a year of change

a year of ACTION
Dear Friends,

Over the past year, worldwide economic instability gave cause for rich and poor alike to have great concern about their economic future. For Action, as we work to help people in need, this period has been a time of change, challenge, opportunity, and accomplishment.

Early in 2009, Bill Rochford, Action’s Executive Director for more than 35 years, announced his retirement. His tenure saw the growth of Action from a small upstart agency to the large multi-faceted organization it is today. Along the way, Bill and Action brought new programs and services to Cape Ann such as Meals on Wheels, the Homemaker Program, the Food Pantry and the Energy Programs. Action also founded two of Cape Ann’s most important and successful social service agencies: SeniorCare and Pathways for Children.

Action’s Board and talented staff will continue to move forward as the guardians of Action’s 45-year legacy of community action. During the past year, with help from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and with generous support from the community and other funders, we were able to expand our services to meet the growing needs of our communities. Action served more than 7,000 people last year — far more than any prior year.

Our energy conservation programs were greatly expanded, enabling us to weatherize hundreds of homes across the region. New Action offices were opened in Ipswich and Rockport, giving better access to residents of those towns. Action completed major upgrades to our homeless shelter building and our Energy Services office in Gloucester. We were gratified to receive an award from the Gloucester Historic Commission for both projects. Action increased training opportunities for careers in the medical field and we brought financial literacy education to many families. Our outreach efforts to the immigrant population brought greater numbers to our programs and we initiated a citizenship preparation course. And Project Uplift, our holiday toy and clothing drive for children, had by far its most successful season ever!

In introducing the War on Poverty in 1964, President Johnson said, “Very often a lack of jobs and money is not the cause of poverty, but the symptom. The cause may lie deeper in our failure to give our fellow citizens a fair chance to develop their own capacities, in a lack of education and training, in a lack of medical care and housing, in a lack of decent communities in which to live and bring up their children.”

We are fortunate on Cape Ann to live in a wonderful, caring community. With your support, Action will continue to present our fellow citizens with opportunities to develop their capabilities. Through training and education, access to benefits and needed services, keeping families safe and warm in their homes, caring for our elders, and giving hope to the homeless, Action will keep the promise of community action — helping people and changing lives.

Sincerely,

Timothy Riley, Executive Director

Richard Rafuse, Chair, Board of Directors
Our Mission: To improve the quality of life for economically challenged members of our community by minimizing the effects of poverty, promoting economic security, and advocating for social change.

In 2009...

... we served **7,020** individuals
... we were able to help **1,371** more people than in 2008
... **1,127** of those served were homeowners
... **1,454** were renters
... **248** were homeless
... **1,430** were single parents
... **1,238** were over 70 years old
... **456** were under five years old
... **264** were collecting Unemployment
... **198** had no source of income at all
... **All** of the households we served earned less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

In 2009, ACTION, INC. used American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funds to:

- Provide information and referrals to **306** people through our Benefits & Support Services department
- Help stabilize the housing situations of **158** individuals
- Help **148** people access public benefits like MassHealth and SSI/SSDI
- Enroll **18** students in our Certified Nursing Assistant Training Program, and another **18** in our Clinical Medical Assistant Program
- Hire a Licensed Substance Abuse Counselor for our Emergency Shelter
- Provide Job Training & Education services to **109** individuals
- Provide energy conservation and cost-saving services to **284** individuals
- Hire **4** new contractor companies for the Weatherization Assistance Program
- Oversee the weatherization of **124** homes, from Lynn to the NH border

**Expenses by Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Training</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Services</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel Assistance</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homecare</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Services</td>
<td>65%</td>
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</table>

**Sources of Revenue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Benefits & Support Services connects people with the resources they need to stabilize their lives and become more self-sufficient. Our Advocates help clients access public benefits and services such as MassHealth, Food Stamps, free tax preparation, SSI/SSDI, assistance with housing issues, and more.

Thanks to the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act, in 2009 we added to our list of comprehensive, wrap-around services. We opened new satellite offices in Ipswich and Rockport, staffed by two new Advocates. And we offered financial literacy classes as well as referrals to North Shore Mediation and to attorneys for financial and housing issues.

Meet Jenn

Ipswich resident Jenn had been trying for months to find a home of her own. A young mother of two, she was struggling to provide for her children and frustrated by their tight living quarters. To offer her kids a healthier environment, she brought them to play groups at Ipswich’s Birth to Three Family Center. That’s when she learned about ACTION. With Recovery Act funding, ACTION had just opened an office at the Birth to Three Family Center. Jenn made an appointment with Advocate Harmoni White and knew she was finally in good hands — hands that would help her find housing that was right for her family. With Harmoni’s help, Jenn and her children were settled into their new home within four months — and are loving it!

COMPASS is an education, training, and employment program for 16-21 year olds facing barriers to learning. We offer a Gloucester High School Satellite Day Program, Night Diploma Program, preparation for the General Education Diploma (GED) test, and other services to help young adults earn high school diplomas and experience academic and personal success.

COMPASS also offers academic advising to help students develop a plan to earn a diploma and pursue post-secondary education, plus support services such as help identifying interests and skills, career counseling, leadership development, computer literacy, life skills, and more.

2009 was a great year for COMPASS. Using American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funds, we were able to provide year-round GED tutoring to assist even more individuals. We also hired an Academic and Vocational Coach to provide our students with more comprehensive services.

Year after year, the COMPASS model proves its effectiveness and makes a genuine difference in the lives of young adults.
"My business was down to me and one employee. Now I’ve added three more. We’re happy to have the Stimulus dollars."

~ John Call, weatherization contractor for Action Energy Services

We’re happy to be working.

The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act was signed on February 17, 2009 as a response to the economic crisis that hit our nation. As a recipient of Recovery Act funds, Action, Inc. has been able to develop new services, enhance existing programs, create jobs in our community, and assist more people throughout Cape Ann and beyond.

ACTION has used Recovery Act funds to...

... oversee the Weatherization Assistance Program in 29 communities throughout eastern Massachusetts, weatherizing more homes, expanding the work done on each home, and keeping more people safe and warm

... enhance our Clinical Medical Assistant Training and offer additional Certified Nursing Assistant / Home Health Aide Training

... offer bilingual services and outreach to immigrant communities

... offer ESOL and Financial Literacy classes

... provide referrals to mediation services and attorneys

... open satellite offices in Ipswich and Rockport

... hire new staff, including Advocates for the new offices, a Licensed Substance Abuse Counselor for our Shelter, and Energy Services staff

... save positions that would have otherwise been cut, including an Academic & Vocational Coach for our COMPASS Youth Program

... provide local weatherization and heating contractors with work

Recovery in Massachusetts

With Recovery Act funds, MA Community Action Agencies have:

- Created new jobs and saved at-risk jobs
- Maintained and expanded education and training programs
- Expanded health care, community development, and organizing initiatives
- Expanded the reach of the Weatherization Program
- Restored homeless prevention services
- Created new service sites

Photo, left to right: Ken Rauseo, Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development; Jeff Simon, Director of the Massachusetts Recovery & Reinvestment Office; and John Call, weatherization contractor for Action Energy Services gather at a client’s home in Ipswich. Call’s crew added insulation and new windows to the 1800s house using Recovery Act funds.
Energy Services offers assistance with heating and utility bills, home energy assessments, weatherization, heating system repairs, and more. By helping people manage their energy costs, we enable them to stay warm, stay housed, and conserve energy.

During 2009 the Weatherization Assistance Program received a large grant through the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act, allowing Energy Services to expand the reach of the program. We were able to weatherize more homes and to put more measures in each home, such as additional blown-in insulation, air sealing, and window repairs. We paid special attention to the elderly, clients with young children, and those with disabilities, working to improve their comfort and reduce their energy bills.

Meet John

As the economy continued its downward spiral in 2009, small businesses - particularly contractors - were among the hardest hit. Contractor John Call was trying to keep his business afloat, but the outlook was grim. Years earlier John had been a weatherization contractor for Energy Services, and when times got tough in 2009, he decided to give us a call. It’s a good thing he did. Energy Services was working to weatherize more homes than ever using Recovery Act funding, and was able to give John enough work to not only keep his business from going under, but to keep his staff employed week after week.

HomeCare

HomeCare allows elders and disabled adults to continue to live safely in the comfort of their own homes. For more than 40 years, HomeCare has been proud to offer care that’s professional, and companionship that’s personal.

During 2009, 102 HomeCare workers provided more than 86,300 hours of in-home care, including personal care, bathing, toileting, assistance with transfers, companion services, medication reminders, light housekeeping, laundry, shopping, caregiver respite, and Home Health Aide services. We helped approximately 600 clients, providing weekly service to some and daily assistance to others.

Our HomeCare workers are trained and complete all state and federal requirements for homecare within the first six months of being hired. They are also required to earn yearly continuing education credits.

Six of our HomeCare workers deserve special recognition for their tireless work over more than 20 years. Judy Carey, Sandra Fincel, Rhonda Murray, Joyce Jones, Jane Gleason and Maureen Surrette have collectively served more than 3,000 elders.
For years Shelter Services has aimed to tackle the causes of homelessness and provide shelter and resources to low-income individuals. During 2009, Action and Shelter staff recognized a missing link in these resources. Enter Licensed Substance Abuse Counselor Molly Derr. Molly joined the rest of the Shelter staff, including Shelter Manager of 11 years Jim Noble, to provide onsite counseling at the Emergency Shelter. This vital position was created thanks to American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funding. Molly’s expertise and compassion provide an essential tool to help us address the causes of homelessness, with substance abuse proving a major factor.
The Economic Opportunity Act was signed into law 45 years ago by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Act was, and continues to be, central in the War on Poverty.

Action, Inc. is proud to continue the fight for economic opportunity for all.

Above, left to right: 1. The entrance to the four new apartment units attached to Action’s Emergency Shelter. The units will provide housing for chronically homeless individuals. Construction on these units and on a major renovation to the Shelter itself wrapped up in 2009. 2. Students Dinesh Mahat and Ganesh Kumar Ghimire hard at work in one of our newly offered English for Speakers of Other Languages classes. 3. Action’s new Director of Administration & Program Operations Peggy Hegarty-Steck, hired in 2009. 4. An Action weatherization contractor insulates a home with Recovery Act funds.

Project Uplift is our annual holiday toy drive for low-income families. We provide children with toys and clothing through our longstanding partnerships with the communities we serve.

The 2009 holiday season was Project Uplift’s most successful year ever. Nearly 700 children in Greater Cape Ann received toys and clothing through the program – more than doubling the number served last year. We accepted applications for help from 462 families who were experiencing difficult times and would otherwise have been unable to provide their children with gifts. On top of the generous support from individuals, a host of businesses and organizations also donated gifts, money, and space.

The outpouring of support for this year’s Project Uplift serves as a reminder that we work with a caring, dedicated group of communities that never hesitate to help neighbors in need.
Thank You to the many funders and donors...

Donors

$10,000 & higher ■ Carol Ryan

$5,000-$9,999 ■ James Auditore ■ Bank of America Matching Gifts Program ■ MLS Property Information Network ■ Richard Rosenfeld

$1,000-$4,999 ■ Robert Amory ■ Michael A. Arsenian ■ Ascension Memorial Church ■ Joseph Brooks ■ Cape Ann Savings Bank ■ Cape Ann Thrift Shop ■ Linzee Coolidge ■ Laura Cutler ■ Eastern Insurance Group, LLC ■ Emmanuel Church ■ First Parish Church Congregational ■ Holy Family Parish ■ Ipswich Bay Glass Company, Inc. ■ Pamela Jaeger ■ Leslie Kagan ■ Ronald LaBarre ■ Thomas Manning ■ David Murphy ■ Jean O’Gorman ■ Miriam Silva Preas ■ West Gloucester Trinitarian Congregational Church ■ Betsy Whittey


... who generously contributed to our mission in 2009

Donors, continued


Funders


Please return to: ACTION, INC. ■ 180 Main Street ■ Gloucester, MA ■ 01930

Your name: 

Your address: 

City   State   Zip

Your donation amount: 

$2,500  $1,500  $1,000  $500  $250  $100  Other: $

Thank you for your support

ACTION, INC. depends on the support of the community to maintain vital programs and services. Every day, we help people get back on their feet and become more self-sufficient, whether assisting a disabled adult with daily chores, insulating a hundred-year-old home for an elderly couple that couldn’t afford to do it on their own, providing a teenager with the kind of instruction and guidance he needs, or enabling people to access a range of other services. These people aren’t strangers — they are your neighbors. And they need our help. Your donation will allow ACTION, INC. to continue the fight against poverty in Cape Ann and beyond.
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Altofalantes Portugueses:
Chamada 978-282-1008

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Emergency Shelter
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Ipswich Office
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978-879-3667

Rockport Office
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Rockport, MA 01966
978-879-3487

Benefits & Support Services ■ COMPASS Youth Program

Energy Services ■ Fuel Assistance ■ HomeCare

Job Training & Education ■ Shelter Services

Serving Gloucester ■ Essex ■ Hamilton ■ Ipswich ■ Manchester-by-the-Sea ■ Rockport ■ Wenham