



Florida Association for Community Action (FACA), Inc.

FACA 36th Annual Training Conference

May 10-13, 2016 ♦ Rosen Plaza Hotel ♦ Orlando, FL

FACA 2016 Self-Sufficiency Award

NOMINATION FORM

This official Nomination form, narrative, and the letter(s) of support must be
Typed and received electronically via info@faca.org by Friday, April 1, 2016

Name of Nominee: Ronnie Harris

Name/Title of Nominator: Berneitha McNair - Executive Director

Agency Name: Northeast Florida Community Action Agency, Inc.

Agency Executive Director: Berneitha McNair

Agency Address: 4070 Boulevard Center Drive, Bldg 4500, Suite 200

Agency City, State, Zip: Jacksonville, Florida 32207

Agency Phone: (904) 398-7472 **Fax:** (904) 398-7414 **Email:** bmcnair@nfcaa.org

Mail nominations to:

Florida Association for Community Action (FACA), Inc.
FACA 2016 Self-Sufficiency Award
325 John Knox Rd., Bldg. F-210
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Northeast Florida



COMMUNITY

ACTION AGENCY

Eliminating Poverty. Promoting Self-Sufficiency.

www.nfcaa.org

April 1, 2016

Wilma K. McKay, Executive Director
Florida Association for Community Action (FACA), Inc.
Woodcrest Office Park
325 John Knox Rd., Suite F-210
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Dear Wilma:

It is my pleasure for the Northeast Florida Community Action Agency (NFCAA) to nominate Ronnie Harris for the 2016 Family Self-Sufficiency Award. As Executive Director of NFCAA, I offer complete support to Mr. Harris's nomination.

Mr. Harris, a veteran who faced the risk of homelessness, is now self-sufficient and has obtained assets and financial economic security. In essence, Mr. Harris is the epitome of the spirit of hope that we envision in our community action promise. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Berneitha McNair
Executive Director



BAKER COUNTY • CLAY COUNTY • DUVAL COUNTY • FLAGLER COUNTY
NASSAU COUNTY • PUTNAM COUNTY • ST. JOHNS COUNTY

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Northeast Florida Community Action Agency (NFCAA)

Family Self-Sufficiency Award Nominee

Mr. Ronnie Harris was introduced to Northeast Florida Community Action Agency (NFCAA)'s Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF) program as a referral from a local nonprofit agency. SSVF is designed to help veterans obtain and/or retain permanent housing, while also providing intensive case management that promote self-sufficiency.

Mr. Harris was in the process of being evicted from his night-time residence and was in need of financial assistance. He had no previous knowledge of NFCAA's SSVF program or what services the program provided. Mr. Harris had received a 3-day notice to vacate his housing and had no other housing option. Mr. Harris was also unemployed.

Mr. Harris met the criteria to receive financial assistance through the SSVF program. The program provided rental assistance, and he was able to remain in his housing and not become homeless.

NFCAA's Family Development Specialist and Mr. Harris developed a stabilization plan that addressed those barriers that would prevent him from receiving future eviction notices and/or being evicted.

Mr. Harris was able to secure employment as a concrete finisher. He did not own a vehicle, and unfortunately, the public transit system did not have a route to his job site. Mr. Harris was determined to become self-sufficient and have an enhanced quality of life, so he rode his bicycle 12 miles each way everyday to his new job.

After 2 weeks on the job, Mr. Harris was temporarily laid off due to unsafe working shoes. He had a hole in the bottom of one shoe and the sole had separated from the other shoe. After informing his NFCAA Family Development Specialist, Mr. Harris was assisted with a new pair of steel toes shoes. He returned to work the following day.

Unfortunately, a few months later that job ended, and Mr. Harris found himself unemployed again and losing hope. However, he continued to receive encouragement and job

placement assistance from his Family Development Specialist. He was determined not to sit idle and was able to secure another job as a construction laborer.

Mr. Harris and his SSVF Family Development Specialist met again to revise his stabilization plan. The new plan included a budgeting component and a detailed plan for saving money. Mr. Harris was able to save enough money to purchase his first car. He purchased a 1990 Oldsmobile with cash that he had saved.

Mr. Harris was thinking that things were finally looking up for him but like before this job also ended. He and his Family Development Specialist began an extensive search for a permanent job with benefits and financial security. He was able to secure employment as an Optic Cable Installer with an income of \$18.00 per hour, which is \$37,440 annually with the potential for overtime pay. Mr. Harris is still employed. He has now purchased a 2015 automobile, recently purchased a new home, and is engaged to get married.

Mr. Harris volunteers his time by assisting SSVF Staff with outreach, as well as helping move and relocating other veterans into stable housing. He is a dedicated and committed advocate for homeless Veterans and other NFCAA programs.

Persistency, commitment, and faithfulness empowered Mr. Harris to become self-sufficient and to be a beacon of hope in the community for others to follow.