

## Community Action Duluth Big View Town Hall Meetings

bring people together across race and class lines, in order to find solutions to problems that impact people in poverty. We work to find solutions to poverty, and we solve problems that face each of us. Big View is unique in that we create partnerships and relationships across racial and class lines, resulting in unified action to tackle issues that keep people in poverty. Our Getting Ahead Leadership class provides training for low-income leaders in examining the causes of poverty, learning how to build social assets, and conducting an assessment of personal and community resources. Armed with new information and understanding, they analyze the impact of poverty on themselves and their community. They discuss the issue of social class on personal, community, and systemic levels to understand poverty, middle class, wealth, and the "hidden rules of class."

**Big View Town Hall Meetings are held on the last Thursday of every month from 5:30pm - 8:00pm at Community Action Duluth:**

**2424 W 5th Street  
Duluth, Minnesota, 55806**

A meal and childcare are provided. Quarterly, we host a process called Solutions to End Poverty Presentations (STEP) at Big View Town Hall Meetings. Solution to End Poverty Presentation as hosted by Getting Ahead leaders just prior to graduation from the Getting Ahead process.

Getting Ahead Leadership Team members have identified 8 community priorities for 2015:

1. Housing
2. Financial Literacy / Credit
3. Childcare
4. Transportation
5. Education
6. Jobs and Wages
7. Social Safety Net
8. Leadership/ Racial Equity – "Public Policy focus on the Ladders Out of Poverty- Minnesota Legislative Commission to End Poverty Initiative

RESULTS in 2006-present:

Leaders worked with the Duluth Transit Authority to add more bus routes on evenings and weekends to accommodate low-income people who work at those times. We were successful in our efforts, and, as a result, evening and holiday service bus routes were added in 2010.

In January 2011, Big View leaders were invited to be part of the Legislature's Ladder Out of Poverty Task Force. Big View Leaders went to the Capitol to provide testimony before the Task Force to promote successful community-based initiatives that engage

local community members in efforts to address poverty, specifically citing 3 initiatives highlighted in the Legislative Commission to End Poverty report, including Circles of Support. A bill supporting these initiatives was introduced by Representative Morrie Lanning, but it was not passed.

Leaders spoke out against a Voter ID proposal to the Duluth City Charter Commission that would disenfranchise students, people with disabilities, homeless people and low-income people. Leaders attended an organizing training with Sal Miranda from the Organizing Apprentice Project in St. Paul on February 5, 2011. A primary focus of the training was to give people in the community organizing tools necessary to build alignments that are able to affect public policy decisions that address disparities. Highlights from the event included: race ally training, power-mapping, and messaging. A key outcome of this event was that Big View Leaders are now better equipped and empowered to take on their leadership roles and move action plans to make positive change in our community through the Big View forum.

On June 30 2011, Leaders met with Rep. Kerry Gauthier for a briefing on the impending state shutdown and the devastating budget cuts that were proposed. At the Big View Forum, they created a letter-writing campaign to the Governor, urging him not to agree to budget cuts that would hurt safety net programs. 15 letters were generated and sent.

Also on June 30th, Big View leaders organized a bus from Duluth to the Capitol for a show-up before the State Shuts Down Standing Together to Invest in Minnesota Rally. We organized (43) people, consisting of union members, low-income people, government workers, and many others to fill the bus. While the state government did shut down, devastating cuts to safety net programs were NOT IMPLEMENTED.

11 Big View Leaders attended on August 11, 2011, urging our Congressman to hold a town hall meeting in Duluth. Efforts are still moving forward and we are in the middle of a letter writing campaign as we speak!

Visit [www.communityactionduluth.org](http://www.communityactionduluth.org) for more activities.

## Community Action Duluth Mission and Goals

The Mission of Community Action Duluth is to empower and engage our community to eliminate poverty, and create prosperity and equity in the lives of the people we serve.  
Community Action Duluth Vision

Individuals and families in the Duluth community prosper with access to quality education, affordable housing, healthcare, gainful employment and meaningful involvement in civic life. Through partnerships, people with low income find support, resources and relationships, which helps them overcome economic, racial, and cultural barriers to establishing and maintaining self-sufficient and connected lives.