

Barrier Busters Network Action Group

**January 23, 2008, American Red Cross
1:30pm—3:00pm**

BBN Attendees: Mary Beth Lampe, CSTS; Co-Chair
Andrea Plevak, MSU Extension; Co-Chair
Paul Sher, Legal Services of South Central Michigan; Co-Chair
Lisa Anderson, UM Health System
Alex Bailey, Michigan Ability Partners
Harriet Bakalar, Housing Bureau for Seniors
Mel Batkins, DHS
Lindsey Bishop, Washtenaw Housing Alliance
Karyn Boyce, Ozone House
Soni Buda-Thornburgh, Catholic Social Services
Shannon Farmer, 211 Regional Call Center
Donna Fox, UM Health System
Vickie Frederick-Toure, SafeHouse Center
Carla Freeman, Community Action Network
Kevin Gregg, 211 Regional Call Center
Edwina Jarrett, Washtenaw Community College
Anne Harrell, Washtenaw Community Health Organization
Mari Howard, American Red Cross
Measie James, Washtenaw Health Plan
Lisa Kerfauver, Jewish Family Services
Rob Kesselring, Corner Health Center
Chuck Kieffer, Washtenaw Housing Alliance
Angela Killom, Michigan Ability Partners
Minsu Longiaru, Pediatric Advocacy Initiative
Heather Mooney, Washtenaw County Treasurer
Angela Moore, Women's Center of Southeastern Michigan
Christina Oliver, SOS Community Services
Patricia Parker-Self, Veteran Services
Allison Polluck, Neighborhood Senior Services
Helena Prince, Friends in Deed
Sandy Reeber, ETCS
Anne Rogers, CSTS
Wendi Smith, Salvation Army
Julie Steiner, Interfaith Hospitality Network
Peri Stone-Palmquist, Education Project for Homeless Youth
Shirley Tarvis, CSTS
Therese Taylor, ETCS MichiganWorks!
Laurie Wechter, Jewish Family Services

Staff Present: Emily Arents, CCWC (recorder)

Guests: David Behen, Deputy Administrator, Washtenaw County

I. Welcome/Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves.

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I. Welcome

- The Chairs welcomed all Network Group members and guests.

II. Announcements and Public Comment

- Anne Harrell introduced herself. She is working with Washtenaw County Public Health as a Children's Health Insurance Advocate.
- Helena Prince of Friends In Deed announced that funds are still available for women who are employed and in need of assistance for transportation. Please contact her for details, or with questions: office@friendsindeed.info
- Vickie Frederick-Toure from SAFEHouse Center announced that a training for the Victims of Crime Application will be held on January 29 from 10am-12noon at SAFEHouse. Please contact Vickie to RSVP by Friday, January 25. Her email address is: vickief@safehousecenter.org. An announcement will be distributed to the listserv by email.
- Therese Taylor from ETCS MichiganWorks! introduced herself. She works with individuals aged 19-21. They provide interview and work clothing, tuition, books, move-in, auto repair, and education and training if needed.
- Mari Howard from the American Red Cross of Washtenaw County distributed a pamphlet about preparation for natural disasters.
- Heather Mooney from the Washtenaw County Treasurer's Office distributed a pamphlet called "Your Home, Your Future," about mortgage and other home-ownership issues.
- Carla Freeman from Community Action Network announced that two new CAN communities are in the works. One will be on the north side.

III. Approval of Agenda

- The draft agenda was approved unanimously.

IV. Presentation on Behalf of the Barrier Busters Emergency Unmet Needs Fund

– Phil D'Aneiri, Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation

- Mr. D'Aneiri introduced himself. He delivered a brief presentation about the recent meetings of the funders of the Barrier Busters Emergency Unmet Needs Fund.
- The logistical details and structure of the Barrier Busters Emergency Unmet Needs Fund is tremendously complex. To better understand the Fund, the funders began to meet regularly to find out more about the Fund, and to maintain communication among the funders. The funders plan to meet regularly in the future, and will continue to communicate with the Network Group (most likely through the Network Group Chairs).
- The funders brought in outside professional accounting help so that they could learn more about cash flow, specific requirements and restrictions, etc. The funders will get a report back during the next couple weeks.
- **Overview of the Fund**
 - a. The Barrier Busters Emergency Unmet Needs Fund is really just a collection of different funds with different sets of criteria and restrictions.
 - b. Mr. D'Aneiri distributed a flow chart detailing the sources and directions of the different funds (see attached).
 - Some funds only operate on an as-needed basis.
 - DHS – Works differently than the other funds, as it is awarded on a 50/50 reimbursement basis.
 - AAACF – come from or pass through the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation

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- Eviction Prevention (County has added \$50k additional fund there, specifically for eviction prevention. This money is only available after the private sector matches that amount).
 - a. 2/3 of these funds were raised in 06-07. Mr. D'Aneiri and Mr. Behen plan to solicit more funds for this fund during the coming year.
- City of Ann Arbor Assistance Fund (depends on voluntary contributions of individual utility consumers in Ann Arbor). It was agreed that there is great potential for this fund, and increased publicity could prove fruitful.
- AAACF has two funds devoted to seniors' needs:
 - a. Anna Botsford Bach
 - b. Oscar Reimold – available only to Ann Arbor city codes for seniors.
- c. The Master Buster has access to all of these funds. When a request comes in, the Master Buster considers it, determines which fund it applies to, then the funding goes through.
- d. Mr. D'Aneiri took questions from Network Group members.
 - *Where do private contributions come from? What is the status of those contributions at this point?*
 - Landlords rarely want to evict a tenant, because it is an expensive and time-consuming process.
 - The process of soliciting contributions from private sector was originally set up by F. Cambria and M. Bloom. Mr. D'Aneiri reported that he and Deputy County Administrator David Behen plan to begin that process in the coming year. Large property managers, individual landlords, banks, generous individuals have contributed that. The forthcoming accounting report will prove useful in this venture.
 - *How much money was raised by Cambria and Bloom during their first solicitation of funds?*
 - Approximately \$55,000
 - *Does "eviction prevention" include move-in costs?*
 - Yes, it has in the past.
 - *Would costs resulting from an eviction caused by a tenant's fire be considered for the Eviction Prevention fund?*
 - Yes. There are restrictions on each fund. Most of the frontline decision-making is been done by the Master Buster. Typically, it is best always to fund from the most restrictive fund possible, so that the less restrictive funds are still available for others.
 - *Who qualifies as a senior?*
 - 60 years or older.
 - *Whose responsibility is it to maintain data about those people who are served by the Fund?*
 - What we have access to is everything that caseworkers enter into the Encompass system.
 - *Do you anticipate that the funders will continue to meet regularly?*
 - D'Aneiri: No, we haven't really talked through a plan about how to do that. Until now, there hasn't been a connection between the funders, the Co-Chairs and the Network Group. We can look over monthly statements about funds in, funds out, how we can work together to fund-raise and problem-solve.
- e. The Co-Chairs thanked Mr. D'Aneiri for his attendance and information.

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V. Staff Update – David Behen, Deputy County Administrator

- Mr. Behen has been Deputy County Administrator for little over a year. He commented that he always knew that Barrier Busters was big, but the attendance for this meeting is particularly surprising, and impressive. Mr. Behen commented that it is inspiring to see people who are willing to do this work.
- Staffing Update for Barrier Busters
 - a. Mr. Mike Scholl was the staffing support for Community Collaborative of Washtenaw County and for Barrier Busters. Mr. Scholl has since moved on to Planning and Development. He was asked to stay on as Master Buster until it was clear who would replace him in the position.
 - b. It has been decided that it is ill-advised to have a single point of failure for the structure of Barrier Busters. In the past few months, there has been much discussion among funders, Co-Chairs of the Network Group, and others about the best ways to structure the Master Buster responsibilities, and how the position will look.
 - c. Mr. Behen reported that it is his goal to have the position detailed and filled by March 1.
 - Still to be decided is what department will house the position. There is a possibility that Community Development will take on the position.
 - Mr. Behen everyone who is helping with this restructuring, and welcomed any suggestions or questions from the group.
 - *How are the County budget issues going to affect the change in the position?*
 - a. Behen: Currently, there is a hiring freeze in Washtenaw County, meaning there are no new hires. There are some positions still being posted, though, because they are revenue-based appointments.
 - b. Sheldon: There is a possibility of a joint appointment, with City and County. We know that we need to provide the support that it needs to be successful. There is no question that we will fill the position.
 - d. The Co-Chairs thanked Mr. Behen and Ms. Sheldon for their attendance and the update. Mr. Behen said that he would be happy to return to a future meeting, if needed.

VI. New Business: Barrier Buster Success Stories

- Network Group members shared stories about clients whose emergencies have been resolved through the casework, communication/collaboration, and funding assistance made available through Barrier Busters. These stories were recorded for inclusion in the forthcoming Barrier Busters report.
- Members discussed the need for followup with clients who have received assistance from Barrier Busters funding. It was agreed that most agencies do not have the resources to conduct long-term followup research for clients served in the past. It was agreed that followup is vitally important, both in the context of system improvement and marketing of Barrier Busters to potential funders. Network Group members agreed that they would approach the new staff person about the possibility of making followup a priority in the future.
- Followup could be completed by central Barrier Busters staff, or by individual agencies. Some members suggested that followup should become a requirement for all of those who access the Emergency Unmet Needs Fund, as followup would significantly contribute to Barrier Busters as a whole, and distribution of the workload

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would be more time- and cost-effective than followup by central Barrier Busters staff.

VII. Old Business: Renewal of Participation and Funding Agreements

- Barrier Busters intern Emily Arents thanked those agencies that had already submitted their Participation Agreements for renewal of their Barrier Busters membership. For those agencies who access the Emergency Unmet Needs Fund, a Funding Agreement will be distributed by email for electronic signature.

IX. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

***The Next Meeting is scheduled for
Wednesday, February 27, 2007 –
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm
LLRC***