

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY
(www.sarasotaalliance.net)

Economic Self Sufficiency Strategic Planning Work Group

August 2, 2007

Members Present: Phillip Gorelick
Richard Martin
Elliott Metcalfe

Guests Present: Laura Carter, Goodwill/Good Homes
Pam Duckett, The Salvation Army
Linda Morlock, Jobs, Etc.
Nancy Shoemaker, Catholic Charities

Staff Present: Pauline Tracy

Richard Martin welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Jobs, Etc.

Linda Morlock, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Programs Supervisor, distributed packets of information detailing the services available through Jobs, Etc. There are no charges for any of their services. Some of these services include:

- Career explorations
- Developing employability and re-employability skills
- Learning labs
- Unemployment insurance information
- Job training
- Veteran's program
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Professional Placement Network
- Job Corp
- AARP employment services
- Project Return
- Labor market information and trends
- Job fairs
- Upgrade skills of current workforce

Linda shared the following information for the July 2006 through December 2006 period:

- A total of 76,052 individuals came to the One Stop for services; 19,760 were job seekers; and, 5,132 found employment.
- In the TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) program, 981 individuals were referred to Jobs, Etc; 391 attended job readiness classes; and, 177 found jobs and were no longer receiving cash assistance.
- A total of 1,351 individuals attended the WIA informational sessions; 192 followed through; 75 are currently in training; and, 99 have found employment.
- A total of 2,735 job openings were received from employers and 1,181 of those openings were filled.
- 349 job fairs were held.
- The average hourly wage for jobs found through one of their programs is over \$12 per hour.
- Fifteen employers utilized the WIA program and 302 of their employees received training.

A discussion followed regarding the need to connect those leaving the jail and other institutions with transitional services into the workforce. Jobs, Etc. and the Suncoast Workforce Board are partners, along with four other organizations, in the Community Alternatives Residential Treatment (CART) Initiative. The possibility of having immediate access to the Jobs, Etc. job listing (www.employflorida.com) in facilities such as the jail and the Public Defender's office was discussed. There is also a mobile unit that can be scheduled at different locations where all of the Jobs, Etc. services would be available.

Catholic Charities

Nancy Shoemaker reported that Catholic Charities receives funding from several sources to provide a financial counseling program—Prevention and Support/Financial Assistance. The program consists of only one caseworker and most who are served through the program are the working poor—those who can manage paycheck to paycheck until an emergency arises. Staff have a good working relationship with many other agencies including faith-based groups to meet the needs of their clients.

Goodwill/Good Homes

Laura Carter reported that Good Homes became a subsidiary of Goodwill Industries in 2000. Since that time, they have built 53 units of affordable housing and have 20 more either “in the ground” or planned. Of those 20, 10 are funded through the Land Trust and 10 are funded by the State of Florida. Six of the ten which have already been started are located in the southern part of the county and the other four are in northern Sarasota County. Subsidies of up to \$125,000 are given to families who qualify. Laura stated that Habitat for Humanity is working on a plan to bring 500 units (townhouses) to northern Sarasota County.

Goodwill also sponsors a Homebuyers' Club which consists of 500 members and 2 housing case managers for Sarasota and Manatee counties. They provide pre and post-purchasing counseling, help with life skills through a partner-coach program and provide foreclosure prevention programs. They are currently seeing 2 to 3 customers per week who are already in foreclosure. Good Homes works with Jobs, Etc. to provide employment connections. Their funding comes from HUD and Manatee County. They have applied for funding from Sarasota County.

Salvation Army

Pam Duckett stated that the Salvation Army's FAITH program began with five homes in the beginning. They now have 12 furnished apartments which are offered to homeless families with children where their basic needs are taken care of and case management is provided. They have found that most families do not know how to save money and typically come into the program \$5,000 to \$10,000 in debt. The FAITH program tries to change their saving and spending habits which improves their living situation. Life skills are taught along with taking personal responsibility and accountability.

Pam reported that in 2006:

- A total of 20 families came through the FAITH program.
- 92% of their residents went on to permanent housing.
- 11% moved into home ownership.

For every vacant apartment, 2 to 3 families are interviewed. Twenty-five percent of the residents come from the homeless shelter. Other referrals include the families directly, SPARC, and First Step. The YMCA provides tutors for the children in the program and the Selby Library provides a reading program.

Next Meeting

A meeting date and time was not set, however, the following will be asked to attend to present their programs:

- Land Trust—Martina Guilfoil
- Habitat for Humanity—Mike Jacobson
- Sarasota Housing Authority—Bill Russell
- Sarasota Housing and Community Development—Don Hadsell