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Hunger!! Do You Know Where Your Next Meal Is Coming From??

The Peoria Area Food Bank (PAFB) has been hard at work in addressing food insecurities in our community in a variety of ways. Food insecurity is defined as, "living at the risk of hunger and not knowing where the next meal is coming from." The PAFB partners with pantries, community based organizations, soup kitchens, educational institutions, funders and others to meet the emergency food needs of our community.

Did you know that 1 in 8 American adults are food insecure? Did you know that 1 in 6 children are living in a food insecure household? According to Feeding America 63% of our elderly citizens choose between paying for groceries and getting medical care. The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) surveyed the Tri-county area and the results stated that 4% of individuals living in our area go hungry 1 to 2 days per week.



Food Bank volunteer bringing out free produce & bakery items

The assessment also stated "When asked about consumption of fruits and vegetables servings per day, 60% of CHNA Survey respondents reported they had no consumption". This leads to serious health consequences in economically challenged neighborhoods due to lack of eating fruits and vegetables.

Food Bank partnering with "It Takes A Village" to provide food for Federal government workers



The PAFB has been providing food to qualified area residents since 1984. Its mission is to supply food and grocery products to a network of food pantries in a three county area. As he multiplied the loaves and fishes, we can feed the hungry in our area. The PAFB serves over 80 pantries, soup kitchens and other CBO's. Last year we distributed over 2.3 million pounds of food and served over 240,000 individuals.

To meet the needs of our community the PAFB distributes nutritious food "back-packs" to children to take home over the weekend, help served our local Federal workers during the government shutdown and is partnering to increase the amount of fresh fruits, produce, nutritious food and food related information. For additional information please contact Wayne Cannon, Food Bank Manager.

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Thank you for YOUR continued support of Community Action

The Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity, Inc. is a Community Action Agency and leadership organization that promotes self-sufficiency and economic security!!!

Its been widely reported that Peoria, Illinois is one of the most difficult places for economically challenged individuals and families to live. My question to those of you reading this newsletter is; "What are you doing to combat

those challenges and improve the quality of life for yourself and your family?"

I want to share a secret with you: on any given day in the Peoria and surrounding area, there are over 1000 good paying jobs that are currently vacant at OSF, UnityPoint Methodist, and Proctor Hospitals!!!

PCCEO/Community Action has a commitment to life-long learning and serves as an agent for

transformational change to help individuals and families improve their quality of life in Peoria County.

Please inquire about PCCEO's Health Careers Training Program. We are currently strongly considering the creation of a pipeline concept to connect interested persons to employment opportunities that currently exist which would assist individuals to secure jobs that will pay them a "living wage"!!!

McFarland A. Bragg II
EDFP, HDFFP, CCAP
CEO/President



\$25,000 Grant to Peoria Area Food Bank Supports Backpack Meals for Kids

Peoria Area Food Bank announced a \$25,000 grant from the Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation to provide food for local food nutrition programs!!!



The food bank will purchase food with the grant that is specific to child nutrition programs such as backpack programs. "The Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation will allow the Peoria Area Food Bank to continue serving children who face food insecurities" said Wayne Cannon, Food Bank Manager. "The backpack meals we provide will be, in many cases, the only meal the youth we serve will eat ". The backpacks are being dispersed to qualifying children on Friday afternoon by various schools. For more information about Peoria Area Food Bank, visit: <http://www.peoriafoodbank.org/>.

Food Bank Would Like to Say Thank You to Our Generous Donors!!!

Richard Hart
Ray Lahood
Linda Whitney
Gayla Johnson
Richard Hart
Martha Hudson
Kirk W. Bode
Cleo J. Koch
Lori Carroll
William F. Bond
Alan Kenworthy
Myra Robinson



This year's Annual Learning Conference is held in Springfield, Illinois at the Crowne Plaza Springfield - Convention Center from May 5th - May 7th. Along with signature events, the conference will have keynote speaker Casandra Austin-McDonald and five exciting conference tracks that speak to the commitment of becoming Agents of Change. They include:

Strategy Track

Workplace Safety, Trauma Informed Practices, Family Centered Coaching

Local Solutions Track

Family Development, Organizational Standards and Customer Service

Systematic Support Track

Leadership, Board Training, Fiscal Training, Lobbying and Advocacy

Resources Track

Cultural Competency, Self-care, Collaboration and Partnerships and Local Theory of Change

Energy Track

A track devoted to the needs of LIHEAP, PIPP and weatherization program staff

2019 IACAA Annual Learning Conference

This year's theme is "The Power of Community Action: Agents of Change"

This theme moves towards learning and sharing evidence-based strategies and the latest tools for disrupting poverty. As agents of change, we have the power to not only improve our own local communities, but also improve communities across the country and around the world.



Casandra Austin-McDonald
Keynote Speaker for the 2019 IACAA Conference

Casandra Austin-McDonald is a native of Springfield, Illinois. After spending over a decade working in the criminal justice field by helping offenders make better choices to change their lives, and along with experiencing her own life-changing adversities, Casandra decided to embark on the journey of executing her personal development and sharing her story. Casandra is now a Speaker, Transformation Consultant, Mentor, and Author of *Unclothed: Memoir of a Naked Soul*. She has overcome many obstacles and challenges in her life and is dedicated to helping others transform their lives from the inside-out.

Head Start Celebrates Wakanda Week During Black History Month

Fun Times At Head Start Celebrating Black History!!!

In the United States, we designate February as Black History Month, to commemorate and celebrate African-American Achievements and contributions. It was no surprise then that PCCEO chose the movie Black Panther and his hometown of Wakanda

as the theme for the week. Staff and students got in on the fun. Each day of the week was filled with excitement and something different. On Feb 25th, everyone was encouraged to wear black and red which is the same color as the Wakanda Flag, Feb 26th, everyone was encouraged to wear African Attire, Feb 27th, it was wear a super Hero Day, Feb 28th it was

wear a Black History T-Shirt Day. The Classes with the most participation won a pizza party. The winners were Harrison Room 3, Manual Room 2, Trewyn Room 2, and Woodruff Room 2. PCCEO Head Start would like to thank Papa Johns Bourland location for donating 10 pizzas for the parties.

Head Start Staff during Wakanda Week. (l to r): Crystal Ruffin, Brandon Allen, Erica Heid, Joyce Banks, Morocca Burnside, Dominique McDonald, and Rena Barber



Peoria Area Food Bank Donation Opportunities

Staff at the Peoria Area Food Bank has been hard at work on increasing donations for the program. Join the PAFB staff at Portillo's on April 8th and Panera Bread in East Peoria on April 19th. Let them know you are there for the PAFB and a portion of the bill will be donated. Email Jeanette Wennemacher at foodbank@pccceo.org to get a flyer.



Head Start and Early Head Start Are Now Accepting Applications



HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START



NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

NOW ENROLLING CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE 5

ITEMS NEEDED TO APPLY:

- Current physical no older than 6 months (including immunizations, lead, T.B. & Hemo)
- Medical or Insurance card
- Certified birth certificate
- Proof of income (for the past 12 months or last calendar year)
- Proof of residency (piece of mail with current address)

We Encourage Parents of Children With Disabilities and Foster Families to Apply

Transportation Is Provided On A Limited Basis. For Transportation Resources, Call Head Start and Early Head Start.



Accepting Applications Monday through Friday
8:00 to 4:30 or by Appointment
Head Start at 923 Millman (309) 671-3960
Early Head Start/Prevention Initiative at 616 Abington Suite G
(309) 495-5254
Funded In Part By ISBE



Struggling to keep up with energy bills?

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE EVENT **Thursday, Mar. 14**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Development

BETA FREE ENERGY-SAVING KIT

What to Expect at the Event:

Explore payment assistance programs
Get answers about your bill and learn about payment assistance programs offered by Ameren Illinois.

Apply for a bill assistance grant
Determine if you qualify to receive a one-time grant of up to \$150 toward your energy bill. (See box at right for more information.)

Tips to reduce your monthly bill
Learn about simple actions you can take to be more energy efficient and save money.

What you should bring:

- Current copy of Ameren Illinois bill
- Proof of 30-day income (W-2, etc.)
- Photo ID

WHERE:
Career Center
710 W. 3rd St., Peoria, IL 61605

TIME:
9 A.M. - 1 P.M.

Please note: Grant funds are limited and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Do I qualify for a grant to reduce my bill?
A one-time grant of up to \$150 per household is available to customers who meet low-income eligibility requirements. (See chart below for details.) Funds are limited and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Family Size	30-Day Max Income
1	\$2,023
2	\$2,742
3	\$3,461
4	\$4,180
5	\$4,900
6	\$5,620
7	\$6,340
8	\$7,060
9	\$7,780
10	\$8,500

(Maximum 30-day income based on federal income guidelines.)
This event is open to Ameren Illinois customers only.

Ameren ILLINOIS

On Thursday March 14th, 2019, Ameren Illinois will be in Peoria hosting a Customer Assistance Outreach Event. Ameren Illinois is partnering with PCCEO to assist customers who are struggling to keep up with their energy bills. Customers whose household income meets income requirement can apply at the event for one-time grants of up to \$150. The grants will be applied directly to their Ameren bill. This event is open to Ameren Illinois customers only.

YES, I want to help empower people living in poverty to reach economic stability.

Please accept my gift of \$ _____

Your donation will go toward supporting:

- Feeding those who are hungry
- Preparing children for success in school
- Preventing and eliminating homelessness
- Helping families learn financial skills/save for a home, post-secondary education, or small business start-up

I would like to designate my gift to the following program
(e.g. Peoria Area Food Bank, Head Start, Early Head Start, Foster Grandparent Program, Mitchell "JJ" Anderson & Dana J Davis All Star Basketball Camp)

May we publish your name? Yes No

If so, how would you like your name(s) to appear?

Payment Options:

Check payable to PCCEO

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard Discover

Account # _____

Exp. Date (mo/yr) _____ Security Code _____

Signature _____ Date _____

For more information contact:
Gregory Wilson, Public Relations Specialist (309) 999-3824 | gwilson@pcceo.org

My name _____
Company _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

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