

**Joe Pederson, Executive Director,  
Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, receives  
Poverty Warrior Award**

Presented by: Connie Greer, Director, Minnesota Department of Human Services,  
Office of Economic Opportunity  
August 25, 2010 at the Minnesota Community Action Partnership Annual Conference



**Joe Pederson,  
Executive Director**

As a result of the wonderful training that we had this week on the history of Community Action from David Bradley, Executive Director, National Community Action Foundation, we have a better feel for what some of the original poverty warriors faced and who they are. We know how important it is to have leaders for our work toward ending poverty.

We know certainly about Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. We learned a lot about Sargent Shriver this week.

We know that standing up for those who do not have a voice can be difficult and very challenging work.

We also know that we have had wonderful people in our own state who have set examples for all of us that we should recognize and thank.

The Steve Chadwick Award does a great job of recognizing someone each year for their contribution to ending poverty in Minnesota. Staff at the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity (DHS-OEO) applaud and support that effort by the Association.

However, staff at OEO in recent years have wanted to do a better job of recognizing what we have called: “unsung heroes.” We want to do our part to say thank you to those in our own state who have fought difficult fights, stood up for the right and have always been there when we have needed them.

We are lucky that there are Community Action leaders in Minnesota who we can ALWAYS count on to say the right thing at the right time, to ALWAYS go the extra mile, and ALWAYS lead us well.

When we knew that David Bradley was going to be here this year to talk about Community Action history, OEO staff knew that we should do a Poverty Warrior Award.

As we looked at leaders in our state we came to the conclusion that there is a trio of poverty warriors that we wanted to recognize this year.

These last few years and the next few are special years of recognition for Community Action, as we celebrate anniversaries. 45 years since the signing of the Economic Opportunity Act has past, and many agencies are celebrating their 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year or next year.

So this conference is a wonderful opportunity for OEO to call attention to the fine work of some Minnesota leaders who we know are Poverty Warriors.

Their specific accomplishments are too numerous to list. It is the fact that they are ALWAYS there, that we can ALWAYS count on them to say and do the right thing that we want to acknowledge tonight. We thank them for ALWAYS being steadfast warriors.

**Award Recipients:**

**Joe Pederson; Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership  
Harlan Tardy; Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency  
Steve Nagle; West Central Minnesota Communities Action**



**From left to right: Joe Pederson, Connie Greer, Harlan Tardy, and Steve Nagle**