

**Empowering People...Changing Lives**  
**Annual Report 2018 - 2019**



**FirstState**  
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY



## ***Empowering People...Changing Lives***

*Over 6,800 people served to achieve a better quality of life.*

Delawareans began 2020 with optimism. The economy was strong and the State finances had an ample surplus. First State Community Action Agency (FSCAA) was very aware that the strength of the economy did not reach our most vulnerable Delawareans and that inequities in health outcomes, employment opportunities and quality of life needed to be addressed. FSCAA was engaged in robust activities to expand its services, programs and outreach. In Delaware and throughout our country, the onset of COVID pandemic turned optimism to uncertainty and fear as unemployment, food scarcity, and housing instability rose dramatically as did acts of systemic racism, bigotry, murder and violence to African Americans and persons of color.

True to its mission as an agent for community action, FSCAA staff responded to the needs of persons and families for assistance, to the needs of communities to address health disparities and supports, and to the need for the State of Delaware to address public policies that perpetuate inequities.

In the fight against poverty, FSCAA and its partners had a positive impact on the lives of 6,827 individuals and 3,347 families in 2019. Collaboration makes it possible for FSCAA to deliver integrated services in a holistic manner. The civic responsiveness of corporations has been the foundation for FSCAA to act quickly and directly to meet the needs of our most hard pressed Delawareans. Heartfelt thanks to Discover Bank, Delmarva Power, Bank of America, M&T Bank, United Way, I.G. Burton, Rehoboth Art League, and the 400+ organizations who assisted us in coordinated efforts to assist communities and families. A heartfelt thank you to FSCAA volunteers and employees who embody the values and mission of community action in the selfless work that they do.

FSCAA offices in Sussex and Kent counties continued in their second year as official Community Energy Centers (CECs), making energy education, weatherization and home repair services available to low-income Delawareans. In partnership with the Delaware Sustainable Energy Utility, program participants receive access to energy counseling, bill payment assistance, and free Winter Home Heating workshops.

With funding from Community Bank and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), we initiated a statewide pilot program for year-round employment opportunities for students. Now, in its third year, the Youth Employment program employed over 200 students between the ages of 14-18 years.

FSCAA is in partnership with the Beau Biden Foundation Shield of Protection program. The Foundation creates concrete action plans for proven youth-serving organizations to implement best practices and policies to better protect children. This Initiative encompasses training and background checks of staff and volunteers, child abuse prevention programming, internet safety training for parents, and much more in the way of child-protective resources.

We continue to work with collective strength and determination to address and ameliorate the causes and conditions of poverty, to lift people out of poverty toward self-sufficiency and to address systemic racism, discrimination, bigotry and inequities that impact the persons and communities that FSCAA serves.

*Anne M. Farley*  
Dr. Anne M. Farley, Board President

*Bernice Edwards*  
Bernice Edwards, Executive Director



# Community Service & Youth Enrichment

Building Strong Communities and Leadership  
Investing in Our Future with Community-based Programs

## Community Development

### *Empowering Community Action and Advocacy Participation*

First State works passionately with low-income communities across the state to build strong leadership, increase resident involvement, and increase access to resources to address community issues and needs.

Our volunteers help put our mission into action by assisting in community revitalization and anti-poverty initiatives, serving on governing boards and assisting with program activities and logistics. Low wage residents participate in formal community organization, government, boards or councils that provide input to decision-making and policy-setting through Community Action efforts.

## Community-based Youth Programs

### *Keeping Young Students Healthy, Productive and Engaged in Learning and Physical Activities*

Creating a safe environment for our children to learn and grow is at the heart of First State. Students are educated and enriched by activities designed to prevent use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs while being provided hands-on learning, after-school homework assistance, supervised recreational activities, summer camp, physical fitness and nutrition workshops.

Through our continually expansion of programs with the Rehoboth Art League, students enjoy art-based education and arts/crafts at seven after-school and summer community sites.

Our Summer Youth Employment Program enables youth between the ages 14 to 20 years old to , life skills and professional development.



**142**

**Improved  
Leadership Skills  
through  
Community Action  
Involvement**



**94**

**Received  
Civic Engagement  
Services**



**556**

**Were Trained  
in Child Sensitivity  
and  
Responsiveness**



**390**

**Hispanic Individuals  
Received  
Life and Soft Skills  
Services**



## Family Resource Development

Providing Emergency Assistance and Holistic Support for Individuals and Families

### Extending a Helping Hand to Those in Need

#### *Meeting the Needs for Financial, Emotional, Physical & Social Support*

For 53 years, First State has provided relief with emergency food, shelter and utilities, and assists those in need of emotional and physical support, life skills training. Services also include assistance in obtaining employment, income, education, and access to transportation.

Our programs include Emergency Services, Comprehensive Case Management, Promoting Safe and Stable Families, and Inside Outside Dad® Reentry Program.



**1,155**

Received  
Basic Needs Services

**601**

Adults Received  
Temporary Shelter

**556**

Demonstrated Improved  
Behavioral Health  
and Well-being

## Housing and Financial Literacy

Providing Home Ownership Opportunities, Budgeting Tools, and Financial Education

### Affordable Housing, Energy Conservation, and Tax Assistance

#### *Promoting Stable and Secure Households*

Stable, secure housing is vital to the health and well-being of individuals, families and the community as a whole. First State provides comprehensive training that financially empowers lower-income families through Comprehensive Housing Counseling, First Time Homebuyers Education and Counseling, Mortgage Default Counseling, Credit and Budget Counseling, Homeless/Displaced Persons Counseling, Foreclosure Prevention Seminars, Financial Literacy Education Courses, Pre/post Housing Counseling, Pre/Post Rental Tenancy Counseling and Security Deposit Loan programs.

Our Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program assists households with statewide tax preparation service for low-income households.



**3,905**

Received Housing  
Services

**318**

Obtained Safe &  
Affordable Housing

**1,391**

Received  
Earned Income  
Tax Credit  
Services



# Employment & Training Programs

Improving the Quality of Life in our Community through Employment

## Professional Skills Training and Employment

### *Finding the Strength in Each Individual for Building Self-Capacity*

First State helps those seeking livable wages with training assistance in obtaining employment. We are proud of our graduates from Summer Youth Employment Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Culinary Arts Skills Training, and “Now We’re Cooking” Vocational Foodservice Program including enrollment of students with disabilities.



**5,025**

Received  
Employment Services

**195**

Adults  
Increased Incomes  
through  
Employment  
Services

**195**

Adults Obtained  
Career  
Advancements  
Related to  
Employment  
Programs



**50**

Elderly Seniors  
Maintained  
Independent Living

**52**

Individuals with  
Disabilities or  
Chronic Illness  
Maintained  
Independent Living



## Senior Programs

Improving the Quality of Life for Our Community's Elderly

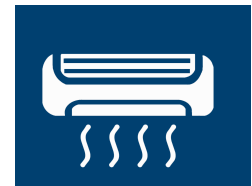
### Senior Companions & Senior Community Service

#### *Helping Our Seniors (55+) Maintain Independence and Dignity*

First State connects dedicated volunteers with our community's frail, elderly and handicapped, providing them with caring services, transportation to doctors, medical equipment and companionship. This allows recipients to remain living independently in their own homes, retain their dignity, and to make new friends.

# Heating, Cooling & Energy Programs

Making Homes Healthier and Housholds More Energy Efficient



**414**

**Energy-Efficient  
Air Conditioners  
were installed**

**227**

**Heaters were repaired  
or replaced**

**47**

**Healthy Homes Repairs**

**641**

**Super Energy Saving  
"Eco Kits"  
were distributed**

## First State is the official Community Energy Center in Sussex and Kent Counties in Delaware

First State assists needy households with weatherization improvements, energy efficiency awareness and cost-saving eco kits through Delaware LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program). Free home energy conservation workshops and energy-saving Eco Kits are available to improve quality, health and safety.

Our Summer Cooling and Heating Repair programs help people to avoid dangerous health risks of excessive heat and cold.

## Client Spotlight: Nacesseca

Nacesseca is a 16-year-old Haitian female, and the middle child of a family of five living in Georgetown, Delaware. After her experiences as a First State Community Action Agency client, she is truly a testament that young people can reach their dreams and goals.

Nacesseca has been a participant in multiple First State programs including Afterschool Homework and Enrichment Program, Summer Enrichment Camp, Year-round Youth Employment, and the Summer Youth Employment Program.

During the time when Nacesseca was gainfully employed through the summer youth employment program, she took advantage of the opportunities that equipped her for college and career readiness. Nacesseca tirelessly positioned herself in leadership roles with the Jefferson Award's Multiplying Good, a recent graduate of the Georgetown Police Cadets Academy, service learning at the Harrison Living Senior Center, Sussex Technical High School Student Government, community volunteerism and school athletics. She also represents a body of young people as a spokesperson for youth advocacy.

One of her proudest moments was witnessing her mother achieve her own dream, graduating from First State's Adult Culinary Arts Programs, in which Nacesseca inspired her mom to enroll.

When asked what drives her, Nacesseca stated "It's not an option to be less or do less." Nacesseca is a model of what fortitude and tenacity has the ability to become.



# First State Community Action Agency Financial Report

For Year Ended June 30, 2018

## Expenses

### Program Services

Housing	\$ 247,666
Case Management	2,055,658
LIHEAP & LEAD	2,393,341
Senior Community Service Employment	566,563
Senior Companion	546,100
Community-based Programs	593,296
Community & Economic Development	585,104
Employment & Training	263,331

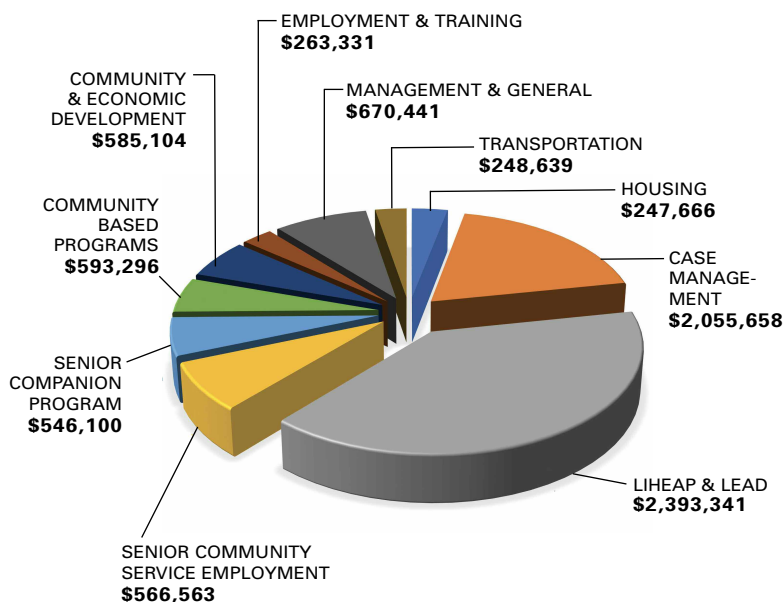
**Program Services Total** \$ 7,251,059

### Supporting Services

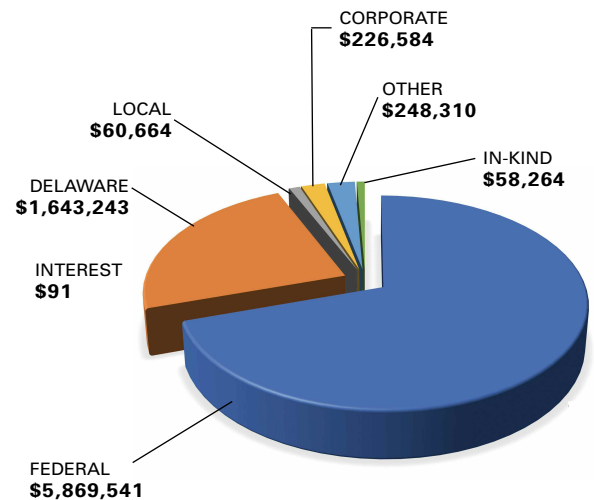
Management & General	\$ 670,441
Transportation	248,639

**Total Supporting Services** \$ 919,080

**TOTAL EXPENSES** \$ 8,170,139



## Revenues & Support



### Revenues & Support

Federal	\$ 5,869,541
Delaware	1,643,243
Local	60,664
Corporate	226,584
Other	248,310
Interest	91
In-Kind	58,264

**TOTAL REVENUES** \$ 8,106,697

## Net Assets Year 2018

Beginning of Year	\$ 1,402,962
End of Year	1,339,520

Independent Auditors' Report, TGM Group, LLC



# FirstState

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY  
*People Helping People Build Community*

## **Our Mission**

To work towards the elimination of poverty  
and lessen the effects of poverty on people of low-income.

## **Our Vision**

To eliminate the paradox of poverty by replacing despair with opportunity,  
enabling each individual to reach his/her full potential,  
and enjoy the highest standard of life.

## **Our Community Action Promise**

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope,  
improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community.

We are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

## **Our Programs**

Community & Economic Development • Community-based Youth Programs

Family Resource Development • Housing & Financial Literacy

Employment & Training • H.E.L.P.

Senior Community Services • Senior Companions

## **Board of Directors 2019-2020**

Anne Farley, Ph.D., Board President  
James "JJ" Johnson, 1st Vice President  
Eugene Dvornick, Jr., 2nd Vice President  
Carrie Casey, Secretary/Treasurer

Ronald Handy, Sr.  
Troy Hazzard  
Brian McGlinchey  
Carolyn McNeice  
Tasha Miller

Frank Paquett  
Linda Price  
Joanne Reilly  
Brad Whaley  
Evelyn Wilson

## **Executive Director**

Bernice Edwards

### **NEW CASTLE COUNTY**

Rose Hill Community Center  
19 Lambson Lane, Suite 105A  
New Castle, DE 19720  
302-498-0454

### **SUSSEX COUNTY**

Stanford L. Bratton Bldg.  
P.O. Box 877 • 308 N. Railroad Ave.  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
302-856-7761 • 800-372-2240

### **KENT COUNTY**

Blue Hen Corporate Center  
655 S. Bay Road, Suite 4J  
Dover, DE 19901  
302-674-1355

**[www.firststatecaa.org](http://www.firststatecaa.org)**