

THIS JUST *INDIRECT*

Volume 51 / Apr Issue



COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH

MAY is Community Action Month! This year, we are excited to show our neighbors and employees who've not yet seen it our new offices at 51 Broad Street!

As you may know, we have owned this building for several years and have now been able to complete the renovations needed to turn it into the showplace that it now is.

SO on May 8th, we'll be hosting an open house in our main offices, so feel free to stop by and check us out!

JANELLE'S JOTS AND THOUGHTS

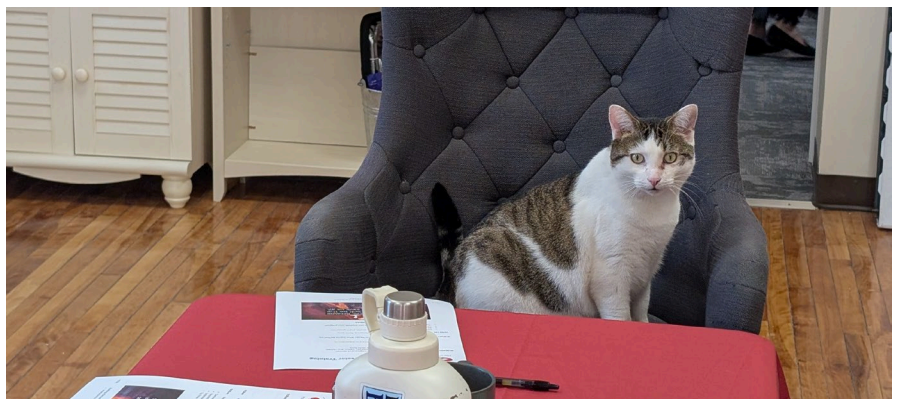
I wish I had a magic wand to answer all of the questions we have been receiving regarding grant funding and what it means for Finger Lakes Community Action and our future, but I have no such thing. What I do have, however, is the confidence to tell you that community action has been around for 60 years, and we have no intention of going anywhere!

Information still continues to change on a daily basis, and we will do our best to keep you apprised of what we do know. There are weekly meetings that we attend through the National Community Action Foundation and NYSCAA (New York State Community Action Agency) in addition to briefings from our funders.

At present, we continue to employ 600 people in the community and provide much needed services throughout many counties. Our intention is to continue this work whether it be with state, federal, or private money (- which our directors and administrators are searching for as we speak).

In the immortal words of Rocky Balboa, "it ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward." As the days grow longer and the weather turns warmer, we will continue to move forward.

-Janelle



Here is Larry, who was preparing for our manager training at the MO in March. He gave a riveting lecture on how he got his role of Chief Morale Officer (CMO).

NYS MANDATED HARASSMENT TRAINING

Your NYS Harassment training should have been completed by March 31st! If it hasn't, PLEASE COMPLETE IT TODAY! This is a requirement of the state, not just the agency, so compliance is mandatory.

ANNUAL GENERAL AUDIT

Just a heads up that Indirect will be a little busier than normal this month due to our agency general audit. Please be patient as we are adding this additional workload onto our normal day-to-day activities, so response times will be a little slower than normal.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

GUYS. It's almost time! "Let's go on an Adventure" is the theme for the June 6th Employee Appreciation Day, and we are SO. EXCITED. While this event is NOT mandatory this year, we've worked hard to find the pun-niest things to come up throughout the event, so we hope that will help incentivize you to attend! Please RSVP on the Survey Monkey link, so we can get an idea of how much food, ect, needs to be purchased.



ALSO, we've gotten the most nominations for employee of the year we've ever had, with a total of SEVENTEEN co-worker recognitions! This is so exciting and inspiring that so many people are looking for the good in others, so THANK YOU to those who took the time to submit a nomination! Please read the nominations and cast your vote for the 2025 EMPLOYEE of the YEAR!!

LINK TO VOTE AND RSVP: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZTGGCJ3>

As a reminder: after we vote anonymously on SURVEY MONKEY, the top three get sent to the board for them to pick the winner!

NEW FACES:

MARCH:



Alisha Thompson – Head Start



Natalie Maddox – Head Start



Stephanie Demmon-Maddox – Head Start

APR BIRTHDAYS:

Nicole Howard	4/2	Clive Guy	4/22
Lara Duckett-Scoville	4/3	Allison Burrows	4/24
Kennedy Jones	4/7	Drew Miller	4/24
Stacey Degroff	4/8	Cameron Bowser	4/24
Julie Fuller	4/12	Rachel Rivera	4/25
Kimberly Howell	4/14	Charlene Gill	4/27
Timmy McDonald	4/15	Amie Rothenburgh	4/27
Tammy Thiel	4/18	Mikayla Bush	4/28
Susan Lynch	4/18	Erin Rowley	4/30
Bridget Burnup	4/19	Hannah Stone	4/30

APR CAP-AVERSARIES:

Janelle Cooper	04/15/1996	29 years!!	Justine Quackenbush	04/19/2023
Richard Fernandez	04/08/2022		David Weaver	04/26/2023
Melissa Kersten	04/04/2023		Joseph Church	04/15/2024
Bridget Burnup	04/12/2023		Jordan St. Andre	04/16/2024
Colby Balcom	04/18/2023			

SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE:

GABRIEL CARDIN

Crew Leader
BIL (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law)

ABOUT Gabriel:

I have been with the agency for a year and a half. I love to do anything with my three amazing children and wife. I also love deer hunting. Something about me that people may be surprised to find out is that I have SIX siblings: five sisters and one brother.

If I could have any superpower, it would be the power to heal the sick. I love listening to Simple Man by Shinedown, and I'm currently binge-watching Jeopardy. As for my bucket list, I would like to ride the Tail of the Dragon in Tennessee.



SPOTLIGHT PROGRAM:

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

The main purpose of the BIL (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) weatherization program is to make improvements to energy efficiency, health and safety, and comfort in income-eligible households. The intended outcome of these weatherization retrofits is ultimately to lower energy costs for eligible households, but also to make the dwelling a healthier and safer place to live. These services have lasting impacts that improve client living situations, but also the overall housing stock across communities in the three counties we currently serve.

Nominee: Debra Cimineri, Indirect

Nominated By: Emily Hoven

I have never done this before so hopefully I don't butcher this because I tried to keep it short even though I could write an essay...

This individual brings such a wonderful presence to the office and truly inspires me with their positive attitude. I appreciate their flexibility and willingness to help others. This individual is a go getter, a team player, filled with compassion and humor as well as a heart of gold. I want them to know that their contributions are noticed and very much appreciated. SO, here is a huge thank you to Deb Cimineri!

Nominee: Karen Meyer, Indirect

Nominated by: Shannon Brown

I would like to catch Karen Meyer!

Disney World functions 95% underground as does IT. Everything that makes Disney run is never seen. Everything that allows us to work is also not seen and that is because of Karen.

I have seen her in ceiling tiles pulling wire while old insulation fell on her head. And maybe Mickey Mouse Poop too!! I have also met her after hours when my laptop was infected with a virus in a snowstorm.

She comes to the Success Center and attempts to figure out all the multiple buildings and how they were once configured just so we can have use of our printers. She hauls equipment in and out of her car SOLO. Her response time to emails and request is spot on, never beyond a business day. Sometimes the best things are often unseen and even though she is not always visible she is always there.

In addition, her quirky sense of humor doesn't hurt.

Nominee: Rosanna Roberson, Indirect

Nominated by: Janet Klein

Rosanna is one of the most (if not the most) dedicated employees at FLCA. Not only is she dedicated to her job she is also dedicated to her family and was able to go to school and earn 2 degrees in under a year ... a true superhuman! She is one of the reasons why FLCA functions as well as it does, she isn't seen by every employee day to day BUT she is there to help whenever a program needs it regardless of if it is her "work time" or not. She wants what is best for all our employees and creates a positive work environment for her team. I don't think I have seen her hesitate to tackle any situation that comes her way, good or bad she jumps right in and always knows what to do. On top of being incredible at her job she is the best supervisor I have ever had. She is there for every silly question I ask and never fails to explain "the why" behind it. I love coming to work every day and I hope I can work with her for as long as possible. When you think of FLCA you probably don't think about the HR director, but if we didn't have her you would know! She does so much for the agency behind the scenes and deserves recognition for all of her hard work and dedication.

Nominee: Rosanna Roberson, Indirect

Nominated by: Janelle Cooper

I am both pleased and honored to nominate Rosanna Roberson for the Employee of the Year award. She has consistently demonstrated exceptional performance, dedication, and a positive attitude that has significantly contributed to the success of our indirect team and the organization.

Rosanna demonstrates an outstanding work ethic and is willing to work until the job is complete. Whether it be early mornings, late evenings, or weekend attention, Rosanna will ensure a task is complete on time. This was evident this past year as we transitioned to a new payroll system. Although there were many hurdles along the way, she maintained her composure and her professionalism and worked through each issue with a smile on her face always looking out for what was best for the employee. Whether it be exploring new benefits or planning our annual staff day Rosanna continues to introduce innovative ideas.

Rosanna is a natural leader and a true team player. She strives to do what is best for the employees in the agency and her department while ensuring the agency is ultimately better for her decisions. Her team not only respects her authority but supports her wholeheartedly!

Rosanna is dedicated to customer and employee satisfaction and is continuously working to enhance our company's reputation. Were it not for her nomination and belief, we would not be recipients of the workplace of the year designation two years in a row now.

In conclusion, Rosanna Roberson exemplifies the qualities of an outstanding employee. Her dedication to the staff, her innovation and her positive attitude make her a most deserving candidate for the Employee of the Year award. I wholeheartedly support this nomination and believe that Rosanna is truly an asset to Finger Lakes Community Action.

Thank you for considering this nomination.

Nominee: Emily Hoven, ACE

Nominated by: Anonymous

I would like to nominate Emily Hoven as a candidate for Employee of the Year.

While I am not completely familiar with the intricacies of her position and have not seen her in the field, I do see her maintaining a very professional and diligent demeanor in the office. She almost always has a smile on her face regardless of the stressful nature of her work. I have never heard her complain or expect praise for the challenging work she does. She is constantly on the move but still has time to listen to a coworker's story or to give advice. Emily is very considerate of the people she works with and regularly brings EXCELLENT homemade treats to share with everyone. I think this is the reason for my nomination ... Seriously, I can only assume that same care and attentiveness is given to her work and clients. With all the changes that have occurred recently with ACE, having Emily and her years of experience onboard will be a foundation for the program's future growth. She seems like someone that has a true passion for her work and the people that she services.

Nominee: Ron Gill, Housing

Nominated by: Kayla Kern

I am honored and proud to nominate Ronald Gill for Employee of the Year. Ron consistently demonstrates the qualities of an outstanding employee through his attentiveness, compassion, and encouraging presence, making him a true asset to our team.

Ron's commitment to our work and the people we serve is evident in everything he does. He cares deeply about both our clients and his coworkers, always going above and beyond to ensure that people feel supported, valued, and heard. His ability to see the best in others and help them recognize their own strengths is truly a superpower.

What really sets Ron apart is his unwavering dedication to problem solving. Whether it be a difficulty or concern an auditor is having modeling a home in TIPS, drawing an intricate map, or understanding complex homes, or even a crew lead having questions about a task, Ron is always ready to listen and offer thoughtful advice and effective solutions. He truly wants clients to get the best possible service and most effective help from us in weatherizing their home. Whether it requires extra time, specific tools, creative tips, or even silly drawings and hands on demonstrations, Ron is dedicated to using any method necessary to make sure that others grasp the issue at hand. His thorough approach helps everyone learn and grow, making the whole team stronger.

Ron is incredibly flexible in his role as Quality Control Inspector and often puts in unthanked and unnoticed work at client's homes to resolve any potential "go-backs" handles communications with clients if unforeseen problems arise, and just goes above and beyond with clients and easing their concerns or confusion. Ron does so much work "behind the scenes" to make everybody else's day a little easier. His hardworking and reliable nature ensures that no matter the challenge, Ron will tackle it with the attentiveness it deserves. He makes even the toughest days manageable, thanks to his supportive attitude, and genuine care for others.

For all these reasons (and many more if I didn't have to keep this short and concise) I believe Ron exemplifies everything that Employee of the Year should be. He has made a lasting and positive impact on everyone around him, and I am honored to work alongside him and have the opportunity to know him and learn from him.

Nominee: Ron Gill, Housing

Nominated by: Adam Morrison

I'm voting for Ron Gill, employee of the year. He is one of a select few with 30 plus years experience in construction, working for us, and has been a great "phone a friend". Ron has always been available when we have technical questions, ie; electrical, plumbing, code, etc.

Ron's knowledge, and calm demeanor, has saved us on job sites time and time again. He always answers the phone, "what's goooooooooing on?"

He is compassionate towards the community we serve, ethical, safe, and once again, available.

What a stand up, classy guy to work with, with a matching personality and broad musical interest. Wayne Cap is blessed to have him on board.

Nominee: Adam Morrison, Housing

Nominated by: Anonymous

I would like to nominate Adam Morrison as employee of the year. When Adam joined the Safe Homes team, he immediately went into action, completing job after job with efficiency and ease, making the end goal a reality. He treats every client with respect and compassion. He taught himself how to build ramps quickly, and of the highest quality. He prides himself on doing the best work he can do, and he has an exceptional work ethic. Adam goes above and beyond for clients on a regular basis. He is the type of person that does good because it's the right thing to do. If a client mentions that they need or want something specific, Adam will ensure that it is done, even on his own time. He has returned to client's homes to assist with emergencies that were not his responsibility. He has gone back to fix previous contractors' errors on the drop of a dime when asked to. When other contractors have refused to work with a client, Adam has gone in and made that client feel empowered. He works with the youth from Steady Work every day, teaching with patience and detail. He takes it upon himself to help the youth in many other ways too, including helping them get food and family assistance. He is serious about setting them up for success in their lives and is serious about making every client safe and sound. For all these reasons and more, I would like to nominate Adam Morrison as employee of the year.

Nominee: Ryan Robbins, Housing

Nominated by: Nick Schrader

Perhaps long overdue, I would like to nominate Ryan Robbins, Administrator of Housing Programs, for Finger Lakes Community Action's Employee of the Year.

In my relatively short time with the agency, I have witnessed Ryan lead the way towards massive expansion of the Housing Program area within FLCA, as well as work toward other grants outside of his typical programming. This massive expansion of programs and funding has helped to grow the agency by leaps and bounds in a few short years. Ryan's continual effort to secure grants, awards, and extra funding for this agency ensures that the people in our communities have access to life-changing services.

It is worth noting that Ryan's contributions to this agency extend even further than his success with winning grants and growing programs. Whenever help is needed by other programs or at agency sites, Ryan consistently volunteers his own time to do what needs to be done. His extensive involvement in overseeing the renovation projects at our main office site should not be overlooked, with countless hours spent doing whatever may be needed to further the agency's status and security as we expand.

There is so much more that could be said to build Ryan's case for FLCA's Employee of the Year, but the list would go on and on. For all of these reasons and more, please consider Ryan Robbins for this honorable recognition.

Nominee: Ryan Robbins, Housing

Nominated by: Anonymous

I would like to nominate Ryan Robbins for Employee of the Year. He has had a significant impact on shaping the roles of others by providing guidance, constructive feedback, and fostering an environment of trust and collaboration. His ability to help others identify their own strengths and areas for growth allows us to develop professionally, be comfortable taking on more responsibility, and gain confidence in our work and in ourselves. Ryan encourages open communication, which helps address challenges effectively and stay focused on the goals at hand. His leadership style emphasizes both personal development and team success, enabling us to contribute meaningfully to the organization while

advancing our own skills. His sparkling personality and sense of humor help people get through the day, especially the difficult ones. Ryan has an uncanny ability to know when someone may need some "mostly respectful" sarcasm to be able to smile and move forward. Overall, his mentorship and support have been crucial in helping me thrive in my role and I know others feel the same. This is why I nominate Ryan Robbins for Employee of the Year.

Nominee: Caitlin Shaffer, Housing

Nominated by: Ron Gill

I'd like to nominate Caitlin Shaffer for Employee of the Year. In addition to her normal job duties, at which she's very competent, she's relied on for myriad other responsibilities, and she jumps in with enthusiasm. She's been called on for many of the logistical duties related to the office remodeling project as well as taking a large role in moving and setting up offices and has taken on many responsibilities above her position. She shows up early but never clocks in until her official start time. She's proactive, thorough, and a compassionate and tenacious advocate for clients. In addition to her role at FLCA, she's an active community member who gives her time generously to local events and causes. She's the kind of employee that FLCA should seek to retain and celebrate, and I hope you'll consider her for Employee of the Year!

Nominee: Caitlin Shaffer, Housing

Nominated by: Anonymous

I would like to nominate Caitlin Shaffer as employee of the year. From the day she was hired at the agency, she has gone above and beyond for not only her own program, but for everyone around her. When she was initially hired as an Administrative Assistant, she took on the role of basically running the programs she was asked to assist with, no questions asked. She was then promoted to Program Coordinator for the Impact program, where she had to re-vamp the entire database upon her first day, and did it with ease. She has reached every goal of the program since day one, pushing through any struggle that came up, and making sure every client was served with integrity and respect. Her consistent, positive work ethic, kindness, respect for others and their roles, and great empathy, she proves that she is the perfect person for her role. Not only does Caitlin excel in her position, but she also strives to help the agency whenever she

can. She was one of the contact people that helped Ryan with the sale of the Canal Street building, and she was the contact point between Ryan and the contractors in the new building remodel, which was vital in communication to get the project completed. She took it upon herself to clean the whole Canal Street exterior so that it was safe and esthetically nice and set up the basement to be repaired when needed. She has been a part of almost every committee in the agency over the past 2 years, and I can almost guarantee that if you know her, she has done something kind for you or helped you in some way. Her smile greets you when you arrive at work and when you leave for the day. For this reason, I nominate Caitlin Shaffer for this year's employee of the year.

Nominee: Meagan Christian, Head Start

Nominated By: Tammy Fisher

I would like to nominate Meagan Christian from the Head Start program for employee of the year. Meagan comes to work everyday, she is friendly and helpful and has a great personality. She makes the parents and children in the classroom feel welcome and comfortable. When children are having a rough day or exhibiting behaviors she is always there to comfort them and guide them through their tough moments. She has the patience and ability to calm and sooth upset children, and co workers :). She is easy to talk to, listens and has the ability to make you feel better no matter what situation you are facing. She goes above and beyond in her work, she takes the initiative to do what ever needs to be done throughout the day, helps make my "crazy" ideas for activities work, and has currently started the process to become my co-teacher. Meagan is an important part of the classroom, to the children and her co workers she works hard, has patience, and she persisted in getting the ok for our classroom fish which shows the patience and dedication she has.

Nominee: Stacey DeGross, Early Childhood

Nominated by: Anonymous

When I think about the qualities of a winning nomination, I think about an employee that must display dedication, endless support even on the days that seem dark, compassion, creative thinking, teamwork, a positive attitude, and

most importantly someone that stands by their team through not only the good but the challenging times, too. An employee that can do this and still manage to complete their own job responsibilities, find time to meet with members of the employees and do all this without complaining and still having a smile on their face to conquer the world in my eyes is a definite winner.

Hearing these models and implementing them is something that you will catch this employee doing almost every day. She is one that many staff lean on, and you will hear her on the phone talking through any situation that is challenging with the most positive strategies. The value that she shows staff on any level is beyond something that you see in today's world with so much "ugly" and not enough kindness. This is something that she excels in 100% of the time and no matter who sees her in action, they will see the compassion, teamwork, dedication, development of staff occurring, and most importantly her endless fight to build a team of strong leaders and staff no matter how exhausting it becomes. She will be right there to hold the heavy door whenever it is needed.

She has been with FLCA almost 25 years and held almost every position Head Start has to offer. She is determined to make this program work and will spend hours and hours at the table to ensure that it does. From the bottom of my heart, for the outstanding leadership skills that she possesses and her ultimate sacrifice to the program and the agency, I proudly nominate Stacey DeGroff our Early Childhood Administrator.

Stacey from the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for your service not only to FLCA, but to the Early Childhood Program area. You have been an inspiration to many, and truth be told, we could not do this without you! Words will never fully describe how much you are appreciated. Continue to be the Stacey we all know and cherish and continue to rise above all the challenges that occur.

Nominee: Stacey DeGroff, Early Childhood

Nominated by: McKenna Middlebrook

I'd like to nominate Stacey DeGroff as employee of the year for Finger Lakes Community Action.

My reasonings are as follows:

I have never had a better boss than Stacey, she is a person who believes in her staff and will do whatever it takes to make them successful. I have come in early

and stayed late, under my own volition while working under Stacey, because I know she does the same for my program and every program that she is the Director or Administrator for. She is also a wealth of knowledge, information, and is always ready to give advice if needed, I am never afraid to ask questions or go to her for help as she always answers with kindness and truth! You feel as if you need to do a great job while working for Stacey, not because of any pressure she puts you under, but for the fact she truly believes in your own abilities.

Aside from being an excellent boss, she is an even better person. She is caring, understanding, supportive and gives as much grace as needed when it comes to her staff and their personal lives and problems. There have been times when working with Stacey she could tell that I was flustered or upset, and always made sure before we continued our meeting, we would address whatever else was bothering me whether it was work related or not. Stacey is not afraid to take interest into the hobbies of her staff to better relate to and understand them! Not only has she made me a better employee, but honestly, she has made me a better person!

Nominee: April Wilhelm, Head Start

Nominated by: Dana Devlin

I am nominating April Wilhelm because of her dedication to her job and the families she works with. She has helped me numerous times as both of my centers have been missing a family advocate for a prolonged period of time, whether it be covering so there is an extra person in the building or following up with my numerous emails regarding families. April has helped guide me in tasks that help fill the missing role(s) to help our buildings run smoothly. April has exemplified our motto of "Stronger Together" as we have relied on each other to ensure both centers are covered.

Nominee: Cathy Wilson, Head Start

Nominated by: Anonymous

I would like to nominate Cathy Wilson for Employee of the month. She is always ready to help, she is kind to all and so helpful. She is a wonderful co-worker. Thank you for all you do!