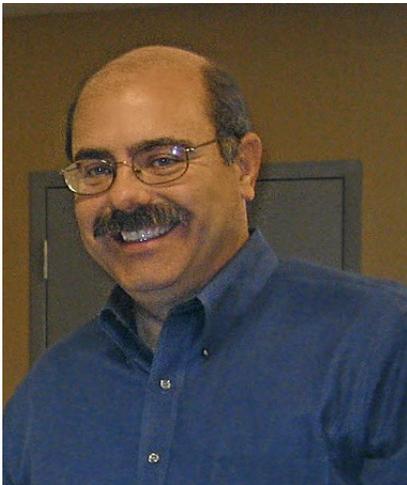




OCATO Spotlight

Meet IC Jeffrey Diver: Keeping the Values of the Community Action Movement Alive



Jeffrey Diver has been in Community Action for over 16 years when he started as the first employee and executive director of Supports to Encourage Low-income Families (SELF), the Community Action Agency in Butler County, and he has served as an Internal Consultant (IC) for the Ohio Community Action Training Organization (OCATO) for the past six years.

He has 30 years of experience working in the non-profit field, including a stint working for a national nonprofit in Washington D.C. where he and his staff built grassroots coalitions throughout the country, which gave him a strong foundation for his current work in Community Action. He was introduced to Community Action when he decided to move from Washington D.C. to the Midwest to raise his family. That is when he accepted the executive director position at SELF and attended a Community Action executive training institute. "I was inspired by Community Action's rich past," Jeff explained. "Those traditions have kept up my drive to build the strongest organization possible ... It's been a labor of love to build a new Community Action Agency rooted in the values of the early founders of our movement."

Jeff has been successful in developing the new CAA in Butler, being honored with 16 national, state and local awards for their best practices. He learned of the Internal Consultant program after talking to an OCATO staff member and thought that it was a natural fit having assisted and trained community coalitions across the country in a wide array of topics while in Washington D.C. "I enjoy facilitating all of the areas in the IC program, but I specialize in helping agencies with strategic planning, customer service, family development, and now Bridges Out of Poverty," Jeff said. "It's a very exciting program, gaining quality small group training from top experts and then being able to spread the wealth of that knowledge to the Community Action network in Ohio." In particular, Jeff remembers last year all of the ICs traveling to Denver to become certified Bridges Out of Poverty trainers. "Once again, Ohio CAAs were blazing the trail in gaining and disseminating knowledge in a way that other states may replicate, much like how they have copied our 'Best Practices' program," he stated.

Jeff finds the IC program to be very valuable stating, "The breadth of knowledge and experience within the IC program is staggering. Our ongoing job is to inform the network of the free training opportunities available to Ohio CAAs from OCATO. With all of our experience, we all strive to continuously improve."