



Celebrating Patricia Daly and her Impact in Community Action



After 23 years at the helm of South Shore Community Action Council (SSCAC), Patricia Daly is retiring in June. In that time – and even before as SSCAC’s Head Start director - she has dedicated her life to Community Action. She will be missed on many levels by many people including the SSCAC board and staff, her colleagues in the MASSCAP network, the people the agency serves, and as a leader in the greater Plymouth community.

“Pat is the full package...inspiring, comforting and so solid. Everything about the organization is disciplined and organized. She manages her team effortlessly and people develop under her leadership.

She is always bringing new ideas to the board about ways to grow the organization and expand the reach to those in need. I am continuously amazed and inspired by her. We hope to continue to benefit from her expertise and advice.”

--Martha Dennison, SSCAC Board Member

Born and raised in Marshfield, Pat started her career working for Child Protective Services in New Bedford, MA and then in Florida. Her career at SSCAC began during the time she was spending at home after having her second child when she was asked to write a grant to help the agency convert its summer Head Start program to a full (academic) year. The agency received the grant, and Pat came on as Head Start Director.

SSCAC is now a \$20 M operation with 187 employees. The agency is located in Plymouth; however, SSCAC also serves Carver, Duxbury, Hanover, Hull, Kingston, Marshfield, Norwell, Pembroke, Plympton, and Scituate as well as many other communities through the fuel assistance and transportation programs. They have two Head Start Centers, one in Plymouth and one in Marshfield.

During her time representing families in MA and FL, she saw the need for a system of resources to help families in crisis. Community Action Programs are the closest thing there is to such a system. Pat’s focus has always been on helping people. She believes that if you help one person, you have accomplished something.

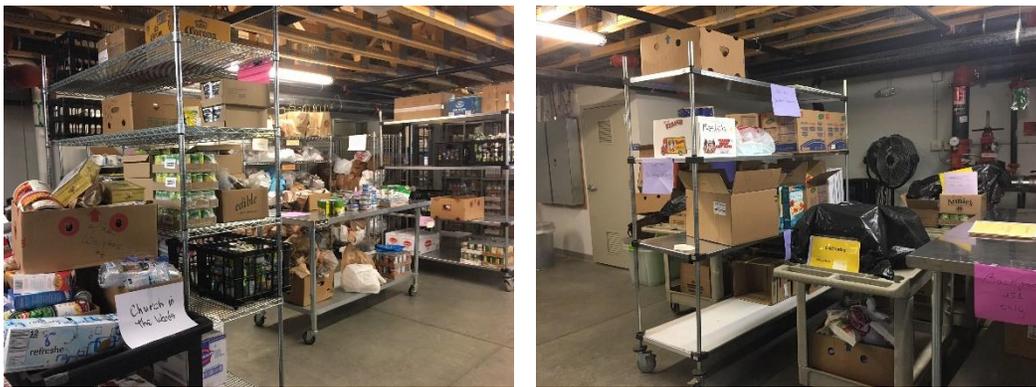
“Focused...Pat has an incomparable ability to see through the “noise” and always does what is best for the client in each particular situation.”

--SSCAC Staff Member

In the process of exploring an initiative to help homeless middle-age women, Pat and her team were able to help one individual in need. Finding temporary housing led to improved health, getting her car on the road and employment. When asked by one of her team members about how to scale this, Pat responded with, “we helped this person

and that is a success”. It is not that Pat or SSCAC will stop there. It is just that is important to recognize that every person who they are able help creates opportunity for that person and for others.

One program that Pat is quite passionate about is the Food Resources Program at SSCAC. In 2004, after much collaboration and local support, SSCAC opened a Food Distribution Center run mainly by volunteers to safely store both frozen and fresh as well as nonperishable items. The agency is the leader in providing community outreach, logistical support, and service coordination in collecting and distributing food to agencies and organizations working to feed South Shores low-income residents experiencing food insecurity. The program is funded with 100% local money, \$250,000 per year. In FY16, they distributed 488,406 pounds of food through more than 4,000 hours of volunteer time. SSCAC Food Distribution Network consists of 35 Food Distribution Center Members, 21 Healthy Harvest Drop Locations, 5 locations that serve as both, and 10 Backpack Food for Kids Partner Schools.



When you walk through the distribution center, you immediately notice that it is clean and organized with everything labeled. It is set up in a way that makes it easy for volunteers to pick and pack. No heavy machinery needed.

Pat is quite humble. When asked what she is most proud of at SSCAC, she said that they have created a stable and sustainable platform which the organization can operate. This platform allows the many talented leaders and staff to run their programs and do their jobs. The strong infrastructure is critical to their success. It is challenging to balance federal funding and the required use of programmatic funds with the needs of the organization and flexibility to respond to the local needs. The future is unknown, but Pat believes in Community Action and believes that CAAs can continue to be the platform for changing lives, creating opportunity and ending poverty. She hopes to see the profile of CAA's elevated.

If you are looking for Pat after June, check the beach! She intends to spend some time at the beach this summer with her family including her grandchildren. After that you may even find her in the classroom as she would like to go back to school and finish her Master's degree in nonprofit management. No doubt she will enhance any classroom – she could probably teach the courses!

She leaves us with words of wisdom, “Enjoy the little things, the smaller, daily successes”.