



Cultural Fusion: Culinary Extravaganza

NCA completed its 75th year of service with a culminating event held on Thursday, September 19th at Gordon Green. Over 150 friends attended the event that evoked memories of NCA's formerly renowned event Ethnic Extravaganza.

We highlighted our educational programs spanning school age youth K-12th grade, adults, and older adults. Guests sampled some activities we provide to our participants - Our IConnect station demonstrated using a Cricut™ to create a personal bookmark; our STEAM Educator used VR Goggles to transport guests to a virtual reality; VenMax, our robotic dog, shook a lot of paws; and P4SS introduced many books read by our students, newsletters, field trips & photography.

Pictured Above: Anthony Brown, Paul Sekfy & Meryl Johnson
Pictured to the Right: Allison Wallace, Teya Easterling & Robert Hermann, Jr.
Pictured Below: Sarah, Adah & Dace



Mission

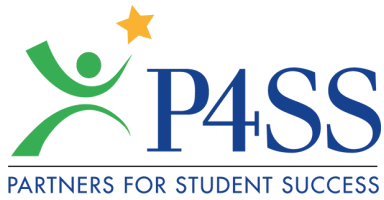
To support and strengthen education for children, families and older adults, and advocate for the social, economic, and political well-being of Greater Clevelanders. NCA envisions a Cleveland where all people have access to resources to help them thrive.



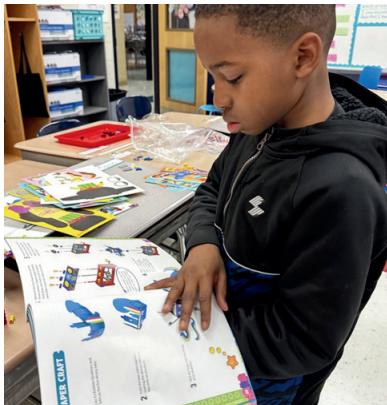
Lifetime Service Awards honored four local leaders integral to NCA's success including Clay Mock, Board President (1973-1974), William Easterling, long-time Board Member (2002-2010), Lynne B. Alfred, Board President (1996-1998) and Cleveland Council President, Blaine A. Griffin, who started his career at NCA's member centers. We thank our sponsors who supported our event our dedicated co-chairs and volunteers.



NCA hosted international fellows from August - November through the Community Solutions Program funded by the State Department. Since 2019, NCA has participated by having mid-career professionals from across the globe join us. Sarah worked with NCA to learn more about youth programming to replicate in Liberia. Dace from Latvia worked at LEAP to learn about advancing participation for people with disabilities. Adah from Zambia was hosted by Morgan Paper Conservancy to support art instruction and community outreach. The fellows loved Cleveland, and its welcoming people. They presented their projects in D.C before returning to their home countries to implement what they learned.



With a strong focus on education, P4SS provides out-of-school programs at seven Cleveland Metropolitan Schools for Elementary (K-5), Middle School (6-8) and High School (9-12). Last school year, NCA provided programs at 14 sites thanks to funding provided by CMSD. Unfortunately, the District eliminated funding for the 2024-2025 school year. Thanks to Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center funds and funds dedicated from three Elementary schools, NCA provides enriching programs at seven schools.



Under a STEAM (Science, Tech, Engineering, Arts, Math) framework, NCA's P4SS programs use problem/project-based activities on "real-world" issues to reinforce academic learning appropriate to grade levels.

Career and College Readiness activities support students to develop critical job readiness skills, explore interests, visit local businesses, & engage with professionals in Safety/Security, Allied Health, Civil Service, Manufacturing, and Entrepreneurship.



NCA was pleased to host the Board of the International Federation of Settlements & Neighborhood Centers for its Annual Board Meeting. As the Board Treasurer, Allison Wallace introduced 27 individuals from across the globe to many Cleveland neighborhoods enjoying a week of meetings and activities. Some arrived early to celebrate our 75th Anniversary. They were surprised by Lake Erie's size, awed by the many football fans & impressed with the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame's exhibits. Members traveled from Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, France, Netherlands, Sweden, England, Minnesota & New York City. Other members from Denmark, Hungary, Nigeria, Romania, and Uganda who were unable to travel joined meetings remotely. As they all said – We love O-Hi-O!





NCA hosted its inaugural Amazing Shake Competition for 39 CMSD students in 5th – 8th grades. Over six weeks, P4SS Staff, community leaders and role models worked with youth at four school sites teaching students professional skills necessary for lifetime success. Instruction and practice included a proper handshake, conversing with adults, presenting themselves for volunteer and employment opportunities, applying for a bank account, accepting a gift graciously, proper conduct at a business function and more.

The 20 finalists competed in the Amazing Shake Finale held at John F. Kennedy High School moving through three levels of varied situations– The Gauntlet, Work the Room, and The Circle of Doom. They met with volunteers who scored the students on handshake firmness, eye contact, confidence, charisma, and poise. Each level became more competitive until three students remained for the final round of interviews held with two judges. The top candidates won prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. The Amazing Shake was enjoyed by the students who learned critical skills and is a cornerstone of NCA’s Youth Leadership Program.



IConnect engages adults aged 55 and older in activities and classes to provide social interaction, skill building and digital tech instruction and support. Over 630 adults in Northeast Ohio increased socialization and improved digital tech skills thanks to IConnect!

IConnect’s Tech Concierge Team delivers digital tech training and guided support to help individuals overcome tech anxiety, strengthen digital skills, and develop confidence using tech devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Digital tech applications used in home security, assistive devices, and new automobiles are also covered. Tech help is offered after system updates, when a screen looks different, and when new apps are available. Participants love to learn about new features and ways to access topics of interest.

Classes are held in-person at Cleveland Resource & Rec Centers, apartment complexes and community sites. 35 remote classes are provided weekly. Staff offer curated, facilitated classes daily at various times, creating on-line communities and socialization. Classes consist of Book Club, Movies, Games and Bingo, Exercise, Cooking and more.



NCA congratulated 30 AmeriCorps Members completing a service year in July 2024 and welcomed 29 new Members in August 2024. Funding from Serve Ohio enables NCA to have Members dedicated to education initiatives in P4SS, IConnect and Aspire Adult Education. Members also serve at partner sites including America Scores Cleveland, Promise Academy, Lexington-Bell Community Center, Open Doors Academy, and a new partnership with Shoes & Clothes For Kids.

NCA has the most diverse corps in Ohio with 20% over age 55, 83% female and 69% BIPOC. Several Members sign on for additional years because of the relationships they develop. In July, six Members attended the National Points of Light Conference in Houston, Texas had a fabulous time and promoted the importance of national service.

NCA is pleased to kick off its education initiative to help adults in Cuyahoga County. Dr. Carmine Stewart created an evidence-based HyFlex program that will prove successful in helping individuals successfully improve literacy skills. This model creates six educational functioning levels, placing students with more similarly abled students both online and in person. Students learn at a pace appropriate for them, with instruction differentiated for their level, and allows instructors to give students more equal time.

NCA's Board of Trustees endorses the Aspire Adult Education Program as we believe reading is the basic foundation on which all other academic skills are built. ProLiteracy identified bringing all adults to the equivalent of a 6th grade reading level would generate an additional \$2.2 trillion (10% of GDP annual income for the U.S.). When NCA Aspire students improve their literacy skills, they will have better economic opportunities to provide for their families and experience a greater sense of economic independence.



NCA's "back-office services" continues to support community-based organizations (CBOs) with high-quality services at competitive rates. Since 2012, NCA has provided NPA services (finance, IT, HR, planning, fiscal sponsorship) to over 25 organizations. Clients include America Scores Cleveland, Cleveland VOTES, CREW Foundation, Final Touch Fencing Club, Jones Road Family Development Corporation, Modern Warrior Live, Morgan Paper Conservancy, Ohio Transformation Fund, Partnership for Good Health, and unBail. Collaborating closely with these partners, NCA supports important initiatives that help connect and support our community.



Board Members: Robert E. Hermann, Jr., President; Sean Kilcher, CPA, Treasurer; Lisa Bottoms; David H. Gunning, II; LuAnne Peters; Michael Potraz; Bradley J. Rinella; Adam Scher; Lawrence Shelvin, Jr.; Edward M. Stevens, APR; Allison Wallace, Executive Director