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# CAAS Spring Newsletter

## HAPPY SPRING!

### Special points of interest:

- Mystic Tenant Association
- Head Start Teacher Illustrates a New Book!
- Parents Connect for Healthy Families
- Community Action Month

## CAAS Outreach: Mystic Tenant Association

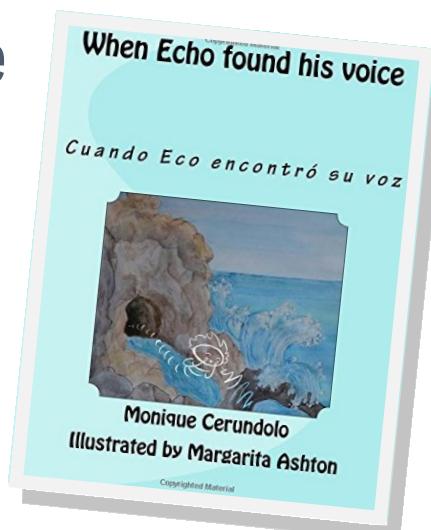
The CAAS Outreach Team has been working with residents at the Mystic Housing Project in Winter Hill to revive the Mystic Tenant Association (MTA).

Elections for the MTA Board members were held in February 2017, and at the beginning of April this new group of resident leaders had their first all-resident meeting. It was a rousing success with over forty tenants in attendance, and people actively participating in both English and Spanish. The MTA Board is now looking to continue building their base and involving more and more Mystic residents from all language backgrounds.



## When Echo Found His Voice

CAAS Head Start teacher Margarita Ashton recently illustrated the book "When Echo Found His Voice". Margarita is a painter and a teacher. She grew up in Argentina and started painting in her youth. She loves working with children and creating novel ways to learn. Currently she also works as a Spanish interpreter. The book is written in English and in Spanish and Margarita illustrated the entire book. All of the drawings are based on her paintings. The book will be in all CAAS Head Start classrooms by the summer and is also for sale on Amazon!



# Parents Connect for Healthy Families

This past spring CAAS offered a trial run of the PConnect program to a group of parents and caregivers from Jack Hamilton Center. PConnect, or Parents Connect for Healthy Families, is a 10-week peer-led program that provides parents with life skills such as positive communication strategies and how to advocate for health resources. Over the course of the program, parents learned how these skills can be used to support healthy diets, physical activity, limiting screen time, and sleep behaviors that bring many mental and physical health benefits for families. Participants met once a week for two hours to share a meal, learn about health related topics and local resources, and discuss positive strategies that would work for their families. PConnect was developed over the past year with the help of CAAS Head Start staff and parents, community leaders, and Harvard researchers as part of the Communities for Healthy Living grant. PConnect will be offered to Head Start parents and guardians again in Fall 2017.



## May is Community Action Month!



CAAS is celebrating Community Action Month, dedicated to recognizing the success of the national Community Action Network that fights poverty across the United States. This month, CAAS will be engaging in programs and events that showcase our anti-poverty work in Somerville and Cambridge. "Community Action Month is a wonderful time to honor and celebrate the impact Community Action has in the lives of families and communities across the country," stated Executive Director, David Gibbs. "Agencies are successful every day in helping families achieve economic security. Given that the needs of each family and community are unique, Community Action is able to use a range of resources and programs to meet local needs in creative and impactful ways." Gibbs continued, "This past year, our Agency has served almost 1,000 individuals in Somerville and Cambridge and empowered them to attain economic security. Our work changes lives and strengthens our entire community." For more information about CAAS, visit [www.caasomerville.org](http://www.caasomerville.org).

CAAS was established in 1981 to wage the war on poverty in Somerville, MA through Head Start and Homelessness Prevention. CAAS is a member of the Community Action Network, originally created in 1964 by President Lyndon B. Johnson's Economic Opportunity Act, a pivotal piece of legislation in the War on Poverty.

## Volunteer with CAAS!

Spend time helping us out at the CAAS office in Union Square or volunteer to help with an event!

Host a House Party or other event to help raise money for CAAS' Head Start and Homelessness Prevention Programs!

Email [info@caasomerville.org](mailto:info@caasomerville.org) today to find out more!

Learn more about our work by visiting our website: [www.caasomerville.org](http://www.caasomerville.org)

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**Community Action Agency of Somerville**  
66-70 Union Square, Ste. #104, Somerville, MA 02143  
**Working to End Poverty Where We Live**

**tel:617.623.7370**  
[www.caasomerville.org](http://www.caasomerville.org)  
**fax:617.628.2512**