

# *2014-2015* ANNUAL REPORT





## **NRCA Mission**

The mission of New River Community Action, Inc. is to promote and support the well-being and self-reliance of individuals, families and communities.

## **Organizational Values**

New River Community Action, Inc. strives to accomplish its mission by:

- Focusing on the needs of people through interactive, participatory processes
- · Increasing community awareness regarding poverty issues
- Advocating for the needs of participants
- Striving for social justice
- Providing and promoting leadership
- Fostering a proactive approach
- Continuously developing, evaluating and improving programs using an outcome measures approach
- Respecting all people and their contributions
- · Recognizing individual and group achievements
- Creating a caring environment that encourages openness, trust and compassion
- Valuing independence, interdependence and self-reliance
- · Encouraging personal integrity, effectiveness and performance
- Providing equal opportunities for individuals to achieve their full potential
- · Encouraging innovation, creativity, risk taking and teamwork
- Fostering cooperative and collaborative relationships
- · Maintaining organizational integrity and effectiveness
- Promoting responsible stewardship of resources
- · Committing resources to organizational growth and development

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, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

> The Promise of Community Action National Community Action Partnership

## MESSAGE FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIRMAN & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ver 13,000 New River Valley residents made positive changes in their lives through participation in services provided by New River Community Action during program year 2014-15. With assistance from numerous volunteers, grantors and donors, NRCA offered hope and help through services that meet basic needs, strengthen families, promote school readiness and economic stability.

Our programs are community-based and designed in partnership other human services and organizations. We extend assistance to those in need, serve as a catalyst for opportunity and a voice of advocacy.

The 2014-15 program year produced several notable events at NRCA. We returned program operations to the newly renovated NRCA Floyd building in August and opened a new Head Start classroom at the site in October. We also said goodbye to our Retired and Senior Volunteer Program following an in-depth review of volunteer enrollment and new program requirements. NRCA gave Family Outreach Connections its own program status and the Board of Directors developed and approved a new agency Strategic Plan.

We are able to carry forward our mission only with the assistance of our dedicated staff, Board of Directors, advisory boards and councils, plus federal, state and local governments, foundations, United Way/United Fund and other supporters. As we move into our next 50 years of service, we thank you for your confidence in NRCA and our programs.



John McEnhill, Chairman Board of Directors



Ms. Terry Smusz Chief Executive Officer

John C. McEnhillaz Terry D. Smun

### **NRCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014/2015**

JOHN McENHILL, Chairperson

Kristin Adams Dianne Anderson Don Clark Mary Critzer Tanya Evans John Getgood TERRY MAYS, Vice Chair

Kayla Gardunio Kathryn Hoover Lura Ann Pitchford

### ELAINE POWELL, Secretary/Treasurer

Sally Quesenberry Hillary Vaillancourt Corbin Vierling

Board of Directors provided over 400 volunteer hours to the leadership of New River Community Action in 2014/15.

### **NRCA ADVISORY GROUPS 2014/2015**

### LOCAL ADVISORY BOARDS

FLOYD COUNTY

Karen Bingham Tracie Brewster William Gardner John Getgood Susan Icove John McEnhill Pat Shelor Jack Wall GILES COUNTY Rev Terry Mays Susan Kidd Jill Williams Don Clark Corbin Vierling Rebecca Walkup

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Mary Critzer Mona DiGiulian Deena Flinchum Karen Frazier Ann Hess Marquita Hill Larry Lindsay Stephanie Myrthil Lindsay West PULASKI COUNTY EMERGENCY NEEDS TASK FORCE\* Denise Bolden Edith Hampton Janet Johnson Fannie McClanahan Melissa McNair-King Violet Nash Connie Patterson Sally Quesenberry Joseph Reed Randy Vaughn

### **RADFORD CITY**

Queen Alexander Sarah Carter Leslie Dean Kelly McCoy Ann Walker

\*Pulaski County Emergency Needs Task Force serves as the Pulaski Local Advisory Board

### PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCILS

CHILDREN'S HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP ADVISORY COUNCIL

Joan Behl Mary Critzer Erin Cruise Amy Epperly Larry Lindsey Terry Mays Molly O'Dell Trina Porterfield Alicia Prioleau Rhonda Seltz Tammy Taylor

### HEAD START HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Maggie Bassett Sylvia Bond Kylie Cisneros Kelly Ginger David Hudgins Wallace Huff Steve Jacobs Elizabeth Jone Ruby Lucado Jessica McPeak Leigh Anne Moye Debbie Poff Rhonda Seltz Michelle Smith

#### HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

Leah Carmady Alexandria Cordova Kavla Gardunio Chanera Durante Sefah Majeed Leigh Anne Mave Barbara Havens Mandy Seeberger Brittany Kinder Jessica Hale Kim Combs LeeAnn Keffer Tammy Murphy Ashley Kimbrough Wendy Cregger Jessica McPeak Amy Porvencher Rhonda Seltz Stephanie Smith

#### RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Floyd County Ed Fallon John Getgood Pat Haluska John Pendrey Rosa Powell Sue Quesinberry Iletta Slusher Laurence Wood

### **Giles County**

Robert Miles J.R. Peek Dianne Rader Lester Sears Caroleen Slowers Gail Vaught

### TO OUR HOUSE POLICY COUNCIL

Mary Blakely Morris Fleischer Linda Jilk Bill King Janne Mathes JoeRacek Rebecca Rees Melanie Smith Megan Stuart Don Waite

#### BLACKSBURG INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY

David Bluey Christy Brown Fredda Cromer Roy Kirkpatrick Jon Low Brenda Moses Jerald Robinson Bruce Shepherd Verb Simpson Mike Snyder Leigh Anne Taylor Donald Williams

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## NATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTION GOALS

### **GOAL 1: HELP LOW-INCOME PEOPLE BECOME MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT**

Employment and Education are the two most important factors leading to self-sufficiency. Program staff works with customers to find permanent employment, healthcare, transportation, and childcare.

### **GOAL 2:** IMPROVE CONDITIONS IN WHICH LOW-INCOME PEOPLE LIVE

NRCA helps low-income families and individuals to obtain or remain in safe and affordable housing.

### **GOAL 3:** ENCOURAGE LOW-INCOME PEOPLE TO OWN A STAKE IN THEIR COMMUNITY

Staff and customers are invited to take part in volunteer activities, councils, and committees that have positive impact on the community. Participation in program advisory councils and committees give our customers a chance to contribute their ideas.

### GOAL 4: CREATE PARTNERSHIPS AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

NRCA builds committed partnerships and agreements with organizations, area services, and community supporters to ensure our customers' success. These partnerships are essential for comprehensive customer care.

### **GOAL 5: INCREASE AGENCY CAPACITY TO HELP MORE LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

As the pressure for limited resources increases, NRCA must successfully manage its finances and raise additional funds to continue providing essential services. These realities call for NRCA to bring forth its collective experience and expertise to meet new demands through innovative, pro-active cost containment, financial management, and fund development strategies.

### **GOAL 6:** STRENGTHEN LOW-INCOME FAMILY SUPPORT SYSTEM

NRCA builds strong families by providing supportive services that give families the tools and resources to succeed and achieve financial independence, while embracing core family values. NRCA believes in building strong families to build strong communities.

## New River Community Action recognizes . . .

## Scholarship Award winner

The New River Community Action Board of Directors annually presents the *George Ducker Memorial Scholarship Award* in memory of the late Reverend Ducker, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Radford, member of the Radford City School Board and member of the New River Community Action Board of Directors from 1986-1992.

In June 2015, the Board presented the \$500 *Ducker Scholarship* to **AUTUMN BLEVINS** in recognition of her academic achievements, extracurricular activities and community service.

Autumn graduated from Blacksburg High School with a 3.3 GPA. She challenged herself with honors, dual-enrolled, and Advanced Placement courses. In addition to her outstanding academic success, Autumn worked nearly full-time while a student, volunteered with the local rescue squad and held a leadership position with the National Art Honors Society.

According to her guidance counselor, "Autumn can be a very enduring young woman with a great sense of humor and a spontaneous and outgoing personality." Autumn hopes to learn how to manage a business and perhaps run a non-profit organization. NRCA is proud to assist Autumn as she follows her dreams.

## Xolunteer of the Year

The Board of Directors of New River Community Action (NRCA) presented the agency's annual *Philip Sadler Memorial Community Service Volunteer of the Year Award* to **SUSAN ICOVE** of Floyd in June 2015.

Icove serves as Chairperson of the NRCA Floyd Local Advisory Board and served as Chairperson of the NRCA Floyd Building Renovation Committee. Icove provided leadership to local fundraising efforts to rehabilitate the Floyd Community Action building, raising more than \$150,000 for the project. She recruited local private donations, organized an event featuring poet Nikki Giovanni, and designed a fundraising brochure mailed to all Floyd residents.

According to Terry Smusz, NRCA CEO, "Susan had a vision -- a new Head Start classroom, renovated playground and food pantry, and plenty of office space for NRCA's current services with room for growth. Knowing the

limits of affordable non-profit space in our community, she also envisioned a spacious meeting room, now used for job fairs, GED and parenting classes. She brought experience and perseverance to her cause, and Floyd County is now the beneficiary of her hard work."

New River Community Action annually presents the *Philip Sadler Memorial Community Service Volunteer of the Year Award* in memory of the late Sadler, a Pulaski County attorney, community leader and humanitarian. The award is presented each year to an NRCA volunteer in recognition of outstanding service to the community.



Autumn Blevins, recipient of 2015 NRCA George Ducker Memorial Scholarship Award.



Susan Icove, recipient of 2015 NRCA Philip Sadler Memorial Community Service Volunteer of the Year Award. Susan is pictured with NRCA Board members John McEnhill (Chairman) and John Getgood, also members of the NRCA Floyd Building Renovation Committee.



New River Community Action, with the assistance of 1,923 volunteers who worked 65,814 hours, provided the following services to 13,538\* unduplicated individuals in 2014-2015:

- EMERGENCY FOOD was provided to 5,644 individuals in 2,566 families through six food pantries.
- VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) was provided free of charge for 601 families who saved \$120,200 in tax preparation fees.
- The HEAD START PROGRAM provided comprehensive education, nutrition, health, parent involvement and social services to 365 pre-school children.
- **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE** was provided to 2,627 families (6,407 individuals) alleviating their financial crises. Assistance with applying for electric bill payments through Neighbor-to-Neighbor was provided to 1894 families consisting of 4,472 individuals.
- HOUSING COUNSELING was provided to 101 households (208 individuals) leading to improved housing.
- HOMELESS and HOUSING PROGRAMs assisted 70 households (149 individuals) to obtain or maintain permanent housing through assistance with utility and security deposits, moving costs, and temporary rental assistance (\$170,213).
- CHILDREN'S HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP (CHIP) of the New River Valley provided 136 families with 232 children (age 0-6) with improved health care, parent education and case management.
- VIRGINIA CARES provided assistance to 146 ex-offenders to promote successful transition from prison or jail to society.
- INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES were provided to 5,936 families.
- FORMAL and INFORMAL PARTNERSHIPS were maintained with 174 organizations.
- STAFF SUPPORT OR OFFICE SPACE was provided to three agencies or organizations; 6,452 low- income individuals benefited.
- A total of 23 unduplicated low-income individuals were mobilized to serve on BOARDS AND COUNCILS OF NRCA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.
- FLOYD BACK PACK PROGRAM served 179 children in 83 families.
- FAMILY OUTREACH CONNECTIONS screened and referred 65 families to local home visiting programs and facilitated 187 visits to the Baby Shops.
- **TO OUR HOUSE** winter shelter served 52 homeless men providing 1,141 bed-nights, and a total of 3,423 meals. Fourteen host churches and 36 support churches/organization participated in the program. Nine hundred thirty-three volunteers provided 8,663 hours of service to men experiencing homelessness.
- Eighteen **AMERICORPS MEMBERS** provided a combined 10,848 service hours in these program areas: Head Start, Homeless and Housing Programs, VITA, MCEAP, and To Our House.

\*estimate/unconfirmed

## 2014-2015 FINANCIAL REPORT

Agency Revenues		Agency Expenses	
Grants	\$4,945,408	Head Start	\$3,417,384
In-Kind Donations	\$913,826	Administrative	\$661,494
Contributions*	\$250,138	Children's Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP)	\$585,229
Other Funding	\$40,199	Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$423,469
United Way	\$28,800	Housing Programs	\$338,588
Fundraising	\$19,364	Emergency Assistance Program	\$314,469
Total Revenue	\$6,197,735	AmeriCorps	\$144,736
		Family Outreach Connections	\$76,926
		Virginia CARES	\$74,823

Other Programs

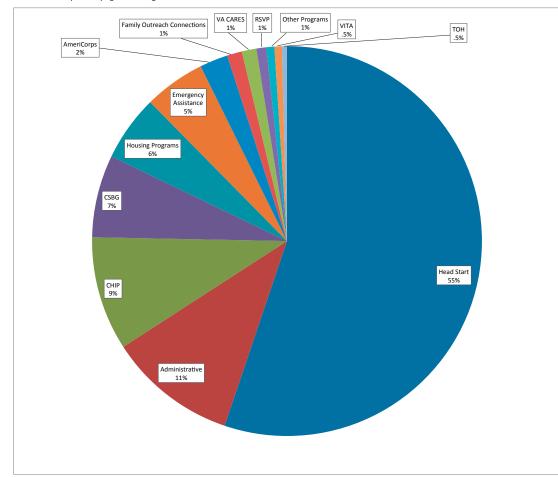
To Our House

Total Expenses

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

\*NRCA conducted a Capital Campaign for building renovations in FY 15.



\$50,721

\$41,099

\$37,770

\$26,208 \$6,192,916

## **AMERICORPS PROGRAM**



### The NRCA AmeriCorps Program members provided 10,848 hours of service.

AmeriCorps is a federal government program that networks with non-profit organizations, public agencies and faith-based groups. Initiated under President Bill Clinton through the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, the program currently enrolls over 80,000 individuals nationwide each year. AmeriCorps State and National Programs engage thousands of Americans in intensive community service. AmeriCorps members address

unmet community needs in areas of education, public safety, health, and the environment.

The NRCA AmeriCorps program enrolled eighteen members this service year. Through their efforts, a total of 10,848 hours were completed in the following programs: To Our House Thermal Shelter, Head Start, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, Homeless and Housing Programs, and Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program. Service activities included literacy support for children and families, renter education workshops, free tax preparation, coordination of local emergency services, and provision of overnight shelter and meals for homeless men. AmeriCorps members are truly our community heroes!

### 🔀 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

This year AmeriCorps celebrated its 20th Anniversary! On September 12<sup>th</sup>, NRCA AmeriCorps members gathered with over 500 members from around the state at the *Virginia Volunteer & Service Con*-

*ference* in Richmond to commit to a year of *service*! Then Virginia's AmeriCorps members joined with thousands of members from around the United States as they participated in a national simultaneous swearing in ceremony. Governor and First Lady McAuliffe and a U.S. Senator Tim Kaine attended the Richmond event, while Presidents Obama and Clinton broadcasted remarks from the White House South Lawn. President Obama reflected on his previous volunteerism in the community, "...the idea of making a difference in other people's lives made a difference in mine. It made me whole. It gave me center. It gave me a compass." Incoming members at the Richmond location were inspired by Kaine and the McAuliffes to make service a lifelong commitment. Kaine remarked, "If you make your life about serving others, you'll always have something to do, and you'll always be happy and fulfilled." Kaine proudly shared that one of his sons was joining AmeriCorps service that day.



NRCA AmeriCorps Program Coordinator, Nina Hollins, with US Senator Tim Kaine celebrating AmeriCorps' 20th anniversary at the Virginia Volunteer & Service Conference.

## CHILDREN'S HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP OF NRV



CHIP of NRV provided 136 families (232 children) with services including access to health care, case management and parent education.

The Children's Health Improvement Partnership of the New River Valley (CHIP of NRV) partners with families to create a nurturing home environment and promote the health and well-being of children in our community. CHIP provides services to families with children age birth through 6. The program model includes accessing medical and dental homes, promoting successful parenting through use of the nationally recognized evidence-based Parents as Teachers curriculum, ensuring parents understand and follow physician recommendations, helping families set and attain health and self-sufficiency goals, coordinating transportation, developmental screenings, case management and referrals to other community-based services to help meet the multifaceted needs of families. All services emphasize prevention, early intervention, school readiness and family empowerment.

CHIP links families with medical and dental homes where children receive consistent and comprehensive care in familiar settings. Enrolled families receive regular home visits from CHIP Nurses who provide health education, medical case management and early screening for developmental delays. The CHIP Nurse supports the child's physician ensuring access to preventative health care and other necessary medical services.

A key component of the CHIP program is the Parents as Teachers (PAT) parent education curriculum. All CHIP of NRV Family Case Managers are nationally-certified trainers. PAT drives home the message that parents are their children's first and best teachers.

## 🔀 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

*uring* 2014-15, CHIP of NRV served a total of 462 individuals: 221 parents, 232 CHIP children, and 9 siblings. Family Case Managers and Registered Nurses completed 1,957 home visits. Additionally, CHIP of NRV



staff completed 442 developmental and social emotional screenings, resulting in 51 referrals to Early Intervention or specialists for diagnostic and intervention services. Staff made 1,493 referrals to other human service agencies and providers. Our Registered Nurses provided 70 dental varnishes and 39 Otoacoustic Emissions hearing screenings to children in the New River Valley.

## Outcomes for 2014-15 (families/children who have received at least 10 months of service)

- At enrollment, 33% of families had one or both parents employed; after 1 year of service that number increased to 61%.
- 92% of parents report they are more confident in taking care of their child.
- 93% of parents report CHIP has helped them manage their parenting responsibilities.

- 98% of families report that CHIP has helped their family.
- 100% of families would refer their friends and family.
- 96% of children are up to date on immunizations.
- 93% of parents report they are closer to their child because they have a better understanding of their child.

- 100% of children have a medical home.
- 98% of parents report CHIP has helped them develop better parenting skills.
- 86% of families have met at least one familyfocused goal.
- 98% of parents report CHIP has helped them learn how to keep their child safe.

## FAMILY OUTREACH CONNECTIONS

Family Outreach Connections screened and referred 65 families to local home-visiting programs and contributed to the over-all well-being of families through 187 visits to the Baby Shops, ensuring families had daily hygienic necessities for their children.



Family Outreach Connections of the New River Valley is a free local service designed to assist pregnant women, parents, and others caring for young children to find a home-visiting program and other community resources most beneficial for their specific needs. Funded by a Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting grant from the Virginia Department of Health, families participate in a brief, yet comprehensive, screening to determine which program would best suit the family, thus maximizing the services received. This outreach offers families in the New River Valley a holistic approach to connecting with assistance programs located within their communities and tailored to their needs. Families who contact the Family Outreach Connections Program may receive assistance for parenting education, health needs, accessing medical care, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, housing resources, domestic violence, and a variety of other issues that families might encounter. Family Outreach Connections partners with the following programs: Baby Care, Resource Mothers, NRCA CHIP, Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia, Preschool Case Management and Parent Coach Services, Special Deliveries, NRV CARES Parenting Young Children & Circle of Parents, and Strengthening Families.

A key component of the Family Outreach Connections Program is managing local *Baby Shops* that provide children's clothing, books, toys, and daily hygiene necessities free of charge to families enrolled, or interested in enrolling, in a home-visiting program. These shops are volunteer and donation driven. The Baby Shops' mission is to promote self-esteem, confidence, and overall general positive character building, while at the same time helping to meet the basic needs of infants and toddlers. This unique outreach experience is geared toward providing families with a shopping experience that includes making choices and being treated as a "preferred customer."

### 💥 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Uring 2014-15, New River Community Action launched Family Outreach Connections as an individual program; previously the program was housed under NRCA's Children's Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP). With this change, Family Outreach Connections was able to focus on extending its community partnerships and volunteer engagement throughout the New River Valley. The program now links with eight projects serving pregnant women and families with young children. Additionally, Family Outreach Connections secured in-kind donations valued at over \$3,500 to support the *Baby Shops* through several drives and giving opportunities, including collaborations with BB&T Bank and Kroger.



Shanice Hairston, Family Outreach Connections Screener, at the **Baby Shop** in Christiansburg.



## HEAD START PROGRAM

## Head Start provided 365 children and their families with comprehensive developmental services, benefiting the entire family unit.

Head Start is dedicated to providing eligible pre-school children with the tools necessary for creating and maintaining a lifelong learning foundation for school and for success in life. Head Start promotes school readiness and successful transitions by offering children and families supportive education in: language and literacy skills, science and math, cognition and general knowledge, physical development and health, and social and emotional development.

Head Start emphasizes the role of the parent as their child's first and most important teacher. Program staff members build relationships with parents, while engaging them to be strong advocates for their children and family as a whole. Comprehensive services to enrolled families also include social, health, nutrition, and support in goal development and implementation. Services are designed to be responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage.

## 🔀 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

he NRCA Head Start program year 2014-2015 marked a year of progress with many changes as the motivator. A new partnership with Giles County Public Schools resulted in a braided Virginia Preschool Initiative and Head Start classroom (VPI/HS) at Narrow Elementary/Middle School (NEMS). With a classroom for four-year old children at NEMS, this allowed Head Start to offer a Combination (center/home-based) classroom for three-year old children at the NRCA Narrows Head Start Center.

After strong community support and much effort, the renovation of the Floyd New River Community Action Building Head Start classroom was completed on October 7, 2015. Three-year old Floyd County Head Start children were wel-



NRCA Floyd Head Start sponsored a **Tea Party** for the Floyd County Fine HeArts artists. Staff and children posed with members of Fine HeArts in front of the garden mural created by the artists for the Head Start classroom.

comed to a new aesthetically pleasing Combination classroom and playground located at the NRCA building. Other changes for the 2014-2015 program year included the adoption of the new *Creative Curriculum* for Head Start in place of the *Highscope* curriculum, which had when used for many years. The program also changed from using the *Children's Observation Report* (COR) to Teaching Strategies Gold as the child assessment tool. These changes aligned NRCA Head Start children's outcome measurements with those of other preschool programs across the state and nation.

Also, 2014-2015 marked NRCA Head Start's first year of the federal Office of Head Start's new five-year grant cycle. The Office of Head Start shifted from a three-year review period to an annual review cycle. As a result of being a quality program, NRCA was one of only ninety-nine grantees nationwide awarded participation in the new Head Start Key Indicator Review, instead of the usual Comprehensive Review for the first review period.

## HOMELESS AND HOUSING PROGRAMS

### Focus on Group Education in 2014-2015

During program year 2014-15, NRCA management focused on group education services as part of the continuing program restructuring begun in 2013-2014. The NRCA Board of Directors voted in October, 2014 to require clients who receive financial Emergency Assistance through a local NRCA office to attend a Renter Education Workshop. This program was piloted in Giles and Radford beginning in January, 2015. To accommodate the new requirement, Renter Education classes were increased to two per month in each locality, one during the day and one in the evening. This led to an increase in Renter Education participants, with 24 households served in 2014-15 compared to no households served in 2013-14. This requirement for attendance will expand to Floyd in 2015-16.

As part of this restructuring, the Board voted in May, 2015, to discontinue the First Time Homebuyer Classes, and instead partner with Community Housing Partners (CHP) who provides these classes. CHP refers rental clients to NRCA workshops, and NRCA refers pre-purchase clients to their classes.

## PREVENTION AND RAPID REHOUSING

### Prevention and Rapid Rehousing programs provided \$170,213 in financial assistance to 70 households.

NRCA's Homeless and Housing Programs assisted 70 households (149 individuals) that were either at-risk of homelessness or already homeless. Funding assisted these families with rent and utility deposits, rent arrears, and temporary rental and utility support to help households obtain or maintain stable and safe housing.

### HOUSING COUNSELING

### Counseling was provided to 101 households in 2014-2015.

NRCA provided Housing Counseling to 101 households (208 individuals) during 2014-2015, a significant increase over 2013-14. Housing Counseling included rental rights and responsibilities, pre-purchase, foreclosure prevention and financial literacy.



## **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

young married couple with two children and another on the way were living with a relative. The husband was working a minimum wage job and the family was barely making ends meet, even with the help of a relative. The relative determined she could no longer provide help and moved away, abandoning the young family. After she left, the couple could not afford to pay their rent and were evicted. They entered the New River Family Shelter and were referred to NRCA for rapid rehousing assistance.

While in the shelter, the husband found a better job making more money. That same week, NRCA staff performed an assessment of the family's situation, and they were approved for rapid rehousing funds. An apartment at a Community Housing Partners subsidized complex became available and the family moved in, but continued working with a NRCA Housing Counselor. The family graduated from the rapid rehousing program and have continued on their own with a sustainable budget.

## **VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)**

### Volunteers served 601 families, saving filers \$120,200 in tax preparation fees.

New River Community Action was the recipient of a \$12,000 grant from the Virginia Community Action Partnership, allowing the operation at the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program at sites in Floyd, Montgomery and Pulaski Counties and Radford City. VITA provides free tax preparation to moderate-low income individuals. From January to May 2015, community volunteers worked 634 hours and assisted 601 taxpayers. The volunteers helped their clients receive \$777,829 in tax refunds, including \$238,063 in federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) dollars. The EITC is the largest federal anti-poverty program, serving working families who are most at-risk during hard economic times. The average adjusted gross income for households served by VITA was \$18,486. NRCA's free services saved low-income tax payers \$120,200 in tax preparation fees, based on an average fee of \$200 per tax-filer.

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

RCA VITA sites now include additional computers so individuals can file their own tax returns online with the help of a VITA volunteer, as needed. Two filers learned how to file their own returns at a NRCA VITA site, thanks to help from a volunteer. Neither filer had ever completed a tax return nor was familiar with computers. With a little help and support from the volunteer, they both successfully completed and submitted their returns. One stated, "I can't believe I just filed my own tax return!" The other said, "That's it! I can't believe it was that easy; I never would have tried it on my own." Both left the site having gained the confidence to file their own returns in the future.



Heather Lucas, NRCA VITA Program Coordinator, and volunteers Brenda Springer, Jettie Montgomery, Lee Henkel, and Richard Theobald.

## NRCA ENDS SPONSORSHIP OF THE RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



On January 15, 2015, the New River Community Action (NRCA) Board of Directors voted to end NRCA's sponsorship of the Floyd and Giles Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) effective at the end of the 2014-15 program year, March 31, 2015. The Board reached this decision following careful review of the program and its community impact.

The number of NRCA RSVP enrollees had dropped over the past several years. By winter 2015, only 40 RSVP volunteers were reporting monthly service hours. The enrollment drop might have been due to easy access to information about local volunteer opportunities. Today's seniors are computer-savvy, perhaps not needing this program designed in the 1970s to help them find volunteer service.

Additionally, the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS), the federal agency administering RSVP, established new priorities for volunteer service. NRCA RSVP had minimum success meeting the CNCS goals, primarily because of the rural nature of our service area and volunteer preferences for service activities different from the CNCS priorities.

NRCA spent approximately \$20,000 annually from unrestricted funds to meet the RSVP grant match and budget requirements. The agency determined these funds would be better spent supporting NRCA's mission of alleviating local conditions of poverty.

As the program came to an end, many dedicated RSVP members stated their intentions to continue on with their volunteer community service. NRCA expressed gratitude to Valerie Mills, RSVP Program Director, and Cindy Laws, RSVP Program Coordinator, and to the RSVP Advisory Council members for their excellent service to NRCA RSVP.

During its fifth season of operation, 933 volunteers from 50 faith-based organizations, businesses and community groups provided 1,141 bed-nights of winter shelter and 3,423 meals for 52 homeless men. During Season Five, 19 guests obtained employment and 25 guests moved into permanent housing.

Homelessness looks very different in the New River Valley than in urban areas. The homeless in rural areas might reside in their cars, in the woods or caves. Individuals in our area who find themselves without housing often include ex-offenders, the disabled, those working at low-paying jobs, and those experiencing long-term unemployment. Long waiting lists for limited subsidized housing exacerbate the problem.

NRCA's To Our House program works in partnership with the local faith community to shelter homeless single men in the winter months. Churches offer their fellowship halls each for one or two weeks as night shelter. Host and support church volunteers transport the homeless men (guests), set up cots and sleep at the shelter as church liaisons to the To Our House staff that stay awake on site all night. Volunteers also cook and serve meals and offer fellowship to the guests during the evening hours.

New River Community Action offers a variety of support services to the guests, including VA CARES for the ex-offenders. NRCA also links the To Our House guests with our Homeless and Housing Program to obtain stable housing.

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

olunteers are the heart, soul, and hands of this program. Volunteers transport, inventory, and set up equipment; support staff at the intake site; plan, cook, and serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner; launder program sheets and towels; transport men (guests) to and from the host shelter site; and provide conversation and support to the guests during the evening hours. Some volunteers even provide well-check health visits, give haircuts and organize Super Bowl parties.

Season Five experienced a special challenge when one of the

program's long standing hosts, Grace Episcopal Church in Radford, could no longer accommodate sheltering To Our House guests because the church had taken on a new ministry to shelter four homeless single females. The Grace Episcopal pastor felt so strongly about the mission of *To Our House* that he reached out to other churches in his community and challenged them to fill the gap of the two weeks his church had been hosting. As a result, St. Jude's Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Church of Radford became new hosts for the program. These two churches embraced the role of hosting, opening their doors and sheltering guests the last two weeks of the season. Grace Episcopal Church took on a new role of *To Our House* support church and helped provide meals and fellowship when the men were guests at the Presbyterian Church. 15 www.newrivercommunityaction.org





## NRCA FLOYD BUILDING RENOVATIONS

The continuing renovation of the NRCA Floyd facility was one of our most notable accomplishments during 2014-15. Local donors and volunteers generously supported efforts to restore our building located at 323 Floyd Highway South. NRCA program staff returned to the facility in August 2014 and we opened a new Head Start classroom at the site the following October. In addition to Head Start, programs housed in the newly-renovated building include Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), Emergency Assistance and Food Pantry, Backpack Program, Housing Counseling, Children's Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP), VA CARES and the Floyd County Baby Store. NRCA also partners with New River Community College to provide space for GED classes and with NRV CARES for parent education classes.









## **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

### NRCA assisted 9,301 unduplicated individuals in 4,287 families alleviating their hunger and financial crises.

NRCA's Emergency Assistance Programs serve low income families who are experiencing financial crises. Temporary financial assistance includes vouchers for utility payments, mortgage/rent payments, medications, clothing, or gasoline for transportation to a job or medical appointment. Staff and volunteers also assist families through NRCA's six food pantries located throughout the New River Valley. Clients can access Neighbor-to-Neighbor electrical assistance, Atmos Energy assistance, and Weatherization application assistance at any of the five NRCA Emergency Assistance offices. Information and referrals help participants obtain needed support from both inside and outside the NRCA network.

During 2014-15, emergency food was distributed to 5,644 individuals in 2,566 families. NRCA provided temporary financial assistance through vouchers to 6,407 individuals in 2,627 families.

The Emergency Assistance Programs are supported through partnerships with numerous organizations and agencies throughout the New River Valley. Funds are provided by the United Way, United Fund, faith-based organizations, civic groups, businesses, and individuals. Only through a coordinated community effort is emergency assistance possible and duplication of services avoided.

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

In the New River Valley, 1 in 8 people, including 1 in 5 children, are at risk of hunger. On May 13, 2015, local residents assembled bags non-perishable food and placed them by their mail boxes for the National Association of Letter Carriers' annual *Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive*. The mail carriers picked up the bags of food throughout the day and delivered them to NRCA's food pantries to help feed hungry lowincome families. People were so generous with their contributions to the postal food drive, our pantries received enough food to last several months. Thanks to the generous donors, the mail carriers who put in



Volunteers sort and shelve donated food at the NRCA Floyd Food Pantry following the *Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive*.

long hours hauling bags of heavy food, and the NRCA volunteers who stocked the shelves, we went from empty pantries to full!

## FLOYD COUNTY BACK PACK PROGRAM

During the 2014-15 school year, NRCA's Floyd County Back Pack Program provided 179 lower-income students in 83 families with supplemental food for the weekends. Child-friendly and easily consumed food was distributed weekly through local schools. Funding was provided by private donors, foundations, and the Empty Bowls fundraising event which raised \$8,322 through ticket purchases, donations, and silent auction.

## VIRGINIA CARES (COMMUNITY ACTION RE-ENTRY SYSTEM)



### Virginia CARES program provided 146 newly released ex-offenders with assistance and support to promote a successful transition from prison or jail to society.

Virginia CARES is a community-based effort to assist individuals coming out of jail or prison. Services include emergency aid (food, clothing, shelter and transportation), job readiness instruction, employment search and assistance with restoration of rights. Through linkages with community resources, Virginia CARES provides opportunities for ex-offenders to become self-sufficient, law-abiding and taxpaying members of society. The program reduces recidivism by helping formerly-incarcerated individuals obtain the skills and support they need to reintegrate into their home communities.

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

*I* uring the 2014-2015 program year, Virginia CARES staff assisted 74 participants to find fulltime permanent employment.

Program staff helped "Bill" obtain his Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Once a testing site was found, Virginia CARES partnered with local community organizations to pay for the cost of the testing. After completing a refresher course, "Bill" successfully passed his CDL test. Virginia CARES staff helped him find full-time employment and "Bill" was soon on the road driving an 18-wheeler!

"Bill" has remained employed and is in the process of paying off all his fines and restitution. He is on track to pay all required costs ahead of schedule and will likely complete his probationary period four years early.

## 🔀 2014-2015 FUNDING SOURCES

### NRCA expresses appreciation to individuals, institutions, and organizations for their financial support!

Monetary support \$100 or more

Abercrombie, Joseph and Christiane Acosta, Mary Agrivisions LLC Aiken, William and Sullivan, Katherine Air Mechanical Alliant Techsystems Operations LLC Altieri, Elizabeth and Rankin Jr, H Wilson Ann Hess Pottery APCO Employee Benevolent Assoc. Arbury, A S Auburn United Methodist Church Bank of Flovd Barts, Wesley and Lindsey Bauers-Wall Family Foundation Bell, William Berney, Isabel Bibb, Diane and Johnson, Patrick Bishop, Anne Blacksburg Christian Church Blacksburg Christian Fellowship Blacksburg Church Women United Blacksburg First Church of God Blacksburg Friends Meeting Blacksburg Junior Womens Club Blacksburg Newcomers Club, Inc. Blacksburg Presbyterian Church Blacksburg Presbyterian Women of the Church Blacksburg Women's Club Blakely, Mary Bland, Delores and Marvin Bollo's Cafe & Bakery Downtown Bos, Ronald Bowen, Marsha Bowman, L. A. Boyd, Michael Britt, Brian Brown, John and Mary Brown, Jr., J. Howe and Margaret Browning, Larry Bull & Bones at the River Burton, Patrick Butler, Dora C.E. Richardson Benevolent Foundation Cadmus, Pamela Caldwell, William Calvary Christian Church Calvary United Methodist Church Camden, Sue and Daniel Carr, Scott and Jane

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Stonewall Home and Garden

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Taylor, George Tellier Family Inc dba Our Daily Bread Bakerv & Cafe The Carter and Kay Craigie Family Foundation The Floyd County Chamber of Commerce, Inc The Side Door Sessions Tideman, Nicolaus and Putney, Estill Tonev. Roberta Town of Blacksburg Town of Christianburg Town of Flovd Town of Pulaski Tremblett, Eleanor and Paul Tuchler Edwin and Elizabeth Twisted Sisters Pizza, Inc. dba Sharkev's Wing & Rib Joint Tvnan, Sandra Tyson, John and Linda Unitarian Universalist Congregation United Auto Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America United Fund of Giles County United States Department of Agriculture United States Department of Health & Human Services United States Department of Housing & Urban Development United States Department of the Treasury-Internal Revenue Service United States Emergency Food & Shelter Program United Steelworkers Local #1022

United Way of Montgomery, Radford, & Flovd United Way of Roanoke Valley United Way of Southwest Virginia United We Stand Ministries Unity Christian Church Disciples of Christ Unity Christian Church, CWF VALALLIC Vaughan, Gary and Janice Verbrugge, Susan Vest, Glenda and Roger Vest Johanna Virginia Community Action Partnership Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Service Virginia Department of Health Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development Virginia Department of Social Services Virginia Housing Development Wallace. Beth Walmart Watson, Judith Wesleyan Community Church West, David and Lindsay Winters. Paul and Kathryn Wojnowich, Gili and Shifi Woods, Susan Worley, Timothy and Jamie York. Merrilee Yost, Delegate Joseph Zallen, Richard and Doris Zalopany, Cecile Zion Oak Grove Pavilion Zucchet Gloria

We ask forgiveness from anyone we might have inadvertently left off our list. Please contact 633-5133, ext. 457 with any corrections.

Please note the above list does not include donations to the Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program or Pulaski County Emergency Needs Task Force, NRCA's emergency assistance program partners.

List does not include in-kind material or volunteer donations. Many local citizen groups and businesses contribute time, professional services and thousands of items to NRCA annually. Without their support, NRCA would not be able to assist the low-income residents of the New River Valley. All donations are tax-deductible.

Thank you very much for your support!

## 🔀 2014-2015 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

### NRCA expresses appreciation to all our community partners!

Amedisys Hospice American Cancer Society American Legion Auxiliary American Red Cross Angel Project Angels in the Attic Asbury United Methodist Church Association of Energy Conservation Professionals Auburn United Methodist Church Big Stoney Creek Hikers Ministry Blacksburg Baptist Church Blacksburg Ministerial Association Blacksburg Presbyterian Church Blacksburg United Methodist Church Calvary Baptist Church, Floyd Calvary Baptist Church, Radford Carilion Clinic Hospice of NRV Carilion Giles Memorial Hospital Carilion NRV Medical Center Carl McNeil's Bluegrass Barn Castlerock Baptist Church Central United Methodist Church Check Elementary School Chris Prokosch Christ Episcopal Church, Blacksburg Christiansburg Kiwanis Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship Christiansburg Presbyterian Church Christmas for Children Church of Latter Day Saints, Pembroke Church Women United, Blacksburg Cindy Murphy **Community Housing Partners** Cornerstone Pentecostal Church Cross Pointe Conference Center DesignWorks **Dublin Family Practice** Dust Covenant Church **Enterprise Car Sales** Fairlawn Presbyterian Church Family Preservation Services

Feeding America Fieldstone United Methodist Church First Baptist Church, Radford First Christian Church, Pearisburg First Presbyterian Church, Narrows First Presbyterian Church, Pulaski First United Methodist Church, Narrows First United Methodist Church, Pembroke Floyd Baptist church Floyd County Chamber of Commerce Floyd County Department of Social Services Floyd County Emergency & Rescue Squad Floyd County Fine HeArts Flovd County High School Floyd County Humane Society Floyd County Lions Club Floyd County MD Team Floyd County Ministerial Association Floyd County PSA Floyd County Willing Helpers Floyd Elementary School Floyd Ladies Auxiliary Coat Drive Foster Grandparent Program Freedom First Credit Union Freedom First Insurance Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Rocky Knob Giles Amateur Radio Association Giles County Chamber of Commerce Giles County Christian Mission Giles County Commissioner of Revenue Giles County Department of Social Services Giles County Historical Society Giles County Lion's Club Giles County Public Schools Giles County Senior Center Giles County Sheriff's Office **Giles Family Practice** Goodwill Industries Grace Episcopal Church Grove United Methodist Church Habitat for Humanity of New River Valley

Holy Family Social Justice Holy Spirit Catholic Church Hubbard's Boarding House Indian Valley Elementary School Inn at Virginia Tech Iris Brammer Library It's All About Jesus Jacksonville Center for the Arts June Bug Center Knights of Columbus Kiwanis Club of Montgomery County, Blacksburg Chapter Lions Clubs Lewis Gale Hospital, Montgomery Literacy Volunteers of NRV Luther Memorial Lutheran Church Med Home Health Mental Health Association of NRV Mike West Montgomery County Department of Social Services Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program Montgomery County Public Schools Montgomery/Floyd Regional Library Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church Mt. Tabor United Methodist Church Narrows Cornerstone Church Narrows Junior Women's Club Narrows Presbyterian Church Narrows United Methodist Church National Fatherhood Initiative New Dublin Presbyterian Church New Life Christian Fellowship New Life Church New River Community College New River Family Shelter New River Health District New River Valley Agency on Aging New River Valley Association of Realtors New River Valley CARES



New River Valley Community Services New River Valley Early Intervention Council New River Valley Employment Network New River Valley Housing Partnership New River Valley Pediatrics New River Valley Project Linus New River Valley Regional Jail New River Valley/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board Newport Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church Northstar Church Our Saviour Lutheran Church Pearisburg AARP Pearisburg Lions Club Pearisburg Presbyterian Church Pearisburg Public Library Pearisburg United Methodist Church Pembroke Christian Church Pembroke Management Pleasant Hill/Eaton's Chapel Pulaski County Children and Family Partners Pulaski County Christmas Store Pulaski County Department of Social Services Pulaski County Emergency Needs Task Force Pulaski County Public Schools Pulaski First Presbyterian Church Pulaski Health Care Center Pulaski Salvation Armv Quilters of Floyd Radford City Department of Social Services Radford City Police Department Radford City Public Schools

Radford Clothing Bank Radford Fairlawn YMCA Radford Fairlawn Ministerial Association Radford Housing Rehab Board Radford Presbyterian Church Radford University Radford Worship Center Rich Creek Public Library Rich Creek 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church RIFF Reading Is Fun in Flovd **Riverview Nursing Home** Salvation Army Senior Community Service Employment Program Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project Southwest VA Second Harvest Food Bank Southwestern VA Training Center St. Jude's Catholic Church St. Mary's Catholic Church St. Michael's Lutheran Church St. Thomas Episcopal Church Subway, Christiansburg & Pulaski **Terry Clements Total Action For Progress** Tri-Area Community Health Clinic Unitarian Universalist Church Unity Christian Church University of Virginia Valley Interfaith Child Care Center Veterans of Foreign Wars Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children

Virginia Association of Housing Counselors Virginia Community Action Partnership Virginia Cooperative Extension Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services Virginia Department of Social Services Virginia Dietetic Association Virginia Head Start Association Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy Virginia Organizing Project Virginia Premier Virginia Preschool Initiative Virginia Tech Virginia Tech Residential Honors College Wades Foods Wesley Foundation at Radford University Wesley Foundation at Virginia Tech Wild Goose Church, Indian Valley Willis Elementary School Willow Springs Tree Farms/Billy Crigler Women of Presbyterian Church-Floyd Women's Resource Center YMCA. Radford/Fairlawn Zion Oak Grove Pavilion

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## NEW RIVER COMMUNITY ACTION LOCATIONS

#### ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

1093 East Main Street Radford, VA 24141 (540) 633-5133

#### **BLACKSBURG HEAD START**

Blacksburg Presbyterian Church 701 Church Street Blacksburg, VA 24060 (540) 552-0490

#### BLACKSBURG INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY

706 Harding Avenue Blacksburg, VA 24060 (540) 951-8134

#### CHRISTIANSBURG HEAD START

135 Church Street Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 381-7559

#### FLOYD BABY SHOP

323 Floyd Highway South Floyd, VA 24091 (540) 639-3159

#### **FLOYD CHIP**

323 Floyd Highway South PO Box 849 Floyd, VA 24091 (540) 745-2211

## FLOYD EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE & HOUSING COUNSELING

323 Floyd Highway South PO Box 849 Floyd, VA 24091 (540) 745-2102

#### **FLOYD HEAD START**

323 Floyd Highway South PO Box 849 Floyd, VA 24091 (540) 745-2120

#### FLOYD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

531 Oak Hill Drive Floyd, VA 24091 (540) 745-9440 Ext. 4673

### **GILES BABY SHOP**

211 Main Street Narrows, VA 24124 (540) 639-3159

#### **GILES CHIP**

211 Main Street, Suite 104 Narrows, VA 24124 (540) 726-2252

## GILES EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE & HOUSING COUNSELING

1410-B Wenonah Avenue Pearisburg, VA 24134 (540) 921-2146

### HOMELESS AND HOUSING PROGRAMS

1093 East Main Street Radford, VA 24141 (540) 633-5133 Ext. 440

#### **MONTGOMERY BABY SHOP**

St. Paul United Methodist Church 220 West Main Street Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 639-3159

#### **MONTGOMERY & RADFORD CHIP**

114 A North Franklin Street Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 394-3255

#### MONTGOMERY EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE & HOUSING COUNSELING

110 Roanoke Street Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 382-6186

#### NARROWS HEAD START

111 Mary Street Narrows, VA 24124 (540) 726-2700

### NARROWS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

401 West Wolf Street Narrows, VA 24124 (540) 726-2391

#### PEARISBURG HEAD START

1105 Henson Avenue Pearisburg, VA 24134 (540) 921-2355

#### MACY MCCLAUGHERTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1001 Henson Avenue Pearisburg, VA 24134 (540) 921-1363

#### PULASKI BABY SHOP

412 North Jefferson Avenue Pulaski, VA 24301 (540) 639-3159

### PULASKI CHIP

412 North Jefferson Avenue Pulaski, VA 24301 (540) 994-9200

#### PULASKI EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE & HOUSING COUNSELING

412 North Jefferson Avenue Pulaski, VA 24301 (540) 980-5525

#### **PULASKI HEAD START**

14 Sixth Street Pulaski, VA 24301 (540) 994-5741

#### RADFORD EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE & HOUSING COUNSELING

928 West Main Street Radford, VA 24141 (540) 267-3205

#### **RADFORD HEAD START**

306 West Main Street Radford, VA 24141 (540) 731-4107

### **TO OUR HOUSE**

110 Roanoke Street Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 382-6188

#### **VIRGINIA CARES**

110 Roanoke Street Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 382-9382

### VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

110 Roanoke Street Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 382-6186 (during tax season)



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