

Barrier Busters Network Action Group

Barrier Buster June 24, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Attendance:

American Red Cross www.we-redcross.org/	Linda Dintenfass John Miley Ashley Cieslinski	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	734-971-5300
Ann Arbor District Library www.aadl.org	Beth Manuel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-327-8327
Community Support and Treatment Services (CSTS) www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/community_mental_health	Mary Beth Lampe Shirley Tarvis Barb Fortune	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	734-996-3030 734-971-9605
Dawn Farm	Charles Coleman Anna Byberg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-485-8725
Employment Training and Community Services (ETCS) www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/etcs	Sandra Reeber Bonnie Guest	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-484-7116
Friends In Deed www.friendsindeed.info	Joanna Barnes Helena Prince	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-484-2727
Home of New Vision	Debra Wright Shannon Ellis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	734-879-1101
Housing Bureau for Seniors www.med.umich.edu/seniors/	Harriet Bakalar Janet Hunko	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-998-9355
Jewish Family Services www.jfsannarbor.org/	Mira Sussman Anya Abramzon Merrill Poliner	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-769-0209
Michigan Ability Partners www.michability.org	Eric Hendershot Stacey Haskin Joel Skene	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-975-6880
MSU Extension www.extension.ewashtenaw.org/	Amber Wells	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-997-1678
Personalized Nursing Lighthouse	Julie Merriman Taylor Arbuckle Karen White	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-649-9584 734-395-0384
POWER, Inc. www.powerclf.org/	Victoria Smith Erika Graham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	734-929-6509
Salvation Army www.sawashtenaw.org	Wendi Smith Susan Sifuna	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-482-4700 734-668-8353
Shelter Association of Washtenaw County www.annarborshelter.org/	Barbara Blom Kimberly Graor	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-662-2829x244 734-662-2829x257
Treasurer's Office of Washtenaw County www.ewashtenaw.org/government/treasurer	Heather Mooney Moonson Enische	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	734-222-6579 734-222-6632

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UM Social Work www.med.umich.edu/socialwork/	Stephanie Rakes, LLMSW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-615-7575
Veteran Services of Washtenaw County www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/veteran_services/	Pat Parker-Self	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-973-4540
Barrier Busters Staff	Andrea Plevak, Master Buster Chantal R. Cotton, Intern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Announcements:

- a. The Ann Arbor District Library is back to the Barrier Busters group. They have summer computer classes and no library card is required to attend the class. Previously, a library card was required for admission. The Ann Arbor District Library has also taken over the blind and physically disabled. For more information about any of their programs, just visit their website at www.aadl.org. The services page has a lot of helpful info.
- b. BB has a new sign in sheet for our meetings. Please find your name and initial next to it. Check your contact information and ensure that it is correct. If your name is not listed on this sheet, please make note of it at the end of the sheet and we will add you in the future.
- c. Red Cross is collecting cell phones for soldiers so that the soldiers can communicate with their families. This is an ongoing program that Ashley Cielinski at the Red Cross is responsible for.
- d. Dawn Farm: If you have a client that needs to earn a little bit of money and can work 15-20 hours during the Ann Arbor Street Art Fair, please let Charles Coleman know immediately. An ID is necessary for anyone to work (to make sure they get the check to the right person). They have no criminal background restrictions. Please call Charles on his cell 734-604-4237 within the next few days. The positions won't be open for very long. The typical work day for someone would be from 7am – 11pm.
- e. MSU Extension, HBS, and the WC Treasurer's Office have a Housing Counseling Event on July 13th. A flier was sent around about this. They can help with anyone except for mobile home family issues. It is free and will take place from 6.30PM-8.30PM at the Malletts Creek Branch of the Ann Arbor Library.

III. Minutes and Agenda Approval: The May 27th Meeting Minutes, which can be found on the Barrier Busters website (www.ewashtenaw.org/barrierbusters), are approved.

IV. New Business

- a. **The July 22, 2009 Barrier Busters Meeting is Cancelled. Please make note of this on your calendars. Have a great summer and we will see you in August!**

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b. MPRI:

- a. Mary King**, will hopefully speak at a future Barrier Busters meeting about the program since she was unable to make it today. What we do know of the program today, is that it is available for past offenders who are reentering the community after serving time. It is a very special resource in our community. Barrier Busters has been working with the program financially through the JHET Foundation grant that we received to support it. However, since the JHET Foundation was a part of the Madoff Scheme, it went under when the scheme did. MPRI, like many others is financially struggling as a result of that. However, the program will do its best to continue to be a community resource. They hope to do a program evaluation at some point in the future about the program.

V. Old Business:

Funders Meeting Updates:

We are moving forward with trying to get more money for Barrier Busters. Our funders are working diligently with this.

Transitional Housing:

It is our funders' recommendation that Barrier Busters funds should be used only for situations with leases. The funds can be used to help with security deposits, etc. for clients in a lease situation. The funders also recommended that Barrier Busters can serve as a conduit for future funds in the community for transitional housing. If other funding can be raised for transitional housing, by a task force or a team of agencies, Barrier Busters can administer the funds and provide the administration for such.

The Community Foundation was unable to give us an update about changing the age for senior funds (due to a last minute inability to attend the funders meeting), however, Andrea compiled data about our number of requests from that in between population of residents and sent it to them. We have a compelling argument, facts, and the overall funders support, but we have to get the official okay before we can officially open the funds more broadly. We will update you as the information comes to us.

General Barrier Busters Funding Update:

We are working towards getting the county to release our funds. We are waiting to actually get our check in hand from McKinley (we have their commitment, but not a check yet).

Please try to use other community funds as much as possible to support people's utility bills. Try Friends In Deed, use the ETCS THAW funds starting next month, and other possibilities. We will try to work with DTE on this because utility bills are a very huge issue. Please try to negotiate as much as you legally can negotiate with DTE on behalf of your client. This actually helps to get your client better support. Our county general funds are being used a lot for

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utilities and we want to ensure that all possible community resources are being used for this issue if possible.

VI. Case Consultation

Jewish Family Services has a client that is currently living in a two bedroom apartment and she didn't tell her landlord that she has 7 children. Her eviction date is sometime in July. She is looking for a 3 bedroom apartment but many 3 bedroom options have serious restrictions that are keeping her from being able to move into them. She does not have a very high income (maybe no income at all). Not a legal resident. Her children are, but she isn't. She has been in contact also with Safehouse for a separate case, as well. Does anyone have any suggestions about how she can possibly be helped with housing or with her housing rights?

Suggestions:

1. Fair housing center.
2. Legal services if she has received her summons and complaints.
3. She can possibly stretch the eviction date (push it further out) if she just got the notice. But she does have a lease where she misrepresented the number of people that will be staying in the apartment and that can cause an issue here.
4. Maybe a mobile home option?
5. www.michigantenant.org may be another option.
6. Pediatric Advocacy clinic has done a lot of work with Spanish illegal residents. They may be able to help.
7. The head of household has to be a US citizen (at least one of them) in order to qualify for Section 8, so she may not be eligible for that.

Does anyone know of any local resources for people who are looking to gain legal status, but don't have kids?

No one really knows of one except for the one in Detroit who is hard to get in touch with.

Maybe local law students can look it up too. Someone who works with the UM Michigan Poverty Law Clinic. It may be an immigrant law taskforce or something that is separate from services provided by Legal Services.

VII. Other Business / Announcements

The ETCS Weatherization Program is up and running and still taking in folks. ETCS hopes to have more THAW money for utility assistance in July. But the customer has to pay a certain amount of it first (and it has to be paid by the client, not an agency). ETCS is asking the client to contribute, not just getting help from agencies. If the client has less than \$600, they talk to Bonnie Guest of ETCS personally (guestb@ewashtenaw.org). The money will probably be gone soon, so please act now on that program and keep your eyes open for the THAW program in July. ETCS clients need supporting documents to show that they can sustain after the program.

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DTE Training: There is a lot of information on their online system. Mary Beth Lampe will send out the link to the website where you can get information and see if clients have utilities and what their utility history is. Now that DTE reports every month to creditors, landlords will also know through about client's back bills even without the DTE system. You have to either have an account number, soc number, and at least part of the client name to access a client's account online.

Reminder: The July 22nd Barrier Busters Meeting is CANCELLED. Enjoy your Summer!! ☺

Motion to Adjourn; Meeting Adjourned at 2.35pm.

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