



Community Action Partnership

**COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP
FOR MADISON COUNTY
2017-2018
ANNUAL REPORT**



CAP IN THE COMMUNITY



Healthy Families Program Manager, Colleen Matthews, accepting the certificate on behalf of CAP for signing the 80%-by-2018 Pledge for Colorectal Cancer Screening



CAP staff at a Cazenovia Farmers' Market



Executive Director, Antara Mitra, accepting a community grant from CORE Federal Credit Union



CAP Staff at an Oneida Farmers' Market

EARLY HEAD START



The Literacy Coalition Grant

Early Head Start is partnering with the Reading League to offer trainings to provide strategies our Family Support Workers can use with parents and children to increase literacy skills. According to a 2003 study by Hart and Risley, children in poverty have a vocabulary of at least four million fewer words by age four than those in more financially advantaged homes. Our program data also shows that ten percent of primary caregivers are not high school graduates. With all of the children in our Early Head Start program coming from low-income families, it is very important that we provide any guidance we can to help resolve this issue. While the support workers do receive some training in language and literacy, none of them have extensive training in this area. Our goal is to bring literacy strategies into the house as part of the home visit to increase the literacy levels of the families in our programs. Home visitors from the Healthy Families program and Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency will also be attending the trainings.

By the Numbers:

Enrollment: 90 children, 18 pregnant mothers

Families: 76

Home visits made: over 1,800

A Message from Phyllis Koester, Program Manager

One of the great things about Early Head Start Play Group is the opportunity to expose children to new experiences. Play groups allow children to explore opportunities and learn through different experiences. New experiences expose children to new words and build larger vocabularies. We were able to take Early Head Start children and parents on a trip to The Wild in Chittenango this year. Children had the opportunity to see giraffes, monkeys, goats, large cats such as lions, and a variety of birds. Think of all the great language those children were able to experience! Imagine if the only cat you knew was a cat in your home and now you see that a lion can also be a cat. You have learned that the same word can mean different things; you have learned big versus small; people have explained how the two are the same and how they are different; and you have had the experience of seeing a lion. When that child is in school and the teacher reads a book or talks about lions, the lion isn't just a word, it is an experience providing connections to make the learning process easier.



HEALTHY FAMILIES



Graduation

Fourteen families graduated from the Healthy Families program this year. A Graduation ceremony took place at Allen Park in Oneida, NY. Lots of food, fun, games, and laughs were shared by all. The children participated in arts and crafts and a hula-hoop contest. The families spoke of their many positive experiences from the program and the support that their home visitors provided to them throughout the year.

By the Numbers:

Children Served: 226

New Participants: 71

Home Visits Completed: 2,534

Client Story

In the fall of 2017, a family with a newborn baby came to CAP seeking housing assistance. The family had been couch-surfing with no place to call home. The family was quickly connected to our Healthy Families team. Initially the family was very shy and reserved. They struggled with the concept of trust and of being the best parents they could with limited resources. Through relationship building, communication, and promises kept, the family support worker and family started to work through the ins and outs of being new parents. Over the course of time, they started to build a strong relationship of trust and a concept of dependability.

A year later, the family continues to flourish and push forward. Both parents are employed and living in their own apartment. They have both gotten their license, bought a car, and are completely off all public services. Their son is a very loving little boy who developmentally is above average. The family attributes their success to the services offered through Community Action and the support they have obtained through being connected with the Healthy Families program.

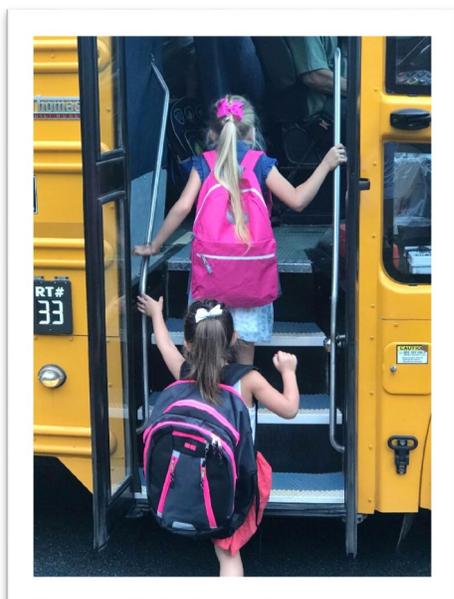


HOUSING

“Wrapped in Love”

Hat, Glove, & Scarf Drive

Each year, scarves, hats, and gloves are collected and hung out on trees in the community. Anyone who is cold is encouraged to take one with the message, “I am not lost. If you are stuck in the cold, please take me to keep warm.” This past year 90 scarves were distributed throughout Oneida, Chittenango, and Canastota. A gentleman in Oneida even came up and asked for one while they were being hung. A special thank you to Ellen Coe for contributing her time to knit many of the scarves. This winter initiative has been ongoing for the last four years and will continue for years to come.



By the Numbers:

Clients served: 170 (Solutions To End Homelessness Program)

42 (Transitional Apartments)

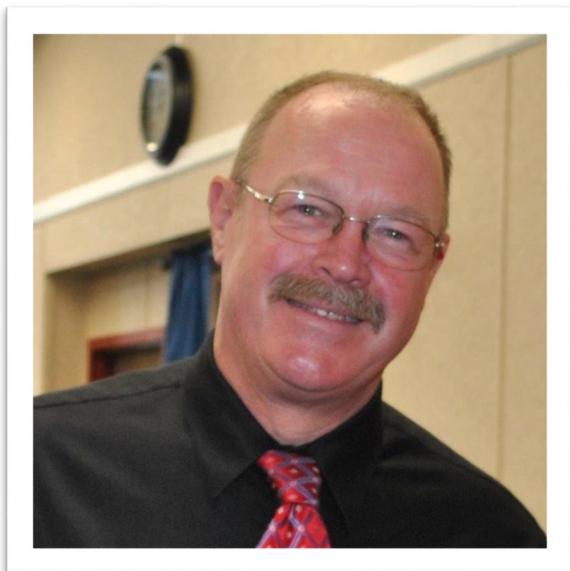
10 (Permanent Supportive Housing)

100% of our clients have left each of these programs for permanent housing and **93%** have obtained or maintained mainstream benefits

Client Story

Heather, mother of five, moved into our Transitional Housing on February 16. She says, “Community Action helped with not only housing, but clothing, birth certificates, referrals, rides, advocating, and so much more. I wouldn’t be where I am now if it wasn’t for this program.” Of Housing Coordinator Sandi Bain, Heather says, “It would be unfair to say she is just a caseworker. She’s been my teacher, my voice, my friend, and a shoulder to cry on. She’s seen me at my lowest and has been right by my side through everything I have overcome and accomplished.” Never thinking she would overcome homelessness, Heather says, “We now have a bright and clear outlook and future to enjoy and look forward to.” We at CAP wish them all the best and look forward to seeing what the future holds for Heather and her family.

MENTORING



A Message from Sam Reeder, Volunteer Mentor:

"I have only been a mentor now for about 9 months and have been learning every day from this experience. First, let me mention that I do not have any children of my own and really did not know if I could offer much in the way of guidance, or be an example for a child. My job with The Salvation Army grants me the opportunity to meet and serve many families that give me a glimpse into the lives of children who may not be as fortunate as I to have a strong family upbringing. For a couple years now, I felt I was missing the responsibility we all have to help those children.

When I started in the program, my mentors at CAP, Cory Marsh and Rebecca Myers, gently guided me into knowing what to expect and how to allow nature to take its course. Before long, I was surprised to learn that, while I thought it was my duty to serve, in actuality my young charge was serving and guiding me. In these few short months, I have been reminded that patience and consistency and learning to listen can move mountains. Every day I look forward to spending time with my little buddy and to find new things to do on our next visit that may spark a nice memory or lesson for him, while not making our time into a lecture or an extension of school.

Of course, this program is not about cheerfulness, having fun, or some vision of perfect times spent together every visit; if it was, it would not be as important as it is. There is heartache and disappointment at times and even the feeling that you may be bailing out the Titanic with a teaspoon. But isn't that what child-raising is all about? Sometimes my buddy is in a bad mood or grumbles about what we have planned and wants to stay home and play video games. But, when I show him that I care by maintaining composure and ease him into trying something new, or allow him to have his say, there is always a smile at the end. That smile lets me know that he too cares and, best of all, he knows that I care about him."



By the Numbers:

Children in the program: 32

Former Mentees in Adulthood
(Colgate University Study, 2016):

57% Completed Higher Education

75% are Employed

Only 1 in 10 have experienced
substance abuse problems

KINSHIP CAREGIVER PROGRAM

Borrow Bins

CAP's Kinship Caregiver Program partnered with the Delta Kappa Gamma Society over the course of the year to design and create "Borrow Bins" for families in the Kinship program to use in their homes. The Delta Kappa Gamma Society is a professional honor society of key women educators worldwide. The bins were created with the purpose of encouraging family engagement, bonding, communication, partnerships, learning, and more, for both the children and their caregivers. A total of twelve bins were donated to the program with items including children's books of various reading levels, craft items, card games, flash cards, board games, and puzzles. The bins are signed out to families upon their request and delivered through the home visiting portion of the Kinship Program. The total donation was valued at \$1,000.



By the Numbers:

Children enrolled: 29

Families enrolled: 16

Home Visits: 171

Kinship Caregiver Groups

A Kinship Caregiver is someone who has full-time responsibility for a child who is not their own. This could be a grandparent, aunt, uncle, adult sibling, other relative, or a non-related supportive adult. Adult peer support groups are offered to families in the Kinship Caregiver program. Community Action currently provides multiple support groups for parents and grandparents to allow families to meet for networking and social and emotional support, as well as informational presentations. The Parenting the Second Time Around (PASTA) curriculum is used to discuss a caregiver's new parenting situation. Topics include child development, discipline and guidance, legal issues, advocacy, caring for yourself as a caregiver, and living with teens.

FAMILY ACTION



Event Spotlight: Tim Collins

On November 15, 2017, CAP partnered with the Madison County Department of Social Services to bring motivational speaker Tim Collins to Oneida. Tim has worked as an actor, writer, and performer since 2001. He has been nominated for the Kevin Kline award and has won many awards including “Best Dramatic Script” and “Best Educational Show” at the United Solo Theater Festival. Tim gave his interactive presentation, “Standing By, Standing Up” to approximately fifty community members, including children and their parents. His anti-bullying one-man workshop couldn’t have been more timely with focus given to this generation’s internet presence and the consequences that come along with it. Through his workshop the audience learned different actions that can be taken to prevent bullying, as well as encouragement to speak up if they witness something that they know isn’t right. A special thank you to the Arc of Madison Cortland in Oneida for allowing us to use their facility.

Client Testimonials:

“My experience with Family Action has been wonderful. My worker was extremely supportive. It meant a lot to have someone to talk to and validate my feelings. Thank you for a wonderful program and wonderful worker.”

“My worker helps me when I need it. She is supportive and gets me the help that I need.”

“It has been an amazing support system.”

By the Numbers:

Children served: 110

Adults served: 69

Families served: 46

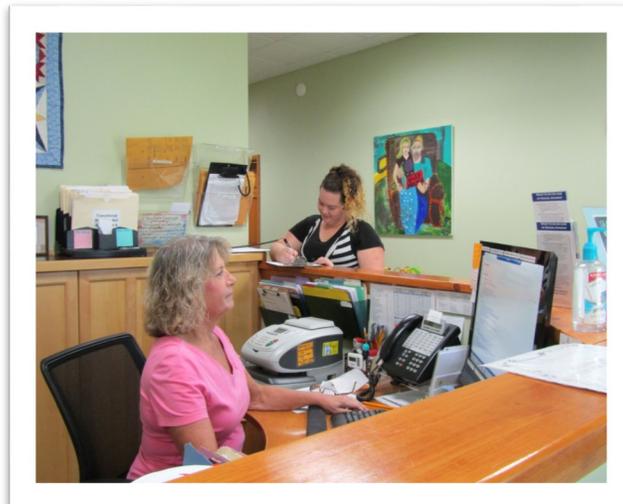
Home visits: 525



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

A Message from Kaleigh Bascom, Facilitator

As a Supportive Services Facilitator in Oneida I see a lot of clients with housing needs. In one case there was a new senior housing complex opening in Oneida. Luckily they were able to take in some homeless seniors and base their rent off of their income. However, they still had to pay at least some of their security deposit. We were able to assist three homeless seniors with some of the security deposit so they could move in. There was one gentleman who had spent some nights on the streets. I was able to meet with him and not only provide some of his security deposit but, through conversation, I was able to learn his needs and connect him to different resources in the community. We also took a hard look at his budget and were able to find some areas where he may be able to make cuts and didn't realize how much he was spending. In the end he had stable housing, good connections, and a plan on how to best move forward.



TOBACCO CESSATION

About the Program

In June CAP wrapped up its Tobacco Cessation Program. Facilitators in Oneida, Canastota, and Morrisville screened clients to identify current tobacco users, engaged them using motivational interviewing techniques, and referred them to applicable community resources such as the New York State Smokers Quit Line and BRiDGES. Educational materials were given and a follow-up interview was held to assess any changes in behavior. 100% of clients seen by facilitators during the program were provided a brief intervention and education. Fourteen of our home visiting staff have been trained on the benefits of quitting smoking through a two-hour session with BRiDGES. Although the program will not be continuing with CAP services, we have ensured that staff have the knowledge and resources to share with clients regarding the benefits of living a smoke-free life.



NUTRITION OUTREACH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Spotlight on: Kaleigh Bascom

Although the NOEP program is no longer a part of CAP, it is still accessible in Madison County. Our former NOEP Coordinator Kaleigh Bascom reflects on her time spent and the impact the program had:

“It has been a pleasure to serve the people in Madison County and help towards alleviating hunger. I will always remember the time a man came in to the office in tears because he was hungry. Because of the NOEP program we were able to refer him to the emergency food pantry and help him apply for expedited SNAP benefits. He received his benefits in only a few days! That moment reminded me of the importance of what all of us do at CAP every day.”

Kaleigh continues to thrive at CAP in her new role of Supportive Services Facilitator.



VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE



The VITA Program

Throughout the months of February, March, and April, CAP partnered with students at the Center for Outreach, Volunteerism, and Education (COVE) at Colgate University and the Cornell Cooperative Extension for the VITA Program (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance). IRS-certified volunteers performed free basic tax return preparation as well as informing tax payers about special tax credits they may qualify for. Overall, 432 tax returns were filed through the program. In total, \$872,622 came back in federal refunds and \$194,134 came back in state refunds to participants.

WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)



Farmers' Market Program

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provided checks to WIC participants last summer to be used specifically at farmers' markets, in addition to their regular benefits. This allowed participants to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. With approximately 1,000 farmers participating in New York State, approximately 300,000 households benefited from the program statewide.

By the Numbers:

Women: 1,420

Infants: 1,750

Children: 3,543

In February 2018, 25,525 checks were redeemed by WIC participants valuing \$461,407.07.

Exciting Changes Ahead

WIC is about to undergo its biggest change since its inception 46 years ago. Beginning in October, all WIC programs in the Central New York region will be transitioning from paper checks to an electronic system. At many grocery stores WIC clients will be able to pay for food with their new eWIC card. Checkout will be much faster and more discreet for those in the program. This will also allow them to use their food benefits in multiple visits. All WIC participants in New York State will be fully transitioned to the eWIC system by January 1, 2019.

Along with nutritional support, WIC also provides breastfeeding counseling and support services. Peer counselors provide mom-to-mom breastfeeding support. Breast pumps are also provided to those who need them. Studies show that women who have breastfed experience reduced rates of breast and ovarian cancer later in life.



FUNDRAISING EVENTS



Games at the Duck Derby



Ducks Racing Down the Creek at our Duck Derby



At our Annual Road Rally

ROAD RALLY
THROUGH SCENIC MADISON COUNTY

ROUTE 20

Saturday
May 19th
9am-1pm

CLASSIC CARS &
ALL AGES WELCOME

REGISTRATION	9-10:00
START / FLAG OFF	10-10:30
VIEWING OF CARS	
LUNCH	12:00
PRIZES	1-2:00

CAP OFFICE - NEW MARKET DR, CANASTOTA
RT. 5 TO ALDIS, TURN ON MT. PLEASANT 1/4 MI. ON RIGHT

REGISTRATION FEE \$20
PRE-REGISTRATION
CALL CAP OFFICE 315 697-3585 EXT. 13

No car... No worries
Join us for lunch & music. View cars from 10:30 onwards

SCAVENGER HUNT • LUNCH • PRIZES • MUSIC

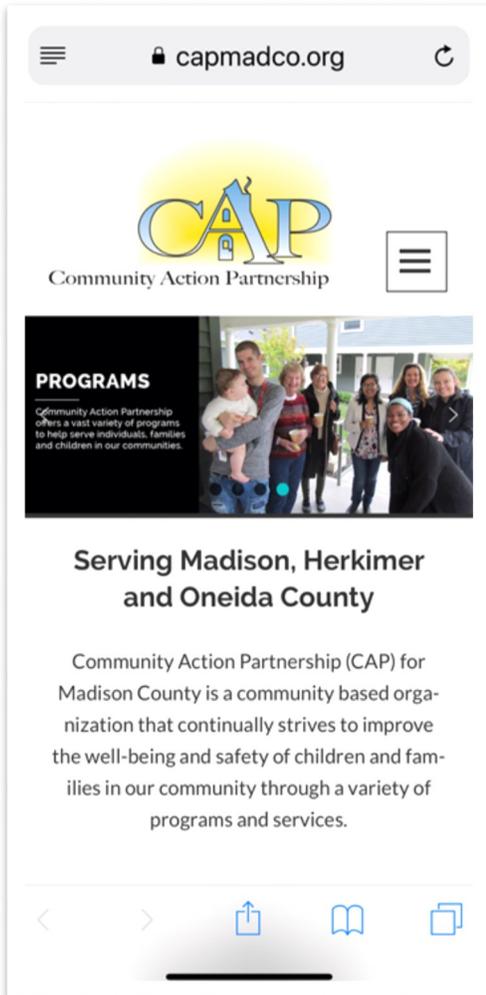
SERVING CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN CENTRAL NEW YORK FOR 35 YEARS WWW.CAPMADCO.ORG

*Annual Road Rally
Poster*



*First Annual
Wreath Sale with
Affections*

INTERNAL UPGRADES



Our Morrisville facility has received many necessary upgrades this year. Remedial work has taken place in the basement, including a new furnace and upgrades in the ductwork.

Our Utica WIC office has expanded to improve client flow and provide more private areas for client discussion, as well as to accommodate large families with multiple children and strollers.

Our website has been redesigned to align with our mission and everything we do at CAP. It now easily connects clients with community resources and highlights our different programs and services. Community partners are also showcased.

A multitude of Information Technology upgrades have been approved and a plan is in place to continue through the next few years. Offices will receive new servers, computers will be refreshed, and a new firewall will be installed. Our email system has been transitioned to a cloud-based service to free up space on our server, as well as provide an extra layer of protection.



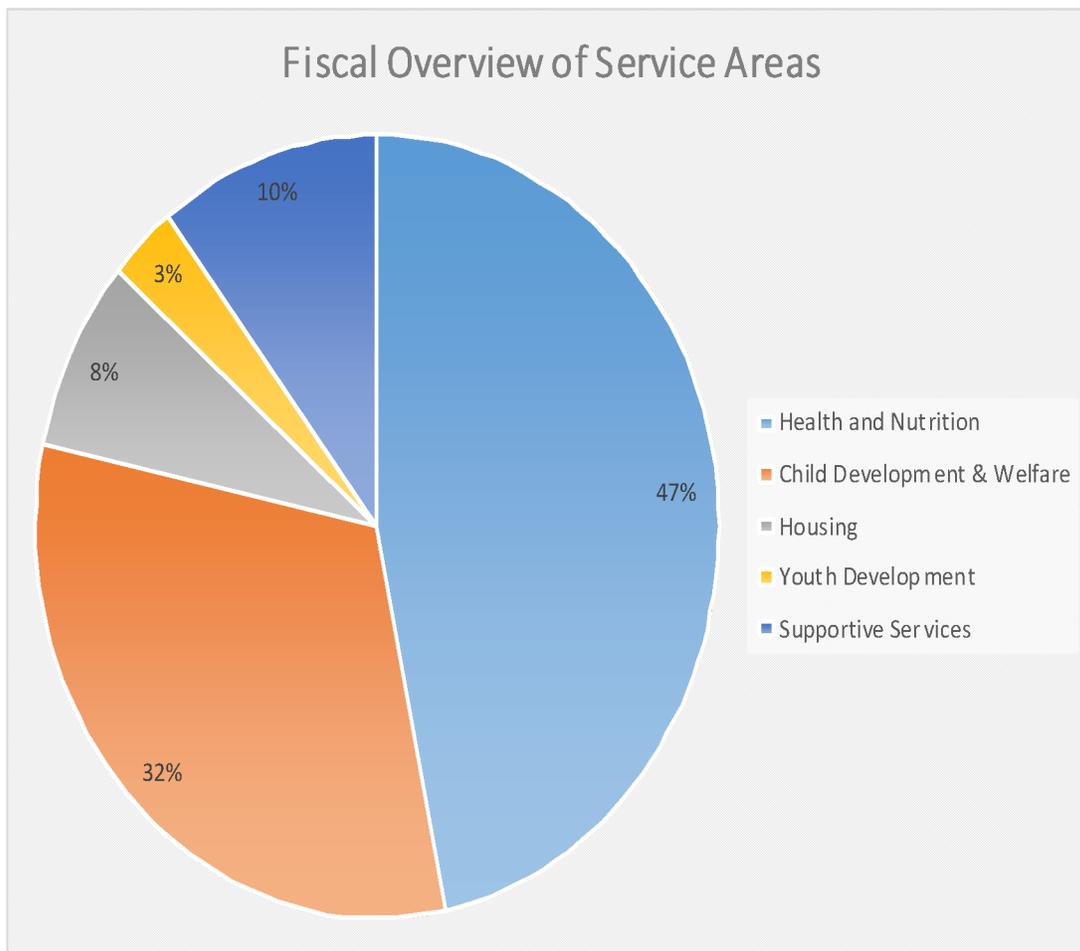
STRATEGIC PLAN



The agency recently undertook a strategic planning process to develop a five-year strategic plan that will serve as a roadmap for future growth and development until 2023. As part of this process we invited New York State Community Action Association (NYSCAA) and Professor Thomas Dennison of Syracuse University to help guide and facilitate the process. A community-needs assessment was completed looking at primary and secondary sources of data and feedback from staff, community members, and the Board of Directors. The agency also completed a SWOT analysis looking at our internal strengths and weaknesses, and the external opportunities and threats in the environment that might impact us. Finally, we examined our services and programs and how they align with the National Community Action goals and objectives. After much thought, discussion, and deliberation, the following long-term goals were developed:

Goals:

1. Collaborate to build a stronger, more resilient community
2. Develop a more efficient and effective environment that promotes growth
3. Create an environment that supports professional growth and provides staff with the tools and training to adapt to community needs
4. Develop sustainable revenue streams and bolster program growth
5. Help families with low incomes access and maintain safe, affordable housing
6. Provide nutrition counseling and supplemental food to women, infants, and children through the Tri-County WIC program.
7. Help children and youth benefit from more stable and supportive relationships with parents, caregivers, and mentors
8. Help families overcome setbacks through referrals and supports that help them identify economic opportunities and/or employment



Our Management Team

Executive Director: Antara Mitra

Fiscal Director: Diane Scalzo

Fiscal Manager: Shannon Cook

Community Services Director: Maribel Arce

Human Resource Manager: Donna Prosser

Grants Manager: Susan Hodge

Program Managers: Barbara Church, Colleen Matthews,

Elizabeth Crofut, Jessica Ginney, Nancy Verro, and Phyllis Koester

OUR MISSION

“We partner with individuals, families, and children to address the challenges of today and build hope for the future. “

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018

Public Sector Representatives

Dick Kirby, Board President, Retired CFO of Community Memorial Hospital

Brian Bruno, Treasurer, President of Servomation Refreshments Inc.

Jerry Romagnoli, Board Vice President , CEO of Abscope Environmental Inc.

Martha Grabowski, Le Moyne College

Low Income Representative

Cathy Baksa, Secretary, Oneida Healthcare Center

Mary Griffin, Oneida Housing Authority

Paula Welsh, Community Memorial Hospital

Private/Other Sector Representative

Kelli Johnson, Faith-Based Community

Brett Zielasko, Community Bank N.A.

Janice Romagnoli, Cazenovia College