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PRESS RELEASE

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Indiana Institute for Working Families Announces Funding from the Duke Energy Foundation

Indianapolis, IN—Many Hoosiers are struggling to make ends meet. One in three Hoosiers are now low-income—earning less than 200 percent of poverty (\$36,620 for a family of three in 2010). These individuals, despite their best efforts, are struggling to meet their most basic needs as Hoosier workers continue to earn a median wage lower than the average American. National long-term unemployment (lasting more than 26 weeks) is at its highest level since 1948 and continues to plague Indiana as 58 percent of unemployed Hoosiers have exhausted their benefits in 2009. In order for Indiana to recover from the national recession and prepare for a more prosperous future, special attention needs to be paid to the education and training needs of low-income workers to ensure they have access to basic skills and postsecondary education opportunities that will increase their employability and earnings.

In order to address this need, the Indiana Institute for Working Families (Institute), a program of Indiana Community Action Association, announced today it has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to research and develop a comprehensive Indiana Self-Sufficiency Standard Training Curriculum (Curriculum) for case managers, financial counselors, and workforce and education counselors. The Curriculum teaches them how to use the Indiana Self-Sufficiency Standard (Standard) and online Self-Sufficiency Standard Calculator (Calculator) with their clients to move them toward the goal of economic self-sufficiency.

The Standard and online Calculator calculate how much income a family of a certain composition in a given place needs to adequately meet their basic needs—without relying on public or private assistance. It takes into account local variances in expenses as well as family configuration (e.g., children less than 5 years old who are going to require child care if a parent is working) and other factors. The Standard and Calculator calculates this information for 70 family types in all 92 counties in Indiana.

The Institute will research and develop a comprehensive Curriculum in partnership with Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) for these various stakeholders, many of whom provide case management, building on lessons learned from previous iterations of case management curricula. Currently there is no curriculum that comprehensively addresses each of these stakeholders group and that is specific to Indiana. The Curriculum will provide a framework and tools that are accessible to these groups in Indiana.

The Curriculum will provide tools to those who serve these individuals including information on how the Standard can be used for education and training counseling, goal setting, budget

counseling, as an evaluation tool to assess where clients are at, and as a benchmark for program and client success. The Curriculum will also include information on the online Calculator which tells workers the wage they need to make on an hourly, monthly, and yearly basis to meet their family's basic needs. The Calculator can also offer information on the jobs in their region that pay a self-sufficient wage, education and training requirements for these jobs, institutions in their area that offer this education and training, and links to the federal financial aid web site.

Once the Curriculum is developed the Institute will deliver this training to many different audiences including Community Action case managers, Centers for Working Families advocates, and other applicable audiences. The Institute will also promote the existence of the training Curriculum to the media and to state agencies.

Additionally, this Curriculum will be used by WOW with participating Family Economic Security partners publish a Self-Sufficiency Standard or (currently 37states) and to help groups like the Institute work better, more closely, and effectively with stakeholders who can benefit from and utilize the Self-Sufficiency Standard in their states.

The Indiana Standard and Calculator can be accessed at: <http://www.incap.org/iwfw.html> or <http://www.wowonline.org/ourprograms/fess/state-resources/indiana.asp>.

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The Duke Energy Foundation is the core of Duke Energy's support and development of sustainable communities. The Foundation, along with employee and retiree volunteers, actively works to improve the quality of life in our communities, lending expertise in the form of leadership and financial support through grants to charitable organizations. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.duke-energy.com/community/foundation.asp>.

Wider Opportunities for Women

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) works nationally and in its home community of Washington, DC to build pathways to economic independence for America's families, women, and girls. WOW has a distinctive history in changing the landscape of women and work.

For more than 40 years, WOW has helped women learn to earn, with programs emphasizing literacy, technical and nontraditional skills, the welfare-to-work transition, career development, and retirement security. Since 1964, WOW has trained more than 10,000 women for well-paid work in the DC area.

WOW leads the National Women's Workforce Network, which is comprised of organizations committed to increasing women and girls' access to well-paid work, the Family Economic Security Program (FES), and the Elder Economic Security Initiative (Initiative). To learn more about WOW, please visit: <http://www.wowonline.org>.

Indiana Institute for Working Families

The Indiana Institute for Working Families (Institute) is a program of the Indiana Community Action Association, Inc. (IN-CAA). The Institute was founded in 2004. The Indiana Institute for Working Families conducts research and promotes public policies to help Hoosier families

achieve and maintain economic self-sufficiency. The Institute is the only statewide program in Indiana that combines research and policy analysis on federal and state legislation, public policies and programs impacting low-income working families with education and outreach. The Institute achieves its work by focusing its activities in the following areas: Public Policy; Research and Analysis; Education and Outreach; and National, Statewide, and Community Partnerships. To learn more, please visit: www.incap.org/iwfw.html.

Indiana Community Action Association (IN-CAA)

The Indiana Community Action Association, Inc. (IN-CAA) is a statewide not-for-profit membership corporation, incorporated in the State of Indiana in 1970. IN-CAA's members are comprised of Indiana's 23 Community Action Agencies (CAAs), which serve all of Indiana's 92 counties. IN-CAA envisions a state with limited or no poverty, where its residents have decent, safe, and sanitary living conditions, and where resources are available to help low income individuals attain self-sufficiency. IN-CAA serves as an advocate and facilitator of policy, planning and programs to create solutions and share responsibility as leaders in the war against poverty. IN-CAA's mission is to help the state's CAAs address the conditions of poverty through: training and technical assistance; developing models for service delivery; and providing resources to help increase network capacity. For more information about IN-CAA, please visit IN-CAA's web site at: www.incap.org.