



Community Action Wayne/Medina

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WCCF Supports CAW/M's Getting Ahead Self-Sufficiency Program

In efforts to significantly move the dial on lasting self-sufficiency for families, Community Action Wayne/Medina (CAW/M) launched Getting Ahead in Wayne County. Begun this fall, the program received a boost for its own sustainability for 2017 through a \$10,000 grant from both the Marjorie B. Newland Memorial Fund and the Florence L. Rice Community Fund of the Wayne County Community Foundation. Designed to empower individuals to determine their own path out of poverty, the Getting Ahead program has been shown to be a game changer as participants identify challenges, learn how to overcome them, establish and then achieve goals for household financial stability.

In serving its anti-poverty mission locally for 50 years, CAW/M is uniquely positioned to provide a solution for establishing self-sufficiency through its two-generational approach. Beyond its traditional economic assistance and housing services, Getting Ahead (the participant curriculum of the Bridges Out of Poverty program) is an investment in providing a long-term solution for gaining self-sufficiency and building resources for a better life.

Getting Ahead guides individuals in learning causes of poverty, understanding their own challenges more fully and then achieving goal progress through building skills and resources and using them effectively. Research outcomes for the program indicate success as participants gain confidence and learn how to determine and reach goals. As one participant noted, "Getting Ahead gave me the drive, the ambition to do something." Led by a trained facilitator/life coach and supported by peers, participants work to leverage current resources and identify new resources in support of household financial stability.

The eight-week program requires participants to dedicate 3 ½ hours, twice a week.

CAW/M enhances the curriculum with financial literacy and soft skills/work ethic training - using Bring Your A Game to Work curriculum - to support job placement, performance and retention. Participants become "A Game" certified, which can give them an edge in the hiring process with local employers.

To further support household financial stability, financial literacy training individualizes learning, financial goal formulation and outcomes measurement while building knowledge progressively. Individuals learn to apply skills and adopt new habits.

What Getting Ahead participants are saying about their experience:

- “The course simplified my situation. Getting Ahead put me on the right path. It gave me the tools to work with ... I have hope and a light at the end of the tunnel. I have one credit card paid off and the second one will be next month! I’m eating smarter and healthier too! Thank you!”
- “I like the friendship and support I received. I loved helping others with their goals and getting to go back for encouragement on my goals. I like that each time we achieve a goal we always set a new goal, so we are always moving forward.”

The program is designed for individuals who are in generational or situational financial difficulty, who want to make changes towards a better future. For more information, please call Kim Bagby @ 330-264-8766, ext. 1005.