

Steven Dow

Steven Dow has been the Executive Director of Community Action Project of Tulsa County (“CAP Tulsa”) since 1992. CAP Tulsa advances a whole family anti-poverty strategy by providing high-quality early childhood education coupled with comprehensive parent support services - most notably CareerAdvance, a sector-based workforce development program that offers job training to parents of preschool-aged children to enter careers in the health care field.

In the 25 years he has been leading the agency, CAP Tulsa has grown from a staff of 2 and budget of \$165,000 to one with an annual operating budget of approximately \$50 Million and a staff of nearly 600. Together with eight community partners spanning 20 service locations across Oklahoma, CAP Tulsa enrolls more than 3,200 young children ages birth through four into full-day, year-round center-based early learning programs and evidence-based home visiting services.

CAP Tulsa has led numerous development projects to finance and construct state-of-the-art preschools in Tulsa, building one of the most highly regarded early childhood infrastructures in the nation consisting of 12 facilities, nearly 200 classrooms, and 400,000 square feet of operating space, most built adjacent to public elementary schools to help smooth children’s transition into kindergarten.

CAP Tulsa has received a range of recognition for innovative and effective approaches and has been featured prominently in academic and policy discussions about the impacts of high-quality early childhood education. Since 2001, Georgetown University’s Center for Research on Children in the United States has evaluated the effectiveness of CAP Tulsa’s Head Start program. Most recently, in 2016, Georgetown researchers published results of their long-term, independent study concluding that CAP Tulsa’s program “produced significant and consequential effects into the middle school years” including “significant positive effects on achievement test scores... grade retention and chronic absenteeism.” Separately, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the CareerAdvance program on both parent and child outcomes is being led by researchers from Northwestern, Columbia, NYU, and the University of Texas.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children & Families has designated CAP Tulsa as a ‘Center of Excellence in Early Childhood’ due to a consistent record of positive outcomes for children and families. CAP Tulsa was also selected to lead both Choice and Promise Neighborhoods federal planning grants to develop comprehensive plans to transform distressed neighborhoods through educational reforms, social services, occupational training, and housing programs. CAP Tulsa was a member of the initial class of the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Family Counts National Honors program and selected to participate in the Fannie Mae Foundation Alliance and Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Learning Action Network. For the last two years, the NonProfit Times has named CAP Tulsa one of the top employers in the country, mostly recently ranking third among large agencies. CAP Tulsa’s programs have received national press recognition, including National Public Radio, New York Times, USA Today, CBS Evening News, Huffington Post, Washington Post, and Education Week.

Steven Dow was an inaugural Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow and is currently a Pahara Institute Fellow. Dow’s service on local, state, and national boards and commissions has included: National Civilian Community Corps, Reach Out and Read, Center for Financial Services Innovation, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Avodah: The Jewish Service Corps, Strive Together, Tulsa Legacy Charter School, Tulsa Housing Authority, and Teach For America-Tulsa.

Dow has a J.D. from Yale Law School and a B.A. from Yale University. Dow’s work experience began with Goldman, Sachs & Co. where he was an analyst in the Corporate Finance Department. Dow served as a law clerk for U.S. District Judge Thomas R. Brett and was in the private practice of law before joining CAP Tulsa.

Dow and his wife Stacy have been married 27 years and have three daughters.