



NASCSP 2026 Winter Training Conference

CSBG Core Conference Agenda

February 4 - 6, 2026

AGENDA (subject to change)

Wednesday, February 4th

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Legislative Breakfast

Join us for a timely legislative update and morning conversation focused on the federal policy landscape shaping our programs and partners across the country. This session will provide an overview of current developments in Congress and the Administration, highlight key priorities impacting CSBG and WAP, and offer insight into what lies ahead. Grounded in the realities facing states and local agencies, the discussion will help participants better understand how national policy decisions connect to on-the-ground work and how the Network can remain rooted in hope while navigating uncertainty.

Presenter(s): **David Bradley**, *Chief Executive Officer, National Community Action Foundation*

9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Opening Plenary

Join us as we kick off the conference with remarks from NASCSP's Executive Director and newly elected Board President, who will share priorities for the year ahead and reflections on the opportunities shaping our network. Invited federal partners will provide updates on national policy directions and investments affecting CSBG and WAP. The plenary will also include a special opening performance from the highly acclaimed and national award-winning Duke Ellington School of the Arts Show Choir to inspire and energize us as we begin our week of learning, connection, and collective action.

Presenter(s): **J. Janelle George**, *Acting Director, Office of Community Services, Administration of Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (invited)*; **Michael Li**, *Acting Principal Deputy Director and Deputy Director for Community Energy Programs, Office of State and Community Energy Programs, U. S. Department of Energy (invited)*; **Melanie Sanford**, *Weatherization Manager, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and NASCSP Board President*; **Cheryl Williams**, *Executive Director, NASCSP*

10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Networking Break

Updated 1/27/2026

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.

National Partner Update

Hear from key national partners as they provide updates on current priorities, emerging initiatives, and developments impacting the Community Services Block Grant and Weatherization Assistance Program. This session offers a broad look at the policy, program, and advocacy efforts underway across the network and highlights how national collaboration supports state and local work.

Presenter(s): **Katrina Metzler**, *Executive Director, National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition*; **Jonathan Cohen, Esq.**, *Deputy Director and Senior Counsel, Community Action Program Legal Services*; **Denise Harlow**, *Chief Executive Officer, National Community Action Partnership*; **Tommy Sheridan**, *Deputy Director, National Head Start Association*; **Cheryl Williams**, *Executive Director, NASCSP*

11:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Lunch (on your own)

2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS:

CSBG Member Planning & Action (Members Only)

CSBG Member Planning and Action is devoted to in-depth peer exchanges facilitated by your elected NASCSP regional representatives, covering critical topics around CSBG operations and administration. This session is reserved for NASCSP Members only.

What the SOP?

Many operating principles in agencies and state offices rely on informal habits that are often described as “the way we have always done it.” This workshop explores how Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) can strengthen performance management, especially for subgrantees who may be struggling. Participants will learn how SOPs help ensure consistent and reliable data that can be used to tell compelling stories about Community Action’s impact. Topics will include universal intake, customer life cycle tracking, the use of AI tools to streamline reporting and analysis, and strategies for connecting services and outcomes across multiple domains through bundled services, scales, and effective follow-up practices.

Presenter(s): **Carey Gibson**, *Deputy Director*, **Barbara Mooney**, *Director, Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Professionals*

3:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Networking Break

3:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS:

CSBG Joint Planning & Action

This workshop will be focused on in-depth exchanges facilitated by NASCSP's regional representatives covering critical CSBG topics such as T/TA assessment and delivery, Annual Reporting, and more. This session will be a joint State Office/State Association/National Partner collaborative discussion.

Identifying Agency Needs for Assessment and Planning

Many strategic plans in Community Action focus on agency outcomes like strengthening programs, improving internal systems, building staff capacity, upgrading technology, or meeting organizational standards. What often goes missing is the answer to a simple question: where do the agency's needs come from in the first place? In this session we will explore data sources/organizational evidence including agency outcome reports, customer satisfaction data, past SWOT assessments and other capacity findings. Participants will understand how to link these data sources to the Community Needs Assessment and planning documents.

Presenter(s): **Carey Gibson**, *Deputy Director, Association of Nationally Certified ROMA Professionals*

Thursday, February 5th

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Harnessing AI for Better Service Delivery

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming how government agencies operate by enhancing efficiency, improving service delivery, and supporting data-driven decision-making. This session explores how AI tools can be responsibly and effectively integrated into state offices. Attendees will gain insights into real-world use cases, including technical report writing and data analysis. Whether you are a tech-savvy innovator or just beginning to explore AI, this session will offer practical ideas and resources to help you harness AI's potential in your role.

Presenter(s): **Kris Schoenow**, *Executive Director, Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity*

10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Networking Break

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

CSBG Annual Report Update

The CSBG Annual Report is both a statutory requirement and an integral part of an effective performance management toolbox. This session will provide important updates related to the report, including current guidance on v2.1, emerging information on v3.0, and resources that are available

and being developed. Participants will receive the most up-to-date insights available to support accurate reporting and effective state oversight.

Presenter(s): **Monique Alcantara**, *Management and Program Analyst, Division of Community Assistance, Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*; **Tiffany Jarvis**, *Director of Research, NASCSP*

12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Lunch

1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

OCS Update

We are hopeful that our partners from the Office of Community Services (OCS) will join us to provide key updates that impact CSBG and the broader Network. These sessions are expected to cover high-priority topics such as Annual Report Version 3.0, state data review and cleaning processes, data analysis efforts, and other emerging initiatives. Final details and specific topics for these sessions will be shared as they are confirmed.

2:45 p.m. – 3:15 pm

Networking Break

3:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Building Funding Strategies to Support Mission and Network Priorities

Strong funding supports mission-driven work at both the agency and state levels. This session covers core elements of grant readiness, fund diversification, and sustainability planning for CAAs, along with how CSBG State Offices can identify emerging funding opportunities, connect CAAs to existing funding streams, and support shared approaches to fund diversification across the network. Participants will examine ways to identify and align funding opportunities, strengthen proposals, and develop funding strategies that support organizational goals, state priorities, and long-term community outcomes.

Presenter(s): **Tiffney Marley**, *Senior Vice President, Practice Transformation, National Community Action Partnership*

7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Awards Gala and Reception

This year marks a special milestone for NASCSP as we host our first-ever Awards Gala and Reception. Each year, NASCSP's Board of Directors honors extraordinary contributions to the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) networks through its service awards. We will honor individuals whose leadership, advocacy, innovation, and long-standing commitment have strengthened our network and created meaningful impact at the national, state, and local levels. Join us as we debut this special event and celebrate the people who move our mission forward.

Friday, February 6th

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Aligned in Action: State-Level Leadership and Local Partnership in a Time of Change

In a rapidly shifting landscape, the strength of Community Action lies in our ability to act in unified, strategic partnership. This session explores how State Offices, State Associations, and local Community Action Agencies are working together to navigate today's challenges, from rising community needs to organizational capacity strains to unpredictable policy and funding environments. This session offers a look at how the level of the network plays a distinct yet interconnected role, and how collaborative structures and responsive technical assistance can impact communities. Join us for an honest, solutions-focused conversation on what effective collaboration looks like right now, and how we can strengthen readiness, resilience, and impact across the network.

Presenter(s): **Lillie Seels**, *Director, Practice Transformation, National Community Action Partnership*

10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Networking Break

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.

Rooted in Hope: Centering Community Voice to Strengthen Trust and Impact

Community Action has always drawn its strength from deep roots grounded in the lived experiences, resilience, and wisdom of the people we serve. In a moment marked by uncertainty and rapid change, staying rooted in hope requires us to listen more deeply, engage more intentionally, and elevate voices that too often go unheard. Drawing from principles of local journalism and nonprofit engagement, this session invites us to reimagine what it means to truly center community voice. Through intentional listening and authentic storytelling, we will explore how narrative can deepen trust, strengthen engagement, and amplify the impact of our network. Participants will be challenged to think differently about how stories are told and how elevating lived experiences can shape public understanding, influence policy, and strengthen program effectiveness – while honoring the dignity, resilience, and agency of those most impacted by poverty.

Presenter(s): **Eric Falquero**, *Co-Founder, The 51st*

12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Closing Plenary

Updated 1/27/2026

