



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2004

Options awarded funding to study housing needs in Illinois valley

Coalition Dedicated to Illinois Valley Housing Solutions

Options recently received a Rural Housing and Economic Development grant for \$108,675 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to study and deliver affordable housing services in the Illinois Valley of Southwest Oregon.

Agencies participating in the project include Options, Josephine Housing and Community Development Council, Illinois Valley Family Coalition, the Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance, and the Illinois Valley Community Response Team (IVCRT). These agencies will be working with the Community Planning Workshop of the University of Oregon to conduct a Housing Needs Survey of the Illinois Valley.

After the results of the survey are compiled and a comprehensive housing needs assessment is completed for the Illinois Valley, there will be an opportunity for coordination with existing federal and state programs to provide eligible home buyers with information concerning low-interest housing loans, subsidies and construction options as well as information on programs that assist eligible home owners to improve and maintain owner-occupied housing, including energy efficiency.

Participating organizations will offer community education classes in rental readiness, home buying, and general money management for potential tenants and homebuyers. An educational forum will be offered to the residents and agencies of the Illinois Valley concerning the advantages of providing affordable housing, encouraging participation by local faith-based and

grass roots organizations. An Advisory Committee of Illinois Valley service providers was formed and is offering local input, cooperation and guidance to meet the project goals.

Graduate students from the University of Oregon have mailed the survey to over 1000 households and the survey forms are also available in the Cave Junction library and other locations in the Illinois Valley. A homeless survey was also created by Advisory Committee members to assess the needs of a growing homeless population. This survey is being distributed by the Illinois Valley Family Coalition, the IVCRT and workers with Adult and Family Services.

There will be individual interviews conducted with area realtors, appraisers, contractors and lending institutions to gather more background and anecdotal data to further inform the housing needs assessment. In addition targeted Focus Groups will be held with a sampling of respondents to the survey.

Preliminary results of the assessment will be available in July and will guide the coalition in developing programs and educational seminars for IV residents. Meanwhile, participating agencies will send staff to trainings and conferences that offer education and certification in the development and management of a range of housing programs.

Members of the Illinois Valley Advisory Committee are:

Ron Phillips, Executive Director, IVCRT

Cilicia Philemon, IV Real Estate

Brett Dixon, Rural Development

Felicity Elworthy, Head Start

Kathleen Doyle, Illinois Valley Family Coalition

Gayle Daniel, Housing Resource Coordinator

Teresa Santucci, Executive Director, JHCDC

Harold L. Haugen, County Commissioner

Ken Houck, Community Development Consultant

Kim Miller, Executive Director, Options

Darrel Pearce, Residential Coordinator, Options

Joe Serres, Grant Administrator, Options

NEW FUNDING SOURCES BEING DEVELOPED

For over six months Options has been building community support to bring a "Compeer" Program to Josephine County. The Compeer Program matches trained, caring volunteers in one-to-one supportive relationships with consumers referred by mental health professionals. We viewed the Compeer Program as one that would require major funding by foundations. Unfortunately, despite several strong proposals we have not received adequate foundation support to start the program. In light of this experience we have re-examined our priorities and decided not to implement the Compeer Program at this time. A \$7,500 grant towards development of the Compeer Program from the Carpenter Foundation has been returned but we were encouraged to immediately re-apply for funding of other agency needs.

This setback has not hampered the momentum of Options growth. We continue to expand program funding on a variety of levels. We are developing two separate contracts with the City of Grants Pass and Josephine County to provide grant administration and monitoring for

Community Block Development Grants awarded to other agencies. We have submitted technology grants to both the Fohs Foundation and the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation to upgrade our computer systems and we have applied for a general operations grant from U.S. Bank.

Person Centered Planning

Josephine County Mental Health received a grant to offer a range of *REAL CHOICE* opportunities to consumers of mental health services. A series of classes is being offered to consumers and service providers at Options in the concept and application of Person Centered Planning (PCP).

PCP is an approach that emphasizes invested consumer participation and the achievement of personal control for individuals served through the public mental health system. With PCP, individuals must not only have the freedom to define the life that they seek, but are encouraged to direct the assistance they require in the pursuit of that life. They are offered access to meaningful options from which to make choices and be supported to control the course of their lives.

The process of change and choice is developed by consumers working with service providers, using a structured approach that seeks to identify individual strengths and weaknesses. Another aspect of PCP is to examine limitations and assets, both real and perceived, as well as to inventory what the consumer truly likes and dislikes about themselves and others. After the initial discovery and recording of personal issues, the focus is extended to the consumers' immediate environment and then the community at large.

Incrementally, attention is drawn to what is and is not working in the various spheres of influence from the internal to the global environment. In the process, those forces and influences that are beyond personal control are also identified. The link between choice and change is repeatedly reinforced as a tool to empowerment.

Some choices come easily; a person's request for something different falls within existing capabilities.

But some choices take people into new territory. These deeper changes call for learning to do new things in new ways and may require redirection of existing patterns and assumptions. In the discovery of new resources and ways of being, consumers and their support system, including friends, family and service providers, must let go of comfortable habits of practice.

A change process should be no more complex than the change required. An easy change demands skill in routine planning and problem solving. Deeper change takes smart, hard work over time. What drives the work is a search for inherent capabilities in the person, family, and friends as well as the discovery of opportunities in the community and in services. What sustains the work is the desire for a more just and inclusive community and the expectation that publicly funded services should provide personalized assistance.

A hallmark of self-determination is assuring a person the opportunity to direct a fixed amount of resources, which is derived from the PCP process and called an "individual budget." The person controls the use of the resources in his/her individual budget, determining, with the assistance of chosen allies, which services and supports he/she will purchase, from whom, and under what circumstances. Through this process, they possess power to make meaningful choices in how they live their lives.

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***With sadness, we report that on March 7, 2004, Alan Converse, one of our Board members, died due to complications of muscular dystrophy. We remain thankful for the service Alan gave to Options and the community and we offer our condolences to his wife and family.***

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Options' Board of Directors

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This is the ninth issue of the Options Newsletter and our third year of publication. We wish to thank all the gracious donors who have utilized this avenue to support Options. We also wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to the Meyer Memorial Trust, from whom the grant originated to make this newsletter possible.

### ***Email***

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