



March 4, 2025

Napa County Board of Supervisors
1195 Third Street
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Supervisors:

Community Action of Napa Valley (CANV) is requesting the appointment of two Board of Supervisors' representatives to its Board of Directors.

Community Action of Napa Valley ("CANV"), a 501(c) (3) non-profit charitable organization, has a long history of service in Napa County dating back to its inception in 1965.

In August 1964, the Economic Opportunity Act was signed into law to by President Lyndon Johnson to "eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity." Under a new White House Office of Economic Opportunity, the concept of the federally-funded, local Community Action Program (CAP)—delivered by a local Community Action Agency (CAA), in a nationwide Community Action Network—would become the primary vehicle for the new, federal "War on Poverty."

CANV (originally named the Napa County Council for Economic Opportunity) was established in 1965 as a formal Community Action Agency (CAA) becoming part of a larger network that was seen as an effective way to better focus available local, state, federal, and private resources to assist low-income individuals and families to acquire useful skills and knowledge, to gain access to new opportunities, and to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Since 1965, CANV has offered Napa County residents assistance along with tools and skills to rebuild their lives and fully participate in their community. CANV administers a wide variety of service programs to low-income individuals through numerous grants.

CANV currently provides the following services in Napa County.

Senior Nutrition Program administers the *Congregate Meals Program*, and the *Home Delivered Meals Program (Meals on Wheels)*, both of which also provide nutrition educational information.

CANV Kids offers low cost affordable full day/full year, high quality childcare for children ages 18 months through pre-K at two locations in the city of Napa.

CANV Food Bank, provides *Food Pantries* throughout Napa County and the *Senior Brown Bag program*.

Housing Service Community Action Napa Valley contracts with The Napa Salvation Army Culinary Program to house culinary students in the former Samaritan Shelter building on Old Sonoma Road. CANV provides transitional housing services, and the Salvation Army provides other supportive services to program participants - adults engaged in recovery from addiction, trauma or homelessness—while they learn employable skills in the hospitality industry through the Salvation Army’s Napa Valley Culinary Training Academy.

Total Napa County Residents Served by CANV Programs in 2024:

- The **Senior Nutrition Program** serves 460 meals per day, Monday through Friday.
- The **Food Bank** serves 20,115 individuals and 6978 families yearly and we distribute 2,661,563 pounds of food yearly to the Napa Community.
- Our two preschool/childcare centers (**CANV Kids**) serve 92 low-income families.
- Our **Housing Service** houses 15 individuals

The *vision* of Community Action of Napa Valley (CANV) is that all families and individuals in Napa County have equal opportunity to access community resources that lead to healthy living and support self-sufficiency. The *mission* of CANV, in partnership with the community, is to provide services and resources that promote healthy living and encourage self-sufficiency for the vulnerable members of the community. For the past 60 years CANV has fulfilled this mission.

To qualify as a Community Action Agency and continue to receive Federal Block Grant funding, CANV is required under federal and state law to have a tripartite board of directors. As reflected through its bylaws, CANV maintains (at minimum) a twelve-person tri-partite Board of Directors. One third of the Directors represent the public sector of Napa County, one third represent the perspectives of low-income residents of Napa County, and one third represent the private sector of Napa County. The public sector representation shall be elected public officials or their representatives.

The Napa County Board of Supervisors has historically appointed two public sector representatives to the CANV Board of Directors. There has been difficulty in filling the Napa County seats on the

CANV Board and a formal mechanism has not been established to ensure an uninterrupted representation of the Napa County Board of Supervisors on the CANV Board of Directors since 2004 (see attached Board of Supervisors agenda letter dated October 19, 2004).

Community Action of Napa Valley has been in contact with a representative of the Napa County Counsel's Office, and we strongly support the proposed Board resolution to appoint the Director of the Health and Human Services Agency or the Director's Designee and the Director of Housing and Homeless Services or the Director's Designee as the representatives for the Board of Supervisors to the CANV Board of Directors.

In order to maintain CANV's close collaboration with other services across Napa County, ensure formal County participation on the CANV's board of Directors, and help CANV to maintain the tripartite structure of its Board as required by law, we also strongly support the resolution to have Board of Supervisors authorize the HHSA and HHS Directors to designate staff to serve on the CANV Board for two-year terms should the directors choose not to serve directly on the CANV Board.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Drene Johnson", written in a cursive style.

Drene Johnson, Executive Director
Community Action of Napa Valley