



Financial Education Committee

February 2008

Present: Jill Shuey, Stephanie Smith, Cathy Braniecki, Karyn Hausknecht, Chris Parisi, Mark Manuele, Mary Philbin, Kate Beck, Nicole Juzdowski, Louisa Frazier-Merritt, Kate Bukowski, Cynthia Shore, Robin Wilber, Bobby Lenhard, Della Miller, Melody Marchese, Laurie Schaller, Diane Bessel, and Marian Deutschman.

Diane began the meeting by announcing that Cynthia Shore has agreed to serve as Chair of the Financial Education Committee.

Cynthia stated that she would like to make sure that the committee provided tools to help staff and volunteers at CASH member agencies. She also mentioned that she would like to see the CASH Website (www.cashbuffalo.org) become a key resource for information sharing including meeting minutes, links to financial education videos, membership lists, meeting calendar, etc. Cynthia asked committee members to review the website and to identify materials to include on the site for next meeting.

Committee members then reviewed the January minutes as well as the financial education standard items with scores of 80% or higher. Committee members reiterated that the CASH Curriculum should focus on basic skills (such as budgeting, credit, and financial safety) and leave topics including homeownership, credit repair, and asset building (including vehicle purchase, retirement, 401K, and college savings plan) to the experts as they are much more complex.

The group also discussed an opportunity to learn about resources currently available in the Buffalo & Erie County community. Diane shared the “needs assessment” information gathered last year by a student. She also provided members with a copy of the updated resource guide. Marian asked that information on interpretation/translation be included in the resource guide. Diane asked that the Buffalo State Refugee committee provide the needed information for inclusion in the resource guide.

Committee members discussed the importance of collecting up-to-date and more thorough information about local programs. They also suggested using other standards (such as, Neighborworks) to evaluate more advanced topic workshops and seminars. Melody, Karyn, and Della indicated that could provide assistance in securing the appropriate materials. The committee will begin work on the development of a survey instrument during the next sessions.

Diane also advised committee members that CASH has been awarded a grant from the WNY Women's Fund to launch the CASH Coaches program. CASH Coaches is a one-on-one financial mentoring program in which paraprofessional volunteers help low-to-moderate income households to identify 1-3 financial goals and work with them over the course of 5-8 months. As part of the grant, Inger Giuffrida will be asked to come back to Buffalo and resources from the National Center for Financial Social Work will be purchased.

Finally, Diane asked members to consider a proposal made by Learnwell Graphics to pursue a grant to develop a series of graphic novels for CASH. Committee members did not feel that this project warranted support at this time.

Our next Financial Education Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 19th from 9-10am at the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County (742 Delaware Avenue).