



Quarterly Full Coalition Meeting

September 2008

Present: Katy Shafer, Karyn Hausknecht, Rose Mary Ginwright, Cathy Braniecki, Cynthia M. Shore, Dan Colpoys, Donna Mallon, Suzanne Reusch, Kelly Dodd, Karen Carman, Sharon Benz, Marian Deutschman, Brad Dossinger, Doris Corley, Carol Dozier, Laurie Schaller, Katie Lyons, Justin Moscati, Mary K. Comtois and Diane Bessel.

The meeting began with introductions and Diane then informed the coalition that to start the meeting a brief presentation would be made by Katy Shafer of The Parachute Group.

The Parachute Group

Katy Shafer presented on The Parachute Group explaining that the group is a job networking support group which shares ideas and contacts for potential job opportunities. The group formed 12-13 months ago and now meets at three locations including Tonawanda, Amherst and the United Way. The group is member and volunteer driven and include seminars and speakers on everything from resume improvements to interviewing skills.

Organizational Updates

Diane introduced Katie Lyons a student at the UB School of Social Work who will be working as an intern for CASH for the coming year. Katie will be working as the coordinator of the Communications Committee and on projects such as the Poverty Simulator.

The coalition was then informed of the recognition the Income Tax has received at the United Way of New York State Promising Practice conference in Albany, congratulations were given to all involved with the Income Tax.

The CASH coalition was reminded of the recent staffing changes taking place at the United Way currently and was informed that as soon as Diane knows something the coalition will know.

Committee Updates

Free Tax Preparation Committee: The committee reported that it is seeking to encourage participation this year in the committee. It was advised that meetings will be taking place on October 14th 2008 and

December 9th 2008 at 1:00 pm. A date for November is TBD. Diane also informed the coalition that dollars have been secured to support CASH's free tax preparation program for the coming year from various sources; in addition CASH is waiting to hear back on a pending federal grant called the VITA grant.

Financial Education Committee: The coalition was informed that the Financial Education Committee has recently completed their Financial Education Survey. The survey was sent out on September 4, 2008 and we are anxiously awaiting feedback. The survey will serve to help determine current levels of financial education available in the area and identify any existing gaps in the services offered. Using this information, the committee hopes to increase awareness, coordination and consistency of key financial education resources. Upcoming meetings are at 9:00 am on September 17th, October 15th, November 19th, and December 17th.

Asset Building Committee: It was reported to the coalition that we have received the 62 homeownership/business development IDA's which the committee applied for. Upcoming committee meetings all at 1:00 pm are September 11th, October 9th, November 13th, and December 11th.

Workforce Development: The committee reported to the coalition that in it's tools for living program it is currently looking at the needs of single moms which for the most part have been reported as advanced education and training. In addition to working with single moms, the committee plans to work with the children of the moms in order to instill a family model for their program.

Communications Committee: Diane informed the coalition that the committee is currently in formation. The groups goals will be centered around community awareness and advocacy and working with policy makers and legislatures.

Programming and Grant Updates:

It was reported to the coalition that **Cash Coaches** has begun. The first training of Coaches has been completed and the program has now begun to seek clients and is looking forward to training more Coaches. If anyone is interested, training to become a coach is roughly 20 hours. Also of note is anyone in the coalition who attended the Inger training can complete their CASH Coaches training on September 23rd from 12-5 pm.

The coalition was also told that the **Economic Stimulus Payment** is still available and will be until October 15th. Diane reported that CASH has been doing mailings and distributing flyers in an attempt to get this service to the guesstimated 9,000 Buffalo area citizens who have not received and are eligible for this benefit.

Diane informed the coalition that **Benefits Screening** through SEEDCo is available at the HOPE Center in the Tri-Main Building. Diane also stated that work is being done to attempt to secure 4 AmeriCorps to help with screening.

It was reported that CASH is seeking to further its efforts towards a **Coordinated Community Initiative on Poverty**. WNED will be partnering in this endeavor and the development of campaign and strategy has been initiated.

Poverty Simulation- Diane reported that we are looking for volunteers for a poverty simulation exercise. This simulation is for grantmakers and grantseekers and will have a rehearsal prior to the actual simulation taking place on October 21st from 9am-12pm. Please contact Diane if you are interested.

SNAP/TEPP – It was reported that the Erie County Department of Social Services approached CASH and future grants are probable.

Next Full Coalition meeting will be held on December 10th from 3-4 pm at the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County (742 Delaware Avenue).