



ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010



Community Action Agency
of Somerville, Inc.



We invite all our friends, old and new, to join us in working to end poverty where we live.

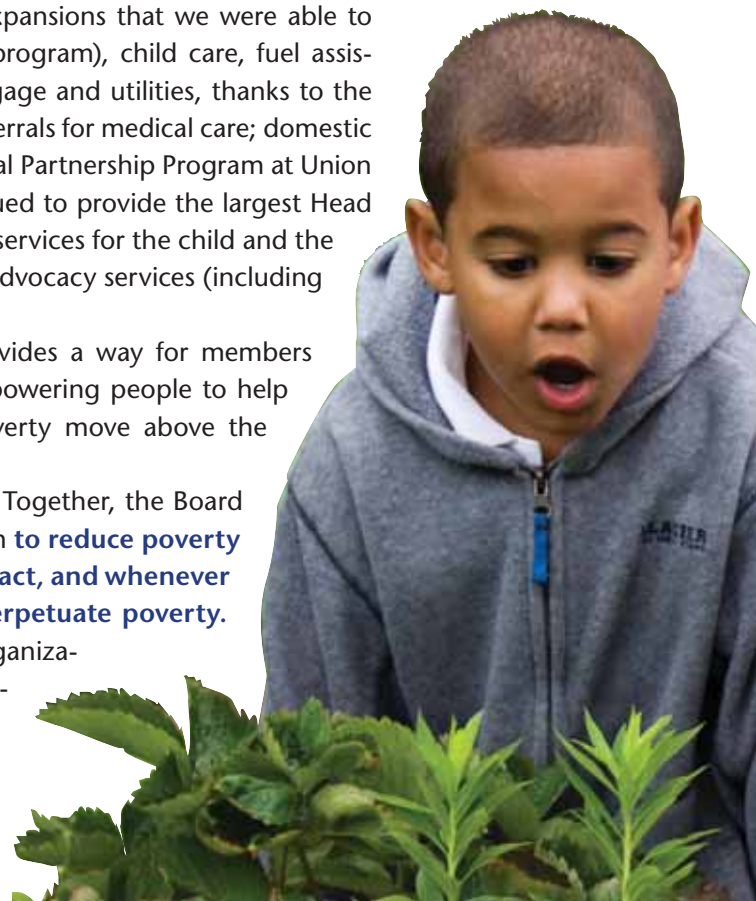
THIS PAST YEAR HAS BEEN A FULL YEAR, one that included incredible challenges as well as opportunities for CAAS and the Somerville community that we serve.

We began the year with the gravest economic situation that we have seen in generations. In Somerville, we saw individuals and families who were already poor experience conditions that were beyond cruel. At the same time our staff were overwhelmed by the numbers of those in our community who (some of them, for the first time) were coming through the door with nowhere else to turn and very limited options for obtaining basic necessities: any means to feed their families, pay their mortgage, rent and utilities, or obtain healthcare. These were Somerville's hard-working poor and middle-class residents. Not only were they the most vulnerable families suddenly facing poverty, but they were our neighbors, friends and family members that we suddenly saw in trouble after a job was lost, a family member took ill, a family business had to close, the effects of a collapsing housing and stock market were still being felt, the tightening of consumer credit was evident, the Haitian crisis occurred, and family members were doubling up in apartments. At CAAS, we definitely experienced and observed a direct correlation between the poverty levels in our community and the overall health of the economy. The recession of 2008 and 2009 had truly battered our families.

CAAS is grateful for the key public benefit programs and expansions that we were able to offer individuals and families. They include SNAP (food stamp program), child care, fuel assistance, emergency assistance (arrearages program for rent, mortgage and utilities, thanks to the Recovery Act), Job Readiness, and Case Management as well as referrals for medical care; domestic violence, substance abuse and legal services; and the Medical/Legal Partnership Program at Union Square Family Health. In addition to these services, CAAS continued to provide the largest Head Start Program in the area with remarkable ongoing wrap-around services for the child and the family, plus eviction prevention, housing search, and foreclosure advocacy services (including representation in court and organizing in the community).

The combination of all of these services and resources provides a way for members of our community to become economically mobile again... empowering people to help themselves. In 2009, CAAS helped many families living in poverty move above the poverty threshold.

This was an extraordinary year with great accomplishments. Together, the Board of Directors and staff have stayed committed to the CAAS mission **to reduce poverty among local families and individuals while working to counteract, and whenever possible eliminate, the societal conditions that cause and perpetuate poverty.** This past year's work has set the tone for future efforts of the organization. We are grateful to the residents and businesses that have provided support to CAAS, and we invite all our friends, old and new, to join us in working to end poverty where we live.





PARENTS SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF THE FINANCIAL AID FORM AT COLLEGE GOAL SUNDAY.

HEAD START IS A PROVEN METHOD OF GETTING CHILDREN READY TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL... AND IMPROVING THEIR LIFE CHANCES FOREVER AFTER. Over 350 children, ages three to five, enrolled in **CAAS Head Start's** early education program this year. The program cares for them while their parents are at work and screens them for health and developmental problems. Head Start nurtures children's curiosity and desire to learn. Parents participate in governing the program through the **Head Start Policy Council**. Through courses in Exploring Parenting and English for Speakers of Other Languages, parents educate themselves and gain the skills and confidence they need to help their children learn.

MANY FAMILIES WANT TO PURSUE HIGHER EDUCATION, but they wonder: how do you get the money to pay for college? For the third year, CAAS co-sponsored College Goal Sunday. Each year, dozens of parents finish a two-hour session at Somerville High School with a completed FAFSA financial aid form in hand, ready to help their children apply for college scholarships. CAAS' *Jovenes Latinos* (*Latino Youth*) help interpret the session into Spanish. With their peers at the **Welcome Project**, they work year-round to improve college access for all students in the Somerville schools.

Over 350 children enrolled in CAAS Head Start's early education program this year.



HEAD START CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT THE WONDERS OF THE NATURAL WORLD
PHOTO: RICH PERRY

EMPLOYMENT

ESPECIALLY WHEN TIMES ARE HARD, PEOPLE LOOKING FOR WORK NEED TO BE PREPARED. This year, CAAS partnered with the **Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences (SCALE)** to create a course called "Your Path to Career Readiness." Graduates of this pilot program learned soft skills (how to speak to employers, dress for the work world, learn the expectations held in a particular workplace), plus fundamental computer skills and the elements of job search. CAAS staff will continue to work with the graduates to help them overcome obstacles as they pursue a living wage that will lift them out of poverty. We are building relationships with area employers so that they will look at our graduates as good job candidates with a strong recommendation from CAAS.

In good times and bad, one path out of poverty has been employment in CAAS' **Head Start** program. Over half of the employees in the program, including the Head Start Director, began as parent volunteers. CAAS continues to train volunteers to become substitute teachers in our eighteen Head Start classrooms. Many of them go on to obtain certification and even college degrees and climb the career ladder in early education. A parent seeking child care may end up getting a lifelong career.



CAAS HEAD START TRAINS PARENTS FROM MANY NATIONS AND CULTURES TO BECOME SKILLED CLASSROOM TEACHERS.

Our graduates are strong candidates for jobs, with certificates and recommendations from CAAS.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE FIRST "YOUR PATH TO CAREER READINESS" COURSE PROUDLY SHOW OFF THEIR CERTIFICATES AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY IN JUNE 2010. A SECOND CLASS GRADUATED IN AUGUST. ALREADY, SOME STUDENTS HAVE FOUND JOBS OR TAKEN MORE ADVANCED TRAINING.

PHOTO: RICH PERRY



“Your agency has been exceptional in assisting this family. Mr. Dessin worked tirelessly to bring a very happy ending to a family that saw a difficult period in their life... He gave them hope and assured them that he would do everything possible to get them back to a normal life...together with Ms. Margela Olivier-Galette, Case Manager, they were able to restore love and stability to a family that once thought it was all over.”



SOMERVILLE IS AN EXPENSIVE PLACE TO LIVE. This year, many people lost their jobs, while others who had been unemployed for a long time finally used up their savings. They had difficulty paying the rent and their utility bills. Many homeowners found they couldn't pay their mortgages, and both they and the tenants to whom they rented apartments were looking at losing their homes.

Between October 2009 and June 2010, CAAS helped prevent over 400 households from becoming homeless. Our skilled Advocates found money to help pay the rent from many different sources, including economic stimulus funding. CAAS helped raise tens of thousands of dollars through the annual **Save Our Homes Walk**, which we co-sponsor. Legal and mediation services, and sometimes just interpretation into a tenant's native language, sometimes saved the day. When a household just had to find a new place to live, housing search services at CAAS helped them find a place they could afford. And every dollar we helped families save by obtaining food stamps or child care subsidies was a dollar they could use to pay their rent.

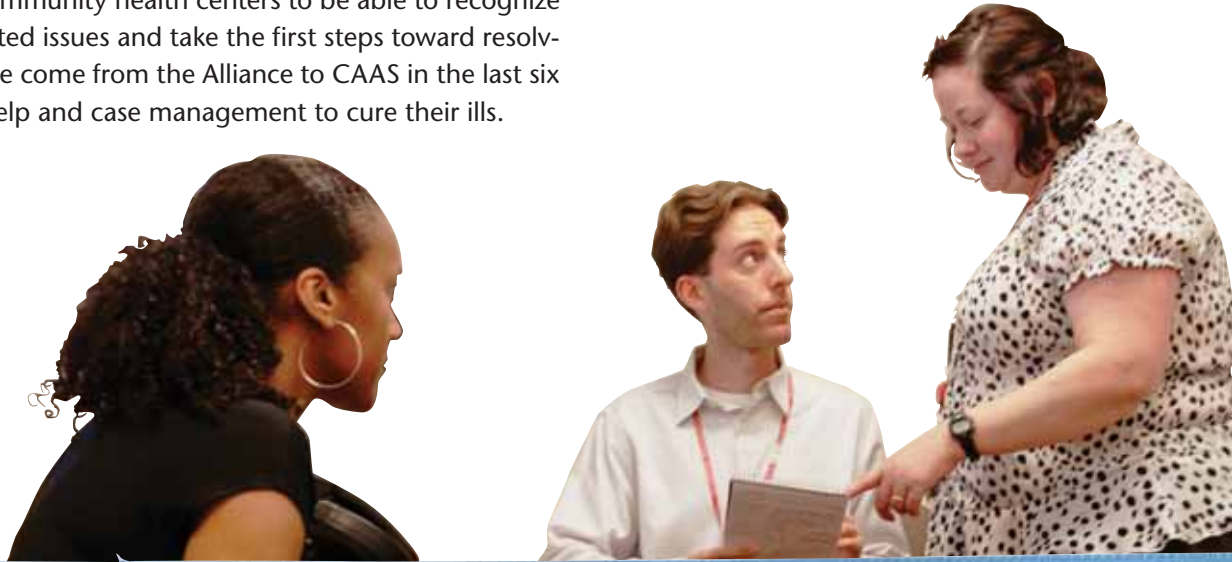
DANIELA MOVED OUT OF AN APARTMENT WHERE HER LANDLORD WAS MAKING HER PAY BOTH THEIR UTILITY BILLS, TO A DECENT PLACE SHE COULD AFFORD. CAAS HELPED HER FIND HOUSING, REPLACE FURNITURE THE BEDBUGS HAD INFESTED, AND PAY A SECURITY DEPOSIT SO SHE COULD MOVE INTO HER NEW HOME.



HEALTH

SOMETIMES THE CORRECT DIAGNOSIS OF A MEDICAL ISSUE IS A PROBLEM WITH THE PATIENT'S HOUSING. Sometimes, the best prescription is a referral to a lawyer. CAAS and the **Cambridge Health Alliance** have formed a Medical-Legal Partnership. CAAS' Lawyer Advocate trains providers at community health centers to be able to recognize housing and benefits-related issues and take the first steps toward resolving them. 73 patients have come from the Alliance to CAAS in the last six months to receive legal help and case management to cure their ills.

CAAS' MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CAMBRIDGE HEALTH ALLIANCE BRINGS DOCTORS, LAWYERS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS TOGETHER TO MAKE PATIENTS' HOMES HEALTHY AND SAFE.
PHOTO: RICH PERRY



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

CAAS WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MANY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO HELP END POVERTY IN SOMERVILLE. This year, CAAS and **Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services** knocked on hundreds of doors to warn people under threat of foreclosure, and we jointly issued a report to the Board of Aldermen. We work closely with other partners through coalitions including the **Early Childhood Advisory Council**, the **Somerville Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program**, the **Affordable Housing Organizing Committee**, and the **Immigrant Services Providers Group on Health**.



CAAS HELPED TENANTS AT THE CLARENDON HILL DEVELOPMENT CREATE A COMMUNITY GARDEN, PERSUADING THE SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO MAKE LAND AVAILABLE FOR GROWING FRUITS, VEGETABLES, AND FLOWERS.



WORKING TO END POVERTY



OVER 100 PEOPLE CAME TO CAAS TO MEET GOVERNOR DEVAL PATRICK AT A BACK TO WORK ROUNDTABLE IN MARCH 2010. "I WANT TO THANK EVERYONE OUT THERE AT [AGENCIES LIKE CAAS] WHO ARE HELPING OTHERS FIND A REASON TO HOPE," HE SAID.



CAAS IS WORKING TO END POVERTY WHERE WE LIVE. We begin with pre-school children and their low-income parents, making sure they have safe places to live, food to eat, and the basic ingredients children need to grow and learn. We train Somerville youth in leadership skills and set their sights on higher education, preparing them for a better future. We work with families on parenting skills, family financial planning, nutrition and exercise, job readiness and job search. We help them close the gap between what they have and what it costs to be self-sufficient in Somerville. CAAS helps single individuals of all ages stay housed and healthy. We involve seniors as volunteers in Head Start classrooms and in inter-generational programming. All of our work is conducted in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Nepali. We are constantly striving to make our facilities and our programs more accessible to people with a wide range of abilities.

CAAS is able to serve the broad spectrum of low-income people in our community because of the support it receives.

CAAS is able to serve the broad spectrum of low-income people in our community because of the support it receives. Please consider volunteering at CAAS and making your most generous donation. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of the people who most need our help.

ONE OUT OF EVERY THIRTY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN SOMERVILLE HAS BEEN IN SOME STAGE OF FORECLOSURE SINCE 2007. CAAS AND CASLS KNOCKED ON THE DOORS OF THESE PROPERTIES, LETTING THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE KNOW WHAT THEY FACE, AND HELPING THEM DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. YOU CAN FIND A FULL REPORT ON FORECLOSURE IN SOMERVILLE AT [HTTP://CAASOMERVILLE.ORG/IMAGES/UPLOADS/FINAL_SOMERVILLE_REPORT.PDF](http://caasomerville.org/images/uploads/final_somerville_report.pdf). PHOTO: RICH PERRY

COLLABORATING AGENCIES

PEOPLE WHO COME TO WORK IN SOMERVILLE AFTER WORKING IN ANOTHER COMMUNITY ARE FREQUENTLY ASTONISHED AT THE LEVEL OF COOPERATION. A typical comment is, "You don't just say you work together—you really do!" In the past year, CAAS has worked with many, many agencies to serve the low-income community. We are happy to acknowledge the agencies with which CAAS has collaborated the most closely.

Cambridge and Somerville
Legal Services (CASLS)
Cambridge Health Alliance
Cambridge Housing Authority

SOMERVILLE AGENCIES ACHIEVE MORE BECAUSE WE WORK TOGETHER. ADVOCACY PROGRAM DIRECTOR MELISSA MCWHINNEY (BELOW) STOPS TO CHAT AT TUFT UNIVERSITY'S 2009 COMMUNITY DAY. TUFTS WORKS WITH CAAS ON COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH. PHOTO: ALONSO NICHOLS/TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Cambridge Public Libraries
Cambridge Public Schools
Catholic Charities
Centro Presente
Child Care Resource Center
City of Somerville
Door 2 Door Transportation
Early Childhood
Advisory Council
Elizabeth Peabody House
Haitian Coalition
Harvard University
Homeowner's Rehab
Immigrant Services
Providers' Group/Health
Just-a-Start
Kiwanis Club of Somerville
LIFT-Somerville

Massachusetts Law Reform
Institute
Massachusetts Alliance of
Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)
MIRA Coalition
Project Joy
RESPOND
Somerville Center for Adult
Learning Experiences (SCALE)
Somerville-Cambridge
Elder Services
Somerville Community
Corporation (SCC)
Somerville Homeless Coalition
Somerville Housing Authority
Somerville Mental Health
Somerville Public Schools
Tufts University
Welcome
Project



FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION NOVEMBER 30, 2009

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash	\$ 304,266
Grants and Contracts Receivable	365,071
Prepaid expenses	81,118

TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS 750,455

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET 2,549,735

OTHER ASSETS

Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust	5,780
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TOTAL OTHER ASSETS 5,780

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 3,305,970

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$ 159,014
Line of credit	68,600
Accrued wages and related liabilities	149,813
Current Portion of Long Term Debt	23,427
Deferred revenue	97,208

TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES 498,062

LONG TERM LIABILITIES

Long-Term Debt, Less Current Portion	1,509,016
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TOTAL LONG TERM LIABILITIES 1,509,016

TOTAL LIABILITIES 2,007,078

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>1,298,893</u>
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TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS \$ 3,305,970

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

REVENUE AND PUBLIC SUPPORT

Grants and Contracts	\$ 5,304,502
In-Kind Contributions	390,042
Other Income	120,789

TOTAL REVENUE AND PUBLIC SUPPORT \$ 5,815,333

EXPENSES

Head Start	\$ 4,892,121
Community Organizing	467,687
Management and General	571,414

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 5,931,222

CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS \$ (115,889)

**NET ASSETS AS OF THE
BEGINNING OF THE YEAR** \$ 1,414,782

**NET ASSETS AS OF THE
END OF THE YEAR** \$ 1,298,893

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS \$ (115,889)

ADJUSTMENTS TO RECONCILE CHANGE IN NET ASSETS TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Depreciation	67,662
(Increase) Decrease in Operating Assets	
Grants receivable	111,196
Prepaid expenses	2,490
Inventory	-
Increase (Decrease) in Operating Liabilities	
Accounts payable	(100,094)
Accrued wages and related liabilities	(25,470)
Due to funding source	-
Deferred revenue	90,007

**NET CASH PROVIDED BY
OPERATING ACTIVITIES** 29,902

CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES

Borrowings (payments) on line of credit	<u>(21,171)</u>
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**NET CASH PROVIDED (USED) BY
FINANCING ACTIVITIES** (21,171)

NET INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS 8,731

BEGINNING CASH \$ 295,535

ENDING CASH \$ 304,266

DONORS

**CAAS THANKS ALL THE GENEROUS DONORS WHO
SUPPORTED OUR WORK IN THE PAST YEAR!
SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MOST MAGNANIMOUS DONORS OF \$500 OR MORE:**

Paul Bockelman

Clarendon Hill Towers Tenant Association

Macy Coffey

William M. Connolly

DONORS SINCE JANUARY 1, 2009

Chris Abouzeid	Reed Cochran	The Independent	Prescott & Sons Insurance
Vincent Anastas	John Connolly, Jr.	Pat & Alain Jehlen	Jim Propp & Sandi Gubin
Alma Antoniotti & Gail Jennes	Hildo Costa	Peter Jehlen	Cathy Quense & Sandy Ahlstrom
Margarita Ashton	Ann Couch	Nancy & Aladdine Joroff	Elisabeth Raleigh
Auto Sal, Inc.	Mayor Joseph Curtatone	James Kaddaras, Jr.	Susanna Reichart
Virginia Azubuine	Mary Louise Daly	Susan Kamin	Joseph Richmond
Rose Balog	Pat Daly	Stephen Kelley	Nancy Roach & William Sullivan
Roberta & Dick Bauer	Adam Dash	Kiwanis Club of Somerville	Ronnarong Thai Tapas Bar
Rachel Bedick	Lou Ann David	Anne Lawson	Paul Ronsheim
Allison J. Blackwell & Tim Walsh	Ellen Davidson	Lois Levinsky & David Willey	Susan Rosa
Ellie Blute	Cosmo DiSchino	Lochstead Photography	Evelyn Rosenthal
Ian Boardman & Deborah Friedman	James & Catherine Duffy	Elizabeth Loveland	Barbara Rubel
Bob's Discount Furniture	Elephant Walk Restaurant	Janine Mahoney	Sagra Restaurant
Paul Bockelman & Cathy Barber	Encore Images	Market Basket	Jose Manuel Santiago
Boston Winery	Linda Falstein & Julie Schneider	James McGinnis & Kristi Chase	Marilyn Schachter
Bostonian Florist	Randy Faulkner	Tammy & Daniel McKanan	Serenity in the City
Brian J. Brady	Eileen Feldman	John & Marjorie McKenzie	Liam & Kathleen Seward
Barbara Brandt	Candy Feldt	Lynn McWhood	Andrea Shapiro
Suzanne Bremer & Jane Peyrouse	Joe Ferro	Alice Mello Cavallo	Toni Shelzi
Ronald Bridges	Dennis & Rona Fischman	Joshua Meltzer & Joanne Holdridge	Sarah Shugars
Lisa Brukilacchio	Dina Friedman	Charlotte & Peter Merrell	Peter Sisk
Eugene Brune	James Gagne	Dr. James Meyers	Larry Slotnick
Anne Button	Dorothy Kelly Gay	Justin Moeling & Stephanie Toews-Moeling	Kimberly Smith-Cofield
Teresa & Jose Cardoso	Gentle Giant Moving Com- pany	Nimo Ali Mohamed	Bob Stark & Megan Kierstead
Kate Byrne & Bill Cavellini	Marcy & Warren Goldstein-Gelb	Tom Murphy, Jr.	David & Debbie Stoloff
Patrick Cahn & Madeleine Schulman	Mimi Graney	Alice Napoleon & Nathan Jones	Stop & Shop
CaNine to Five	Roy Gray	Nature Springs Water	Cornelia & Joe Tierney
Barbara Cassesso	Brian Green	Carole & William Nellis	Timothy Toomey, Jr.
Rachel & Denis Chagnon	Grossman Marketing Group	Tema Nemtzow	Erica & Mikol Voolich
Pam Charney & Caroline Sullivan	Mike & Beth Grunko	Eileen Nolan	Donald Warner
Costa & Alba Chitouras	Joseph & Sandra Guelpa	Michel & Derek Ohly	Karl & Karen Weiland
John Ciampa	Jack Hamilton & Kate Cloud	Richard & Betsy Perry	Roslyn Weiner
Anthony Ciccariello	Peter Heller	Anthony & Joyce Pierantozzi	Winter Hill Federal Savings Bank
Donna M. Clark	Ralph & Leslie Hergert	June Pietrantoni	Yak & Yeti Restaurant
	Carmen Adela Hernandez	El Potro Restaurant	Timur Yontar & Lois Kaznicki
	Amy Honda & Wayne O'Neil		



CAAS GIVES THANKS TO MANY FORMER MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE HELPED MAKE THE AGENCY WHAT IT IS TODAY. SHOWN AT THE NAMING CEREMONY FOR THE JACK HAMILTON HEAD START CENTER (LEFT TO RIGHT):

REVEREND
RALPH HERGERT

BOARD PRESIDENT
ROBERTA BAUER
(CONTINUING)

FORMER PRESIDENT
PAUL DIPASQUALE

FORMER EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR JACK
HAMILTON

FORMER PRESIDENT
MARY LOUISE DALY

FORMER PRESIDENT
TERESA CARDOSO

FORMER BOARD
MEMBER GALE
DOANE

FORMER VICE
PRESIDENT ELLIE
BLUTE

FORMER VICE
PRESIDENT
BARBARA RUBEL.

CAAS WISHES TO RECOGNIZE SEVERAL LONGTIME BOARD MEMBERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY GIVEN UP THEIR POSITIONS ON THE CAAS BOARD. EACH OF THEM SERVED THE AGENCY AND COMMUNITY WITH DISTINCTION OVER MANY YEARS.

ELLIE BLUTE, a former CAAS Board Vice President, was the Title I Parent Coordinator for the Somerville Public Schools. For many years, she famously appeared at parent fairs with tables full of activities for children. She is retired and living in Somerville.

TERESA CARDOSO, a former CAAS Board President and chair of CAAS' 25th Anniversary Celebration, is a member of the Somerville School Committee, representing Ward 2, where she lives. In 2003, she received the Person of the Year Award from the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS).

GALE DOANE, a longtime CAAS Board member, has energetically participated in organizing many events at CAAS. Most recently, she chaired the Membership Committee of the Board. She continues her good work as Resident Services Coordinator at Center Communities of Brookline and as a resident of Somerville.

MARY LOUISE DALY, a former CAAS Board President, helped organize her neighbors to make the Clarendon Hill Towers where she lives into a tenant-owned housing complex. She was a key figure in the creation of the Somerville Save Our Homes Walk, which has raised tens of thousands of dollars to help people in Somerville pay rent and other expenses and stay in their homes. She recently retired as a Trustee of the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

PAUL DIPASQUALE is the immediate past President of the CAAS Board. In the past, Paul has been very active in educational activities and gave lots of volunteer time to the Somerville Band Parents Association. He works for the state as a computer technician and lives in Somerville.

REVEREND RALPH HERGERT, a longtime CAAS Board member, was the pastor of Grace Baptist Church, the treasurer of Community Change, Inc., and the director of the Mayor's Office of Human Services of the City of Somerville. He remains a member of the Board of Somerville Cambridge Elder Services, and he is active at Old Cambridge Baptist Church, where he sings in the choir. He is retired and living in Somerville with his wife Leslie.

BARBARA RUBEL, a former CAAS Board Vice President, is the Director of Community Relations at Tufts University. Barbara sits on two other Somerville boards, SCM Community Transportation, Inc., and the Somerville Chamber of Commerce.



Community Action Agency
of Somerville, Inc.

Working to end poverty where we live

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HEAD START CHILDREN by RICH PERRY. REPORT DESIGN: ALTHEA CHEN DESIGN SERVICES.

SENIOR STAFF

Kimberly Smith-Cofield
Executive Director

Donna Cabral
Head Start Director

Melissa McWhinney
Advocacy Director

Dennis Fischman
Planning Director

Jeffrey Karon
Finance Director

BOARD OFFICERS

Roberta Bauer
President

Suzanne Bremer
Vice President

Sonja Darai
Vice President

Paul Bockelman
Treasurer

Justin Moeling
Clerk

