

**COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY**  
([www.sarasotaalliance.net](http://www.sarasotaalliance.net))

**Economic Self Sufficiency Strategic Planning Work Group**

**September 12, 2007**

Members Present:            Laura Carter  
                                     Kirstin Fulkerson  
                                     Richard Martin  
                                     Elliott Metcalfe  
                                     Tom Pfaff  
                                     Bryan Pope  
                                     Steve Queior

Guests:                         Janice Socha, Senior Tax Specialist, IRS

Staff Present:                 Pauline Tracy

Richard Martin and Steve Queior welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

**Additional EITC Data**

Janice Socha presented additional Sarasota County EITC data ([Sarasota county eitc data 2004.xls](#)). According to this data, only 20% of Sarasota residents who are eligible for EITC, actually claimed the credit in 2004. This was below the state average of 33%. The total EITC dollars received in Sarasota County was \$29,413,097. The group agreed that there is a great potential to bring in more EITC dollars with education and outreach to the eligible population.

**Florida Families Future Conference**

Pauline Tracy reported on the Florida Families Future Conference she attended in Tampa sponsored by the United Way and the Allegany Franciscan Ministries. Information was distributed to the group which outlines the United Way's steps in the Financial Stability Framework (<http://www.unitedway.org/fsp/index.cfm>).

- Step 1 is to increase income through the EITC, credit repair/debt reduction, workforce development and accessing public and employer benefits.
- Step 2 is to build savings through savings campaigns and split tax refunds.
- Step 3 is to gain and sustain assets through Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) and asset protection tools.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the framework. The United Way has taken the lead in promoting the Financial Stability Campaign. All members agreed that this model could easily become an umbrella framework for all of the other work groups. Tom Pfaff stated that Goodwill would agree to become a pilot site along with other human service agencies to implement the three steps.

Financial literacy classes should actually start in the schools and some classes have been offered to students outside of the regular class schedule. Efforts to include additional classes during the regular school day, or to incorporate financial literacy through other classes, have not been successful.

The work group agreed on the following action plan:

1. Promote and gain acceptance of the model in the community.
2. Develop different avenues to communicate the information to the community.
3. Introduce one or more pilot efforts that reflect the model.

It was also agreed that this work group should make their presentation first on October 15 so that the other work groups can see how their domains fit into the model.

### **Next Meeting**

The work group will meet again on October 2 at 10:30 am, at the Landings, **blue** awnings, room 218.