

**A look back.
A bold look ahead.**

CONNECT ACT WIN



**Anne Arundel
Connecting
Together**

A POWER Organization

Why We Believe In ACT

During these divisive times, we need people who want to work toward unity. We need people who will cross the barriers that keep us apart and will respectfully connect with one another. We need people who will fight for our shared beliefs and values. We need people like the ones who make up Anne Arundel Connecting Together (ACT).

For the past five years, ACT has been building relationships in Anne Arundel County and Annapolis that allow us to act together in power. These relationships drive our ability to create systemic change through broad-based solutions to issues in our communities that we can solve together.

Our connection to one another is what has allowed our work to continue despite the isolation brought on by the pandemic. We are proud to share what we've been able to accomplish together in the following pages and **we hope you will join us in 2023 for our next chapter.**

In September, we welcomed Katie Zinler as ACT's first full-time Lead Organizer. Building on our past success, her experience in engaging families, schools, and unions will allow ACT to take on even greater challenges.

As the challenges brought on by the pandemic, political and racial violence force us to constantly pivot and adjust in this new reality, we continue to believe in each other. We believe community organizing is the best way to address the challenges we face in this uncertain time. **We believe in ACT.**



Pastor Karen Johnson, Co-Chair (outgoing)
First Christian Community Church



Pastor Stephen Tillett, Co-Chair
Asbury Broadneck United Methodist Church

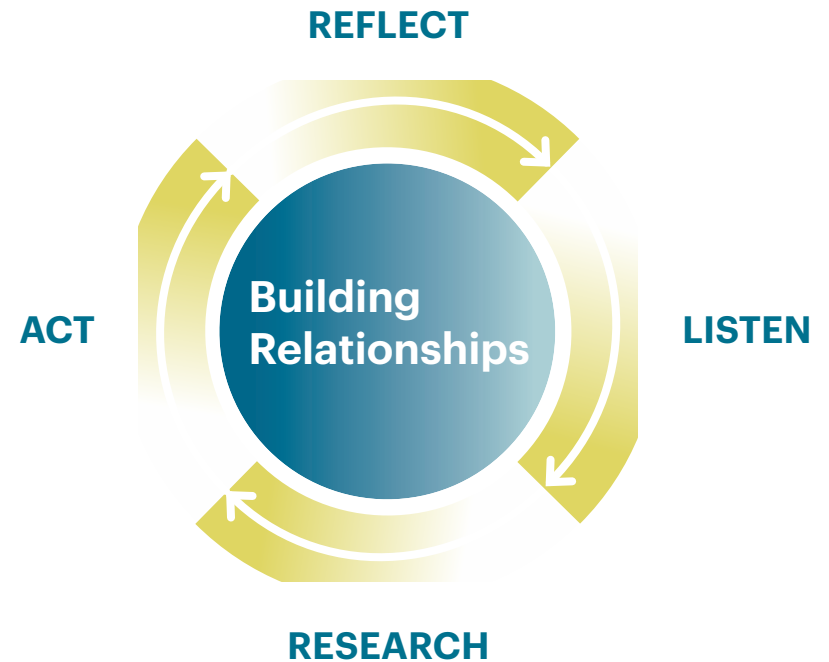


Julie Carlson, Co-Chair (incoming)
First Presbyterian Church of Annapolis



Building The World As We Want It To Be

ACT is a people's power organization working across race, socioeconomic background, faith, and geography to win on issues of justice for low- and moderate-income communities in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. We train and develop leaders to act and win on the issues that are most important to everyday people in our communities.



At the heart of our work, we **listen** to each other in one-on-one conversations, house meetings, and listening sessions. We build relationships of trust across differences. We **research** the best solutions to the problems faced in our neighborhoods. We build power and **act** together to change our communities for the better. And we **reflect** and evaluate to learn from our work and plan for the future.

ACT In Action

2018

ACT was launched at a Founding Assembly with over 1,100 members.



This assembly was the result of hundreds of one-on-one conversations and dozens of trainings on community organizing.

We took the time we needed to build trusting relationships and our collective power. We knew that without this intentional work, we would not have the power we need to face the scale of the problems plaguing our communities.

2019

Safe Schools Because of our work, Anne Arundel County Schools shortened their timeline to test for and remediate the presence of lead in school drinking water from 3 years down to 1.

As a result of ACT's organizing with community partners Anne Arundel County passed **Fair Housing legislation**. This is a crucial step to prevent discrimination in housing against renters using public assistance vouchers.



ACT supported residents of **Woodside Gardens**, a publicly subsidized housing complex in Annapolis, to organize and seek accountability from their landlords for unhealthy and unsafe living conditions. As a result, the owners committed \$1M for renovations and repairs.

ACT engaged the Anne Arundel County Executive, Annapolis Mayor and police chiefs to be leaders in the Do Not Stand Idly By national movement to **reduce gun violence**.

2020

Feed Anne Arundel was formed in partnership with ACT and local restaurants. In the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we mobilized to support workers vulnerable to losing their livelihoods, stabilize small businesses at the core of our economy, and feed our community. We ensured 75 restaurants could pay their workers and delivered over 200,000 meals to families in Anne Arundel County.

PHOTO: BETHANY SWAIN



Equity in Schools

With allies, ACT protected funding to create new school bus routes for low-income and Black students. Next, ACT ensured that every student, instead of every family, in Anne Arundel Public Schools received a laptop for online learning during the pandemic.



2021



ACT brought the **Turnaround Thursday jobs movement**



for returning citizens to Anne Arundel County.

The County Executive committed \$1.3M to fund the movement and Luminis Health joined to become an employer partner and anchor institution.

Learning from Turnaround Tuesday's success in Baltimore, this movement will prepare, train and connect returning citizens, unemployed, underemployed and residents to living wage jobs.



ACT In Action

2022 →

Turnaround Thursday Anne Arundel

Hosted by our partner organization, Community Action Agency of Anne Arundel County, a full-time staff is now working to recruit and train participants. ACT is committed to working with business and government partners to identify employer partners and resources for the movement to succeed. In 2023, the first class of participants will graduate and be connected with a job with one of our employer partners.

Election Accountability Actions

Over 170 ACT members turned out for an accountability session with candidates for County Executive and County Council. The candidates heard our stories and committed to working with us to grow our jobs movement for returning citizens, Turnaround Thursday.

In partnership with our sister organizations, AIM in Montgomery County and PATH in Howard County we held actions with the statewide candidates for Governor, Attorney General, and Comptroller. Over 1,000 members attended the hybrid actions which created deep conversation and commitments to work with us on our priorities for the environment, early childhood learning, affordable housing, and the wealth gap.



To Learn More Contact
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Executive Director
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Join us in 2023!

From Listening To Action

This spring, we will launch a new season of listening and relationship building. Attend a leadership training or reach out to our Lead Organizer, Katie Zinler, to get involved.



Visit us at ACTaaco.org for a calendar of upcoming events.

Donate To Support Building A Better World Your tax-deductible gift will support the important work of ACT including leadership training and development and actions, and campaigns. Consider a recurring gift every month or quarter. You can give online at ACTaaco.org/donate or mail your contribution to PO Box 6053, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Staff

Katie Zinler, Lead Organizer, brings 15 years of community organizing experience with tenants, public schools, faith congregations, labor unions, and community groups. She led campaigns to win \$6M annually for affordable housing and \$8M for child care in Spokane, WA. In Maryland, Katie organized with parents and teachers to create a new, free, high-quality after-school program in high-poverty elementary schools that is now in 14 schools. She also organized with tenants to get their property manager to clean up systemic toxic black mold in their apartments. (katie@actaaco.org)

Maurita Bowie, Admin & Communications Assistant, is the glue that pulls ACT together and manages our communications, website, and database. She believes that shared information is a key to our ability to build power together. (maurita@actaaco.org)

ACT Member Organizations

Annapolis Friends Meeting
Anne Arundel Muslim Council
Anne Arundel NAACP
Ark and Dove Presbyterian Church
Asbury Broadneck United Methodist Church
Asbury United Methodist Church
Broadneck Baptist
Center of Help
Christ Our Anchor
First Christian Community Church
First Presbyterian
Fresh Start Church
Islamic Society of Annapolis
Joy Reigns Lutheran Church
Kingdom Celebration Center
St. Andrew by the Bay
St. Anne's Episcopal Church
St. Philip's Episcopal Church
Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis
United Church of Christ Annapolis
Woods Memorial Presbyterian

"This is just part of what happens when diverse people work together. ACT is a true vision of American democracy in action."

Rudwan Abu-rumman, President of the Anne Arundel County Muslim Council

"I have spent my entire life in this work. When ACT first started to organize, I was hopeful because it felt like 1964 again. And here we are, at a new moment, connecting together so we can ACT together."

Yevola Peters, St Philip's Episcopal Church

Become A Member

Member organizations benefit from community organizing training that builds the capacity within each faith congregation or community organization to act for justice. Members are part of a diverse coalition across the county and state with the power to make change at a scale bigger than any individual organization could on their own. Our member organizations commit to paying 1% of their operational income annually as membership dues. This allows us to maintain our independence and accountability to our members.



← Scan this code to learn more about ACT

Join us!



Anne Arundel Connecting Together

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