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Community Action Walk for Warmth events collect more than \$900,000

Thousands of volunteers marched through dozens of Michigan communities during the winter of 2015 and raised \$909,225 to help low-income households stay warmer as local Community Action Agencies throughout the state held Walk for Warmth fundraisers. From the western Upper Peninsula to southeast Michigan, the annual Walks for Warmth drew those who wanted to help other families in their communities with their heating bills.

“To raise so close to a million dollars is a tremendous achievement by participating Community Action Agencies and the many volunteers who bundled up and walked miles to help others,” says Kate Birnbryer White, executive director of Michigan Community Action. “It was our most successful effort to date, exceeding the amounts raised in past years. We appreciate every person who walked in the events, who showed up to offer support and of course to every person or business that made donations.”

In addition to the money raised during the walks, of which 100 percent goes to help low income families' with utility assistance, Consumers Energy makes a generous donation of \$1 for every \$2 that Community Action Agencies use from January through Dec. 31, 2015, up to \$750,000, to make partial payments for Consumers Energy customers. As a result, every \$2 raised by Walk for Warmth equates to \$3 that helps low-income families stay warm.

Community Action Agencies have a long history of providing utility assistance and weatherization services to help qualified low income families cope with the cost of utilities. Where more affluent households might spend seven to 10 percent of income on utility bills, low income families have to dedicate approximately a quarter of their income to cover heat and electricity.

Founded in 1975, Michigan Community Action serves its 29 member agencies throughout Michigan by strengthening their capacity to alleviate the causes and circumstances of poverty in all 83 counties.