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www.accessproject.org

Home Sick

How Medical Debt Undermines Housing Security

SURVEY PARTNERS

The Access Project (TAP) has served as a resource center for local communities working to improve health and healthcare access since 1998. The mission of The Access Project is to strengthen community action, promote social change, and improve health, especially for those who are most vulnerable. TAP conducts community action research in conjunction with local leaders to improve the quality of relevant information needed to change the health system. The Access Project's fiscal sponsor is Third Sector New England, a non-profit with more than 40 years of experience in public and community health projects. TAP is affiliated with the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.

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Making Connections in Des Moines, sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is partnering with individuals and organizations to stimulate a grassroots movement, neighborhood by neighborhood to improve results for families. They collaborate with residents, civic groups, government leaders, public and private groups, interested citizens, and faith-based organizations to transform neighborhoods into family supportive environments. Helping families to build assets and incomes is an important part of Making Connections.

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The Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED) was the lead agency for a community wide coalition of organizations and businesses to increase participation in the Earned Income Tax and Child Care Tax Credit options for low income working families. ISED partnered with The Access Project to collect the surveys in Des Moines. It is a nonprofit organization that provides services to assist disenfranchised individuals to enter the economic mainstream and create solid economic futures.

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Tulsa County's Community Action Project (CAP) began under the name "Project Get Together" in 1973. From its inception, CAP's objective has been to provide Tulsa's working poor with the services they require to become economically self-sufficient. CAP is focused on removing the stumbling blocks that keep Tulsa County's working poor from achieving economic independence. CAP provides a range of services including early childhood education (Head Start and Early Head Start); safe & affordable rental housing and renovated homes for sale; a first-time homebuyers support & education program; income tax preparation assistance; screening and application assistance for public benefit programs (such as Food stamps & Medicaid); and policy analysis and advocacy.

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United Way of Palm Beach County

United Way of Palm Beach County's mission is to measurably improve the lives of individuals and families in Palm Beach County by uniting the resources of donors, volunteers, agencies and the community. To more effectively meet that mission, they have identified four key areas that are a critical community need: Providing Food, Shelter and Emergency Needs, Improving Futures for Children and Families, Enriching the Lives of Seniors, Promoting Independence for People with Disabilities.

Through its Prosperity Campaign, United Way of Palm Beach County helps working families and low-income residents move toward greater economic stability, higher earnings and home ownership. United Way of Palm Beach County has opened three Prosperity Centers in the county to provide a one-stop neighborhood resource for residents to access supportive services such as credit counseling, budgeting, educational & vocational counseling, as well as the Individual Development Account home buying assistance program. The centers also assist clients with on-line benefits assistance (such as food stamps). In addition, the Prosperity Campaign manages the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program, which provides free tax preparation services to low income residents, at over 40 VITA sites around the county.

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With its focus on education, research and policy, the **Center for Health Law Studies at Saint Louis University School of Law** has earned the reputation as one of the nation's top health law programs. Students choose the Center for its health law certificate, dual degree, and LL.M. programs. The Center has one of the largest full-time faculties of all the health law programs in the nation, and faculty members are engaged in policy analysis and development at local, state, national, and international levels.

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ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, is the nation's largest community organization of low- and moderate-income families, working together for social justice and stronger communities. Since 1970, ACORN has grown to 850 neighborhood chapters in over 80 cities across the U.S. and in cities in Canada, the Dominican Republic and Peru. The four ACORN sites that participated in the survey effort were in Arizona, Georgia, Connecticut and Rhode Island. ACORN's accomplishments include successful campaigns for better housing, schools, neighborhood safety, health care, job conditions, and more. ACORN members participate in local meetings and actively work on campaigns, elect leadership from the neighborhood level up, and pay the organization's core expenses through membership dues and grassroots fundraisers.

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