committee



Nancy Jo Maples

NOT PICTURED

Terri Tyler
Secretary of
Board of Directors

PRIVATE SECTOR



Don Polk
Vice-Chairperson of
Board of Directors



Mandy Feranda



Ricky McCorvey

NOT PICTURED

Lauren Kelley

LOW-INCOME SECTOR

Paul Lee

Sharon Ray

Angie Cowan

Bernard Kirkland

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

In addition to regular reviews and self-assessments, an independent audit is performed annually. Areas of review include internal control over financial reporting and tests of compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, grants, and other matters.

OPINION ON EACH MAJOR FEDERAL PROGRAM

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Community Action of South Mississippi as of September 30, 2020, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flow for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

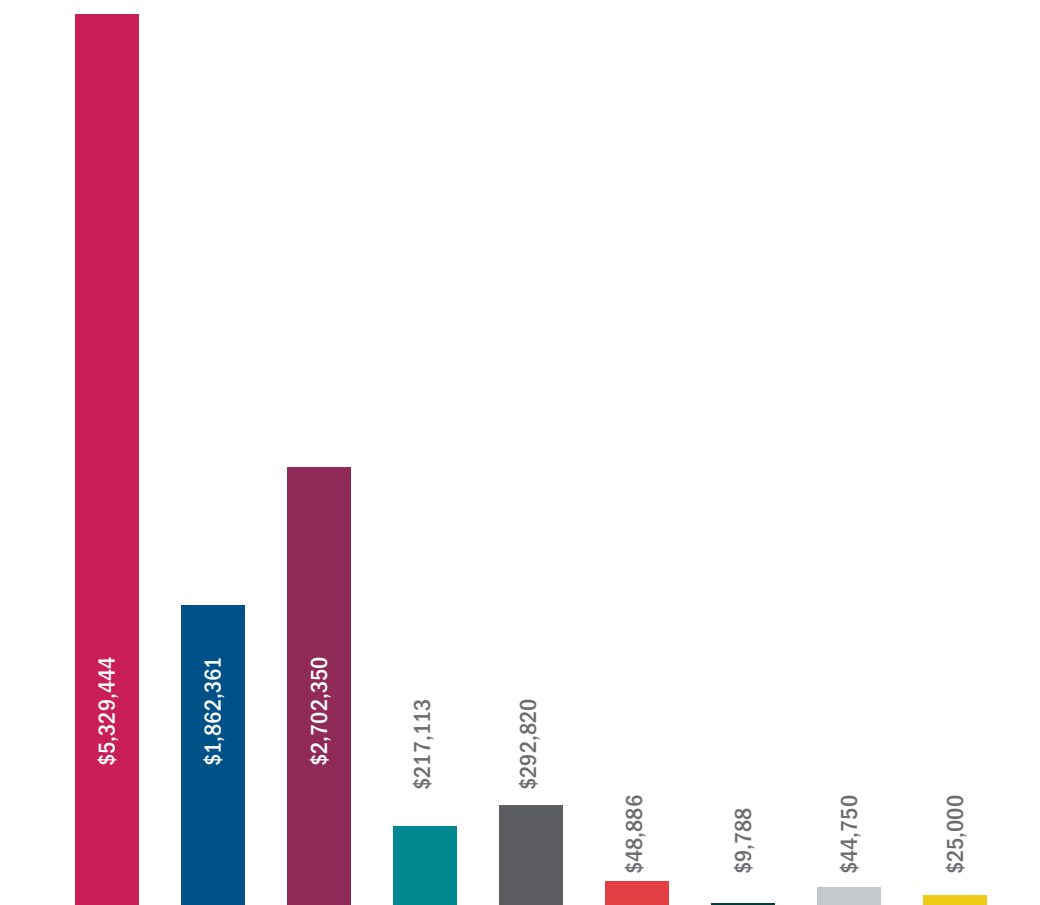
OTHER MATTER

As discussed in Note 7, the financial statements were restated to accurately reflect grants receivable and other liabilities balances during the year ended September 30, 2019 that were previously reported at an overstated balance. Our opinion on each major federal program is not modified with respect to these matters.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

REVENUE FOR FY2021

	Head Start \$5,329,444
	CSBG \$1,862,361
	LIHEAP \$2,702,350
	FDCH \$217,113
	USDA \$292,820
	VITA \$48,886
	Title III-B Senior Center \$9,788
	Title III-C Congregate Meals \$44,750
	Title XX-Transportation \$25,000



HEAD START BUDGET

HEAD START ELIGIBILITY

Income at or below 100% of federal poverty line

147
CHILDREN

Public Assistance such as TANF and SSI

33
CHILDREN

Foster Care

2
CHILDREN

Homeless

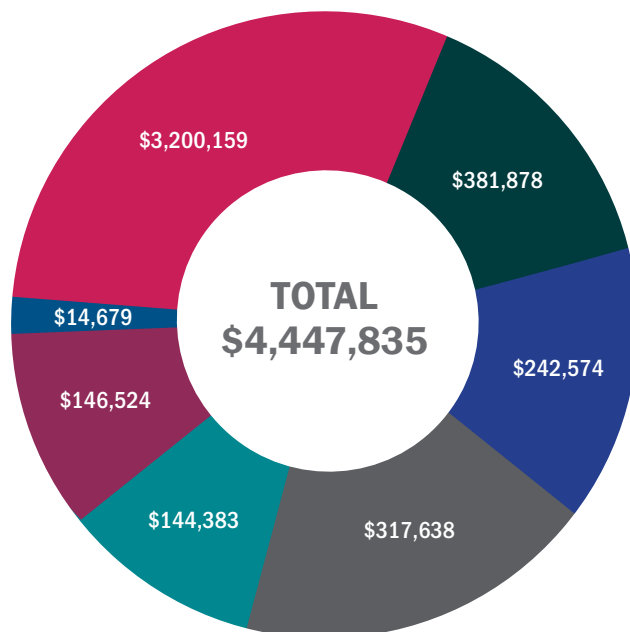
14
CHILDREN

Eligibility based on other type of need

3
CHILDREN

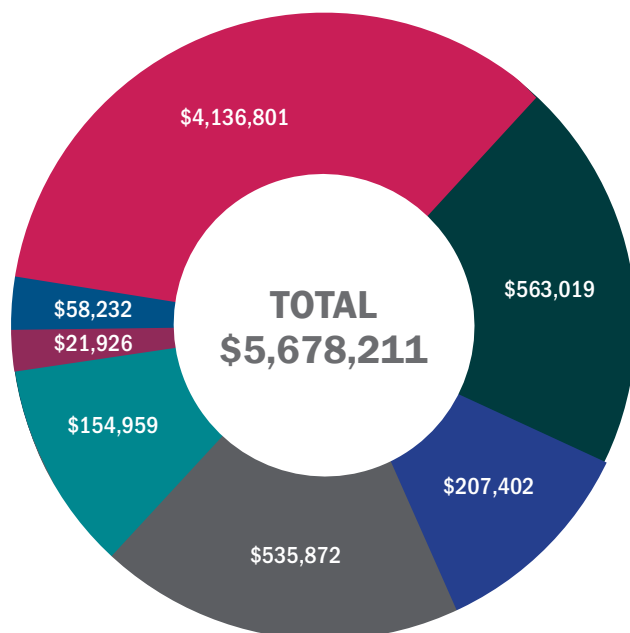
Incomes between 100% and 130% of federal poverty line

2



HEAD START / EHS EXPENDITURES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021 (7/1/2020 - 4/30/2021)

Personel/Fringes	\$3,200,159
Travel/Training	\$14,679
Equipment	\$146,524
Supplies	\$144,383
Contractual	\$317,638
Other	\$242,574
Indirect	\$381,878



HEAD START / EHS EXPENDITURES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 (5/1/2021 - 4/30/2022)

Personel/Fringes	\$4,136,801
Travel/Training	\$58,232
Equipment	\$21,926
Supplies	\$154,959
Contractual	\$535,872
Other	\$207,402
Indirect	\$563,019

HEAD START DEMOGRAPHICS



HEAD START ENROLLMENT

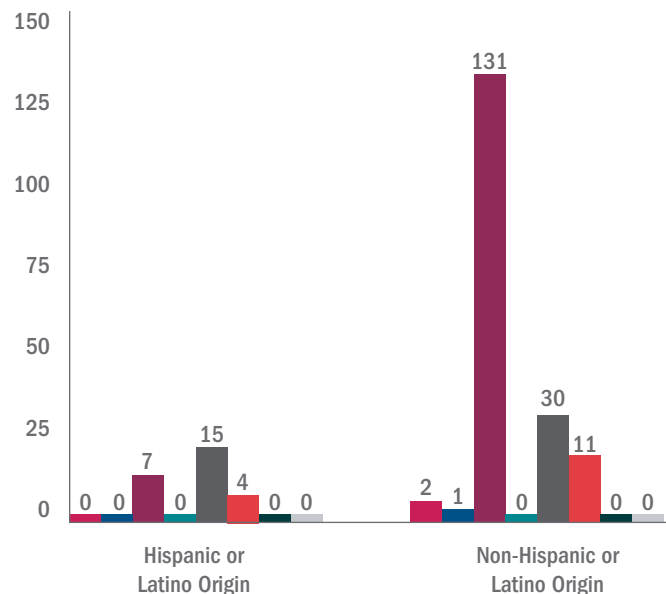
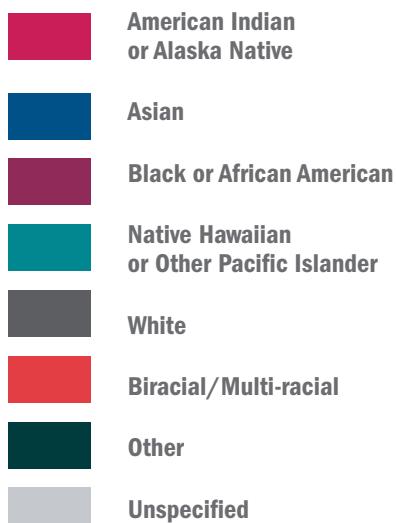
FUNDED
ENROLLMENT

436
CHILDREN

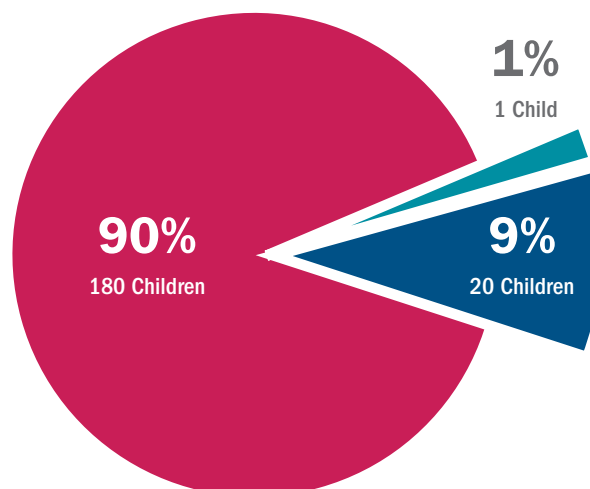
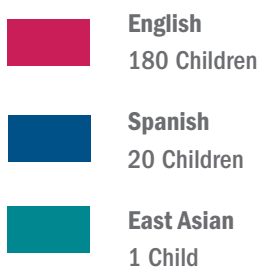
CUMULATIVE
ENROLLMENT

201
CHILDREN

HEAD START DEMOGRAPHICS



PRIMARY LANGUAGE



EARLY HEAD START DEMOGRAPHICS

EARLY HEAD START ELIGIBILITY

Income at or below 100% of federal poverty line

51
CHILDREN

Public Assistance such as TANF and SSI

7
CHILDREN

Foster Care

1
CHILDREN

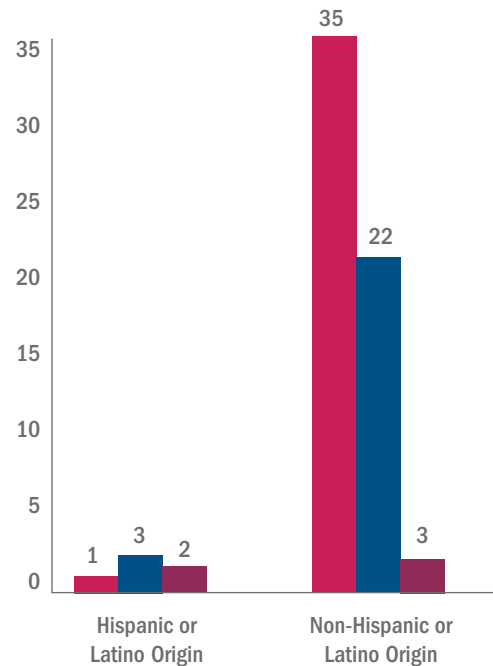
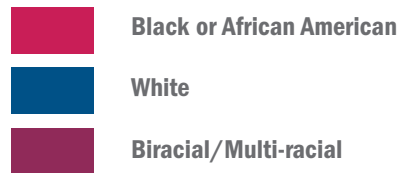
Homeless

7
CHILDREN

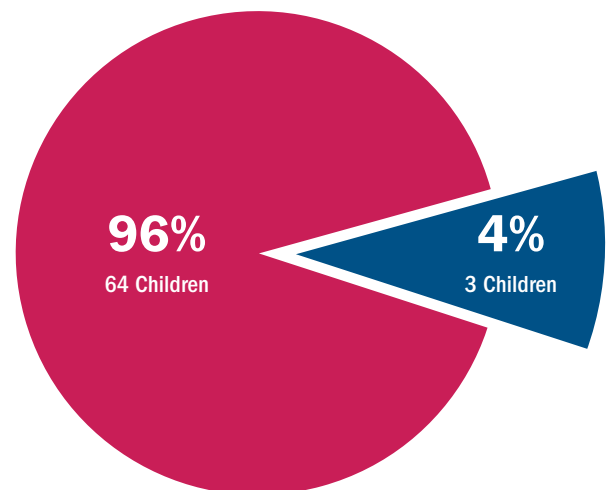
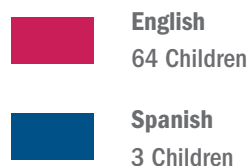
Over income

0

EARLY HEAD START DEMOGRAPHICS



PRIMARY LANGUAGE



EARLY HEAD START ENROLLMENT

CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT

56 CHILDREN **11** PREGNANT WOMEN

CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

67

SCHOOL READINESS

Teachers used the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool quarterly to collect the data needed to plan activities for individual children. Through observations of children's work samplings and parental input, teachers leveled children in each objective area. At the end of each observation cycle, teachers finalized children's checkpoints. Teaching Strategies GOLD reports are generated to show which children are meeting, exceeding or below an area of development and learning.

To collect school readiness data, the agency used The Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment instrument. The system measures the knowledge, skills and behaviors that are most predictive of school success. The tool has 38 objectives, including 2 objectives related to English language acquisition. 36 objectives are organized into 9 areas of development and learning. The first 4 are major areas of child development; social/emotional, physical, language and cognitive. The content learning identified in early learning standards is organized into the following 5 areas; literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and the arts. The objectives in English language acquisition help teachers follow a child's progress in acquiring receptive and expressive skills in English.

RESULTS



SCHOOL READINESS SUMMARY

MENTAL HEALTH

5

Children for whom the MH professional provided an individual mental health assessment

EHS 5

Children enrolled in the program who have an individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) indicating they have been determined eligible by the Part C Agency to receive early intervention services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

PHYSICAL HEALTH

CHILDREN AT ENROLLMENT

181

Children with health insurance

173

Enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP

122

Children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care



163**

Have been determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations

CHILDREN AT END OF ENROLLMENT YEAR

155

Children with health insurance

150

Enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP

122

Children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care



162**

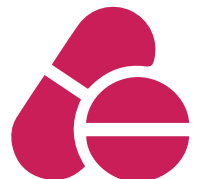
Have been determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations

16

Received medical treatment for chronic conditions

145

Children who are up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventative and primary health care, according to the relevant state's EPSDT schedule for well child care



BMI (BODY MASS INDEX)

11

Underweight

83

Healthy Weight

31

Overweight

65*

Obese

* The agency has implemented the following programs to combat childhood obesity; The Organwise Guys to empower kids to be healthy and smart from the inside out! Color Me Healthy to get children excited about eating smart and moving more. The 5210 program to educate children and families on good nutrition and exercise (Aim for 5 fruits and vegetables every day, keep recreational screen time to 2 hours or less every day, include at least 1 hour or more of active play every day, and skip sugar sweetened beverages, drink more water every day.)

** Access to immunizations limited during pandemic.

SCHOOL READINESS SUMMARY

DENTAL HEALTH

AT ENROLLMENT

114

Number of children with continuous, accessible dental care provided by a dentist

176

Received preventive care since last year's PIR was reported

AT END OF ENROLLMENT YEAR

115

Number of children with continuous, accessible dental care provided by a dentist

177

Children who have completed a professional dental examination since last year's PIR was reported



23

23 children who are up-to-date on a schedule of oral care according to Mississippi's EPSDT schedule

29

Of these, the number of children diagnosed as needing treatment since last year's PIR was reported

14*

Received treatment



* Some children left the program before their treatment could be completed.

DISABILITIES SERVICES

34

Enrolled in the program who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicating they have been determined eligible by the LEA to receive special education and related services

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY RECEIVING SPECIAL SERVICES

1

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

10

Asthma

1

Life-Threatening Allergies

3

Vision Problems



SERVICES



EMPLOYMENT



EDUCATION & COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT



INCOME, INFRASTRUCTURE & ASSETS BUILDING



HEALTH/SOCIAL BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

MEETING THE 3 NATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK THEORY OF CHANGE COMMUNITY ACTION GOALS

GOAL 1

Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

GOAL 2

Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

GOAL 3

People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

HELPING NEIGHBORS.



LOCAL CHANGE THROUGH THE COMMUNITY ACTION OF SOUTH MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY SERVICE BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

To assist clients with meeting these important goals, an annual community needs assessment is conducted by the Community Action of South Mississippi to identify greatest needs for program development. In 2021, three key areas were identified as priorities in the midst of the pandemic: employment, training and housing security.

ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021

518 families avoided
eviction

458 families found safe,
affordable housing

1,503

senior citizens retained
independence and
remained living at home

673

Mississippians were
assisted to achieve and
meet basic needs

1,171

disabled citizens retained
independence and
remained living at home

166 Mississippians received full time jobs
with higher wages and increased skills

46 clients were assisted with continuing education and completed a
credential, certificate or degree achievement in field of choice

590 community members increased skills, knowledge and
abilities to improve and apply leadership skills, social capacity
and engagement for use in their respective communities

289 individuals received financial education and skill development
to improve overall long-term financial well-being

164

families received
at least one
family service

2,181

clients increased healthy
nutrition education, cooking,
shopping and budgeting skills



2021 VITA HIGHLIGHTS

\$200

average family savings
on a simple 1040

3,220

completed returns in 2021

\$6,312,848

in returns

VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TAX PROGRAM (VITA)

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) grant program is an IRS initiative designed to support free tax preparation service for the underserved through various partner organizations. This service helps low- to moderate-income individuals, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and limited English speakers file their taxes each year.

Community Action of South Mississippi is pleased to provide tax assistance to individuals who make under \$58,000 per year for more than 16 years.

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAMS (CACFP)

CASOMS contracts with the MS Department of Education to provide breakfast, lunch and snacks to children enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start and First Step Childcare. The CACFP serves nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers. CACFP also provides meals and snacks to children and youth who participate in afterschool care programs or reside in emergency shelters.

HELPING CHILDREN.



SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (SFSP)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) relies on innovative and collaborative efforts to reach children in need. USDA encourages collaborations with valued partners such as CASOMS to raise awareness about the nutrition gap low-income children face when schools close for the summer and the availability of summer meals to close this gap.

The SFSP was established to ensure that low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. Free meals that meet federal nutrition guidelines are provided to all children at approved SFSP sites in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children.

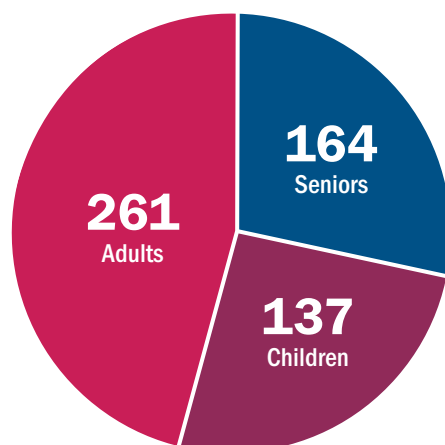
The SFSP operates during school vacations, primarily in the summer months—from May through September. It may also provide meals during vacation breaks in schools that are operated on a year-round basis or a continuous school calendar, or during emergency school closures from October through April

FOOD PANTRY

Food insecurity is a problem throughout the Community Action of South Mississippi service area. To meet the needs of the community, food baskets are distributed on Fridays or on an emergency basis as needed.

INDIVIDUALS HELPED IN 2021

562 Total Individuals
287 Households



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Health Advisory Committee
United Way Sponsored Literacy Week
Chevron Refinery Little Libraries
Pascagoula Audubon Center
Scranton Nature Center
Lynn Meadows Children's Museum
Policy Council
Board of Directors
Partnerships with Public Schools
Excel by 5
Pre-K Launchpad
Pascagoula-Gautier School District
Books Come Alive Jackson & George County Library
Transition to Kindergarten Field Trip
American Cancer Society Relay for Life
American Heart Association Heart Walk
Breast Cancer Awareness Month
HIV/AIDS Awareness Workshops
Coastal Family Health Center (Mobile Unit)
South MS Smiles
Vision Center
Vanceleave Library
Turkey Boxes = Food Pantry Donations
Vanceleave Volunteer Fire Department



LIHEAP ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH COMMUNITY ACTION OF SOUTH MISSISSIPPI

5,473

individuals in George, Harrison and Jackson counties received LIHEAP through Community Action of South Mississippi in 2021

Community Action of South Mississippi administered funds to our local energy providers totaling

\$1,226,287

to Mississippi Power;

\$721,631

to Singing River EPA;

\$220,515

to Coast Electric and

\$20,503

to Center Point Energy

LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a critical, life-saving program that targets and serves the most vulnerable — older Americans, individuals with disabilities, and children. The majority of these families and individuals survive on less than \$20,000 per year; many are on a fixed income.

To qualify for the program, you must need help paying your home energy costs. Your annual household income (before taxes) must also be below the maximum income level for your state and household size, currently in Mississippi LIHEAP eligibility is determined at 60% of state median income so for instance the income of a family of 4 is capped at \$39,982 annually.

FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES (FDCH)

CASOMS operates the Family Day Care Homes (FDCH) program in George, Harrison, Jackson, Perry and Stone Counties. FDCH provides reimbursements for meals and snacks that meet the requirements set forth by USDA. These are private homes where children under 13 receive care. The homes are licensed, registered/inspected or approved for the program. The reimbursements make the cost of day care more affordable for many lower income families. Health and safety standards, training and monitoring are also very important components in the FDCH program.

There are two types of FDCH:

- Licensed homes that care for 6-15 children
- Alternate approved homes that care for 5 children or less

HELPING FAMILIES.



PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

We began the 2020-2021 school year by inviting parents to a Summer Orientation. The Agenda included School Readiness and the Seven Family Outcomes:

- Family Well-Being
- Positive Parent-Child Relationships
- Families as Lifelong Educators
- Families as Learners
- Family Engagement in Transitions
- Family Connections to Peers and Community
- Families as Advocates and Leaders

This included presentations by administrative staff on brain development, the Creative Curriculum, Teaching Strategies Gold and other assessment tools. Parents completed a questionnaire focused on (1) social emotional events affecting the family, (2) family activities, (3) family involvement in community events and (4) needs assessment.

The responses served as a guide for the program to:

- Incorporate activities/awareness
- Become proactive of circumstances that could disrupt mental wellness at home or school
- Invite and support parent participation in community events
- Build spontaneity and creativity into parental engagement

ENGAGEMENTS

- Monthly Parent Meetings
- Bras Across the River
- Fall Festival
- Men's Breakfast
- Mardi Gras Parade
- Literacy Awareness Parade with Dr. Seuss
- Cultures Around the World
- Financial Literacy Workshops
- Food Drive Turkey Box Contest
- Kiddie Day
- Sweetheart Ball



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

3,312

visits to the senior center

3,473

transportation rides

14,112

meals served

SENIOR SERVICES

Healthy bodies, alert minds, energized spirits — that is what Community Action of South Mississippi Seniors Program for adults is designed to deliver year-round for seniors 60+ through diverse activities to support independence and enhance quality of life.

The senior center is a focal point in the community where persons, individually or as a group, come together for a broad spectrum of services, educational and recreational programs and activities. These facilities enable individuals 60 years of age and older to socialize, develop skills, engage in activities, learn new roles that enhance their dignity, support their independence and encourage their involvement within the community.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Jackson County
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563

SENIOR CENTER LOCATIONS

Ocean Springs Senior Center
514 Washington Ave
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

FIRST STEP LOCATIONS

First Step Childcare Center
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563

HEAD START CENTER LOCATIONS

Gautier HS
(Gautier Elementary)
505 Magnolia Tree Drive
Gautier, MS 39553

Gautier Head Start Center
1017 Highway 90
Gautier MS 39553

Jefferson Head Start Center
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563

Kreole HS
(Kreole Primary School)
6312 Martin Luther King Blvd
Moss Point, MS 39563

Martin Bluff HS
(Martin Bluff Elementary)
1306 Roys Rd
Gautier, MS 39553

Pascagoula HS
3301 Spruce Street
Pascagoula, MS 39581

Taconi Head Start
711 Magnolia Street
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

CSBG LIHEAP LOCATIONS

George County
11 Holmes Street
Lucedale, MS 39453

Harrison County
500 24th Street
Gulfport, MS 39507

Jackson County
5343 Jefferson Avenue
Moss Point, MS 39563



CASOMS.ORG