FY 2014 Annual Report

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Mission

The Iowa Department of Human Rights is a state agency with a mission to ensure basic rights, freedoms, and opportunities for all by **empowering underrepresented Iowans and eliminating economic, social, and cultural barriers**. We help individuals attain economic independence by ensuring access to government services and advancing educational achievement and entrepreneurial success consistent with their aspirations.

In pursuit of this mission, we will:

- administer federal programs to help low income families (Community Action Division);
- utilize data to support public safety and to better understand trends in criminal and juvenile justice (Criminal and Juvenile Justice Division)
- assist Iowans of racial/ethnic minority groups, women and those with disabilities in individual and policy advocacy so they will have a fair and legitimate opportunity to obtain and create new jobs at all levels of business including corporate, manufacturing and entrepreneurship (Community Advocacy and Services Division)
- promote positive youth development (PYD) practices throughout Iowa so all youth have positive experiences and opportunities, positive relationships with adults, and safe and supportive environments

Vision

The Iowa Department of Human Rights (DHR) is the **results-oriented leader** in creating a more **inclusive and productive Iowa** where a society of economically independent individuals are engaged citizens, contributing to the improvement of their communities.

Purpose Statement

The Iowa Department of Human Rights will advocate for underrepresented Iowans and foster hope within our communities by educating individuals, businesses and government entities about the needs, rights and responsibilities of all Iowans. As a state agency, we have a special responsibility to ensure accessibility to government in order to improve Iowans' quality of life.

Iowa Code: 216A

For more information, please see Iowa Code 216A

Letter from Director Wong:

The Iowa Department of Human Rights (DHR) is made up of three divisions with one purpose: to serve distinct communities of underrepresented Iowans. This past year, we have sought to show how the department as a whole has come to represent more than the sum of its parts. Each program, grant, or service is part of a larger web of partnerships, activities and outcomes. Our identity as a department has been reinforced as we have achieved enhanced internal coherence and greater mutual interdependence.

It all begins with a bold actionable vision that compels and mobilizes us to focus on problems that plague the lives and welfare of underrepresented populations in Iowa. By definition, the challenges faced by vulnerable populations are often pervasive and intractable. Therefore, our discipline and focus to remain true to our mission is critical to our ability to have impact in meaningful and measurable ways. Guided by our belief that all Iowans should have the opportunity to lead self-determined lives that include participation in the economic, social and cultural life in their communities, we summon our expertise, energy, commitment, and convening power to increase knowledge, understanding and opportunities for our populations.

DHR is committed to relentless self-examination as our activities and resources are stretched, augmented, accelerated or otherwise altered. As resources become increasingly constrained, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the complexity and magnitude of these problems. Instead, we look for new and sometimes untested ways to address our most persistent and complex issues. We recognize that effective solutions will be inextricably intertwined among the overlapping and complimentary roles of the private, public, nonprofit and philanthropic sectors. Although collaborations and partnerships are overused buzzwords, it reflects the profound truth that intractable challenges require the collective and concerted action of all these sectors. It is therefore imperative that we have the humility and conviction to contribute to the worthy efforts of others whose mission and passion align with ours. We can be the catalyst of important needed change or trusted supporting partner.

In these pages, you will see how our programs, services, tools, partners and resources work in combination to advance our mission. I welcome your comments and consideration of the possibility for future partnerships should our purpose, passion and priorities align with yours.

Sincerely,

San Wong
Director

Executive Summary

The Iowa Department of Human Rights (DHR) is a state agency with a mission to ensure basic rights, freedoms, and opportunities for all by empowering underrepresented Iowans and eliminating economic, social, and cultural barriers. We help individuals attain economic independence by ensuring access to government services and advancing educational achievement and entrepreneurial success consistent with their aspirations.

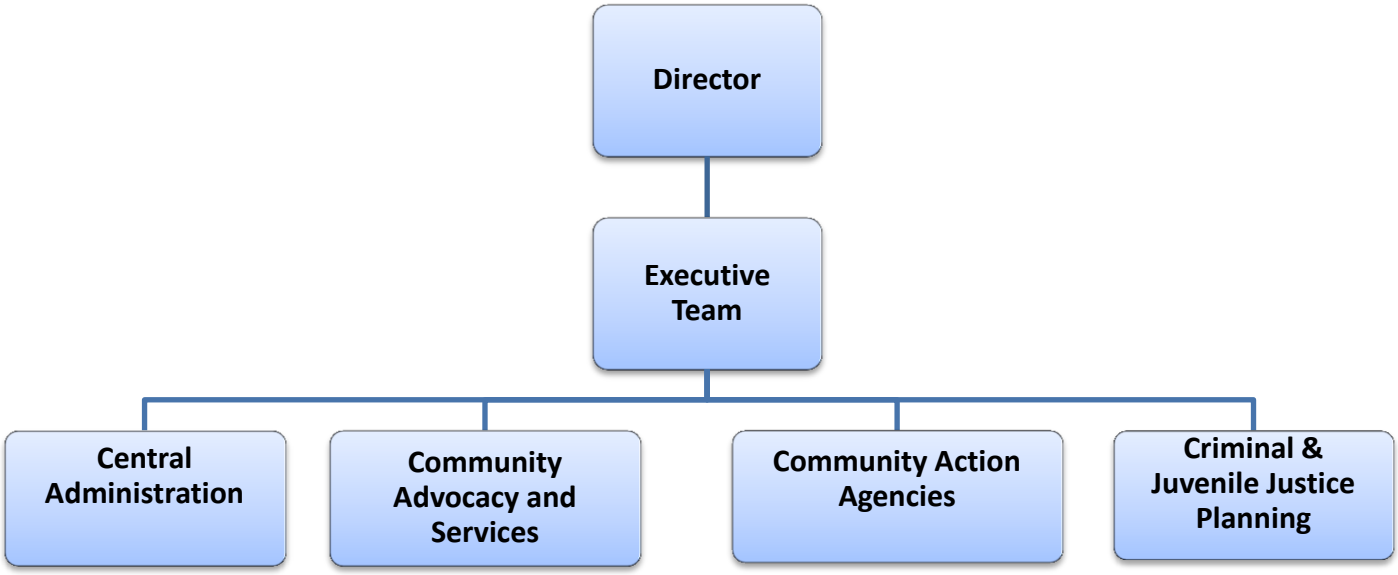
The Department represents Iowa's most vulnerable citizens – families in poverty, persons with disabilities, the deaf and hard of hearing, minorities, and women. While these individuals are often overlooked, the Governor's goals cannot be fully achieved while leaving Iowa's underserved populations behind. Minority children are more likely to end up in the justice system for the same offenses committed by their non-minority classmates, having a direct impact on the education system. Under-represented Iowans have a higher instance of poverty, and raising their family incomes 20% would have a disproportionately *positive* impact. Persons with disabilities, deaf Iowans, minorities and women all benefit from a robust workforce. The Governor's Office and the Iowa Legislature are positioned to provide positive change for those who need it most.

The Executive Team collaboratively created a new three-year strategic plan to guide the Department's work. Our goals focus on supporting the three branches of government, expanding the capacity of other agencies to serve underrepresented Iowans, and encouraging individuals to aspire to self-sufficiency. While some of our programs and services have encouraged self-sufficiency for many years, for others, this will be a new expectation. As we show agencies how to be more accessible, we will simultaneously encourage people in need of service to become more self-sufficient.

The following report will detail how DHR is seeking partnerships and delivering solutions at many levels of state government.

Iowa Department of Human Rights

Table of Organization



- Public Information
- Policy Coordination
- Administrative rules coordination
- Fiscal Services
- Budget development and tracking
- Personnel/human resource functions
- Strategic planning
- Liaison to DHR Board

•Advocate for and empower underrepresented Iowans by eliminating barriers
•Develop and facilitate culturally specific training
•Provide information and referral services to citizens, state agencies, and the business community

•State and local grants management
•Training and technical assistance to community organizations
•On-site program monitoring of grantees

•Operate Justice Data Warehouse
•Manage the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS)
•Distribute federal juvenile justice funds to local jurisdictions
•Analyze and evaluate justice system operations

Results of Reorganization

2014 was a pivotal year for the Department. There was a notable shift, both in work and mindset, from the stress and uncertainly during the Department-wide reorganization to a new “normal”. In 2010 DHR streamlined its administrative functions, consolidating from 10 divisions into three – Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP), Community Action Agencies (DCAA) and Community Advocacy and Services (CAS). It took a couple of years and as many leadership changes in the Director’s Office to fully restructure internal workflows. Finally, in 2014, the Department found its rhythm.

Seeking Partnerships, Delivering Solutions

Part of that rhythm includes a stronger focus on building and strengthening partnerships with other state agencies. As resources have been constrained, we are seeking new ways to deliver solutions for underrepresented Iowans. One way we do this is through inter-agency partnerships.

We have found that many agencies in Iowa are struggling to reach underrepresented populations. Minority groups, especially those with language barriers, can be especially difficult to reach. Some cultures have a historical distrust of government. Other individuals have had trouble physically accessing services because of a disability, hearing loss or deafness. These barriers pose a problem for a broad range of agencies seeking to provide everything from health services to youth programming. DHR is uniquely positioned to provide those agencies, which might be long on resources but short on community connections, with strategies on culturally-sensitive ways to reach underrepresented Iowans.

Recently DHR staff met with staff from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR wants to interest more minority youth in exploring DNR careers, but their outreach efforts had fallen short. Our staff was able to explain the complicated, multi-layered cultural barriers that were keeping the DNR from making meaningful connections.

Some solutions are easy, such as dressing more casually when approaching community members. Others require more relationship-building, such as getting to know the parents of potential youth program participants. Our goal is to reach more agencies to share those best practices for culturally-appropriate outreach. Over time, those changes will improve access to and interaction with state government.

Roadblocks

While DHR is partnering to produce systematic change across state government, there are still roadblocks. In SFY 2016, we estimate nearly 76% of our state appropriation will go to salaries and benefits. We continue to absorb mandatory salary and other administrative increases. Our only way to reduce costs now is to reduce staff, which will mean a loss in service to Iowans. This is an ongoing concern from last year, especially in the deaf, hard of hearing and disability fields. Losing a person would mean losing that institutional knowledge about rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), for example.

Constraints have also forced us to put important, but not urgent items on hold. We had hoped in FY'14 to acquire a database that would allow CAS to collect and analyze client intake information in a central format and location, creating potential new points of data between various constituencies. For example, combined intake data might uncover a deaf community within an Asian immigrant population. This would trigger our Office of Deaf Services to partner with the Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs to reduce unique barriers in that community.

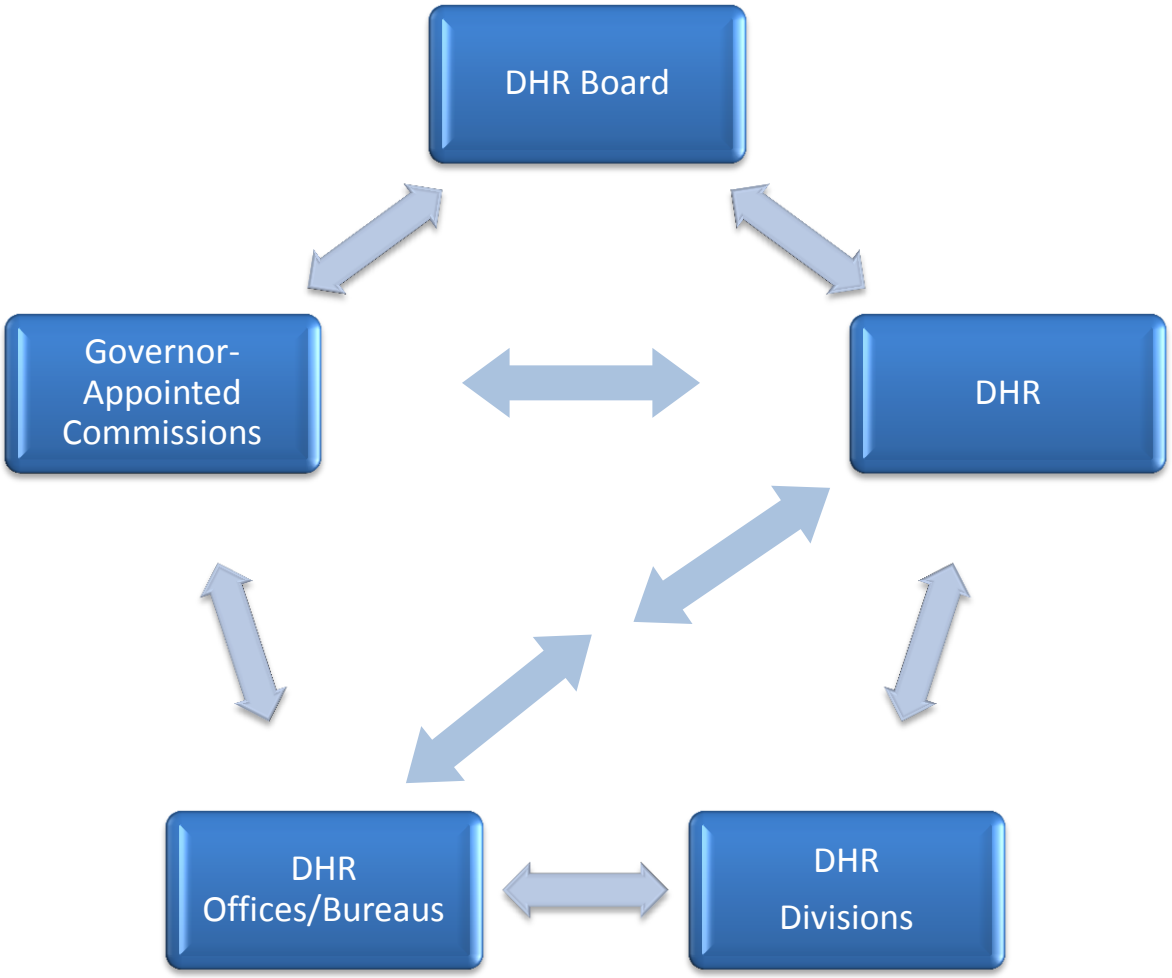
Due to budget constraints, CAS has held off on the database project awaiting the availability of DHR'S appropriation currently allocated for SERIP, an early retirement incentive program that is sun-setting. We hope to retain SERIP funds and implement the database over the next two years.

What's Next

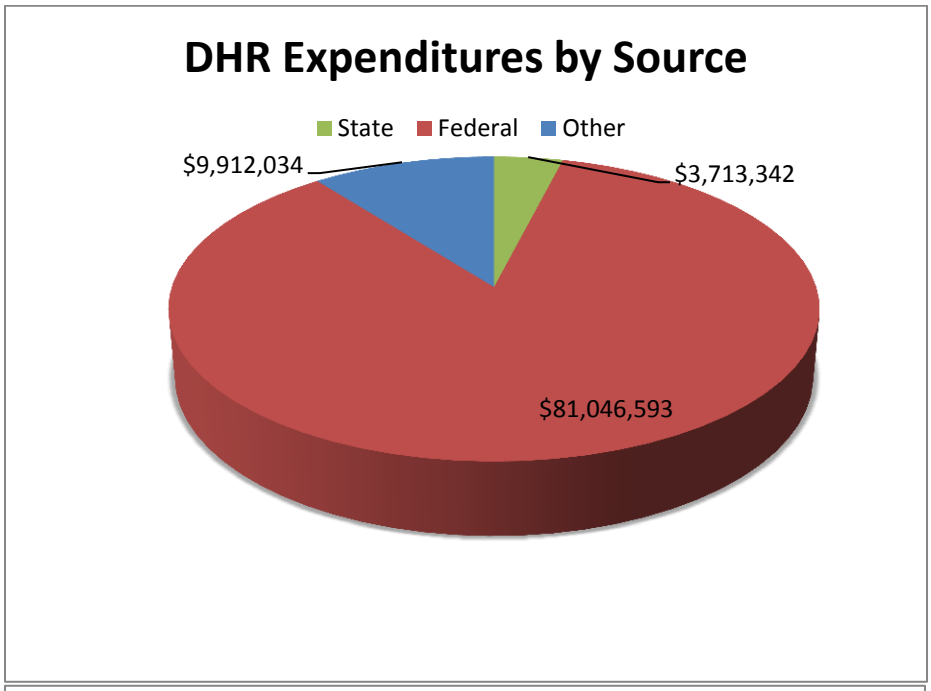
The Department will continue pursuing partnerships, measuring the number of agencies implementing best practices recommended by DHR. The DHR Board is positioned to take a more active role, discussing ways to become involved in reducing Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC), for example. Our Department has more than 100 Governor-appointed board and commission members from every geographical region across Iowa. Those members can partner at the community level to implement DMC reduction strategies.

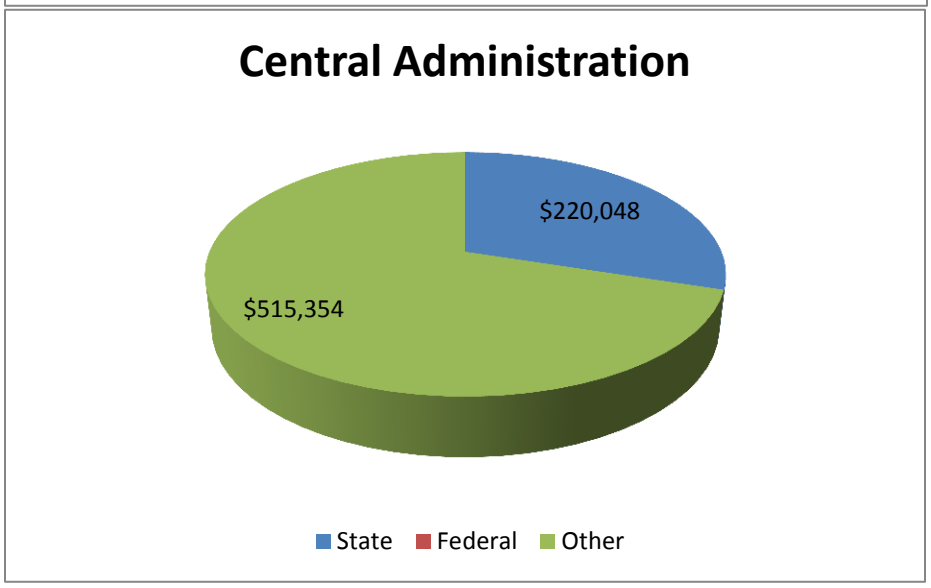
In SFY'15, we will take the idea of unification to our volunteer network, finding ways for commissions to work more closely and in support of one another. Although the staff and divisions have found a comfortable work flow, commissions are still finding their direction following the Department's reorganization. We look forward to hosting an event at the Capitol for all commissions to come together, learn from one another and share their passion with policy makers in Des Moines.

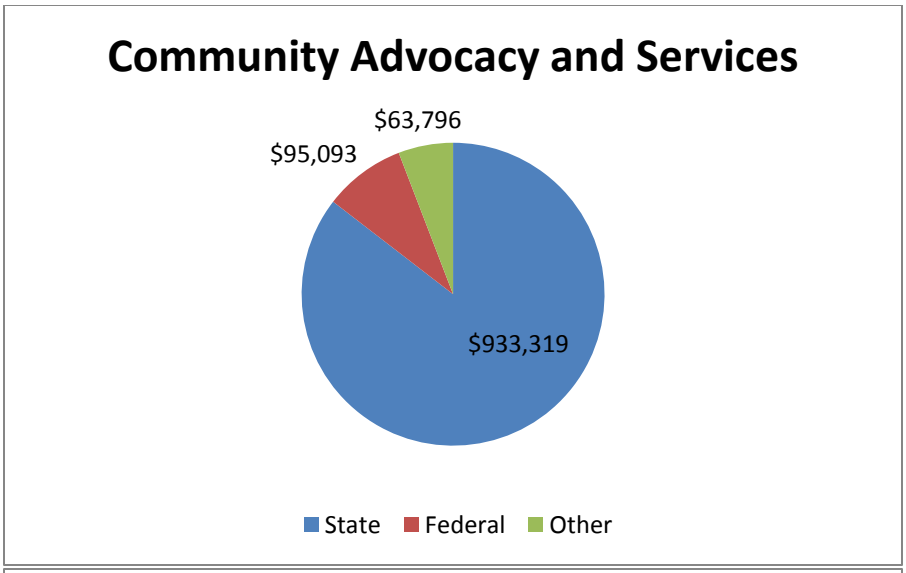
Internal Communication Chart

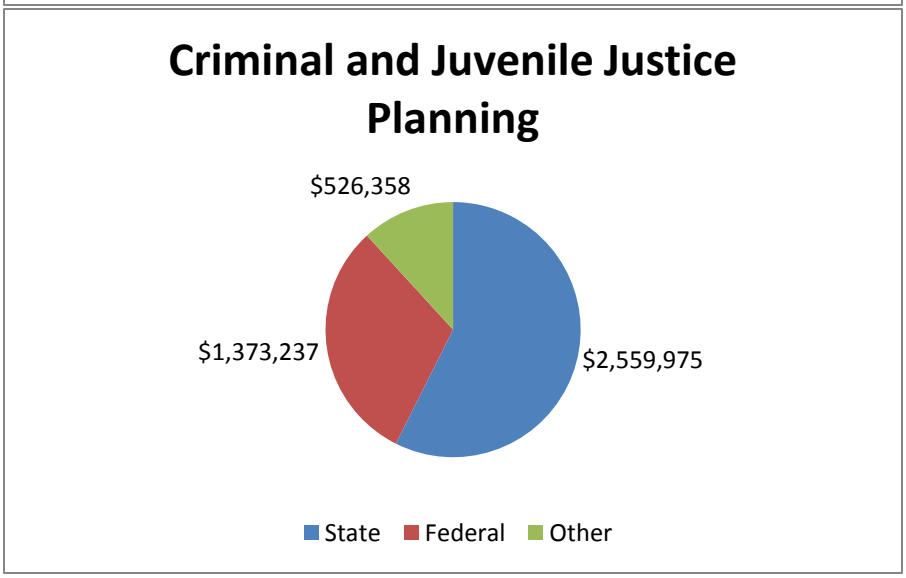


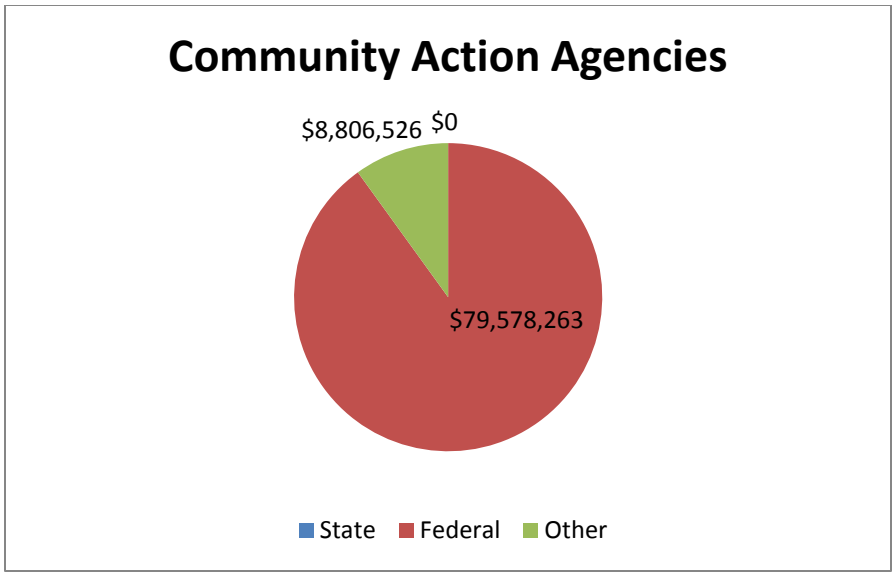
Expenditures SFY14






Community Advocacy and Services
$63,796
$95,093
$933,319
State
Federal
Other


Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning
$526,358
$1,373,237
$2,559,975
State
Federal
Other


Community Action Agencies
$8,806,526
$0
$79,578,263
State
Federal
Other

Expenditures by Source

Criminal and Juvenile Justice Division	State	Federal	Other	Total Expenditures
Criminal and Juvenile Justice Approp.	$ 1,260,169	$ 97,786	$ 20,416	$ 1,378,371
NCPC Embedding Prevention			604	604
Juvenile Court Transfers			278,259	278,259
Family Drug Court			48,127	48,127
Second Chance Grant			987	987
Iowa Statistical Analysis Center		72,329		72,329
Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative			27,985	27,985
NDEX Implementation		94,050		94,050
Gov. Traffic Safety Board		-	9,018	9,018
Rural Homeless Youth		-	94,472	94,472
Mental Health and Juvenile Justice Collaboration Proj.		74,382		74,382
Reintegration of Ex-Offenders		-	167	167
Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws		123,394		123,394
Juvenile and Family Assistance Stabilization Track (J-FAST)		61,088		61,088
Community and Strategic Planning		19,793	-	19,793
Co-Occurring Treatment and Reentry		18,010		18,010
Classification System Verification			10,000	10,000
Juvenile Justice Reform Project		212,927	-	212,927
Uniform Crime Report			25,000	25,000
Youth and Young Adult Suicide Prevention			11,323	11,323
Juvenile Accountability Block Grant		202,666		202,666

Title V Community Grant Fund		2,500		2,500
Juvenile Justice Action Grants		373,124		373,124
Juvenile Justice Advisory Council		21,188		21,188
Justice Data Warehouse	25,000			25,000
Criminal Juvenile Justice Information System	1,274,806			1,274,806
Division Total	$ 2,559,975	$ 1,373,237	$ 526,358	$ 4,459,570
Community Action Agencies	**State**	**Federal**	**Other**	**Total Expenditures**
Dept. of Energy Weatherization	$ -	$ 5,536,274	$ -	$ 5,536,274
Weatherization Refunds		47,500		47,500
Black Hills Utility			451,238	451,238
IP&I Utility			2,493,266	2,493,266
Mid-American Energy Utility			2,431,464	2,431,464
Energy Assistance - LIHEAP		48,447,279	146,652	48,593,931
Home Energy Assistance Program		16,023,843	-	16,023,843
Individual Development Accounts			150,753	150,753
Community Services Block Grant		6,676,926	-	6,676,926
Family Development and Self Sufficiency (FaDSS)		2,846,441	3,133,153	5,979,594
Division Total	$ -	$ 79,578,263	$ 8,806,526	$ 88,384,789
Community Advocacy and Services	**State**	**Federal**	**Other**	**Total Expenditures**
Community Advocacy and Services Appropriation	$ 876,237	$ -	$ 17,500	$ 893,737
Youth Leadership	48,101		46,296	94,397
Client Assistance Program		94,899		94,899

Task force for Young Women	$	$ 194	$	$ 194
Training and Technology	8,981			8,981
Division Total	$ 933,319	$ 95,093	$ 63,796	$ 1,092,208
Central Administration	**State**	**Federal**	**Other**	**Total Expenditures**
Central Administration Appropriation	$ 220,048	$ -	$ 515,354	$ 735,402
Department Totals	$ 3,713,342	$ 81,046,593	$ 9,912,034	$ 94,671,969

Divisions in Depth

Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning

The location of the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP) in the Iowa Department of Human Rights ensures its independence from operational agencies in conducting research, planning, data coordination, and information clearinghouse functions.

The Administrator of CJJP reports administratively to the Director of the Department of Human Rights, but on policy issues is also responsible to two statutory councils, the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning Advisory Council and the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council. To facilitate CJJP's receiving otherwise confidential data from state and local agencies, specific statutory language exists to ensure CJJP access to relevant justice system information. This access has given CJJP a unique capability to provide data and information system-related assistance across agencies and to study and report on Iowa's multi-faceted justice system from a neutral, objective position in state government.

CJJP also provides staff support to three other entities. Legislation passed in 2010 established the Public Safety Advisory Board to provide assistance to the legislative, executive, and judicial branches in developing sound criminal justice policy and legislation. The Sex Offender Research Council provides input to the executive and legislative branches on matters relating to sex offenses and offenders. Finally, the CJIS Advisory Board provides guidance to the Division's CJIS project (discussed below).

Current Staffing

Steve Michael, who has been serving as Interim Administrator has just been appointed as the division administrator following the retirement of Paul Stageberg. The CJJP staff consists of 14 full-time staff and one full-time staff has chosen to work part-time. Staff includes executive officers, information technology specialists, justice system analysts, a juvenile justice program planner, a statistical research analyst, a budget analyst, and a secretary. In FY14, about 68% of CJJP staff salaries and benefits were provided by state funds (including contracts with other state agencies for specific services).

Activities

CJJP activities fall into three general areas:

1. *Justice system research and analysis, including:*
   - Management of the Justice Data Warehouse (JDW), which permits analysis of justice system activity and the preparation of Legislative Impact Statements on proposed justice system legislation.
   - District Court disposition and sentencing data collection and reporting.

- Statutory development and revision of multi-year criminal and juvenile justice plans.
- The provision of staff support for the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning Advisory Council, Public Safety Advisory Board and Sex Offender Research Council.
- Research into recidivism of offenders participating in correctional programming.
- Research on correctional trends and developments and changing sentencing policies, such research to include the upgrading and application of prison population projection protocols.
- Development and support of a web page to support CJJP's technical assistance and information dissemination functions.
- Provision of assistance to the Department of Public Safety in completing the annual Uniform Crime Report.
- Provision of a clearinghouse for justice system information (special reports, ongoing responses to requests from other units of government and the general public, etc.).
- Evaluating a statewide suicide prevention project for the Iowa Department of Public Health.

2. *Juvenile justice research, program analysis, and fund pass-through:*

- Execution of the Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative (JJRRI) federal grant. Iowa was one of three sites nationally chosen for this demonstration project through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Department of Justice and the Office of Management and Budget. The JJRRI has two primary components:
  - Use of the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP), currently in the 1st, 3rd and 6th Judicial Districts as well as at several residential facilities, to determine the likely effectiveness of delinquency services in terms of recidivism reduction when compared to an extensive delinquency service research base. Statewide implementation will occur in October 2015 dependent upon state funding.
  - Broader examination of the array of services available for delinquent youth, any gaps in those services and the return on investment of those services. This level also includes institutionalization of the SPEP and integration with other data-driven tools and systems already being used or in the process of being created, which include:
    - The Iowa Delinquency Assessment (IDA) – Iowa's validated risk/needs assessment instrument which has been in use since 2007 as is used to determine youth risk level as well as to assist with case planning.
    - The Iowa Court Information System (ICIS) – Iowa's electronic case management system.
    - Detention Screening Tool (DST) – Currently being automated in ICIS and is intended to screen juvenile offenders prior to placement in a detention facility. The automated tool will be used statewide.

- Dispositional Matrix – In development, this instrument is a form of structured decision making which weighs offense severity along with risk to reoffend; an approach that will assist system officials in determining the most appropriate level of supervision and type of services for youth, thereby maximizing recidivism reduction.

The JJRRI is expected to assist the juvenile justice system with achieving outcomes related to reduced recidivism, increased public safety, and lower costs. This initiative should also affect correlates to juvenile offending, such as school attendance and achievement, substance abuse, mental health, and behavioral outcomes.

- Development and testing of juvenile justice program monitoring and outcome measurement protocols, including the provision of assistance to system officials as they implement risk assessment tools and outcome identification and tracking procedures.
- Provision of staff support to Iowa's State Advisory Group (the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council) established pursuant to the federal JJDP Act, and the administration of the federal juvenile justice formula grant available to states through this federal act.
- Providing monitoring activities in support of the federal JJDP Act (e.g., inspection of local jails and juvenile detention centers).
- Development of a 5-year strategic plan to reduce Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) at key school discipline points; arrest; JCS point including; referral, diversion, detention and petition. Recommendations and action steps will be finalized in the Fall of 2014.
- Coordination of the Annie E. Casey Foundation Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) in Iowa.
- Providing staff support for the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) and the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC).
- Providing various regular reports to Juvenile Court Services offices. Some of these ongoing reports include monthly case management reports, risk assessment information, placement and services reports, and a variety of others. The use of the Justice Data Warehouse (JDW) continues to grow along with the number of reports and analysis.
- Provision of evaluation services for the state Family Drug Court grant. CJJP staff are active members of the Children's Justice Data Committee and assist with reporting needs related to that population of youth.
- Participating in efforts to control underage drinking in Iowa.

3. *Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS):*

CJIS is a statewide integrated criminal justice information system that has enabled automated sharing of information in a common format between state, local, and federal criminal justice agencies, including the Departments of Corrections, Human Rights, Transportation, Public Safety, and Natural Resources, the Judicial Branch, the Attorney General's Office, County Attorneys, Sheriffs' Offices, and local law enforcement. CJIS will eventually link electronically

all the justice system agencies in Iowa, speeding the flow and accuracy of information, eliminating duplicate data entry, increasing system efficiency, and enhancing public safety and the safety of Iowa's law enforcement officers. Messages between the Departments of Public Safety and Corrections are exceeding 1,000,000 per year. In addition, some exchanges (e.g., sex offender movement and victim notification of protective orders) are operational statewide.

The benefits of the CJIS include the elimination of information errors and redundant data entry. This provides for more complete, accurate, and real-time data to members of the criminal justice community, including improved decision-making, operational efficiency, and an enhanced ability to evaluate the effectiveness of programs. In addition, all agencies that receive data electronically realize a savings in staff time.

Achievements in SFY 2014

- Continued testing and validation of a juvenile detention screening tool in three counties; submitted grant application to permit expansion of juvenile detention screening statewide.
- Continued to work with the juvenile courts to maintain reduced use of juvenile detention (while ensuring public safety).
- Continued data collection from several metropolitan school districts to assist in developing local policies to assist in reducing referrals from schools to law enforcement and the juvenile court.
- Completed and released the following reports:
    - Annual Public Safety Advisory Board Report to the Legislature;
    - Annual Legislation Monitoring Report to the General Assembly
    - 2012-2013 Juvenile Court Liaison Report
    - A Validation of the Iowa Department of Correction's Inmate Classification System
    - Status Report: Juvenile Offenders Serving Life Sentences in Iowa
    - An Analysis on the Effects of Earned time for Inmates Charged with Robbery
    - Request for Information Regarding Sex Offender Special Sentence and Registry Requirements
    - An Analysis of Child Kidnapping in Iowa
    - An Analysis of 70% Mandatory Minimum Sentences in Iowa
    - Iowa Prison Population Forecast FY2013-2023
- Completed the analytic portion of the 2011 Uniform Crime Report, under an MOU with the Department of Public Safety.
- Completed correctional impact statements on 28 pieces of proposed legislation;

- Worked with the Department of Corrections to improve existing statistical reports and hasten monthly uploads. Various support tables were also updated. With changes to the Courts data, a number of DOC scripts had to be re-written to include the new tables for DOC reports that rely on Court information.
- Completed a link between the Courts data and DOT crash data, permitting a partnership with the University of Iowa to use the integrated data as part of a new (FY14) grant from the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau.
- Partnered with research groups to expand use of JDW data, completing additional data exchanges/transfers during FY14.
- With the Department of Revenue, procured a new Teradata server. This update has shown significant benefits in both query run-time and monthly processing.

Division of Community Advocacy and Services

The Division of Community Advocacy and Services (CAS) streamlines access to services offered by the State of Iowa for underserved populations. According to Iowa code, each of these populations has an Office within the CAS Division: Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Persons with Disabilities, African Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Latinos, Native Americans and Women. The division is the vital connection between Iowa's diverse communities and the programs, events and information that can provide understanding and equity. CAS partners with public and private agencies, institutions and groups to enable more people to participate fully and make living in Iowa a richer experience.

Current Staffing

In addition to the division administrator, CAS has 10 authorized FTEs including three executive officers, two program planners, four disability consultants and a secretary. Executive officers, program planners and disability consultants that work in teams across offices, expanding our internal knowledge base and ability to assist constituents.

Major Accomplishment

In FY 2014, The CAS Division, in partnership with the Governor's Office, Iowa Workforce Development, Senator Harkin's office and Iowa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, coordinated the "Employing Individuals with Disabilities through Employment" event. This event was held at the FFA building on the Ankeny DMACC campus on October 17, 2013.

The intent of this event was to provide an opportunity to hear from businesses that have developed best practices and improved their bottom line by employing individuals with disabilities. The discussion also provided an opportunity to hear directly from disabled individuals who have excelled in the workforce or successfully started their own business. Finally, it provided an opportunity for business owners, managers, human

resources directors, support organizations, and community leaders to gain perspective from specific success stories.

Specific objectives of the forum were to renew a discussion about:

- Encouraging and inspiring individuals with disabilities to help get more Iowans working.
- Engaging the business community to take next steps to empower individuals with disabilities.
- Showing how businesses can strengthen their bottom line by hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Motivating relevant stakeholders to redouble efforts.
- Highlighting success stories of individuals in the workplace.
- Highlighting individuals who have started their own business.
- Highlighting businesses who have provided leadership and developed best practices.
- Clarifying existing resources for businesses to leverage.
- Discussing challenges and soliciting recommendations to overcome challenges.

More than 100 individuals, including businesses, advocates and providers attended the event. An exhibit area was also made available to providers of services that help to eliminate barriers to services.

This initiative came from the National Governors Association (NGA). Governor Jack Markell, Governor of Delaware, announced that his 2012-2013 chairs' initiative will focus on increasing employment among individuals with disabilities. Jill Fulitano Avery, Executive Officer from the CAS Division, represented the Department of Human Rights at their annual conference in Seattle earlier that year.

Constituent Services

In addition to the outreach meetings, the Community Advocacy and Services (CAS) Division has been supporting its constituents through information and referrals. Some examples include constituent statistics, barriers to health care related to language, employment and housing discrimination referrals, immigration paper issues, ADA education and service dog questions.

All seven constituent groups served by CAS are unique, and complexities within each community group pose a constant challenge. Staff spends considerable time becoming experts and maintaining expertise on constantly-changing community groups. Staff does this by attending conferences, serving on task forces, meeting with local service providers and speaking directly with constituents.

One example is developing outreach projects within the specific Offices from CAS. The Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs set up an outreach meeting in Storm Lake to identify barriers to access services and supports in the community based on the specific needs of their refugee population. Bringing local leaders together to identify and solve their own issues is one way CAS Division can provide additional support to Iowa's underrepresented populations. The process to assess the needs of our populations is ongoing.

Education and Events

The Iowa Department of Human Rights, including the CAS Division, is not an enforcement agency. Instead, we build bridges by educating stakeholders and coordinating events to raise awareness regarding human rights issues. The annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration is one example of an event that reminds Iowans about Iowa's human rights legacy while also shining a light on areas that need improvement. Other events such as the Capitol Girls, Write Women Back Into History, Youth Leadership Forum, and Iowa Youth Congress expose a new generation of leaders to state government. For example, each year Capitol Girls, an event in partnership with the Girl Scouts, brings young women to Des Moines and spend a day with women legislators at the Capitol. This program as well as our other youth initiatives encourage underrepresented youth to think of themselves as leaders and problem solvers. We believe that having individuals with more diverse experiences at the table leads to better and more inclusive decision-making.

Educating stakeholders is another critical component of our work. Decision-makers sometimes enact policies that have unintended consequences for underrepresented Iowans. Often times, those negative consequences are not the result of malice but rather a lack of education. By educating others about the needs and barriers underrepresented Iowans face, those people are enabled to make more-informed decisions in the future.

Division of Community Action Agencies

The Division of Community Action Agencies (DCAA) is responsible for the administration of federal and state programs operated through a statewide network of community action agencies and other community-based organizations designed to foster self-sufficiency of Iowa's low-income citizens.

The Division works together with the nine-member DCAA Commission appointed by the Governor. The Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program is governed by the FaDSS Council, as designated by Iowa Code. Both the Commission and Council include public and private sector members, including consumers, that help set agency direction.

The Division's guiding principles include: Customer Focus, Results Orientation, Accountability, Collaboration, Empowerment, Data-based Decisions, and Strength-based Focus.

The Bureau of Community Services administers three key self-sufficiency programs: the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Grant program (FaDSS), and the Individual Development Accounts program.

The federal CSBG provides support for Iowa's 18 community action agencies to create, coordinate, and deliver a wide variety of programs and services to low-income Iowans, including health, education, housing, employment, nutrition, emergency services, community linkages, and other self-sufficiency efforts. These are locally-governed, locally-driven initiatives.

In FFY 2013, Iowa's community action agencies served over 323,016 individuals. Local agencies attracted more than 16,000 volunteers who contributed more than 434,000 volunteer hours to their communities during the year. Agencies in Iowa partnered with over 6,400 other community organizations, including education, business, non-profit, and faith-based, to provide an array of programs and services to low-income Iowans.

The Bureau administers the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program that serves Iowa families that are receiving FIP and at risk of long-term economic and family instability. This evidence-based model provided comprehensive services through certified Family Development Specialists to 3,198 Iowa families and 5,446 children last year.

Results show that FaDSS families make substantial progress in a variety of self-sufficiency measures such as increased wages, education, job training, housing, and mental health counseling, and stay off welfare longer than non-FaDSS families.

In FY13, families exiting the FaDSS program increased their average monthly income from wages by over 320%, from $96 to $403. Families exiting FaDSS decreased their average monthly Family Investment Program (FIP) amount by 62%, from $377 to $142 per month. This results in approximately $434,515 in monthly savings to FIP.

Achievement of education goals is a key component to increasing long-term family income. In FY13, 342 FaDSS families achieved a major education goal. Of those families, 164 earned a GED/HS Diploma, 107 completed a Certification Program, 60 earned an Associate Degree, and 11 earned a Bachelor's Degree.

For the complete FaDSS Annual Report, go to www.iowafadss.org/

The Individual Development Accounts (IDA) program was established in 2009 to encourage low-income working Iowans to establish savings accounts for long-term

asset development that lead to family self-sufficiency. Participants can qualify for up to $2,000 in state matching funds to pay for higher education or job training costs, purchase a home, start a small business, pay for emergency medical costs, pay for an automobile, or purchase assistive technology for a family member with a disability. Savers also participate in financial education courses and asset-specific education.

The IDA program is operated under a contract with the Iowa Credit Union Foundation, which was awarded the grant through an RFP process.

As of January 2014, the IDA program had achieved the following results:

IDA participants purchased 249 assets, including 107 with state funds:

- Home - 68 (43 with state funds)
- Education - 71 (22 with state funds)
- Vehicle - 43 (21 with state funds)
- Small business - 55 (12 with state funds)
- Assistive technology - 5 (4 with state funds)
- Rebuild Iowa - 5 (5 with state funds)

The Bureau of Energy Assistance administers the federally funded Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP is designed to assist qualifying low-income households in the payment of a portion of their winter heating costs, and to encourage energy conservation through client education and weatherization.

The program utilized $53.9 million in federal funds to provide assistance to 85,109 Iowa households in FY14, providing an average one-time benefit of $445 per household. Nearly 30% of all households served had an elderly resident, and more than 48% had a member with a disability. Over 94% of LIHEAP recipients are NOT receiving TANF benefits. Benefits are weighted to targeted households, including the elderly, disabled, working poor and households with children under six years of age.

LIHEAP has two additional components: Assessment and Resolution and Emergency Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP). The Assessment and Resolution component includes energy conservation education, referral to outside services, budget counseling, and vendor negotiation. The ECIP component provides immediate assistance to alleviate life-threatening situations, including repair of a furnace or heating system, obtaining temporary shelter, purchase of blankets and/or heaters, and emergency fuel deliveries.

Due to higher fuel prices, and in particular the propane price crisis, and extreme cold winter, unprecedented demands were placed on ECIP this past winter. Iowans

experienced record fuel prices and heating costs, resulting in record highs in accounts in arrears and amounts owed, along with record numbers of service disconnections. The effects of this past winter continue to present challenges for the LIHEAP program going into FY15, especially for propane customers.

The Bureau of Weatherization administers the federal Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), the nation's largest residential energy efficiency program. The program reduces energy costs for low-income persons, particularly the elderly, disabled, and families with children by improving the energy efficiency of their homes and ensuring their health and safety. Approximately 31% of the households served included at least one elderly person, 31% included at least one person with a disability and 20% included young children.

The Weatherization Program served 2,230 households in PY13, providing an estimated average $327 in annual savings per home. The program also conducts a health and safety check on every home weatherized, including inspection of all combustion appliances, possible health and safety problems such as mold and unsafe electrical wiring, and carbon monoxide and smoke detectors. Health and safety risks are mitigated in over 50% of homes.

Programs administered by DCAA are done so at some of the lowest administrative costs for these programs of any state in the country, ranging between 0% - 5%. Lower administrative costs mean more resources available to serve families and support community efforts.

Other Community Coordination Efforts

DCAA, in partnership with the national Center of Excellence for Organizational Performance Standards, continued to develop, pilot and implement comprehensive new organizational "standards of excellence" for the Community Services Block Grant. The standards will be applied to state CSBG offices and local community action agencies. Categories for standards include fiscal operations, human resources, board governance, organizational leadership, community engagement, consumer input, customer satisfaction, strategic planning, and data analysis.

DCAA is working collaboratively with the Iowa Community Action Association and local agencies in Iowa to conduct agency needs assessments and joint training and technical assistance strategies to assist local agencies in meeting new organizational performance standards by Oct. 1, 2015.