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The Power of Civic Engagement

Citizen Service is the very American idea that we meet our challenges not as isolated individuals but as members of a true community, with all of us working together.

Our mission is nothing less than to spark a renewed sense of obligation, a new sense of duty, a new season of service.

Though government has an important role to play in meeting the many challenges that remain before us, we are coming to understand that no organization, including government, will fully succeed without the active participation of each of us.

Volunteers are vital to enabling this country to live up to the true promise of its heritage.

William Jefferson Clinton

Our Mission ... *To promote the creation of quality family life, self-sufficiency, and the ability to thrive for all people in our community.*



2008 ANNUAL REPORT



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Though the term **Civic Engagement** has become a bit of a catch phrase of the times, we at Pro Action have long understood and honored the work of our many “Civically Engaged” volunteers who help make our mission a reality. From our dedicated Board of Directors and numerous Advisory Committees, to those who teach and feed, prepare tax returns, construct ramps for the disabled, improve financial management, invest in emergency assistance, the list goes on and on. You have our deepest praise and appreciation.

There has been a long standing community development rule that goes like this: “The more involved a population is in their community, the more successful that community will be.” One example would be a food pantry. If I come to a pantry, receive food and return home, I remain disconnected. But if I come to a pantry and become involved with food sorting, preparation and/or distribution, I am participating in the community and forming relationships. Such connections allow for growth. The key word is **Participation**.

Borrowing from a website from the State of Montana, I share this wonderful summary:

Civic Engagement:

The heart of a healthy democracy is a citizenry actively engaged in civic life - taking responsibility for building communities, solving community problems and participating in the electoral and political process.

~ **Envision** the community where shared needs are met locally and individuals meeting these needs find lifetime employment skills, leadership techniques and a sense of belonging.

~ **View** the community where helping human hands ensure parks and trails are readied for public use.

~ **Picture** a community where homes of the elderly and low income are painted and repaired and the streets are neat and free of trash.

~ **See** older adults mentoring youth and youth training senior citizens in computer use.

~ **Imagine** this without significant tax increases or growing publically funded works.

Dare to dream, dare to get involved.

We extend our sincere “thank you” for taking the time to learn more about our work and accomplishments.

Let us recognize and salute our most self sacrificing example of Civic Engagement; the members of our Armed Forces. They place so much at risk to protect our freedom and opportunity to grow thriving communities. Let us strive for a better tomorrow and a path which may lead us to peace.

Sincerely,

David F. Hill

Community Impacts and Partnerships

*“There is a destiny that makes us brothers. None goes this way alone.
All that we send out into the lives of others, comes back into our own.”*

~ Edwin Markham (1852 - 1940)

A Community of Volunteers

The generosity of at least **952** individuals who volunteered a minimum of **20,142 hours** in 2008, enabled more Pro Action customers to reach their goals and maintain or make progress toward self-sufficiency. Some of the ways volunteers contributed their time and talents:

- **R**eading to children in the classroom
- **S**erving on Teen Pregnancy Prevention Panels
- **S**erving on Boards and committees
- **P**reparing income tax returns for low and moderate income individuals and families
- **D**elivering meals to senior citizens
- **M**aking telephone calls to home bound senior citizens to check on their well being
- **H**elping peers improve their reading, writing and language skills
- **P**ackaging meals and supplies for the elderly to use during weather emergencies
- **T**eaching financial literacy skills to human service professionals
- **S**orting, packaging and distributing food packages to needy families
- **P**roviding respite care for family members providing long term care for a loved one



Literacy Volunteers of America - Steuben County: Volunteers, Staff, Tutors and Learners celebrate at the Literacy Volunteers of America - Steuben County Awards Dinner - November, 2008.

The Independent Sector, a leadership forum for charities and other non-profits, estimated the value of a volunteer hour in 2008 to be \$20.25, making these volunteer hours worth an estimated \$407,876.

It is because of the contributions of our many volunteers that Pro Action was able to provide the variety and quality of services to our customers who were on their way to achieving self-sufficiency.

Thank you to everyone who supported our mission by giving freely of themselves.

Community Impacts and Partnerships

*“I am a human because I belong. I participate. I share.
~ Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

★ Local Economic Impact ★

Helping Local Residents Obtain Tax Credits

During the 2008 tax season, Pro Action participated in the **C.A.\$.H. (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope) Program**, a collaboration of agencies led by the United Way of the Southern Tier. Four IRS trained and certified Pro Action volunteers prepared over **175 income tax returns** for low and moderate income individuals and families for the tax year 2008.

This resulted in more than **\$53,000 in Earned Income Tax Credits being returned to local residents, an average of more than \$300 per individual/family**. The program helped families access tax credits that included the Child Tax Credit, Additional Child Tax Credit, First Time Home Buyers Credit, Property Tax Credits, and Education Credits. The average annual adjusted gross income for tax customers having their returns prepared at Pro Action was less than **\$20,000**.

**C.A.\$.H. Program
Logo**

**United Way
Community Partner
Logo**

Investing in Quality Child Care

In 2008, Steuben Child Care Project’s Micro Lending Program for Family Child Care Providers issued **9 loans totaling \$6,593** to providers caring for the children of working parents in Steuben County. Loans were given to provide fencing to protect children from a neighbor’s dog, to purchase a computer to improve record keeping practices and help with year end business management, to provide a pavilion to permit outdoor play for children on sunny days, to enhance the learning environment by providing large motor toys, to purchase a storage unit, to improve health and safety practices, and to provide programmatic resources to promote positive development in all areas of child development (social, physical, cognitive, emotional).

“The Micro Lending Program has been a tremendous help to my day care program. I was able to replace almost all of my outdoor ride-on toys. The payments that I am making are very affordable, and the process of obtaining the loan was very simple. It was a pleasant experience in today’s struggling economy. As a Family Child Care Provider, I would like to say “Thank You” for providing an affordable option to improve the quality of our programs.”

*Charity Beebee
Family Child Care Provider*

COMMUNITY IMPACTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

★ Local Economic Impact ★

Weatherization: Return on Investment

During 2008, Pro Action's Weatherization Program Weatherized **110 homes in Steuben and Yates Counties**, making them more energy efficient and providing savings on energy bills for local residents.

Typical upgrades were inexpensive, with the average expenditure limit at \$6,500 per home. Savings compared to costs were documented by the Department of Energy so the efficiency of the services provided by the Weatherization program could be evaluated. The Department of Energy has determined that **for every dollar invested in the Weatherization Program, \$3.31 is returned.**

The weatherization of these homes during 2008 **resulted in a return on investment of \$1,655,083. The average amount invested per home was \$4,551. The average return on investment per home was more than \$15,000.**

Upgrades included replacing inefficient windows, installing insulation, checking the efficiency of heating equipment and other cost saving measures.

PHOTO:

**Weatherization Crew Workers
prepare to make energy
efficient upgrades to a home**

Weatherization Crew workers prepare to make energy efficient upgrades to a home.

Investing in our Communities

During 2008, **\$1,483,750 worth of WIC coupons** were redeemed in Steuben County stores by approximately **2,350 participants per month**. This not only helped families buy nutritious foods, it provided additional local revenues. An additional **\$16,634** in Farmers' Market vouchers allowed WIC clients to spend locally.

Pro Action employed **540 people** in 2008. The gross amount paid to employees was **\$5,666,817**. This resulted in an indirect economic impact (calculated by applying the multiplier of five (5) to estimated employee net disposable income of \$2,611,524) of **\$13,057,620**.

The 2008 TANF Summer Youth Employment Program provided a paid work experience to **144** eligible youth in Steuben (**117**) and Schuyler (**27**) Counties. Youth ages 14 to 20 worked an average of 30 hours a week for 6 weeks. Each participant received job coaching and case management services as well as educational tips on resume preparation, job search activities and interviewing. The gross wages paid to the participating youth in 2008 totaled **\$157,887**.

Pro Action's **Senior Employment program** served **70 participants in 5 counties** during 2008, placing seniors in paid community service positions with **40** organizations. **19 participants obtained permanent employment and retained those jobs for six months or longer.** The value of the service of one Senior Employment participant to their assigned agency was estimated at \$11,800. **The value of the service provided by the 70 program participants was \$826,000.**

COMMUNITY IMPACTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

*“I always wondered why somebody didn’t do something about that.
Then I realized I was somebody.”
~ Lily Tomlin*

Meeting the Needs of Multiple Generations

Telephone Reassurance Program

In 2008, Pro Action’s Yates Office for the Aging expanded their Telephone Reassurance Program for the elderly to include weekly and daily calls for both social and safety purposes. **100%** of the recipients of the service who responded to a survey stated that the Telephone Reassurance calls they received contributed to their safety and that they would recommend the service to others. Comments from program participants included:

“I am very pleased with the concern of your people toward us. It helps to know that someone cares.” (88 years old)

“I think this program is truly beneficial for socially isolated individuals.” (76 years old)

Yates Transportation Program

The Yates County OFA Transportation Program for the elderly was made more efficient in 2008 through the addition of a new wheelchair bus, purchased in part thanks to a donation from the Penn Yan Area Council of Churches. Additional efficiencies were obtained by establishing certain days for specific routes, allowing clients to schedule their medical appointments within those route times/dates, and by doing so, minimizing their wait time for return trips. More clients were served in 2008 than in 2007 (**341 versus 323**), but the number of one-way trips was **reduced from 7,720 to 6,685**. Total miles transported were **reduced from 92,378 to 85,509**. Additional possibilities for increasing the efficiency of the program were discussed at steering committee meetings for Yates County Public Transportation, including the possibility of sharing services with other transportation providers.

Summer Food Program

Pro Action’s Summer Food Service Program served **27,288 meals (11,067 breakfasts and 16,221 lunches) to more than 1,300 children** during the summer of 2008, thanks to partnerships with area businesses and organizations. Crowley Foods of Arkport, NY donated cases of yogurt and vegetable dip every week, helping to ensure that kids were receiving healthy and appealing meals. Arkport Central School District provided their cafeteria for preparing meals. A collaboration with the Food Bank of the Southern Tier enabled the program to obtain nutritious foods like string cheese and fruit at a minimal cost. In addition to community sites at several Hornell area parks and playgrounds, participating community meal distribution sites included Hornell Area Concern for Youth, Hornell Salvation Army, and the Howard Summer Recreation Program. The program also provided meals for kids participating in Pathways Preschool Programs and the BOCES Summer Learning Experience Programs.

WIC Program Focuses on Good Health

In 2008, Pro Action’s WIC Program contributed to efforts to curb the obesity epidemic by providing vouchers for 1% or skim milk to all women and children over the age of 2 years. The program also issued \$5.00 vouchers for the purchase of fruits and vegetables, in addition to the regular vouchers already being issued.

Participant centered education, provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension Eat Smart NY, continued to be a focus at WIC clinics that were held **15 times every month at 8 locations** throughout Steuben County.

COMMUNITY IMPACTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

“Our nation will succeed or fail to the degree that all of us citizens and businesses alike are active participants in building strong, sustainable and enriching communities.”

~ Harold Hiatt

Responding to Community Needs

Collaboration Enhances Child Abuse/Prevention Awareness

In 2008, Pro Action’s Steuben Child Care Project and Steuben Family Enrichment Collaborative programs partnered to bring child abuse/prevention training to the child care community. Staff from Steuben Child Care Project, Jennie Mose Family Resource Center and the Woodhull Family Resource Center utilized the Zero to Three Child Abuse Prevention curriculum and facilitated trainings on “*Understanding and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect*,” “*Social and Emotional Development of Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families*,” and “*The Spirited Child: Temperaments and Challenging Behaviors*.” Of **31 participants** completing training evaluations, **29 (94%)** listed at least one strategy they learned from the training that they could use in their child care program. **100%** of program participants listed at least one way that the knowledge they gained from the training would improve the quality of their program.

Comments from participants included:

“This will help me to better understand different types of childhood temperaments and their behaviors and react to these more effectively to increase success of all children in the program.”

“Learning to adapt to different situations and adjust to temperaments will make for a more pleasant and successful environment. It will also enhance my communication with parents.”

“I learned how much environment can be a factor with respect to child behavior.”

Family Development Home Visitor

The Steuben Family Enrichment Collaborative, a partnership including Pro Action’s Family Development department and Family Resource Centers in Corning, Woodhull, Bath and Addison, implemented a Home Visitor component in 2008. The purpose of the Home Visitor was to provide more intensive support to families with multiple risk factors for child maltreatment. The Home Visitor offered case management and service coordination, crisis intervention, advocacy, information & referral, and formal and informal one-on-one and group parenting education to a total of **47 parents from 38 families**.

Of the 47 parents receiving Home Visiting services, all of them exhibited 4 or more characteristics or behaviors putting them at risk for child maltreatment, including: using developmentally inappropriate discipline, substance abuse, lacking knowledge or access to resources to address child risk factors such as ADHD, having unrealistic expectations of developmentally appropriate child behavior, little or no interaction with extended family, geographic and/or social isolation, unemployed or underemployed, lacking reliable transportation.

Results of the Home Visiting Program in 2008 included: 42 of the 47 participants (**89%**) showed an increase in parenting knowledge and skills, 41 of the 47 (**87%**) evidenced improved parent-child interaction, 43 of the 47 (**91%**) accessed or increased social support systems, and 29 of the 47 (**62%**) addressed barriers to self-sufficiency such as employment, training, or transportation.

COMMUNITY IMPACTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Teen Pregnancy Education and Prevention

In 2008, **234 participants** in the Teen Pregnancy and Prevention Panels were provided a forum in which they heard first hand about the realities of being a teen parent and the value of abstinence. The outcomes of these panels, conducted at schools throughout Steuben County, included **82%** of participants reporting being more likely to wait before becoming sexually active. **88%** of the 43 participants who indicated they would not choose abstinence reported they were more likely to use birth control due to hearing the Teen Panel Presentation. **98%** of all participants reported that they would improve or increase sexually responsible behavior.

Supporting Healthy Environments in Child Care

Steuben Child Care Project applied for and received funding from the Center of Excellence for Training and Research Translation to implement the Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC). The intent of the initiative was to promote healthy policies, practices and environments in child care by improving the nutritional quality of food served, amount and quality of physical activity, staff-child interactions, and facility nutrition and physical activity practices and environmental characteristics.

Assessments and evaluations of four Steuben County Child Care programs were conducted as they related to health and nutrition for children. **54** center staff attended 4 training sessions and received ongoing technical assistance from trained project staff. **79%** of participants felt that applying what they learned about **healthy eating** would benefit the children in their care and their families. **89%** felt that applying what they learned about **physical activity** would benefit the children in their care and their families. **80%** felt that applying what they learned about **childhood obesity** would benefit the children in their care and their families. **85%** of participants felt that applying what they learned about **personal health** would benefit the children in their care and their families.

Resources Mobilized to Address Needs

As a Community Action Agency, Pro Action receives federal dollars in the form of Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Funding. While CSBG represents only 3% of Pro Action's total funding, it plays a significant role in sustaining programs and services that meet vital needs of our customers and have an impact on our communities. CSBG funding is critical to mobilizing additional funds from local, state and federal sources for anti-poverty programming.

In 2008, the majority of CSBG funds were invested in the following programs

| <u>DEPARTMENT</u> | <u>CSBG INVESTMENT</u> | <u>OTHER MOBILIZED REVENUE</u> |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Family Development | \$111,465 | \$ 384,987 |
| Employment & Training | \$ 55,689 | \$ 1,188,831 |
| Yates Office for Aging | \$148,421 | \$ 1,069,867 |
| Yates Youth Services | \$ 3,947 | \$ 12,555 |
| TOTAL | \$319,522 | \$ 2,656,240 |

COMMUNITY IMPACTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

*“Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may not remember;
involve me and I’ll understand.” -- Chinese Proverb*

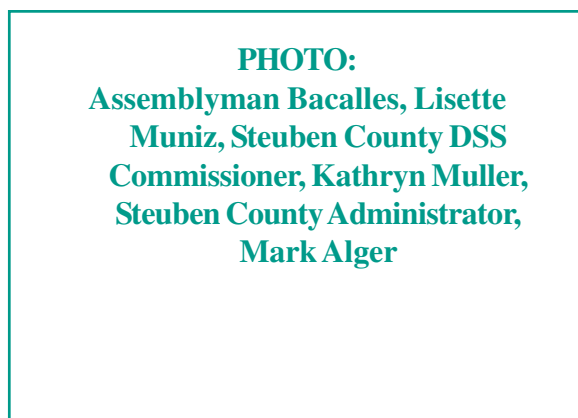
★ Steuben County

“Walk a Mile” Project ★

Beginning in January, 2008, Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc. participated in the month long “Walk a Mile” project. Pro Action collaborated with the Low Income Forum on Energy (LIFE) to facilitate this unique educational opportunity.

The program partnered with New York State Legislators and low-income constituents, pairing them one-on-one for a month of “walking a mile in each others’ shoes.” The goal of the project was to give policy makers a better understanding of the issues faced by families and help participating families better understand the policy making process.

A local customer of Pro Action’s Family Development Programs participated, along with New York State Assemblyman James Bacalles. The project began with a meeting between the two at a reception on Friday, January 18 and concluded with a wrap-up luncheon on March 25. In the meantime, the two met several times throughout the project at the Assemblyman’s offices and the customer’s home.



Left to right: Assemblyman Bacalles, Lisette Muniz, Steuben County Commissioner Kathryn Muller, Steuben County Administrator Mark Alger

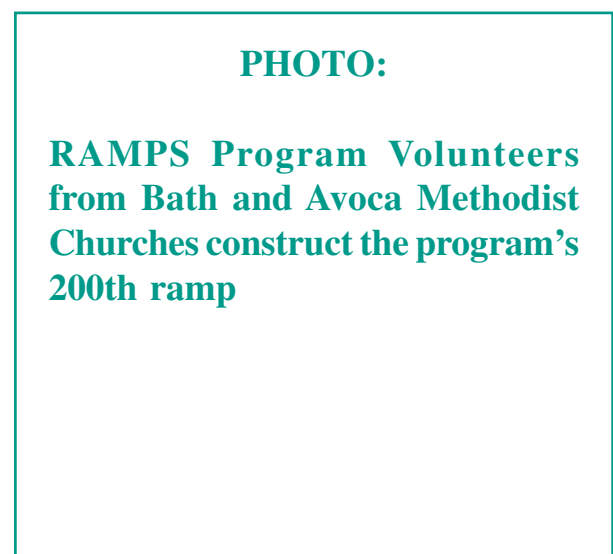
★ 200th Ramp! ★

On May 7, 2008, RAMPS program volunteers built their 200th ramp. This milestone corresponded with the 10th anniversary of the program and gave the building of this ramp special significance.

The ramp was constructed for a Corning family and provided a gentleman who was temporarily wheelchair bound, with the ability to exit his home to get to medical appointments and other activities.

This milestone was made possible thanks to contributions from Wegmans of Corning who provided healthy snacks for the volunteers and Corning Building Company who delivered building materials purchased at a discount.

The recipient of this ramp stated: *“I can’t thank you enough. This ramp is going to help us quite a bit.”*



RAMPS Program volunteers from the Bath and Avoca United Methodist Churches construct the program’s 200th ramp.

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

“...and when all those people believe in you, deep enough and strong enough, believe in you...it stands to reason that you yourself will start to see what everybody sees in you...and maybe even you can believe in you too.”

Larry Grossman/Hal Hackady ~ “Just One Person” from the musical “Snoopy.”

Strong Families / Strong Communities

54 families were enrolled in Family Development Adult Services in 2008. **53** of these families made progress toward or achieved self-reliance.

Family Development Workers assisted these families by helping them build on their strengths and set goals. Referrals to parenting education and services such as free home repairs, grief counseling and other services assisted these families in making progress toward becoming self-sufficient, contributing community members.

Quotes from Family Development Participants

“This program has helped me with parenting skills. This program has helped me set reachable goals and accomplish them, such as getting my eyes examined, going to mental health, applying for HEAP and so on.”

“I feel that Family Development has helped me to be more consistent to follow through with goals that I have set, such as dental help, mental health, GED, taking medication as prescribed. They have helped me feel more confident in myself and more relaxed and comfortable with daily life stressors.”

“I was having issues trying to blend my family from a new marriage. I had a new wife, 3 new step children and some pretty serious health issues. Since becoming involved with Family Development, I have learned to be a better father and husband and person. I look forward each day to being with my family. I took part in the Parenting With Heart class and learned many things about the way I was raised and the changes I want to make for my own kids. Family Development is a great asset to me and my family.”

A “Hand-Up” for Underserved Youth

In 2008, Pro Action’s Employment and Training Department, in partnership with the Hornell City School District and CSS Workforce New York, facilitated the implementation of the HOPES (Honing Our Pre-Employment Skills) Project. HOPES was implemented to bridge a gap in youth services that negatively impacted the ability of at-risk students to obtain and retain employment.

This new partnership provided basic employment skills training, in-school service learning opportunities, paid job experience, and mentoring support for **13 youth**, ages 14 to 17, attending the Hornell Alternative High School. All of the youth received mentoring support and **7** received paid or unpaid work experience.

Giving Kids a “Head Start”

529 children and families received services from Pro Action’s Head Start/UPK/Early Head Start programs in 2008. Results from the 2008 Child Outcomes Reports for 4 year old children demonstrated their improvement in many areas and their progress toward Kindergarten readiness:

* Literacy : **25%** at or above grade level in the fall, increased to **97%** in the spring.

* Letter Recognition: **19%** at or above grade level in the fall, increased to **87%** in the spring

* Early Math Skills: **18%** at or above grade level in the fall, increased to **91%** in the spring

* Science Skills: **25%** at or above grade level in the fall, increased to **94%** in the spring

* Social/Emotional Development: **30%** at or above grade level in the fall, increased to **97%** in the spring.

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Aging Services

Home Delivered Meal Programs

Home Delivered Meals in Steuben and Yates Counties provided **148,828 meals to 998 residents**. Of the **360** Steuben County HDM customers, **270 (75%)** confirmed that the program allowed them to remain living in their homes.

The New York State Partnership for Long Term Care estimated the annual cost for Nursing home care in New York's Western Region (which includes Steuben and Yates Counties) to be \$89,016 per person in 2008. The Home Delivered Meals program in Steuben County alone saved approximately **\$24,034,320** in long term care costs.



Seniors enjoy lunch and good company at a Steuben County Congregate Meal Site

Health Insurance Information/Counseling

Yates County Office for the Aging spent **316 hours counseling 294 Medicare beneficiaries, 31 caregivers and 6 agencies/employers regarding health insurance**. The primary concerns for most were Medicare Part D, NYS EPIC, private Medicare plans and questions about new Medicare benefits. Customer comments illustrate how beneficial this service was to seniors who need to understand their benefits:

“Medicare is an intimidating reality. This program helped me make sense of it all.”

“Turning 65 is scary and signing up for Medicare is confusing so we had many questions. The counselor answered them all thoroughly.”

Making Connections to Needed Services

During 2008, Yates NY Connects: Choices for Long Term Care had **257 requests** for information & referrals for long term care options, including inquiries about home and facility based services (**130**), consumer and caregiver supports (**48**), protective/preventive services (**11**), residential/housing options and supports (**54**), benefit information and counseling (**30**), and transportation assistance (**17**).

Bone Builders

Bone Builders exercise and education program, a component of Pro Action's Senior Wellness programs, had a **15% increase** in total enrolled participants in 2008, from **218 to 250**. Quarterly active participation **increased 22%** from **158 to 203**.

Of the 138 Bone Builders participants who completed evaluations, **77%** reported improved strength, **68%** had improved balance, **69%** improved flexibility, **60%** increased stamina and endurance, **46%** reported improved energy and **24%** reported having implemented a healthier diet.

Social activities increased for **58%** of the participants, **50%** reported an improved attitude, **42%** had an improved future outlook, **40%** reported improved mood, and **24%** reported increased independence.

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Youth Services

Helping Youth Help Others

Pro Action partnered with the Dundee Central School District and developed and implemented a **Community Service Experience Program**. The goal of the program was “to offer students an outside, diversified educational opportunity that would develop empathy, build character and selflessness through a program that encouraged positive citizenship, proactive assistance and a meaningful connection to enrich the lives of others.”

Results of the program’s first year were: **7 Seniors** completed **20 hours** of community service, **6 Juniors** completed **51.5 hours** of community service, **11 Sophomores** completed **64.5 hours** of community service, and **6 Freshmen** completed **45 hours** of community service.

Service by the students included food outreach at area churches, volunteering at the Dundee Public Library, serving at American Legion dinners, participating in the American Heart Association’s Neighbor Campaign, and baking for the Yates County Department of Social Services Christmas Fundraiser.

“We have a powerful potential in our youth and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends.”

~~ Mary McLeod Bethune

Youth Employment Services

In 2008, the YES Careers program served **134** eligible at-risk youth in Steuben and Schuyler Counties. Of the 134 youth served, **65** enrolled in occupational training, **15** enrolled in post-secondary education, **43** entered unsubsidized employment, and **98** worked toward pre-employment skill certification and/or a high school diploma or GED.

Celebrating Success

When “Beth” came to Pro Action’s Youth Employment Services, she was an 18 year old single mother of an infant and a 2 year old. She was homeless and had no income and no means of self-support.

A Youth Employment Counselor met with “Beth” and identified her current needs and provided her with referrals to appropriate community resources. The counselor also identified her basic skill levels and occupational interests.

“Beth” expressed interest in the health care field. Her counselor identified local training opportunities for her to become a Certified Nurse’s Aide and facilitated the application process and funding. “Beth” enrolled in a program, passed the course and state exam and obtained her NYS certification.

The counselor then arranged paid work experience for “Beth” with a local hospital, allowing her to gain experience and increase her chances of obtaining unsubsidized employment. The hospital was impressed by “Beth” and decided to hire her on a permanent basis after her work experience ended.

“Beth” obtained full time employment and moved from being reliant on others to becoming self sufficient. She became a positive contributor to her household and could support her two children. “Beth” set her sights on advancement and is considering LPN training opportunities.

Corporate Capacity Building

★ Strategic Focus 2008 ★

Funding from the United Way of the Southern Tier allowed Pro Action to offer its **Wealth Health Skills Program** to employees and other health & human service agencies. **289** individuals participated. Training topics included: *“Money Matters - How to get a handle on what you spend and prepare a budget”*; and *“Pay Yourself First - How to save money and the importance of doing so”*; and 8 others.

Lunchtime sessions were scheduled, making it convenient for employees to attend. **97%** of participants reported that, as a result of the training, they increased their income. **81%** reported increased savings and **45%** reported building and sustaining assets. Studies by the Benefits Research Institute have shown that employees who are financially healthy are more productive, absent less often and earn higher job performance ratings.

Community Action Professional

In 2008, Laura Rossman, Pro Action’s Associate Director, received her National Community Action Professional Credential from the National Community Action Partnership in Washington, D.C.

Community
Action Logo

The Promise of Community Action:

“Community Action changes people’s lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.”

Community Involvement

Serving on local and regional committees and boards of other organizations was an important way Pro Action employees gave back and stayed involved in 2008. Some of the employees volunteering service to other organizations included:

- David Hill - Institute for Human Services, Catholic Charities, Workforce New York Boards
- Todd Kesel - Institute for Human Services Board
- Dawn Brucie - United Way Central Steuben Cabinet, New York State Parenting Education Partnership Steering Committee
- Laura Rossman - Steuben Senior Services Fund, Greater Bath Area Chamber of Commerce
- Carla Hibbard - Bath Community Day Care Advisory Committee, Early Care & Learning Council
- Kellie Lockwood - Corning Community College Early Childhood Education Advisory Board, Region II Infant & Toddler Advisory Board
- Lisa Cogswell - New York State WIC Association Board, Healthy Families Steuben Advisory Board
- Liz Snyder - Wellness G.I.F.T.S.
- Elizabeth Jeffrey - Community Health and Wellness Committee
- Shirley Herrick - Wellness G.I.F.T.S.
- Mary Allison - Healthy Families Steuben Advisory Board, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions are run as causes and return to us as results. ~ Herman Melville

CORPORATE CAPACITY BUILDING

C.H.A.M.P.

CARING HEARTS AND MINDS OF PRO ACTION

C.H.A.M.P. expanded Pro Action's capacity to help people maintain self-sufficiency in 2008, especially those with incomes above normal guidelines for services. People struggling to bring necessities to their families found themselves unable to because of events beyond their control. Through referrals from local human service professionals, these individuals found that "where there is C.H.A.M.P., there is hope."

C.H.A.M.P. Made a Difference

The C.H.A.M.P. Program continued to offer help and hope to those in need in 2008, with just over 30 requests processed at approximately \$75.00 each. Benefits of the assistance made large impacts on many lives. It allowed families to find safer housing and supplied funds for prescriptions for sick children. Families experiencing the tragedy of a house fire were given necessities such as diapers and food. Local families were given help with utilities, ensuring their heat remained on.

Other ways C.H.A.M.P. helped in 2008 included assistance with gas expenses for mothers to commute to out of town doctor visits with sick children, and auto repairs and car insurance payments kept people working.

C.H.A.M.P.
LOGO

C.H.A.M.P. has forged new relationships with local agencies, offering help to customers of human service organizations throughout Steuben and Yates Counties and continued to be involved in special projects. Knitters from the Pro Action staff donated hours of time knitting blankets for babies born into the Family Development TASA program and to Early Head Start families. Hats, mittens and scarves were created and given to those in need.

Small Actions Have Big Impacts

Through the generosity of Pro Action employees, C.H.A.M.P. collected and delivered over 300 units of food for Catholic Charities Turning Point in 2008. These donations helped to serve the growing number of individuals who relied on our local food pantry.

The 2008 holiday season had the greatest amount of requests for assistance to date for the C.H.A.M.P. Program. Through a wonderful partnership with the local Heart to Heart Program, the Adopt-A-Family Christmas project provided nearly 70 local families with gifts, toiletries, and grocery store gift cards.

"The support from C.H.A.M.P. helped me remember the things that are really important. It made me stop and remember the blessings we have, rather than all the things that seem to be wrong! It helped me remember that the spirit behind Christmas isn't that we make our children happy with the gifts they have asked for. It's about reaching out to other people and lifting others up in their time of need. That's exactly what you have done for me."

"I am very thankful that there are people like you in the world. If there were more people like you, we really could make this a better place. Thank you very much."

Corporate donors were instrumental in building C.H.A.M.P.'s resources for 2008. Five Star Bank, Philips Lighting, Robert Relph Insurance Agency, First Niagara Risk Management, Inc. and many local businesses allowed us to assist more people. Additional funds were raised by the 4th Annual C.H.A.M.P. Classic Golf Tournament and from other generous individual donations.

2008 Resources and Distribution

2008 Revenue and Support

In 2008, a total of \$14,652,449 in financial resources came from Federal, State and County Funding, Grants, Donations, In-Kind Contributions, Non-Federal Cash Match, and other sources of revenue and support.

Federal Funding: \$7,450,580

State Funding: \$1,915,094

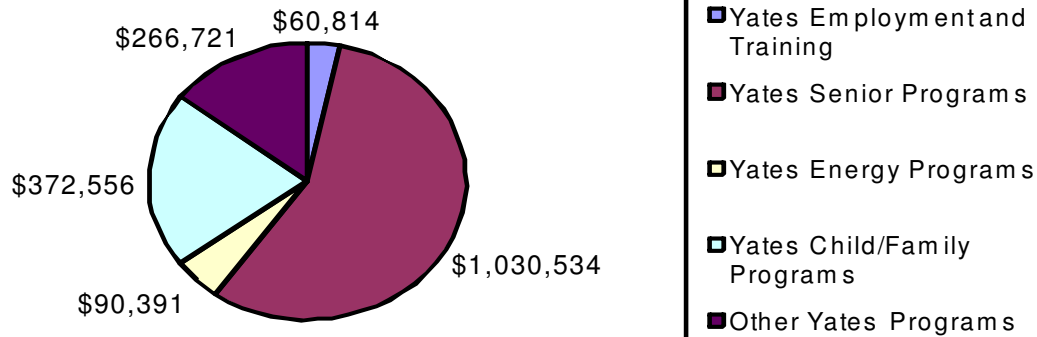
County Funding: \$3,069,026

Individual Donations/Fees: \$363,501

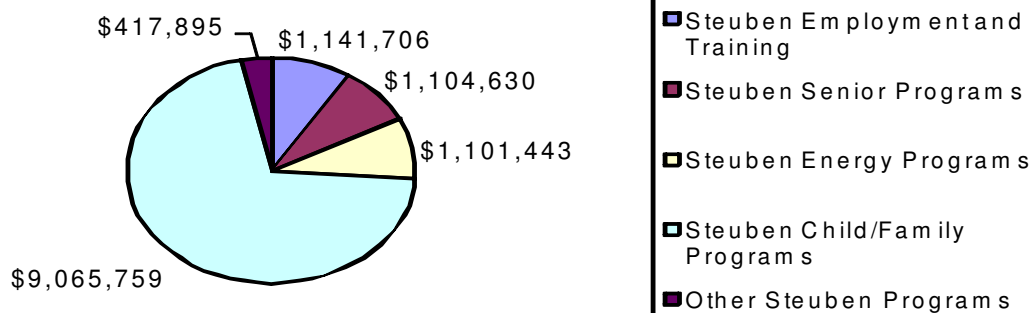
Other (Including In-Kind): \$1,854,248

Total: \$14,652,449

Yates County Programs



Steuben County Programs



The United Way of the Southern Tier provides financial support for the following Pro Action Programs: Senior Nutrition, Senior Wellness, Literacy Volunteers, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Panels, Family Enrichment Collaborative/Parenting Education Pilot.



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E-mail: proaction@proactioninc.com

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2008 Board of Directors

Steuben County

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Heather Kaszynski
Donald B. Creath

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Roberta H. Smith
Deborah A. Deats (Chair)
Frank Muccini

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Yates County

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