



***"A Community In Action, Planting Seeds of Success"***



**St. James Parish Government,  
Department of Human Resources, Community Action Agency  
& St. James Council On Aging**

***"One Department, Many Services"***

**2016 Annual Report**





## ***A Message from the Director & Assistant Director***

We continue to work towards growing an agency that addresses the needs of the low-income and disadvantage populations of St. James Parish. 2016 was a year in which we planted seeds to rebuild, reinvent and reinvest in our residents, staff and agency.

With accountability and delivery of service on the forefront of our minds, we enhanced our policies and procedure handbook, updated the strategic plan, developed a training manual and implemented our board roles and responsibilities guide. These measures were taken to ensure we are in the position to provide quality services to our residents. It has been said in order for a seed to grow, it has to be nurtured. The updating and development of these documents will lead us to branching out pathways that lead to self-sufficiency for our clients.

We are working with social, civic, education, public and faith based organizations to remove barriers faced by our community. In 2016 our internal statistics show an increase in HiSET attainment, job placement and post-secondary enrollment rates. These accomplishments can be attributed to sound partnerships and vested residents. Our poverty rate is slightly higher; however our per capita has seen a slight increase. We continue to see a need for the availability of affordable rental units, homeownership, employment, and educational opportunities. We will continue to work with families as they identify needs and focus on solutions that will assist in their development.

Grant awards, partnerships and local funding have made it possible to afford our residents with an array of initiatives and programs. Based on data and client success stories shared in this report, we are sprouting in the right direction to eliminate poverty. Continued assistance from our dedicated board members, involved governing board, forward thinking Parish President, supportive community partners and our committed staff makes this possible. We will continue to embrace our mission statement which is “to empower individuals and families to self-sufficiency by providing resources and services to improve their quality of life.”

We invite you to take notice of our growth as we share with you our year in 2016. It has been a pleasure to serve our residents.

“Like branches of a tree, we grow in different directions but our roots remain the same.” Author unknown

***Mrs. Bedar Warren, Director***

***Mrs. Ingrid Leblanc, Assistant Director***

## **2016 Highlights**



***“Plant a seed and watch it grow.”***

- Composed a Board Training Handbook
- Developed & updated Department Policies & Procedures Handbook
- Received King David’s “Making A Difference” Award
- Enhanced collaborations with local social and civic organizations
- Recorded approximately 8,933 volunteer hours
- Celebrated Community Action Month inclusive of all populations
- Hosted 1<sup>st</sup> Back to School Teen Conference
- Hosted 1<sup>st</sup> annual formal for disabled residents
- Provided the Diabetes Self Management Workshop that improved the health of 15 individuals
- Enrolled 20 seniors in employment training program providing 4,054 hours of community services
- Provided 46,000 meals to homebound residents
- Provided 23,000 congregate meals
- Renovated Vacherie Center
- Relocated Convent Senior Center
- Received Community Transportation (CTAA) Expo Scholarship from Louisiana RTAP
- Implemented a new out of parish route
- 6 youth received OSHA certification
- 21 youth received NCCER certifications
- 18 youth enrolled in post secondary classes
- 6 participants earned their HiSET
- Provided commodities to approximately 60 families



# Grassroots

## History & Purpose

In the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared War on Poverty, calling community organizations to action to help eradicate poverty by enabling low-income families to attain skills and knowledge to secure opportunities to become self-sufficient. The Act's mission involved the entire community becoming more responsive to the needs and interests of the poor by mobilizing resources. DHR has been fighting this war since 1965. Instead of focusing on a single symptom or cause of poverty, for decades DHR has identified and addressed the changing needs of the community, including programs that target youth, seniors, disabled, and low-income residents of St. James Parish.

DHR is the only established agency in the community that offers comprehensive social services to local residents. In 2016, "Community Action Agency" was reattached to the agency's name to clearly reaffirm its purpose to the community.

### 6 National Goals of Community Action

**Goal 1.** Low-income people become more self-sufficient. **(Family)**

**Goal 2.** The conditions in which low-income people live are improved. **(Community)**

**Goal 3.** Low-income people own a stake in their community. **(Community)**

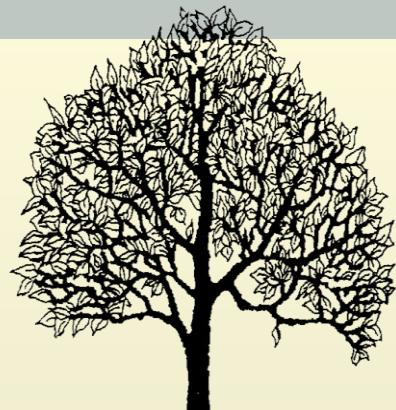
**Goal 4.** Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved. **(Agency)**

**Goal 5.** Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results. **(Agency)**

**Goal 6.** Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems. **(Family)**



***Mission: "To empower individuals and families to self-sufficiency by providing resources and services to improve their quality of life."***



## Key Programs

**Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)**

**Emergency Food & Shelter (EF&S)**

**YouthBuild**

**AmeriCorps**

**CareerPaths**

**Caring Hands**

**(Huey & Angelina Wilson)**

**Financial Fitness**

**Options**

**Get Fit**

**Title V**

**Rural Transportation**

**Job Access for Reverse Commute**

**New Freedom**

**Housing Counseling**

**Homeowner Rehabilitation**

**Housing Preservation**

**Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)**

**Diabetes Self Management**

**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**

**LA Decentralized Arts Grant**

**Susan G. Komen**

**Disaster Recovery Assistance**

**Safe Homes (LCTF)**

**Day of Caring**

**Toy & Coat Drive**





# Funding Streams & Donors

Department	Programs	2016 Award	2015 Award
<b>Special Programs</b>	Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	\$110,032	\$102,450
	Emergency Food & Shelter (EF&S)	\$14,607	\$26,500
	Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$64,274	\$59,200
	Entergy	\$3,500	\$3,500
	Housing Counseling	\$6,825	\$7,500
	Huey & Angelina Wilson Foundation Grant	\$15,000	-----
<b>Housing</b>	Housing Preservation	\$49,675	-----
	Home Rehabilitation Grant (HRP)(Continuation)	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
	YouthBuild (Continuation)	\$900,000	\$900,000
<b>YouthBuild</b>	AmeriCorps	\$35,000	\$33,000
	Title V	\$173,832	\$173,800
	GOEA	\$260,786	\$264,700
<b>Elderly</b>	Peoples Health	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Section 5311 Transit	\$279,132	\$339,350*
	Job Access Reverse Commute	\$141,000	\$40,200
<b>Transit</b>	New Freedom	\$120,653	\$150,000
	Transit Scholarship (DOTD)	\$379	\$1,100
	Capital Area United Way Disaster Assistance (Tornado Recovery) Disaster Assistance (Flood Recovery)	\$53,000 \$50,000 \$20,000	\$21,200
<b>Special Projects</b>	Bayou Regional Arts Council	\$1,700	\$1,100
	Bayou Region Affiliate of Susan G. Komen	\$1,830	\$2,147
	Children's Trust Fund Grant	\$11,000	-----
<b>Donations</b>	Motiva	\$7,000	\$7,000
	Toy & Coat Drive	\$2,000	\$3,625
<b>Approximate Totals:</b>		\$3,322,225	\$2,798,022

## Funding Percentages



- Federal Resources
- State Resources
- Local Resources

\*Corrected Total

# 2016 Service Outcomes

Service Category	Service Description	Number Served	Service Description	Number Served
Employment & Supports	Unemployed & Obtained a job	18	Completed GED/HiSET and received certification	6
	Obtained skills for employment	36	Completed post secondary and obtained a certificate or diploma	18
	Employed and maintained a job for at least 90 days	21	Obtained non-emergency LIHEAP or LIHEAP Crisis services	256
Economic Asset Enhancement and Utilization	Tax Preparations	260	Number demonstrating ability to complete and maintain a budget for over 90 days	4
	Enrollment in Lifeline	4	Rent	9
Emergency Assistance	Food	2	Mortgage	9
	Fuel/Utility	63	Car Repair	4
	Temporary Shelter	11	Medical Care	3
	Disaster Relief	34		
Independent Living	Homemaker Services	23		
Community Improvement & Revitalization	Safe and affordable housing preserved or improved through weatherization or rehabilitation	16	Accessible or Increased Educational Opportunities	18
Family Supports	Obtained care for child or other dependent	25	Obtained access to reliable transportation or driver's license	24

**DHR assisted approximately 864 individuals and families to prevent or eliminate poverty.**



# Special Programs

## Disaster Recovery-Beyond the Storms

On February 23, 2016, an EF-3 tornado swept through the community of Convent, tragically claiming the lives of two individuals. The powerful storm mangled the area within minutes. Approximately 400 homes were affected experiencing minor damages to total destruction. Within hours of the storm, DHR's staff were out assessing the damages and handing out donated supplies. St. James Council on Aging was awarded \$50,000 through Capital Area United Way (CAUW) and assisted approximately 34 families. Additionally, approximately 300 families received emergency food, water, cleaning supplies and clothing through generous donations provided by volunteers and sponsors. Services provided included short-term rental assistance, transportation vouchers, security and utility deposits, medication, standard appliances, furniture, etc.

In August 2016, approximately 20 families were affected by a major flood event. CAUW awarded \$20,000 to assist flood victims. DHR staff, YouthBuild participants, community partners, and volunteers worked diligently to quickly stabilize families during both events.



*“To be a part of an agency that is planting seeds for a better future is a blessing.”* –Milton Cayette, COA/CSBG Board Chairperson



Tornado Disaster



Assessment



Recovery



Donations for Impacted Residents

- **Over 256 families received LIHEAP & client education services**
- **Commodities was provided to approximately 60 families**
- **Approximately 260 tax returns were completed through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)**
- **49 individuals participated in financial literacy training**
- **Nearly 250 children and families were assisted through the annual Toy & Coat Drive**



*“Don’t judge each day  
by the harvest you  
reap but by the seeds  
that you plant.”*  
—Robert Louis  
Stevenson



### Success Story

A single female, living with her mother and brother, was employed part-time at a local hardware store. She wanted to become more independent and financially stable to enhance her living conditions. After receiving assistance in obtaining a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) card for employment through the CSBG program, the young lady was hired full-time at a local industry plant. She now has more income to assist her household and is saving for her own apartment.



# YouthBuild

Over the years, the YouthBuild program has helped approximately 44 students achieve numeracy gains, 27 attain GED/HiSET certifications, 67 earn NCCER construction certifications, 8 enroll in post-secondary education and 30 find gainful employment. Additionally, a total of 8 homes were renovated with nearly 8,000 community service hours completed.

This success continued in 2016 as 6 participants earned their HiSET certificates, 18 youth enrolled in post secondary classes, 21 youth received NCCER certifications, 6 received OSHA certification with approximately 3,000 AmeriCorps community service hours completed.



Tornado Recovery



PHA Construction



Welding



Scaffolding



7 Community Service "We Care"



YouthBuild Closing Ceremony



"Keep America Beautiful" Project

*"I am sure that if you plant the trees back again, it will do nothing but good."*  
-Michael Fish

## Success Story

A young man came to YouthBuild as a troubled youth. He tried many times to get his HiSET, but, to no avail. With needing special accommodation for testing, he was not successful after 5 attempts. With a certificate of completion, he took an interest in welding to acquire a job. As of today, he has completed and tested with favorable results, 9 welding certificates. He has acquired all certificates needed to become a top welder on any job, at any site. Since then, the young man secured full-time employment, averaging just under \$1000 weekly.



# Elderly

The Department of Human Resources' Elderly Department services approximately 750 seniors each year with over 10 programs.

In 2016, through a grant funded by the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs (GOEA), nearly 46,000 homebound meals and 23,000 congregate meals were provided.

The Diabetes Self Management Workshop was a continued success as 15 participants completed the 6 week course. After completion, 90% of participants saw a significant improvement in their blood pressures and weight. Also, while participating in the workshop, participants started a bike riding group to help further reach and maintain their health goals.

The Title V-Senior Community Service Employment program, that employs seniors, was highlighted as participants enrolled in a day long computer class at River Parishes Community College (RPCC). "College staff and students helped seniors learn how to use the computer, mouse, and to navigate the computer's interface." The event was noted in the [TheCreole.com](http://TheCreole.com).

*"It's funny; as I get older,  
I'm reverting to my roots-  
I want to plant stuff."*

*-Melissa McCarthy*



Harvest Festival



Carnival Social



Dedication of Convent Senior Center



Black History Program



"Get Fit" Exercise Program



Diabetes Self Management Workshop



Senior Olympics



Holiday Celebrations



# CareerPaths



***Education proves to be the key to success" as many are taking advantage of the CareerPaths program.***

**In 2016, 18 participants enrolled in post secondary education. 7 became gainfully employed.**



**Welding Participants**

## **Success Story**

A 22 year old that was currently working a minimum wage job applied to participate in the CareerPaths program. During the intake process, he expressed his desire to obtain a trade and become skilled with the hopes of beginning a career. Through this intake process, he became interested in the two week accelerated scaffolding program, which he entered and became a certified scaffold builder. After completing the class, the young man entered into the workforce shortly after as a scaffold builder and has gained steady employment. He was able to make his first big purchase, a brand new car and now has stable transportation to and from work. He is focused and determined to continue his new journey as a certified scaffold builder.



## **Success Story**

An 18 year old young adult dropped out of high school and enrolled in St. James Parish Youthbuild Program. After completion, he enrolled in the two week scaffold program at River Parishes Community College in Sorrento, LA through the Career Paths program. Upon completion of the scaffold program in February 2016, the young adult entered into the workforce as a scaffold builder and attained gainful employment. He is currently still employed and has improved his quality of life. The participant expressed his thanks and gratitude for the CareerPaths program, as he feels without this opportunity he wouldn't have had the opportunity to get and stay on track of becoming self-sufficient.

# Transit



*Public transportation continues to play a vital role in bridging and eliminating gaps in services and resources. In 2016, St. James Transit was still “On the Roll”! as a new route to Ascension Parish began, thus increasing passenger access to resources.*



## 2016 Transit Scholarship Award from CTAA Expo



*During the month of May (Community Action Month), the “Try Transit” campaign was launched in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Transportation, highlighting the many benefits of public transportation.*

*Safety has always been a top priority of the agency, thus internal safety trainings have increased.*

*St. James Transit is a member of the River Parish Transit Authority and South Central Planning & Development Commission Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and actively participates in comprehensive strategic transportation planning to meet the needs of residents.*

# New Funding

During the 2016 Tornado and Flood events, Capital Area United Way quickly came to the aid of those affected by disasters in St. James Parish, donating \$50,000 (tornado), and \$20,000 (flood) respectively. In addition, the agency awarded St. James Council on Aging \$53,000 in support of 4 programs designed to prevent homelessness, increase knowledge and improve the health of residents, promote asset building and offers long-term stability and positive outcomes.



Community Partner

*“A man doesn’t plant a tree for himself. He plants it for posterity.” –Alexander Smith*

## Financial Fitness: Increase Financial Skills

Provides a series of financial literacy workshops to give low income individuals and families the opportunity to gain asset building strategies to obtain financial stability, become homeowners, and/or maintain stable housing. Participants save a portion of their income with opportunity for the agency to provide a dollar for dollar match of funds not to exceed \$200.00. Savings will be spent on higher education, household appliances, transportation, or other resources that build long-term assets.

## Get Fit: Health Education and Prevention

Assists approximately 150 seniors to become and remain active, educating them so that they are able to live healthy lifestyles in their homes as they age. Experienced fitness instructors conduct aerobics and “Sit and Fit” exercise classes designed to increase muscular strength, flexibility, balance, and relaxation techniques. Elderly staff conduct health assessments and provide referrals as needed. The program helps seniors maintain independence with minimal assistance.

## CareerPaths: Prepare for College, Work and Life

Prepares low performing youth and/or adults, age 16 years or older, for college and or a career path. Participants receive tuition assistance, work and school supplies, work credential assistance such as Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) cards, driver’s license, birth certificate, stipends through community service projects, etc. Supportive services such as financial literacy, and budgeting are also provided.

## Options: Long-Term Support Services

Provides homeless individuals and families or individuals in imminent danger of becoming homeless with decent, safe, and sanitary housing while assisting them to save at least 30% of their household income. Direct services include security deposits, utility payments/deposits, rental payments, etc.

## Huey & Angelina Wilson Foundation Grant

Provides emergency assistance to individuals, particularly seniors, disabled, and low income, with documented emergencies to alleviate conditions associated with poverty, homelessness, disaster, and isolation. Additionally, case management and supportive services will be provided to minimize or prevent reoccurrence, thus promoting long term stability.

# Special Projects



## “Beat the Heat” Emergency Preparedness Event

DHR continues its responsiveness to the needs of the community by conducting the 2016 “Beat the Heat” –Get Ready Emergency Preparedness event.

Registered seniors received energy saving tips along with emergency preparedness suggestions. The event was sponsored by Entergy and Mosaic.



## Susan G. Komen “Pretty in Pink” Fashion Show

The Department of Human Resources was awarded a grant from the Bayou Affiliate of Susan G. Komen. A fashion show was held in conjunction with the Elderly Health Fair. Attendees participated in a breast health workshop presented by St. James Hospital, received preventive health educational material, and were pampered at the nail painting station. Additional outreach was conducted at the Public Housing Authority; in total nearly 300 residents benefited.



*“If every plant and flower were found in all places the charm of locality would not exist. Everything varies, and that gives the interest.” –Richard Jefferies*

With funds awarded from the Louisiana Decentralized Arts Grant through the Bayou Regional Arts Council, DHR Planning Department hosted a “Disable the Label” event to promote inclusion of individuals with disabilities and bring arts and culture awareness to the community. The event, themed “**Just Beat It**”, included entertainment from a live band, Mr. Dave James of Young Audiences. When the band kicked off, playing hits from Michael Jackson and other favorites, the place came alive! Filled with music and love, residents young and old, disabled and non-disabled, and from diverse backgrounds, seized the opportunity to enjoy one another through conversations, song, and dance. Nearly 100 guests attended including St. James ARC, Donaldsonville Area ARC, South Central Louisiana Human Services Authority, and St. James Council on Aging .The event was held at Vacherie Senior Center.



# Youth Commission

In 2016, St. James Parish Youth Commission demonstrated an undeniable spirit of volunteerism as the group earned over 450 service hours and hosted several exciting events to benefit the community. In February 2016, the Youth Commission hosted its first Winter Formal to celebrate and promote inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, in August 2016, the group hosted the “R.E.A.L. Talk” Teen Summit, an informational and inspirational workshop for youth aged 12 to 18 years old. Thirteen experienced, motivational guest speakers spoke about different topics to benefit youth, having healthy **R-relationships** with themselves and others, **E-ducation**, how to become a successful student while experiencing challenges in life. **A-cohol**, effects of drugs and alcohol on the body, how substance abuse affects relationships, and how to be responsible and accountable. Finally, the **L-life** topic was filled with stories and lessons learned of the guest speakers, showing youth that life happens but everything can always get better if they have a strong support system and make the right decisions. The event included a performance by local teen, K. Levy, who’s message was to “Shock the World” through positive actions.

The Youth Commission attended Legislative Day at the State Capitol, a career fair, the Back Pack Giveaway, participated in summer employment along with 18 other community service functions, attending bi-weekly meetings to advocate for youth and to learn principles of government each month.

*“Always do your best.  
What you plant now  
will harvest later.”*  
-Og Mandino



Halloween 2016



Winter Wonderland Formal



“R.E.A.L. Talk” Teen Summit



Back Pack Giveaway



Board Meetings



Legislative Day

# The sunshine and water that helps us grow...

## Partners and Donors

Amato, Jared  
Amato, Jason  
Cardel Michaels Higher Heights Baptist Church  
Capital Area United Way  
Catholic Charities  
City of Kentwood  
Copeland's  
Daryl Dispensfire  
David Glass Chateau St. James  
Entergy  
First Baptist Church Gramercy  
Furniture and Mattress Depot  
Gleaming of the World Roy St. Martin  
Gramercy VFW  
Huey & Angelina Wilson Foundation  
Kim Bourgeois LFCU  
Larry Cupper Louisiana Baptists Disaster Relief  
Laura Plantation  
Louisiana Children's Trust Fund  
Louisiana Workforce Commission  
Millennium Galvanizing  
Mooyah's  
Mount Triumph Baptist Church-Donaldsonville  
People's Health  
River Parishes Community College  
River Parish Eye Care  
Rotolo's  
South Central Louisiana Human Services Authority  
St. James Parish Hospital  
St. James Parish ARC  
St. James Public Housing Authority  
St. Joseph Church  
St. Vincent de Paul  
Stein's Cleaners  
The Mosaic Company  
The Zoe Company  
Vacherie Loans Inc.  
Vacherie Rams  
Washington Parish Fireman's Association  
West St. James Pharmacy



*“He that plants trees loves others  
besides himself.”*  
—Thomas Fuller

*“Trees are very essential to our  
environment. They provide many things  
which are useful for our daily lives.”*

*The generosity of donors and partners  
helps the agency provide essential  
resources and services to St. James  
Parish residents.*

*Individuals and families gain knowledge  
and skills that promote independence and  
afford the opportunity to obtain financial  
stability.*

*Like a tree, our committed partners and  
donors have immense value. For that we  
say,  
“THANK YOU!” for your continued  
support!*

*“Far and away the best prize that life has to  
offer is the chance to work hard at work  
worth doing.” ~ Theodore Roosevelt  
Via Timothy Roussel, Parish President*



# Special Recognition to our Volunteers

## 2016 Advisory Board Members



### Council On Aging/

### Community Services Block Grant Board

Batiste, Agnes  
Batiste, Denesia  
Batiste, Donald  
Best, Rose (Vice Chairperson)  
Brathwaite, Dianne  
Brignac, Betty  
Cayette, Milton (Chairperson)  
Fields, Augustine  
Folse, Vivian  
Gauthie, David  
Jones, Carlton  
Keller, Gufielle  
Kirklin, Cathy  
Kraemer, Eddie (Parish Council)  
Lewis, Marie  
Lewis, Sandra  
Martin, Willy (Sheriff)  
Mitchell, Brenda (Secretary)  
Mitchell, Emil  
Roussel, Timothy P. (Parish President)  
Roy, Auga  
St. Pierre, Patrick (Mayor of Lutcher)  
Schexnayder, Darlene  
Waguespack, Glenn (Assessor)  
Walker, Mary (Justice of Peace)  
Walker, Keri  
Woods, Barbara  
Young, Rose



***“One, Department, Many Services”***

### Youth Commission Board

Allen, Timothy  
Bailey, Breanna (Chairperson)  
Faucheaux, Jenna  
Forsythe, Zoe (Vice-Chairperson)  
Gibson, Daija  
Lemar, Seantrell  
Lundy, Garland Lane (Secretary)  
Rocquin, Victoria  
Washington, Alexis

### Emergency Food & Shelter Board

Alessi, Merri  
Bodin, Tammie  
Jones, Carlton  
Joseph, Schiwyn  
Louque, Eugene  
Miller, Albertine  
Mitchell, Emil  
Narcisse, SueWon  
Rapp, Nathaniel  
Sager, Ellen  
Clark, Rubenstein (Chairperson)  
Schexnayder, Darlene  
Warren, Bedar

### Area Agency on Aging Board

Boudreaux, Anthony  
Brass, Ken (Vice  
Chairperson/Parish Council)  
Kraemer, Eddie (Parish Council)  
Coleman, Eva (Chairperson)  
Gaudin, Ruth  
Geason, Albert  
Jones-Roy, Romona (Secretary)  
Louque, Ryan  
Oubre, Anna Lea  
Narcisse, Sue Won  
Reulet, Audrey  
Roberts, Gloria  
Scott, Gloria  
Zeringue, Mary