

# THE BCAP BUZZ

## BURLINGTON COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP, INC. QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

### A Message From the CEO



This edition of the BCAP Buzz will find each of us facing the COVID-19 pandemic that has caused an unexpected shift in how we, as a society, have traditionally interacted with one another daily. This new normal has resulted in strong efforts to flatten the curve of this virus which has resulted in thousands of our citizens being taken too soon from our communities. The BCAP organization, like many others who serve our community's most vulnerable citizens, had to decide how we would continue to serve those who depend on our services. The governance and leadership of BCAP did just that. We looked for ways to serve knowing that balancing the safety of customers and staff would have to be a top priority. The BCAP organization first looked for guidance from the Burlington County Health Department, followed by local, state, and federal officials. Those resources decided early on that "social distancing" would have an immediate impact on slowing down the spread of COVID-19. Their suggestions required stopping all public contact with our customers, resulting in closing our Head Start and Early Head Start early learning centers for the first time in our 54 years of operation. This would also require that all of our County school districts, along with their early learning programs, close as well. We knew that these actions would have an immediate impact on how our parents would continue meeting their outside obligations, therefore, we quickly began thinking about how we would engage this population that we serve. Within days, the Head Start and Early Head Start leadership created a plan that included: electronic lessons for all enrolled students, remote work-from-home capabilities for all staff members, virtual weekly conference calls between leadership and their teams, and even offering all children breakfast, lunch and snacks five days a week. Providing food to our children became an important mission for the organization considering that all of our children were receiving nutritious meals daily. Most importantly, it would release the financial burden that many of our families would face due to the pandemic causing a sharp rise in unemployment. The organization within a brief period of time followed by closing all our facilities to stop public contact for the health and safety of both staff and customers. The organization continues to serve those in need of heating assistance, homeless services, senior case management, affordable housing referrals and assistance, home visitation (child abuse and prevention), child care subsidy placement and referral, and support and oversight of family child care providers. This is all being done from 100% of our staff working remotely with the technology and support needed to remain connected and provide these services. This edition will hopefully bring a smile to your faces as you read through the articles to see how we continue to impact our community. The BCAP organization encourages each of you to go to our website, [www.bccap.org](http://www.bccap.org), for updates from all offered services and operations. The BCAP organization is confident that we will eventually get back to our "normal" and soon begin to re-open our facilities to all of those we serve. However, in the interim, we will continue to encourage hope in the midst of this pandemic. We know that together, as a community, State and nation, we will overcome our challenges of today and welcome our tomorrow with a renewed energy, resilience and perseverance.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ruben A. Johnson  
Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director

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## New This Quarter

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### United Way Grant

The United Way awarded BCAP's home visiting programs, Healthy Families-TIP, Parents as Teachers and Early Head Start, a School Readiness grant in 2018. The grant funding is being used to provide early literacy training for home visitors, and literacy activities and books for parents. The United Way recognizes that learning to read begins long before school starts. The home visitors provide child development information and family literacy support to their families. At BCAP's Annual Meeting in November 2019, the Community Partner Award was presented to Mariama Grimes, Managing Director of Early Learning and Suzanne O'Connor, Senior Advocate for Trauma Informed Care from the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey.

### Read Across America



BCAP Head Start and Early Head Start started the month of March celebrating Read Across America and Dr. Seuss' Birthday week. Our centers participated in a Dr. Seuss themed door/bulletin board decorating contest. Parents and the community were invited to participate by clicking "like" on their favorite(s) door/bulletin board on Facebook. The "likes" were added to our in-center ballots to determine our center winners! Thank you all for participating and please share the post with your friends!

### Infant Expansion Quality Initiative Grant

Families in New Jersey do not have enough access to quality care for infants and toddlers. Many struggle to find care for their children. If infant/toddler care is available, it may not be of the highest quality. This grant is designed to improve the quality of programs as well as increase infant slots and capacity by supporting child care providers in obtaining the necessary supplies, equipment, as well as minor repairs to meet essential health and safety requirements and standards.



Resources permitting, programs may be eligible for an additional \$100 monthly rate per infant for up to 12 months, while the child care program enrolls and participates in Grow NJ Kids, New Jersey Quality Rating Improvement Program. DFD staff will review this additional grant benefit with programs following completion of the grant requirements and enrollment in GROW NJ Kids. Grant Awardees are subject to on-site visits by DFD and the County's Infant Toddler Specialist.

### Families paying less in Copay for Child Care Subsidies

In January 2020, the State introduced a policy to reduce co-payments by 50 percent for those parents who receive child care subsidy payments, in an on-going effort to provide quality, affordable child care for all eligible families. This reduction took effect on March 1, 2020. Subsidy staff completed and mailed letters to over 200 Child Care Providers and over 900 Families who were impacted notifying them of the policy change.

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## BCAP's Response to COVID-19

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### Head Start and Early Head Start

Due to the worldwide outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the public health threat it has caused, BCAP Head Start and Early Head Start has implemented the temporary dismissal of all Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Burlington County as a strategy towards social distancing and to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19 in our communities. This decision was made through close collaboration and coordination and the recommendation of our local health officials, State government and the Office of Head Start (OHS), which has led to the large event cancellation decision of all Schools from March 16, 2020 to April 20, 2020 throughout the State of New Jersey. We also anticipate that the nature of these actions (e.g., geographic scope, duration) may change as the local outbreak situation evolves.

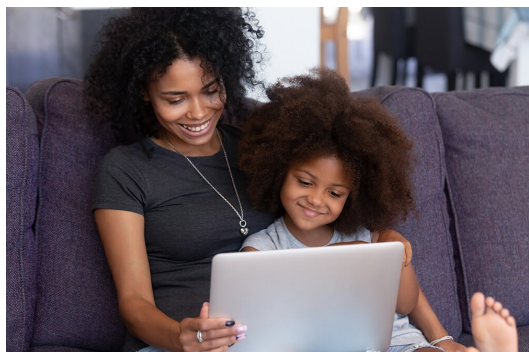
Our program has specifically implemented online classroom remote learning in the form of Parent Activity Letters( PAL) for each of the 22 days we are projected to be closed, and more (if needed) which will be distributed on our website [www.bccap.org](http://www.bccap.org) weekly under the Head Start Link to your Center or Home Visitor name which contain a minimum of 2 hours a day of learning activities plus a recommendation of a quality children's literature book so families can engage in read aloud and extended literacy activities daily with their children at home. If families don't have access to the internet the PAL's will be gathered into a package containing all the activities for the 22 days of closure and will be handed out at our centers by staff during our Wednesday meal delivery days for our enrolled students. Our Home Visitor's will deliver these packets to their families only after utilizing the COVID-19 Phone Screening Tool. Families were communicated instructions on how to retrieve their child's assigned remote learning through our one call system, social media, webpage and in some cases phone calls and texts.

The program has considered ways to distribute food to our enrolled students and decided on the options of a "grab-and-go" bagged lunch meal delivery which will be distributed at the centers for children (upon approval by CACFP). Meals will be distributed once weekly containing five days of breakfast, lunch and snack. Children who have been identified with food allergies and restrictions will be accommodated. Families will be able to drive by or go one at a time to receive food packages adhering to social distancing requirements. Due to the contagious spread of COVID-19, BCAP has implemented strategies to avoid people gathering in large groups or crowds.

BCAP Head Start and Early Head Start will continue providing necessary services for children with special healthcare needs. Our Family Partners, consultants, Disabilities Coordinator and Health and Nutrition Coordinator will be in contact remotely with all clients and are still conducting drop-in services by phone, referrals and resources to families with special needs. BCAP recognizes that our families are concerned about the impact Coronavirus (COVID-19) may have on this program. BCAP Head Start and Early Head Start programs have taken all necessary steps to prevent the introduction and spread of coronavirus among their staff, children, and families. Through collaboration and coordination with local and state health departments, the federal government and the OHS, we will continue to take steps to disseminate information and assistance about the disease and its potential transmission, severity, and other features, as well as what may happen in our communities and the United States. We here at BCAP Head Start and Early Head Start sincerely hope that our families, staff and community stay safe and healthy while maneuvering this "pandemic".

## BCAP's Response to COVID-19

### Home Visiting Continues Virtually



Healthy Families-TIP and Parents as Teachers home visitors are virtually visiting with their families during the COVID-19 crisis. Visits are being conducted via various virtual platforms such as FaceTime, WhatsApp, and Zoom. Home visitors are providing support and resource information to their families. If you are pregnant or have a child under 3 years old and are interested in services, please find us on [bccap.org](http://bccap.org) and call 609-288-3619.

### Housing and Home Energy Notice

The Housing and Home Energy programs are working remotely, assisting clients by phone and email. This flyer is displayed on the BCAP website, on Facebook, and posted at the Willingboro office location.

## \*\*DROP BOX\*\*

### ON THE SIDE OF BUILDING

\* MAKE SURE APPLICANT Name & SOCIAL SECURITY# IS ON DOCUMENTS\*

- 1) **SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS** - ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS  
 \*CURRENT MEDICARE CARDS ARE NOT ACCEPTIBLE DOES NOT SHOW SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
- 2) **UTILITY BILLS** - ALL THAT APPLY TO YOUR HOUSEHOLD  
 \*PSEG            \*JCPL            \*SOUTH JERSEY GAS  
 \*FOSSIL FUEL RECEIPT  
 \*ATLANTIC CITY ELECTRIC \*NEW JERSEY NATURAL GAS
- 3) **HOUSEHOLD INCOME** - ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD OR OLDER FOR THE LAST 30 DAYS.  
**\*\*EXCEPTIONS**  
 CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD RECEIVING SSI/SSD BENEFITS  
 FULL TIME STUDENTS - PROVIDE SCHOOL DOCUMENT SHOWING COLLEGE AND STUDENT'S NAME, FULL TIME STATUS 2020 SPRING, CREDITS TAKEN.
- 4) **PROOF OF RESIDENCE**  
 \***HOMEOWNER** - MORTGAGE, TAX BILL/NOTICE OR DEED  
 \***RENTERS** - ORIGINAL LEASE, LEASE RENEWAL, RENTAL ASSISTANCE LETTER/VOUCHER SHOWING AMOUNT YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO PAY

ANY QUESTIONS, YOU MAY CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 609-747-4743 OR  
 EMAIL US AT [HOMEENERGY@BCCAP.ORG](mailto:HOMEENERGY@BCCAP.ORG) OR BY FAX#609-835-9607



## Recent Events

### New Year, New You



January 23, 2020— The Women’s Resource Center held a workshop for women of Burlington County that focused on Health, Nutrition, and Wellbeing. They shared “girl talk”, information and resources, and giveaways.

### Credit & Investment Workshop for Men

February 6, 2020— The Civic Engagement & Community Empowerment Program held a men’s workshop that discussed important self-sufficiency topics such as, building personal credit, buying your first home, business credit, and real estate investing.

### Kids Cooking Classes

Every Other Friday— The Civic Engagement & Community Empowerment Program held several cooking classes for children, which taught them important skills about healthy eating and assisting in the kitchen.



### Basic Rights in Special Education

March 10, 2020— The Civic Engagement & Community Empowerment Program held a presentation to provide families with an introduction to their rights and responsibilities as parents of children with special needs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the New Jersey Code, and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Parents were encouraged to identify dreams and goals for their children, understand laws and learn advocacy strategies that will help them help their children reach those goals.

### Men's Workshop - Discussion on Entrepreneurship



March 12, 2020— The Civic Engagement & Community Empowerment Program held a workshop to discuss the opportunities in entrepreneurship and “side hustles” with men within the community.



**Now enrolling  
FREE Preschool for  
children  
Birth to 5 years!**  
For more info call  
**(609) 261-2323**

**HEAD START IS STILL  
ACCEPTING STUDENT  
ENROLLMENTS!**

If you know a family who would benefit from enrolling their child(ren) into the Head Start program, please direct them to our website at:

[www.bccap.org/headstart](http://www.bccap.org/headstart)

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## Behind the Scenes

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We are always busy making improvements to help BCAP run more smoothly and modernly.

Below are some of the changes that have been implemented this quarter:

- BCAP computers throughout all locations have been tagged and accounted for in our new inventory tracking system.
- Preparations for the two new classrooms at the Nesbit Center were completed, including security systems, wiring and connectivity.
- The BCAP website has been updated to reflect the new name change and logo. The domain name, “bccap.org” will remain the same for the time being.



We continue to review BCAP’s technological and operational needs and will be implementing more changes in the near future.



## Technical Support Contacts



### Computer, internet, and email issues:

**SHOCK**  
I.T. S U P P O R T

Contact Shock I.T. Support  
Email: [help@ShockIT.com](mailto:help@ShockIT.com)  
or call: 267-554-7070

This form should only be used by managerial staff. It is on Office 365 and sends the information to BCAP staff members who will make arrangements with Shock I.T. for email and computer set-up. The recipient will also set up the staff member's extension. It is advised that this form be completed before the new employee's first day.

If you need a link to the form, please contact Sharon Forman at [sharonf03@bccap.org](mailto:sharonf03@bccap.org).

### Telephone and voicemail issues:

**Telesystem**

Contact Telesystem  
Email: [vipsupport@telesystem.us](mailto:vipsupport@telesystem.us)  
Always CC: [customerservice@stratusip.net](mailto:customerservice@stratusip.net)  
or call: 888-808-6111, option 1

**Please note:** If you need to reset your voicemail PIN, change the name on an extension, or change how you receive voicemail messages, Sharon Forman, Director of Administrative Services, has access to these settings. In her absence, you may contact Telesystem for assistance.

In the event that 1SEO or Telesystem need approval to do a repair, please have them contact Manvir Gill, COO.



### New Computer Request Form

We have implemented a new procedure for ordering computers. All computer requests must be made via the *New Computer Request* form *before* submitting a Purchase Order Request. This form allows us to streamline the

computer ordering process and keep the inventory list updated. All new computers will be ordered from the Administrative Office and delivered there for initial inventory tagging. From there it will be delivered to the program it was ordered from for set-up. A link to the form was e-mailed to all Program Directors on February 13, 2020.

If you did not receive that e-mail, please contact Sharon Forman.

### To Set Up a New Employee



For new employees who need email, computer, and telephone set-up please remember to use the *New Employee Set-Up Form*.

## OUR MISSION

The Burlington Community Action Partnership, Inc. exists to combat the causes and reduce the effects of poverty in Burlington County. It fulfills the purpose by:

- Facilitating a community-based capacity for the human needs planning process, which focuses program strategies on promoting self-sufficiency among low-income people.
- Removing barriers to self-sufficiency among low-income people in the organization and operation of institutions and programs.
- Maximizing participation of low-income people in the development and implementation of programs and projects and in the decision-making process of institutions affecting their lives.
- Testing new approaches to solving basic causes of poverty provided that they do not involve BCAP as a long-term, direct service provider.
- Supporting self-help groups and other cooperative efforts among low-income people.
- Working to better organize services related to the needs of the poor.
- Broadening resource base of programs directed to the elimination of poverty.
- Providing safe, decent, affordable housing to low- and moderate-income families.
- Providing housing counseling services.

## Our Programs

- ◇ First-Time Homebuyer Education and Pre-Purchase Counseling
- ◇ Permanent Housing with Supportive Services
- ◇ Homelessness Prevention Program
- ◇ Foreclosure Prevention and Foreclosure Intervention Services
- ◇ Housing Counseling Services
- ◇ Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)
- ◇ Senior Apartments with Supportive Services
- ◇ Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- ◇ Universal Service Fund (USF)
- ◇ Healthy Families-TIP
- ◇ Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- ◇ Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)
- ◇ New Jersey Cares For Kids (NJCK)
- ◇ Work First New Jersey (WFNJ)
- ◇ Grow NJ Kids
- ◇ Family Child Care
- ◇ Head Start and Early Head Start Child Development
- ◇ Women's Resource Center (WRC)
- ◇ Civic Engagement and Community Partnerships

For more information about the above programs, please visit our website at [www.bccap.org](http://www.bccap.org).

### Special thanks to our funding sources

BURLINGTON COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - BURLINGTON COUNTY OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES - NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS - NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES - NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF STATE - NEW JERSEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT - UNITED WAY OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA AND SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY



**Burlington Community Action Partnership, Inc.**  
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Thank you to all who contributed to this issue of *The BCAP Buzz!*  
If you'd like to submit an announcement, event, or program news for the next issue, please contact Michelle Hewitt at [mihewitt@bccap.org](mailto:mihewitt@bccap.org).