



United Way
of Buffalo & Erie County

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MEMORANDUM

To: Tools for Living Impact Council

From: Bill Lawley, Judge Ogden, and Jim Finamore - Council Chairs
Mike Henry and Bob Scoppechio - Investment Chairs

Date: February 28, 2007

Subject: Next Meeting: March 6th 8-9:45 am

Just a reminder that we are scheduled to meet on Tuesday, March 6th from 8am - 9:45am at United Way of Buffalo and Erie County.

Attached is the agenda for the meeting and the results so far of our planning and priority setting process. At our meeting, a panel of experts in our priority areas will be presenting on the state of families in crisis from their unique vantage points. We've asked the panel to speak briefly about challenges faced by individuals and families struggling to become or maintain self sufficiency, identify opportunities that exist for change and pin point leverage points where our limited funding will produce the largest gains.

Please respond with your attendance plans to Val Cedro at 887-2677 or vcedro@uwbec.org.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 887-2608 or mcomtois@uwbec.org.

Thank you!



**Tools for Living
Council Meeting**

March 6, 2007

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions.....Bill Lawley
Judge Ogden, Jim Finamore, Mike Henry, Bob Scoppechio

Council Purpose & Timeline.....Mary K. Comtois

Framing the Issue of Families in Crisis.....Lidia Snyder
Researcher

**Panel Discussion on Self Sufficiency:
Opportunities/Challenges/Leverage Points**

Facilitated by Renita Shadwick
Tony Davis, Federal Reserve Bank
Allison Duwe, Coalition for Economic Justice
Tom Kerr, Economic Self Sufficiency Coalition
Helene Kramer, Good Schools for All
Debbie Merrifield, Erie County Department of Social Services
Bill O'Connell, Homeless Alliance of WNY

Next Meeting Date

April 3rd 8-9:30am
United Way

Tools for Living

December 15th Forum

Responses

On December 15, 2006, United Way of Buffalo and Erie County held community forums in three impact areas; Early Childhood Development, Kids on Track, and Tools for Living. There were over 90 participants in the forums, which began with a review of community data and trends in these three areas. The data demonstrated that these three priority areas overlap, that early intervention is critical, the poverty rate, one of the most recognized and measured indicators, is an inadequate tool for predicting self sufficiency, educational attainment is one of the factors contributing to an individual's ability to live independently.

The Tools for Living community forum had 36 participants representing the for-profit, public and non-profit sectors. The purpose of the community forum was to gain community input on the priorities for our Tools for Living Council. These priorities will serve as a guide as the Council makes decisions on where to direct United Way and other community resources. We are answering the question of "how we can mobilize community resources to make the greatest, long-lasting impact".

In the forum, participants answered the following question:

Wouldn't It Be Great If

Participants brainstormed in three teams and identified over 400 ideas. These ideas were then prioritized and fell into eleven broad categories. The participants took the ideas and developed the following broad statement:

United Way could focus impact on financial crises in Buffalo, which could bring about strengthening the community through education, basic human rights, and family. These changes can be achieved through better collaborations and policy development.

Priorities fell into the following categories:

Family

Transportation

Environment

Safety

Health Care

Shelter Housing

Employment

Human Rights

Education

Financial

Collaboration/Policy

Tools for Living Council Meeting January 10, 2007

The Tools for Living team met on January 10 to review the information from the December forum and prioritize the eleven broad categories to 3-4. Within those categories, the team further prioritized by drilling into the examples of strategies. This was accomplished through a facilitated process described below:

1. Participants were asked, "Which of these areas, if we were to tackle as United Way with help from the community, would bring about the most impact and long lasting change".
2. The team determined 3 Priority Areas from the original eleven.
3. Like strategies within these 3 priority areas were grouped and the team determined the top 4 Strategies.

Three Priority Areas identified were:

Financial (15 votes)

Shelter/Housing (15 votes)

Employment (15 votes)

Four Strategies within the Priority Areas were:

Financial

Self Sufficiency/Income Support (13 votes)

Financial Education (9 votes)

Employment

Full Employment (9 votes)

Shelter/Housing

Ending Homelessness (10 votes)