

# OPPORTUNITY

*A Publication of the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity*



*HEAD START in Raritan. Children enjoy songs and music during a quiet period. This scene is repeated daily in more than 100 other similar pre-school programs in communities throughout New Jersey this summer. Many parents also participate.*

## ***Farmer Joins Governor's Task Force To Combat State's Adult Illiteracy***

James Farmer, former national director of CORE, is working as a special consultant to Governor Hughes's Task Force on Adult Literacy Opportunities.

Farmer was hired earlier this month, as was announced by John C. Bullitt, director of the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity and Dean Ernest McMahon of Rutgers, the State University, chairman of the Task Force.

Bullitt said Farmer was chosen because of his "deep personal interest in and understanding of the problems of illiteracy among the disadvantaged of our society. Mr. Farmer's advice will make an outstanding contribution to the Task Force's charge of developing the most effective and widespread adult literacy program possible."

The State Legislature has appropriated \$150,000 for use by the Task Force in developing experimental programs to combat the functional illiteracy of an estimated 750,000 New Jersey residents.

Farmer, as chairman of the Center for Community Action Educa-

tion, a Washington-based, non-profit corporation, was instrumental in drafting that organization's proposal for a national literacy demonstration program. However, the proposal, which sought \$860,000 from the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, was withdrawn earlier this month by Farmer in a telegram to Sargent Shriver.

The program, designed to establish over a 12-month period 18 pilot projects in key cities throughout the country, would have accommodated some 7,200 persons aged 16 and up. Farmer said he would seek to implement his proposal through private funds.

As special consultant, Farmer is assisting the Task Force in developing proposals and programs designed to achieve the objectives laid down by Gov. Hughes when he established it several months ago. Among these responsibilities are to: develop needed information through research and statistical analyses; evaluate existing programs within the state; and review results of programs for educationally-deficient.

## ***New Efforts Reach Spanish Speaking***

Special antipoverty efforts to meet the needs of some 75,000 Spanish-speaking poor have been launched or proposed by at least seven Community Action Agencies throughout the State and by the New Jersey Community Action Training Institute.

John C. Bullitt, director of the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity (NJOEO), said specific programs for the Spanish-speaking have begun in Paterson, Jersey City and Trenton, with similar programs scheduled to open soon in Elizabeth and the state Community Action Training Institute.

In addition, Bullitt said, proposals are pending in Newark and Monmouth and Atlantic-Cape May Counties.

"The most pressing problem of Spanish-speaking people—the language barrier—and all its accompanying difficulties, must be overcome through comprehensive, intercultural, language and literacy programs," Bullitt said. "The English language deficiency alone has often served as an impregnable blockade to thousands of Spanish-speaking people who have remained, hopeless and helpless, beyond the scope of much antipoverty assistance."

This barrier, the NJOEO director said, has sometimes resulted in "social unrest and misunderstandings" in the community.

"In late June, the calm of Jersey City's ethnically-mixed downtown neighborhood was broken by skirmishes and street fights among some Puerto Rican and Negro residents," Bullitt explained. "And in other areas, friction and misunderstanding between Spanish-speaking residents and public officials, including law enforcement officers, have generated community unrest."

Bullitt said many explanations for the disturbances have been offered, but "often trouble and misunderstanding stem from a simple break-

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## ***Broad Antipoverty Program To Help Thousands of Seasonal Farm Workers and Migrants***

Thousands of migrants and seasonal agricultural workers have poured onto New Jersey farms again to harvest vegetable and fruit crops that are to be the fresh and frozen produce of our markets. These people are, perhaps, the most impoverished and lowest-paid group of workers in the nation.

New Jersey this year has met them with a comprehensive, \$1 million antipoverty program that rivals any other in the country.

"These workers and their families are at the bottom rung of the country's economy," John C. Bullitt, director of the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity, said to the press recently.

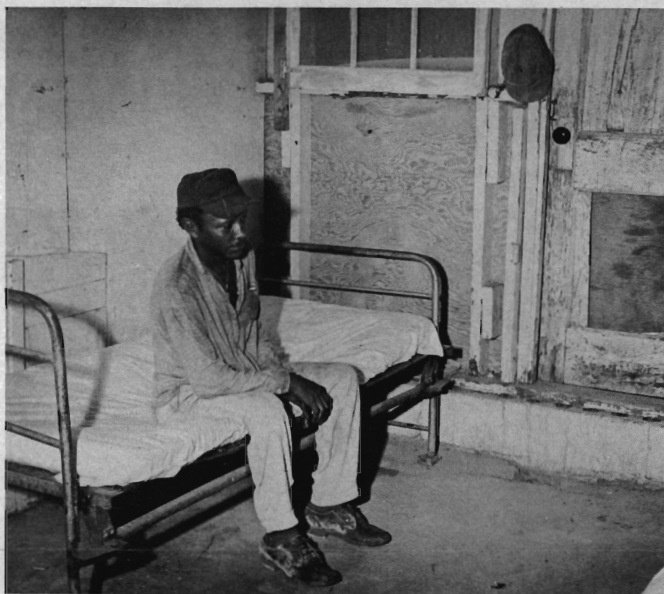
"Their wages are woefully inadequate. They are uniformly excluded from much federal, state and local legislation that other workers take for granted.

"The State made a noteworthy gain in wage legislation, however, when Governor Hughes last month signed the New Jersey State Wage and Hour Law bill. Before year-end, migrants and seasonal agricultural workers will be protected by minimum wage provisions, something they never enjoyed before.

"Nevertheless," Bullitt said, "they still are not protected by compulsory workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance or the right to collective bargaining. They often are denied many forms of public assistance by local municipalities. They are, indeed, the invisible poor. Migrants still suffer many of the deprivations they always have. We intend to change that," Bullitt said.

NJOEO's new Migrant Opportunity Program could provide the answer.

In Vineland, a \$579,000 program sponsored by the Board of Education will provide adult basic education, coupled with skill training in such fields as glass marking, quantity food preparation, practical nursing, carpentry, auto mechanics and meat cutting. Stipends will



*PUERTO RICAN farm worker shares this shack during the sweltering months of harvest.*

be paid enrollees after harvest time. At any one time, it is anticipated that 400 workers will be participating in this year-round program.

In Fairfield Township, an economic opportunity grant of \$81,199 has enabled the launching of an adult basic education program for between 200 and 300 agricultural workers during the summer months and year round. It is sponsored by the Township's Board of Education.

In seven public schools of central and southern New Jersey, a \$49,442 grant underwrites the State Board of Education's program for seven weeks of remedial and elementary education for 400 children of migrant workers. Three of these programs are entirely funded from the grant. Four others have been enlarged because of it. The program operates in schools in Cranbury, Indian Mills, Rosenhayn, Cedarville, Port Norris, Woodstown and the Freehold area.

With a grant of \$32,784, the Cooperative Extension Service of Rutgers, The State University, established an informational program to advise migrants and seasonal farm workers of federal, state and local protections available to them while they are in New Jersey. This includes counsel about social security, wage payment laws, crew leader registration, public assistance and migrant labor code provisions.

A grant of \$58,347 has enabled the N. J. Bureau of Migrant Labor to almost double its inspection staff in the more than 1,800 migrant labor camps in the State. The Bureau is responsible for enforcing State regulations protecting farm workers against inadequate housing and sanitation facilities.

Federal approval of \$89,390 has provided NJOEO for administration of the entire Migrant Opportunity Program for 12 months, including technical assistance from the State staff in supplementary, centralized housing for seasonal farm workers.

Ronald V. Perrin of NJOEO is director of the Migrant Opportunity Program.



*HARVESTING BEANS, migrant children and adults are low-paid and frequently poorly housed.*



## **VISTA Volunteer Recalls Her Work In Newark Ghetto**

Nancy Valentine this month will complete her year of service as a VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) in Newark. Much of her early sense of excitement and high hope for success has vanished.

Nancy joined VISTA because of her strong desire to serve others. She was 20 at the time and studying at the University of Arizona to become a teacher.

"When I sent in my application," she recalled, "I was disturbed by the sterility of my collegiate world. So many people seemed concerned only with the social and superficial aspects of living. I knew there was a world outside where there was much to be done."

She exchanged middleclass America for impoverished black America.

She left a community whose only minority was a small group of American Indians to take up life in a ghetto where she was one of five young women living among thousands of Negroes.

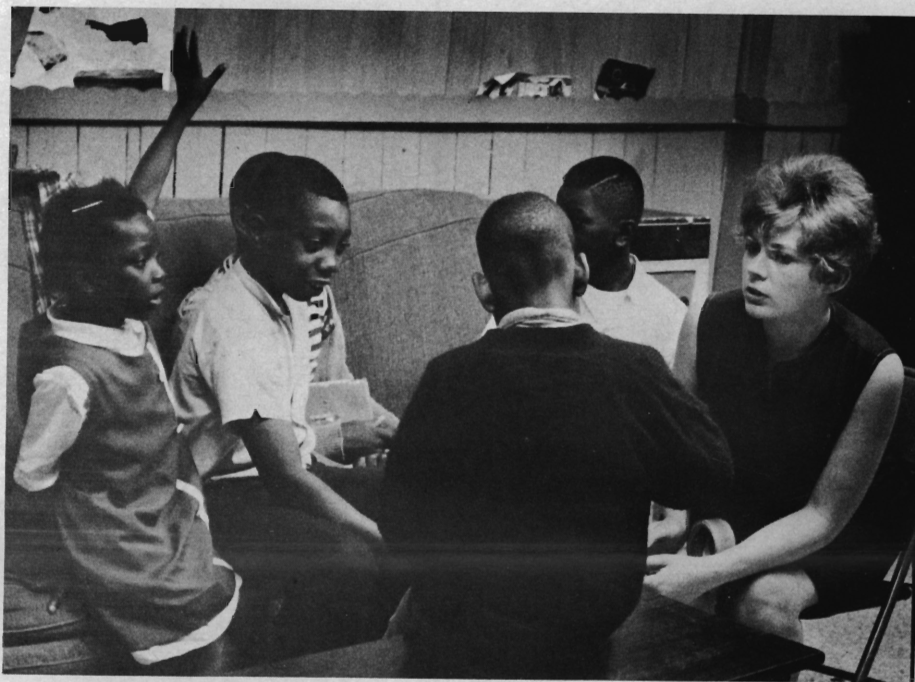
She admits now that she might have interpreted her six weeks' training at Syracuse University more militantly than perhaps she should have.

"I thought we were supposed to go into ghetto communities and shake up the power structure," she said. She soon was advised to go easy and "not rock the boat."

Her first position at Newark City Hospital was a disappointment. Because VISTA volunteers were critical of conditions they found there and tried to make changes quickly, they were transferred after nine days.

Nancy's second attempt to find a meaningful role also failed. She was placed with the Child Service Association, a private social agency responsible for the care of abused and neglected children. Nancy worked five months helping to provide recreation for small groups of children in a housing project. She felt trapped and stymied by the confines of the agency and unable to reach the poor who lived around her.

Her third attempt at finding a



*VISTA volunteer Nancy Valentine with members of "Tiger Club" she helped organize for children in one of Newark's ghettos.*

satisfying role worked. In January, she left the Child Service and joined Carol Paige, a VISTA roommate, to work at a storefront across from their tenement lodgings. Dubbed "Tiger House" by children of the neighborhood who came to use its simple facilities, Nancy felt she was finally reaching the poor.

She created an after school program for 40 children of the neighborhood who before played mostly in the streets. Nancy arranged a full program for the "Tiger Cubs." Three afternoons each week, she took the children to a nearby school gym. One afternoon, she helped them with arts and crafts. Another, she planned dancing and dramatics. On Saturdays, she ran a sewing club and a garden club, and from time to time took the children on day-long trips.

All the activities Nancy arranged were financed by contributions from area people. When she began, men in the poolroom across from the storefront collected \$20 so she could buy supplies. Contributions were not only money. Last Christmas, the director of a nearby funeral parlor dressed as Santa for a Christmas party. Another time, the owner of a local bar joined Nancy and the children to sweep broken glass off a small black topped area now used

for play during hot weather.

The childrens' progress at the storefront made up in some degree for the rebuffs Nancy had received before.

"They have so much potential," she said, "in spite of the incredible liabilities which surround their lives."

She is convinced the greatest need of ghetto children is for love and individual attention. She tells about an 11 year-old boy called Willie who was a severe discipline problem when he first came to the storefront. One of 12 children, Willie broke the glass front door, pounded on walls and caused disturbance after disturbance. Nancy gave Willie more attention than other children and, finally, he began to settle down. He was lead in a play the children performed last spring and was recently elected president of the Tiger Cubs.

Except for her work with the children, Nancy doesn't feel much sense of accomplishment.

"Perhaps the only impact we have had in this whole year," she said, "is letting the people of this neighborhood know we care."

She feels she has done this by living in conditions similar to their own. The tenement the VISTAs share is rundown; the walls are

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## **Trenton Extract: 'Operation Cavity' UPI Starts Drilling, Pulling Teeth**

After carefully looking at the teeth of the young man seated before him and noting the 10 cavities he had discovered, the dentist put down his instruments and asked quietly: "Doesn't your mouth hurt all the time?" The youth shifted his head slightly and answered. "Sure, my mouth hurts all the time. It always has."

This young man is one of 1,100 youths and children from poor families in Trenton who are to benefit this summer from, "Operation Cavity," a new program of United Progress, Inc., the city's antipoverty agency.

The program grew out of a UPI study to determine the condition of the teeth and mouths of children who have grown up in poverty areas.

"We concluded their mouths were in pretty poor shape," says Charles Morrison, program director for UPI.

Findings revealed that although the average poor child has the same number of lesions in his mouth as the average well-off child, he has only one-tenth the number of these lesions treated as the youngster whose parents are able to schedule and pay for dental appointments and treatment. A child from a lower middle class Trenton family has from 40-60% of his cavities filled; a child from a poor family has only 2-4% of his cavities filled. As expected, the study showed the number of dentists practicing in middle class areas far exceed the number in poorer neighborhoods.

To help children who needed dental treatment so badly, UPI launched its program last month, after receiving a grant of \$80,000. When the summertime phase of the program is completed in September, all 400 members of UPI's summer Neighborhood Youth Corps and all 700 children enrolled in Trenton's Head Start programs will have their teeth examined and treated.

Participants first receive a preliminary diagnostic dental examination given on a mass basis, the NYC members in high school gymnasiums, Head Starters in their class-

rooms. Examination results and recommendations are referred to two dentists, Dr. Norman Linder and Dr. Samuel Bernstein, both past presidents of the Mercer County Dental Association, who were hired by UPI to serve as coordinators for "Operation Cavity." These men assign the youths and children who need corrective work to the 30 local dentists who have been recruited into the program.

Each dentist gives from two to three hours a day to treat children sent to his office. They are paid for "services rendered," according to public welfare rates set by the State. They do every phase of corrective dental work including filling cavities, replacing front dentures, putting in braces and bridges and performing delicate root canal work.

The counselors of the Neighborhood Youth Corps are responsible for seeing that members of the Corps go to dentists to whom they have been assigned. Social work aides in the Head Start program shepherd the young children into dental offices.

When school resumes this fall, the program will be extended to another 4,000 children in Trenton's seven poorest elementary, junior high and high school neighborhoods. The children will receive preliminary exams in classrooms and then be assigned to dental offices all over the City. Ten social work aides, hired from poverty areas of Trenton, will escort the children to their appointments.

"The dentists expect to see an average of 15 cavities per youth of high school age," Morrison says. He adds that these cavities will not just be small spots of decay, but, in most cases, the decay will be so widespread that whole teeth will have been destroyed.

The program is scheduled to end November, with the hope that no Trenton youth, silently suffering from lack of dental care, will have to say to a dentist, "sure, my mouth hurts all the time."

## **Thomas Hartmann Joins NJOEO As Program Developer**

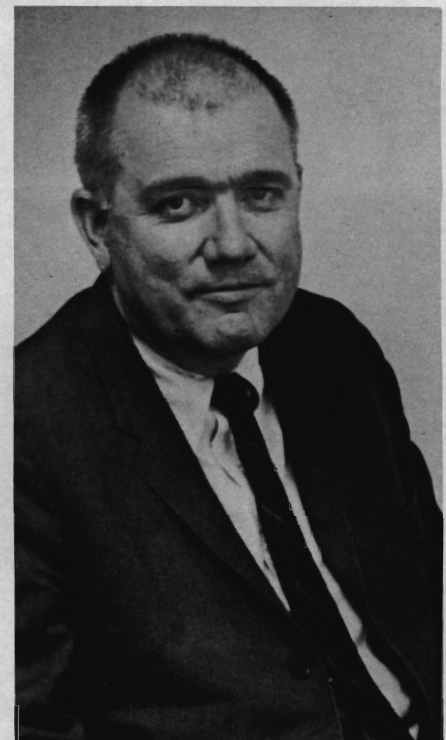
Thomas B. Hartmann, program design specialist, who for the past year has worked as deputy director of The North Carolina Fund, has joined the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity as associate director, program development and community assistance.

With NJOEO, Hartmann will be in charge of providing specialized know-how to community action agencies in the fields of skills training, housing, health, education, welfare, consumer knowledge and others. He will also blueprint State antipoverty programs and supervise a field staff which will assist community action agencies in designing local programs.

Hartmann's appointment parallels a major change in emphasis in NJOEO's community assistance work which, heretofore, has been based on general support for program development.

According to John C. Bullitt, NJOEO director, the need for general assistance to community action programs diminishes as local agencies are approved and staffed and

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THOMAS B. HARTMANN



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down of communications." As regards the Spanish-speaking community, he said, "this breakdown is largely one of language—their inability to understand, speak or write English and the inability of many public officials to understand, speak or write Spanish."

The NJOEO director gave the following breakdown of Spanish-speaking proposals already in operation:

► In Paterson, an independent Multi-Lingual Center, funded by an OEO grant through the Paterson Task Force (the city's antipoverty agency), opened March 14. The center, designed as a common meeting place where all foreign-speaking may go for information and referrals, occupies part of "El Centro Catolico" (The Catholic Center), a Roman Catholic social center established by the Paterson Diocese in 1962. In the first two months, the center's multi-lingual staff helped some 1,649 Spanish-speaking, according to Mrs. Christine Van Lundy, director. There are an estimated 17,000 Spanish-speaking in Paterson.

► In Jersey City, the Community and Neighborhood Development Organization (CAN-DO), the local antipoverty agency, recently opened a non-sectarian Intercultural Instruction Center for the Spanish speaking in the heart of the city's Puerto Rican (downtown) neighborhood.

The center, developed and directed by the Rev. Robert S. Call, a Roman Catholic curate at St. Michael's Church, is designed to teach English to many of the city's estimated 10,000 Puerto Ricans and to teach Spanish to local civil servants, such as police, firemen and nurses. Funded through OEO grants, and private donations, the center occupies a four-story building that was once a rat- and roach-infested tenement. It was renovated through a community-based effort.

► In Trenton, a special summer English teaching project for Spanish-speaking residents, proposed by the United Progress Inc. (UPI), the city's antipoverty agency, began July 5. According to UPI Director Gregory Farrell, the six-week pro-



*NEWLY-ARRIVED family gets help at information center in Spanish-speaking port neighborhood of Elizabeth.*

gram offers English classes to some 100 Spanish-speaking youths and adults. Thirty-five Peace Corps trainees, studying at Princeton University how to teach English as a foreign language, will serve as teachers in the program. The volunteers are preparing for English-teaching assignments in Libya.

Also, Spanish-speaking proposals are scheduled to begin shortly in Elizabeth and the NJCATI, Bullitt explained.

► In Elizabeth, a \$25,704 federal antipoverty grant recently awarded to the Community Action for Economic Opportunity (CAFEEO) will finance an Orientation and Information Center for the non-English-speaking. The center, scheduled to open in late July, will serve as a clearing house for the city's estimated 9,000 Cubans, 3,000 Puerto Ricans and 2,000 Central and South Americans, who largely inhabit the impoverished Elizabethport section of the downtown area.

The new facility will offer a number of information and referral services in housing, welfare, citizenship, employment, and education and offer medical services, clothing, food, translation and follow-up assistance when necessary. For the past year, a temporary center offering similar services, has been in operation.

► The New Jersey Community Action Training Institute, organized

through NJOEO, will provide two intern programs in English and Spanish for some 50 Community Action Program staff workers or board members. The training offers Spanish-speaking CAP personnel the skills needed to develop organizations and projects within Spanish-speaking urban and rural neighborhoods. The courses, scheduled to begin in mid-August, will emphasize community organization and manpower employment opportunities. Enrollees will reside at the Madison campus of Fairleigh Dickinson University, while attending classes for about two weeks. Following that, they will spend a half-day each week at the campus and the remaining time at their respective CAP agencies.

Other programs are being planned, Bullitt added, in Newark and Monmouth and Atlantic-Cape May Counties.

► In Newark, a \$300,000 proposal drawn by the city's Spanish-speaking communities has been submitted to the United Community Corp. (UCC), Newark's antipoverty agency. The plan, known as FOCUS Newark (Field Orientation Center for Underprivileged Spanish-speaking), seeks a comprehensive aid and information center for the city's 35,000 Spanish-speaking residents. The program, designed to coordinate existing social facilities and of-

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pockmarked, the appliances antiquated, the ratholed bathroom is a small closet, the landlord charges high rent and provides few services.

Nancy feels that after a rocky beginning the community accepted the volunteers because they are in sympathy with the goals of the anti-poverty program.

"At first, the men of the community were puzzled as to how to treat us," she said. They finally pitched in to help make the program a success. The women came around, too, although in the beginning, they seemed suspicious and jealous of white girls, apparently unencumbered by similar problems. But they eventually realized the girls were sincere and sent their children to the storefront.

Nancy has no illusions about the permanency of her impact on the community. As a result of her experience, she feels the creative process inherent in VISTA must be strengthened if it is to survive.

She expresses a common frustration of those, who over the years, have sought to fight the oppressive problems of poverty.

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as the New Jersey Community Action Training Institute, organized last year, develops capability to train local staffs.

"What remains," he said, "is the need for special assistance of a more sophisticated variety than the average community action program

can afford or needs full time. The new functional approach which my Office is developing will emphasize these needs and opportunities," Bullitt said.

In his job with the North Carolina Fund, that State's antipoverty agency, Hartmann was charged with technical assistance to 11 community action programs, in addition to reviewing all proposals which reached the Fund and general supervision of two manpower programs, both of which were demonstrations funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Before his appointment to the Fund last year, Hartmann was consultant to the public affairs program of the Ford Foundation.

He lives with his family at 76 Valley Road, Princeton.

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fer services and opportunities for the Spanish-speaking, was sponsored in cooperation with the Newark Human Rights Commission and the Mount Carmel Guild, a Roman Catholic social agency.

► In Monmouth County, a special Language Service Program providing interpretive and instructional services in both English and Spanish is being prepared by the Monmouth Community Action Program, Inc., the county's antipoverty unit. According to Mrs. Harriet McCrahey, educational coordinator, bilingual community aides in neighborhood centers will interpret the problems of the Spanish-speaking

and, if necessary accompany them to the proper local or state agency for assistance. In addition, English classes will be available for those illiterate in Spanish, Spanish-educated literates and those in need of remedial help. There will also be services in English and Spanish dealing with education, consumer problems, housing, welfare, employment, health and legal matters. There are some 5,000 Spanish-speakers in the county.

Also in Monmouth County, a \$523,115 work experience and training project providing public welfare services for the elderly will include English lessons for unemployed Puerto Ricans whose inability to speak English severely handicaps their efforts to become self-supporting. The project, known as Operation Bold (Blot Out Long-Term Dependency) is under the direction of the State Department of Institutions and Agencies.

► In Atlantic and Cape May Counties, the Atlantic Human Resources, Inc., (AHR), is developing a project to meet the needs of that area's Spanish-speaking poor. According to AHR Director Paul Tuerff, a survey is being taken to determine the number of Spanish-speaking and their most pressing needs. AHR is the antipoverty agency serving both counties.

In addition to these specific proposals, most Community Action Agencies in areas with large Spanish-speaking concentrations use bilingual staffs and literature.

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