

Strategic Plan for the Florida Association  
of Community Action

2021-2024



*We appreciate the opportunity to work with the Florida Association for Community Action on the development of this Strategic Plan, and gratefully acknowledge the following individuals for their dedication, insight, and contributions.*

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## Executive Summary

On January 8, 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson introduced legislation to support the War on Poverty. As a result, the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) was passed in August of that same year. While the EOA provided for many things such as job training, adult education, and small business loans, perhaps one of the most impactful outcomes of the act was the creation of Community Action Agencies commissioned to assist with anti-poverty efforts at the local level.

For over 30 years, the Florida Association for Community Action (FACA) has answered the call of the “War on Poverty” by working to support Community Action Agencies throughout Florida. FACA provides training, technical assistance, advocacy and information sharing to each member agency. FACA maintains communication and resource-sharing between member agencies, governmental departments, other social service providers and concerned citizens. FACA provides an information exchange at the state, regional and national level. Through the FACA network, member agencies can participate in statewide discussions on public policy and other issues affecting their communities.

Additionally, FACA provides advocacy services by working collaboratively through its memberships in the National Community Action Partnership (NCAP), National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) and Community Action Program Legal Services, Inc. (CAPLAW). FACA is a private nonprofit 501 ( c ) 3 state association. Its central office is in Tampa, Florida. FACA maintains a standard of periodic reviews of the strategic plan with complete revisions occurring upon expiration of the most recent plan.

FACA began its current strategic planning process in May 2021. The plan covers the period of July 2021 to June 2024. It follows the successful completion of the [2018-2021 Strategic Plan](#). The 2018-2021 planning process is notable for occurring after a long vacancy in the Executive Director position for FACA. New leadership refocused the mission, vision, and core values of FACA. The 2021-2024 Strategic Plan builds on the association’s strong leadership and FACA’s vision to be the key change agent assisting Florida’s Community Action Network in reducing poverty.

The four strategic goals developed are:

1. Explore new mission-aligned sources and amounts of revenue for FACA to build staff and organizational capacity.
2. Build member agency capacity through on-demand training, information, and opportunities on a resource/tool portal.
3. Data/Story Telling: Tell the story of Community Action with data, visuals, and results for people living in FL.
4. FACA is a visible leader and convener of anti-poverty work in FL.

An at-a-glance Plan Summary follows for easy reference and to keep the Strategic Plan top of mind for FACA staff and the Board of Directors.

## Planning Process

FACA engaged Schilling Consulting Services, LLC for the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan. Jeff Schilling, MS, used a proprietary strategic planning and improvement framework crafted from over twenty years of experience in guiding organizations to their desired future state. Joined by Kate White, a Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP), FAC engaged its Board of Directors and staff in a robust planning process that will support its updated mission, vision, and goals for the next 3 years.

The Schilling Consulting Strategic Planning and Improvement Framework© conducted industry, market, and organizational assessments. These assessments form the foundation for FACA's strategic goals and the development of strategies to achieve these carefully crafted goals. The planning process provided space to review and update FACA's mission and values. The participation and engagement by the FACA Board of Directors and FACA staff with Schilling & White resulted in an achievable and focused strategic plan for 2021-2024.

- **Industry, Market, and Organizational Assessments:** Surveys of FACA members and stakeholders, coupled with interviews with industry leaders provided a framework for the were completed to support the development of the desired future state for FACA.
- **Retreat:** FACA Board Members participated in day and a half Strategic Planning Retreat in Fort Lauderdale, FL on May 20-21, 2021.
- **Plan Refinement:** FACA leadership worked with Schilling Consulting Services team members Schilling & White to translate board input and inspiration into an actionable strategic plan. Goals, strategies, and metrics were refined and a implementation timeline created to position FACA to achieve the plan objectives.
- **Board Approval:** The 2021-2024 Strategic Plan was presented to the FACA Board of Directors on July 23, 2021 and approved on (XXXX

# Strategic Plan Summary

**Mission**  
 To enhance Florida's Community Action Network's effectiveness to facilitate the reduction of poverty, through collaboration with public and private partners by providing training, technical assistance and advocacy.  
*Communicate Educate Advocate*

**Community Action National Assessment**

- Expanded use of technology
- New and more effective partnerships
- Increase in specialized Community Action training
- Fee for service strategies to raise revenue

**Florida Market Assessment**

- ❑ Expand and nurture strategic relationships
- ❑ Diversify and increase training offerings
- ❑ Support member to member networking and linkages
- ❑ Develop new resources and revenues

**Goals for 2021 - 2024**

1. Explore new mission-aligned sources and amounts of revenue for FACA to build staff and organizational capacity.
2. Build member agency capacity through on-demand training, information, and opportunities on a resource/tool portal.
3. Data/Story Telling: Tell the story of Community Action with data, visuals, and results for people living in FL.
4. FACA is a visible leader and convener of anti-poverty work in Florida.

**Organizational Assessment**

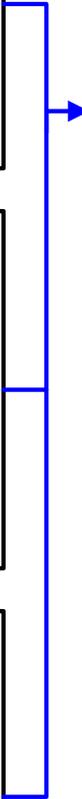
- Strengths: Financially sound and strong Executive Director.
- Weaknesses: Insufficient staff to grow the organization.
- Threats: Limited State funding for poverty reduction.
- Opportunities: Cultivate relationships with leaders in State government/ Governor's office.



**2021 - 2025 Strategic Planning and Improvement Framework**

**2021 - 2024 Strategies**

1. Expand digital training for members and collaborate on regional multistate training opportunities.
2. Increase external communications focusing on outcome data and client/member success stories to raise brand awareness.
3. Strategically cultivate relationships to increase resources to reduce poverty.
4. Optimize funding opportunities to expand the capacity to serve members.



## Mission

FACA's 2018-2021 Strategic Planning process invested significant time and effort to craft an updated mission and values statement. The 2021 Strategic Planning process reviewed and discussed FACA's mission statement. Retreat participants confirmed the current mission statement and added a descriptive tagline to aid FACA in marketing the Association.

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***Mission:** To enhance Florida's Community Action Network's effectiveness to facilitate the reduction of poverty, through collaboration with public and private partners by providing training, technical assistance, and advocacy.*

*Communicate. Educate. Advocate.*

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## Core Values

Retreat participants reviewed FACA's core values. Participants recommended two new core values focused on innovation and collaboration.

- Outstanding Customer Service: Consistently display professionalism, courtesy, patience and genuine care in all communications and interactions
- Integrity: Uphold the highest standards of ethics and moral responsibility to do the right thing at the right time all the time
- Inclusiveness: Value all persons, communities, and agencies by extending a standing invitation to those with likeminded goals to serve and be a part of the network
- Innovation: Commit to staying at the forefront of technology and industry trends (or best practices) in Community Action to better serve people experiencing poverty in FL.
- Collaboration: Lead public and private partnerships to maximize their collective impact to reduce poverty in FL.

## Vision and Analysis

FACA’s vision, consistent with the role of State Associations for Community Action Agencies is:

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*FACA will be the key change agent assisting Florida’s Community Action Network in poverty reduction.*

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Leveraging industry, market, and organizational information, Retreat Participants joined in a Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) Analysis and a traditional Strengths, Weaknesses, Threat, and Opportunity (SWOT) Analysis to identify and articulate key environmental factors that affect FACA and its plans for the next three years. The results of the SOAR and SWOT analysis informed the development of FACA’s strategic plan goals.

### SOAR Analysis

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financially sound</li> <li>2. Knowledgeable ED</li> <li>3. Strength of network</li> <li>4. Ability of FACA to connect members to each other</li> <li>5. Infrastructure to provide training is good/strong</li> <li>6. Certification of Professional for ROMA/CCAP</li> <li>7. More members</li> <li>8. Accessibility of members to get connect with FACA</li> <li>9. Stronger relationships with NCAP</li> <li>10. Board cooperation/teamwork</li> </ol>	<p><b>Aspirations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Good working relationship with CSBG office?</li> <li>2. FACA sees more success among its members in achieving their mission --data to prove it</li> <li>3. Online training tool for network best practices</li> <li>4. collaboration—Create the table</li> <li>5. Fully staffed FACA office—staffing driven by plan and projects</li> <li>6. Intelligent network</li> <li>7. Funding diversification/funding stream</li> <li>8. Represented in NCAF/NCAP</li> </ol>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen relationship with business community/economic development op</li> <li>2. Op to get more involved in community economic development</li> <li>3. Expand membership</li> <li>4. Communication technology</li> <li>5. Online education opportunities</li> <li>6. RPIC Lead</li> <li>7. Diversify/Expand membership (ways we work with FACA)—FACA fellowship</li> <li>8. Partnerships with other agencies and organizations</li> <li>9. TANF?</li> <li>10. New funding from COVID/CARES, Infrastructure</li> <li>11. LILAPP (LIHEAP? Water?)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Results</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved outcomes for CAA program design/delivery (and data to prove)</li> <li>2. Improved financial status</li> <li>3. Right staff and right amount to achieve goal</li> <li>4. Better relationship with State CSBG office? More power in relationship</li> <li>5. More coordinated effort in FL to reduce poverty—FACA/CAN leadership?</li> <li>6. Increased visibility of FACA</li> <li>7. Member performance is improved and data to show it—peoples' lives improved</li> <li>8. Influence on national policy as it affects FL/national (NCAF + NCAP)</li> </ol>

Schilling & White noticed strong consensus on FACA’s strengths and opportunities. Retreat participants articulated a realistic assessment of the threats and potential weaknesses of the association in the current environment. The shared understanding created at the Strategic Planning Retreat provides a strong foundation for the implementation of the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

## SWOT Analysis

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financially sound</li> <li>2. Knowledgeable ED</li> <li>3. Strength of network</li> <li>4. Ability of FACA to connect members to each other</li> <li>5. Infrastructure to provide training is good/strong</li> <li>6. Certification of Professional for ROMA/CCAP</li> <li>7. More members</li> <li>8. Accessibility of members to get connect with FACA</li> <li>9. Stronger relationships with NCAP</li> <li>10. Board cooperation/teamwork</li> </ol>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Insufficient staff</li> <li>2. Partnerships are limited in quality and quantity</li> <li>3. FACA's knowledge of infrastructure needs of members is limited? (broadband)</li> <li>4. We don't always have full participation of membership</li> <li>5. Too dependent on DEO funding</li> <li>6. Funding is not diversified/Unrestricted funding?</li> <li>7. Need to be at more forums and be present with other orgs in poverty space (need to be at more tables)—be at the most effective tables/create a new table? Board membership?</li> <li>8. Better connection with more departments in State government (education, human services, labor, economic development)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen relationship with business community/economic development op</li> <li>2. Op to get more involved in community economic development</li> <li>3. Expand membership</li> <li>4. Communication technology</li> <li>5. Online education opportunities</li> <li>6. RPIC Lead</li> <li>7. Diversify/Expand membership (ways we work with FACA)—FACA fellowship</li> <li>8. Partnerships with other agencies and organizations</li> <li>9. TANF?</li> <li>10. New funding from COVID/CARES, Infrastructure</li> <li>11. WLAPP (LIHEAP? Water?)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pay close attention to FL Chamber's Foundation</li> <li>2. Competitors?</li> <li>3. Lack of succession strategy for staff that would be valuable for the marketplace</li> <li>4. Turnover among DEO/CSBG staff!!</li> <li>5. Political direction/agenda of the state (not need poverty fighting programs)</li> <li>6. New minimum wage might restrict member budgets...drop out of FACA (or is the bigger threat that CAAs can't afford the same size of staff/staff turnover?)</li> <li>7. (Salary study)</li> </ol>

## Florida Market Assessment

Market forces that will affect FACA over the next three years were discussed during the Retreat. Information gathered and analyzed included member survey results. The top factors considered and incorporated into the Strategic Plan are described as needs to:

- Expand and nurture strategic relationships
- Diversify and increase training offerings
- Support member to member networking and linkages
- Develop new resources and revenues

Additional Florida Market Information is available in the form of charts and graphs in the Appendices.

## National Community Action Industry Assessment

Interviews with national leaders in Community Action along with State Association Directors from states with comparable size and composition to Florida were conducted by Schilling & White. Key results from those interviews informed key industry factors incorporated into the FACA Strategic Plan. Industry leaders anticipate the need for:

- Expanded use of technology
- New and more effective partnerships
- Increase in specialized Community Action training
- Fee for service strategies to raise revenue

Trends and priorities flagged by national partners include:

- Turnover of State Association Directors and at OCS
- Exhaustion
- Pressure from regulators
- Whole Family Approach/Human Service Values Curve
- Communicate success of CAAs in COVID
- Partnership
- Antivaccine sentiment
- Branding (using NCAP resources)
- Role in rental assistance and TANF
- Fee for service
- Trauma informed care

Additional market information is available in the form of charts and graphs in the Appendices.

## Goals for 2021-2024

Carefully crafted goals reflect FACA's priorities to meet the needs of its member agencies captured in the member survey and to ensure a sustainable association. Industry and market data informed the development of four strategic goals.

1. Explore new mission-aligned sources and amounts of revenue for FACA to build staff and organizational capacity.
2. Build member agency capacity through on-demand training, information, and opportunities on a resource/tool portal.
3. Data/Story Telling: Tell the story of Community Action with data, visuals, and results for people living in FL.
4. FACA is a visible leader and convener of anti-poverty work in FL.

Key data from the member survey, market assessments, and national industry assessments can be found in the Appendices.

## Strategies

With the help of Schilling & White, FACA leadership articulated strategies and tactics designed to achieve the association's goals. Four broad strategies define the areas of focus for FACA for the next three years.

- A. Expand digital training for members and collaborate on regional multistate training opportunities.
- B. Increase external communications focusing on outcome data and client/member success stories to raise brand awareness.
- C. Strategically cultivate relationships to increase resources to reduce poverty.
- D. Optimize funding opportunities to expand the capacity to serve members.

The Tactics completed by FACA management with the help of Schilling & White lays out a realistic timeline for the completion of tactics to ensure that strategies and goals are completed. The Tactics Table can be used to track and report progress on the implementation of the Strategic Plan to the Board of Directors.



## Plan Metrics

FACA embraces accountability in their operations and in their planning process. With the assistance of Schilling & White, benchmarks and measurable outcomes were created to affirm the completion and success of the Strategic Plan. The clarity of planned outcomes provides structure for FACA staff, consultants, and the Board of Directors.

Goals	Benchmarks	Metrics
1. Explore new mission-aligned sources and amounts of revenue for FACA to build staff and organizational capacity.	Track and report new revenue and grants.	Within three years increase FACA revenues by 15%.
2. Build member agency capacity through on-demand training, information, and opportunities on a resource/tool portal.	Portal is operational by July 2022.	50% of members use the portal within 12 months of it being operational.
	Report on frequency and volume of use of the portal and content.	
3. Data/Story Telling: Tell the story of Community Action with data, visuals, and results for people living in FL.	Create updated collateral and website including data and stories.	Increase agency good stories in FACA newsletter by 25%. CAAs provide an email from at least one state legislator's staff and/or one member of Congress staff to receive the newsletter.
	Report on the frequency of communicating FACA and Community Action (SEO metrics).	
4. FACA is a visible leader and convener of anti-poverty work in FL.	Pre and post survey of FACA's visibility among FL stakeholders. (Year one compared to year three).	Over three years, FACA's visibility increases by 30% based on survey results.
		FACA joins 2 statewide coalitions.

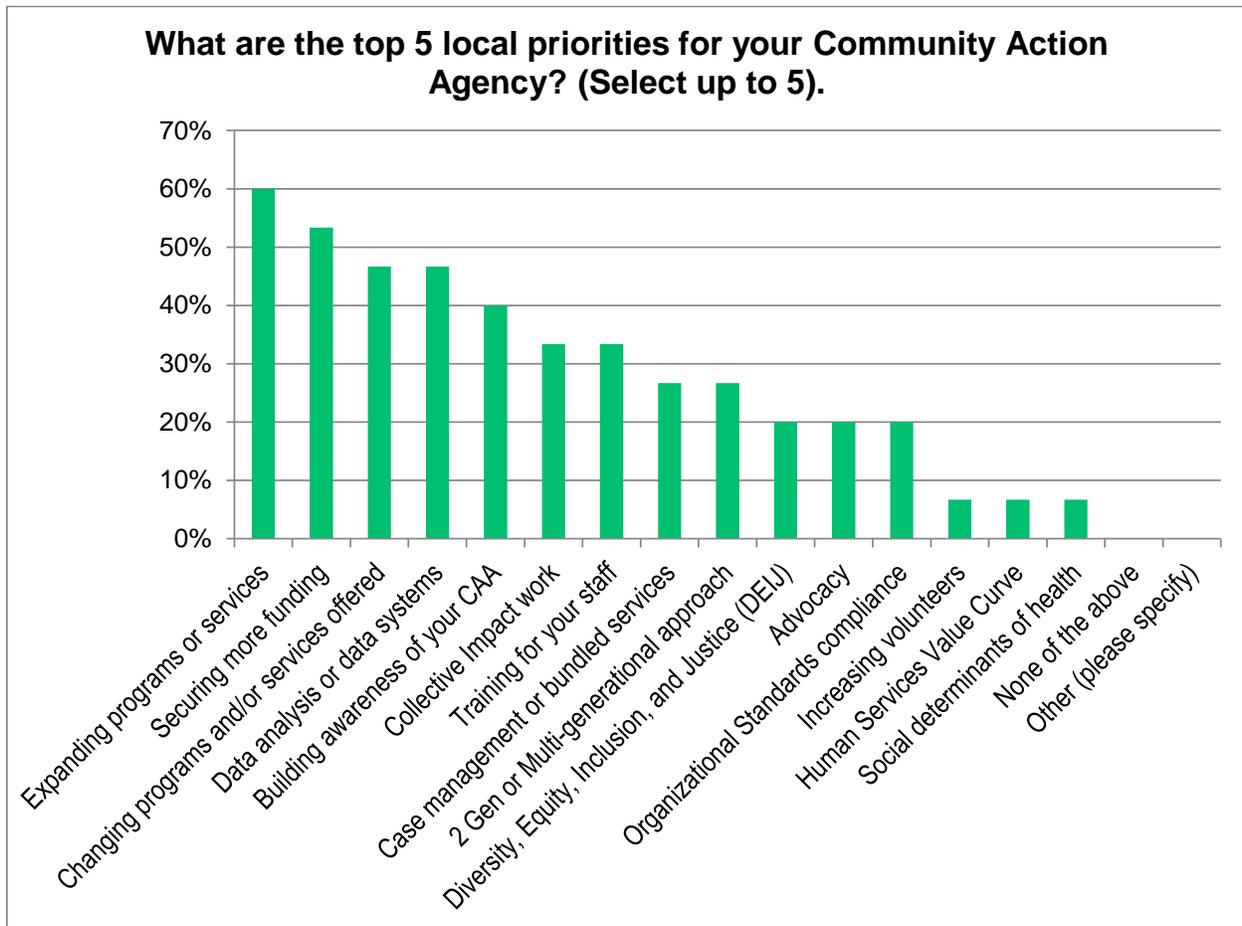
## Conclusion

With the continuing support of FACA's Board of Directors, the association is positioned to expand its influence, offerings, and advocacy efforts. Sharing resources and supporting FACA staff will increase the effectiveness of the Community Action Network in Florida.

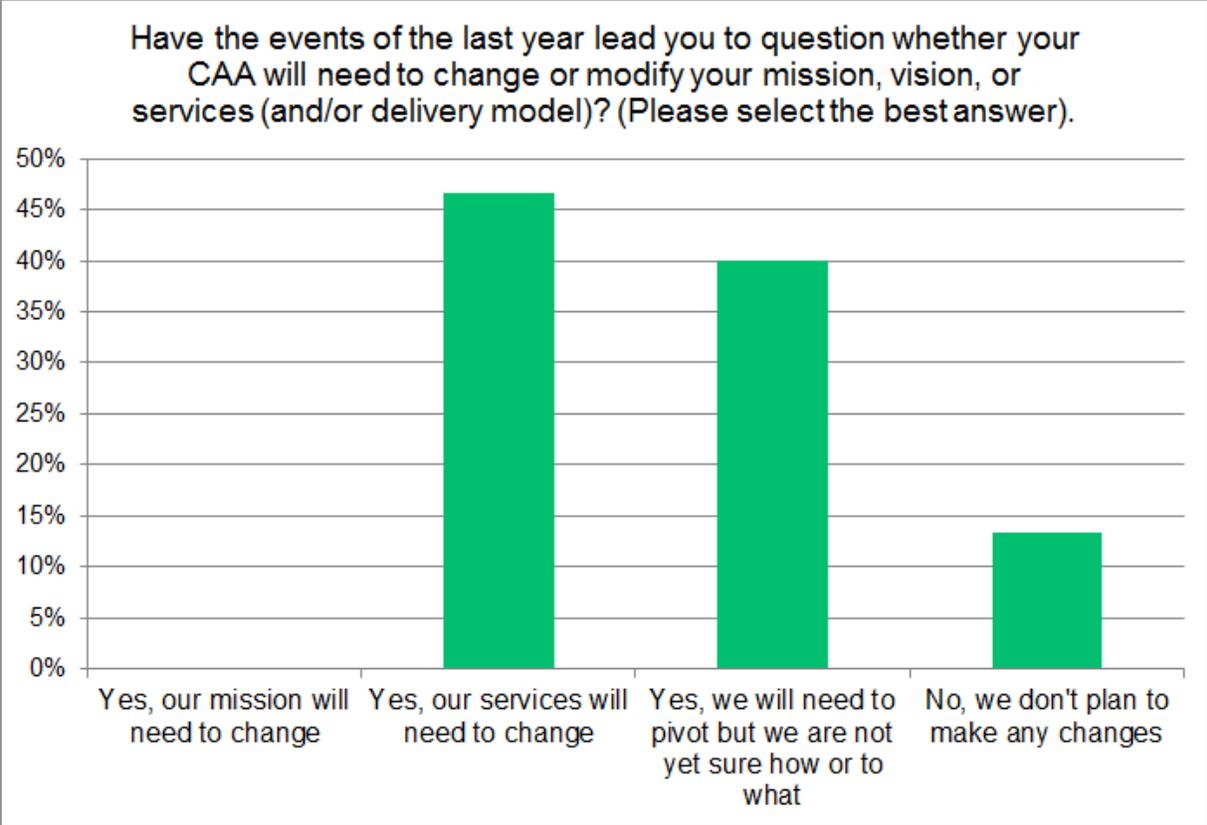
## Appendices

### Market Assessment Highlights from Member Survey

Seventy-six percent (76%) of FACA members participated in the Member Survey conducted by Schilling & White for the Strategic Plan. Understanding member priorities informs FACA priorities.



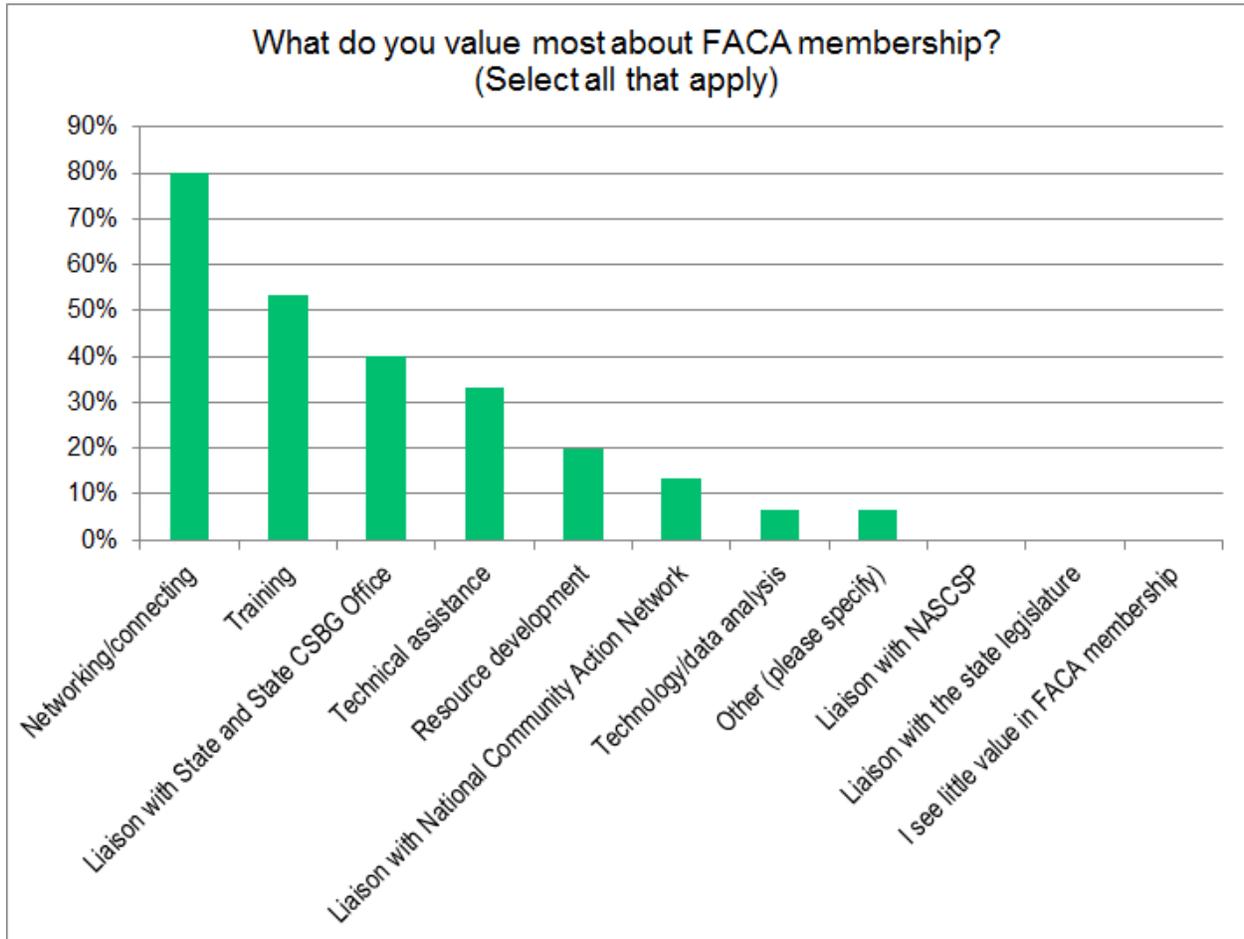
The period of rapid change and adaption between March, 2020 to June, 2021 due to COVID-19 required local Community Action Agencies to assess their capacity and plans for the future. Below are results from the Member Survey.



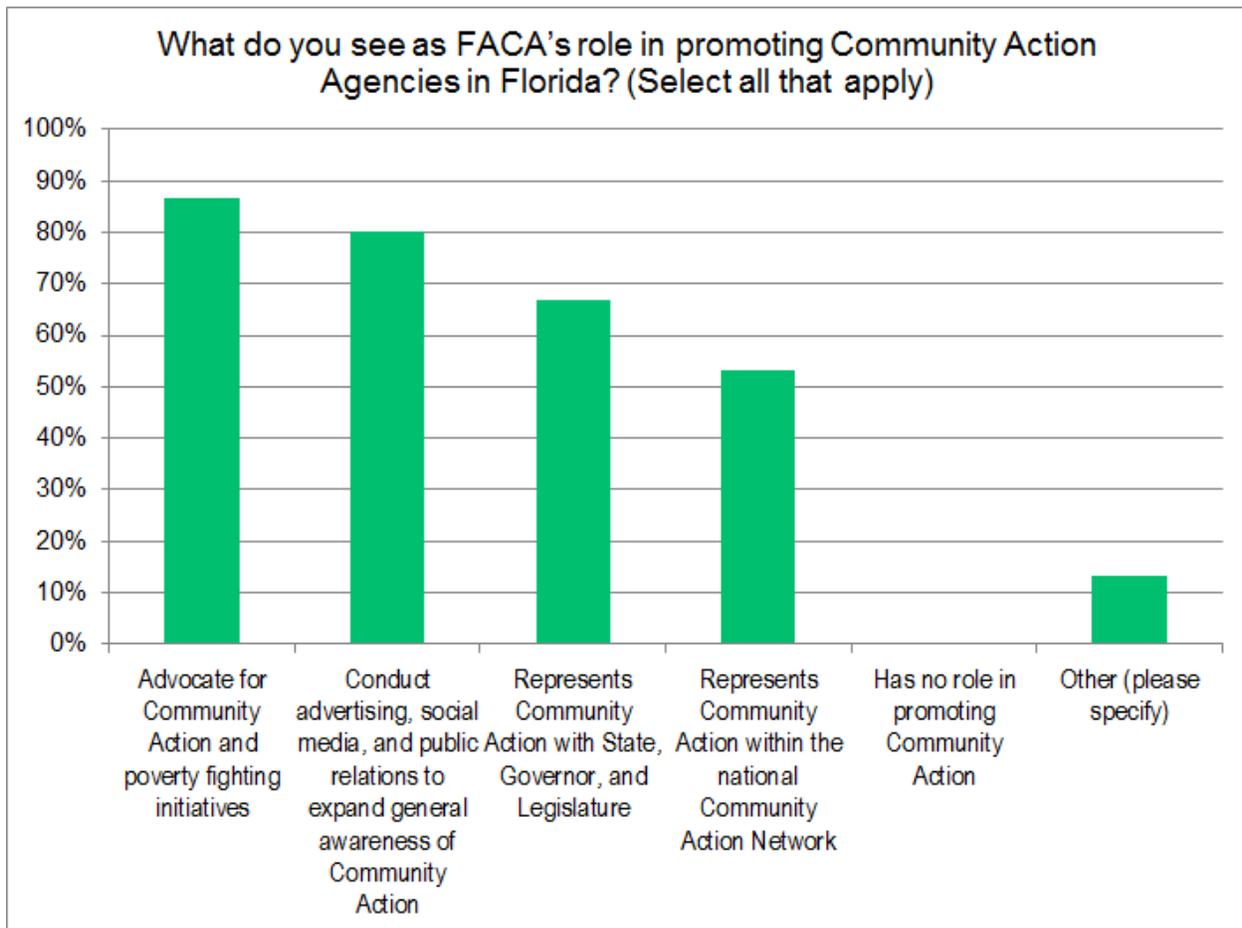
An assessment of staff capacity drives FACA decisions about training and technical assistance.



The Member Survey solicited feedback from members about the most important services and functions that FACA performs.

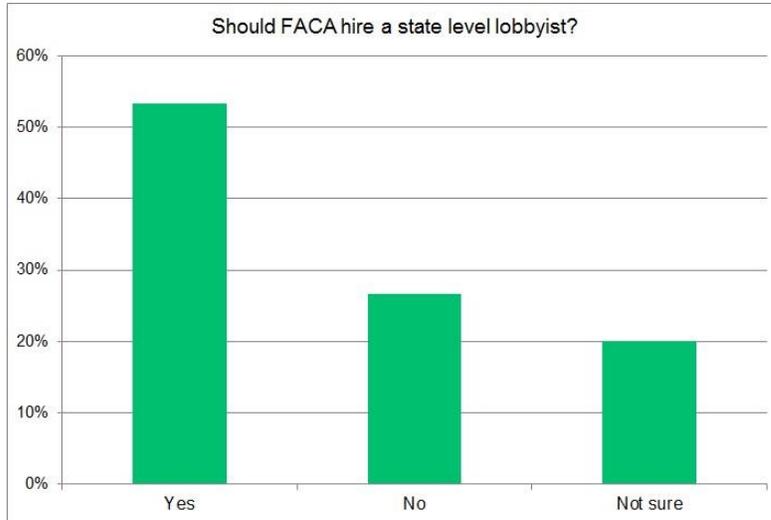


Increasing FACA's visibility and brand awareness in FL is a key concern for members.

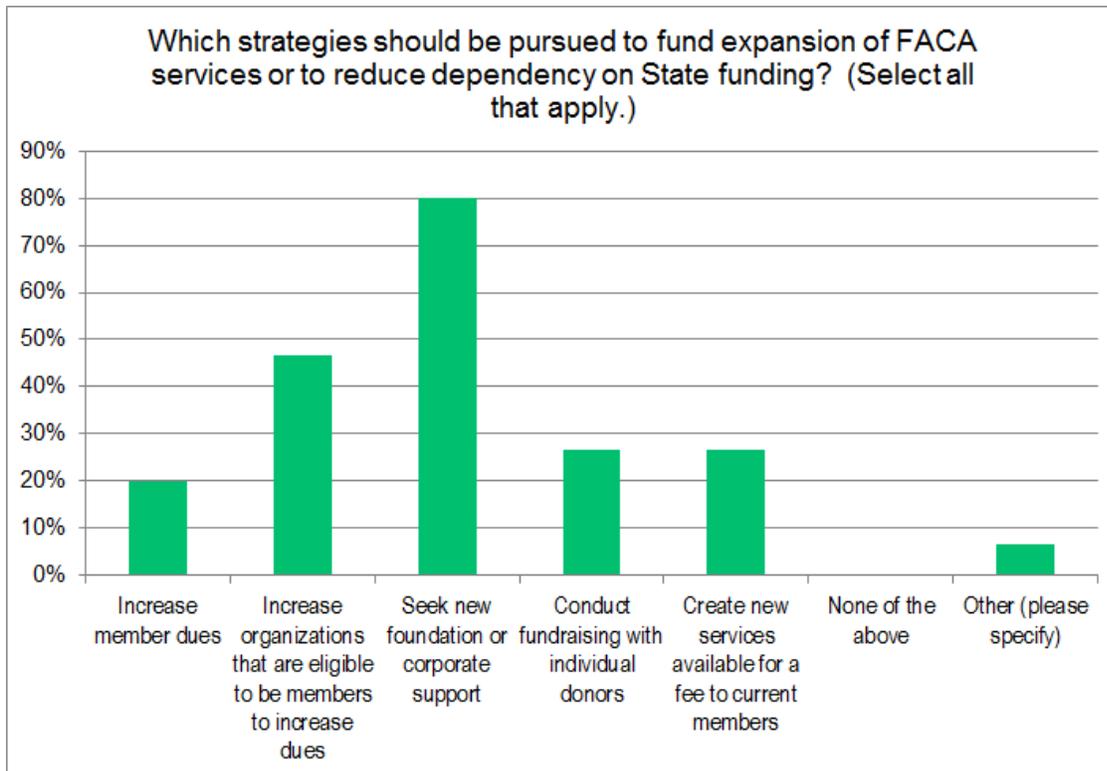


To increase FACA's influence and power in FL, the Board has considered hiring a lobbyist. The majority of respondents agree that FACA should hire a lobbyist.

### CAA Survey Results



Funding and sustainability are ongoing concerns for FACA. Members provided input on fund development strategies for the association.



## Additional National Industry Information

Challenges faced by FACA are common to other State Associations and the National Association. This chart demonstrates core issues that affect associations supporting public and private Community Action Agencies.

Common Issues	NCAP	NY	PA
Revenue—dependent on federal funding	X	X	X
Dues increase over multiple years	X	X	X
Expanded Fee for Service	X	X	X
Pressure from OCS/State CSBG on compliance	X	X	X
More frequent meetings for CAAs		X	X
Partnerships improved/strengthened	X	X	X
Workplace safety issues/remote work	X	X	X
No state level lobbyist/good relationship with State CSBG Office		X	X
Training expanded and got more sophisticated	X	X	X
Increased use of technology	X	X	X
Turnover	X	X	X
Competition for employees/wage issues	X	X	X
Active in NCAF for federal issues	X	X	X
More recent training/support for public CAAs	X	X	X