Fifth Street Renaissance Reintegration Project

Fifth Street Renaissance (FSR) began as Community Energy Systems in 1979 with the purpose of weathering homes for elderly and low income clients in Springfield. As the needs of the Springfield community changes, so did the agency and in 1993 its name changed to Fifth Street Renaissance to reflect the “renaissance” or rebirth of the individuals that are served. FSR was at that time established as a 501 (c) 3 with a primary mission of aiding an ever growing homeless population; however the FSR staff provides a variety of specialized programs to meet the need of a profoundly diverse client base. The 2006 merge of Springfield Aids Resource Association (SARA Center) and Fifth Street Renaissance has afforded a greater opportunity to aid the community in extensive HIV education and outreach, testing and support services.

Currently, Fifth Street Renaissance/ SARA Center operates several much needed programs within the Springfield community. One principal function of FSR is the provision of transitional housing to homeless single men and women, operating both short and long term housing units. To date there are two transitional housing units, one female and one male, as well as 4 permanent housing units strictly for HIV positive individuals. In June of 2007, Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center will begin construction on an apartment building that will house an additional 6 permanent housing units. FSR’s Representative Payee Program takes control of clients’ financial obligations, ensuring that rent, utilities and other bills are paid and that personal spending money last throughout each month. The Norman Program is contracted through the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and offers housing advocacy services to families who are at risk of losing custody of their

McKinney Reauthorization Update

Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Wayne Allard (R-CO) introduced legislation the week of May 20 to reauthorize the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program.

The National Alliance To End Homelessness (NAEH) preliminary analysis of this legislation is very positive. This legislation - the Community Partnership to End Homelessness Act - will make the McKinney program a more effective tool (one of many tools) to prevent and end homelessness. As the bill moves through Congress, we will be working with our local, state and national partners on any changes needed to improve the legislation further and ensure that it suits the needs of as many as possible.

We would like to highlight the following provisions - some new from legislation introduced in the last Congress. The legislation would:

(Continued on page 6)
Supportive Housing Program Grant Financial Training
Wednesday, July 18, 2007
9:00 am - Noon

Abstract: SHP Grant Financial Training: This training will cover all you need to know about the financial requirements of your SHP grants. This training is mandatory for all 2006 first-time SHP grantees and is optional-highly recommended for renewal grantees and those current grantees with new grants and/or staff. Topics include: Budgets, budget changes, LOCCS requirements, when to draw, reporting requirements, etc. Training is geared for the Financial/Accounting staff of the agency.

Supportive Housing Program Start-Up Training
Tuesday, July 17, 2007
9:00am-10:15am Training
10:15am-10:30am Break
10:30am-11:30am Training
11:30am-12:30pm Lunch on your own
12:30pm-3:30pm Training

Abstract: Start-Up Training: The training will be geared to the SHP basics - how to establish an operating year, documentation of payment requests, annual progress reports (APR), client record keeping requirements, program components, tenant rent calculations and homeless eligibility. This training is mandatory for all 2006 first-time SHP grantees and is optional-highly recommended for renewal grantees and those current grantees with new grants and/or staff. We suggest that you send staff members that are involved in the day-to-day operations of your program. This includes those involved in managing your program, client record keeping and those who verify the homeless eligibility requirement.

Location:
U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
77 West Jackson Blvd.
HUD Conference Room 2205
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3507

For required registration, contact:
· Sylvia Fane (312) 353-1696 ext. 2720
· Stephanie Johnson (312) 353-1696 extension 2701
· Fax registration form to our office (312) 353-5417 (Form available at www.icaanet.org Be sure to get the form for the Chicago training.)

Registration Deadline: Friday, July 13, 2007

These are the same trainings held at the Illinois Community Action Association in Springfield on May 31 and June 1, 2007.

For further information, contact Darrel Bugajsky of the Community Planning and Development Office in Chicago at (312) 353-1696 extension 2716.
Budget Resolution
Passes House and Senate

The House and Senate passed the final FY08 budget resolution, S. Con. Res. 21, on May 17. The budget resolution sets Congress’s overall spending limits for discretionary and entitlement spending. The FY08 budget resolution provides $954.1 billion for domestic discretionary programs, including housing. This amount is $21 billion above the president’s request for domestic discretionary spending. This is good news for housing.

The next step in the congressional funding process is appropriations. Now that the House and Senate appropriations committees know their overall spending limit, the appropriations subcommittees can proceed to work on 12 individual spending bills, including the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies bill, which funds housing programs.

House leaders have said they hope to pass all 12 spending bills through the House by the July 4 recess. Both chambers plan to have all 12 bills enacted by October 1, the start of the new fiscal year.

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.

New HUD Q&A

New HUD Q&A new Q&A document has been posted on HUD’s website. The document includes answers for questions related to the e-Logic Model as well as revision of a previous question regarding the distinction between a CoC meeting the 65-point threshold versus meeting the 2007 national funding score of 86.

The new Q&A document can be viewed at: http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/nofa07/cocqa051707.doc. An additional Q&A was published on May 22 at www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/nofa07/cocqa052207.doc.

To see all the Q&A documents as well as other CoC NOFA documents, click here: http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/nofa07/grpcoc.cfm.

Making the Connection
Applying for “Public Aid”

Contributor: DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform

This month I will focus on general information about the application process. Following articles will discuss the right application to use, who can apply for benefits, what to expect during the interview, how long it should take to receive a decision, and the appeal process.

The first step is to complete and sign an application. Even though this appears to be simple, there are many different types of applications. In a future article, I will discuss each application and how to use them. At this time I generally recommend that you use the application called the Mail-in Combined Application Form (CAF), Request for Cash Assistance-Medical Assistance - Food Stamps (Form 2378B). This is the application that is available on the IDHS website (www.dhs.state.il.us). This is a multi-purpose application, so a request can be made for any and all IDHS programs (cash, medical and Food Stamps).

- To be considered an official application, it needs to have at least the name, address and signature of the person applying, or the signature of the person’s representative.

Second, you need to know where to send or bring the application. The application is usually made at the office that serves the area where you live. If you are not sure where to apply, you can go to the IDHS website and use the Office Locator tool.

(Continued on page 7)
Homeless Headlines

House FHA Reform Bill

On March 29, Representatives Maxine Waters (D-CA) and Barney Frank (D-MA) introduced H.R. 1852, “Expanding Homeownership Act of 2007.” Senator Hilary Clinton (D-NY) introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

H.R. 1852 is aimed at revitalizing the Federal Home Administration (FHA), which provides mortgage insurance to low and moderate income homebuyers, among other things. “There is growing evidence about the perils of the subprime lending market and the rise in foreclosures, with estimates as high as 2 million mortgage loan defaults predicted by year’s end,” Ms. Waters said when the bill was introduced. Without a viable FHA, many low and moderate income borrowers are left with few safe and viable mortgage options.”

The measure would increase loan limits in high costs areas, such as California and New York, to enable borrowers in these areas to utilize the FHA program. The bill would authorize zero down payment and lower down payment loan products from the FHA in order to make FHA more consistent with other private loan products. FHA is authorized to underwrite to borrowers with higher credit risks in order to limit their need to go into the subprime loan market with much higher mortgage rates.

The bill would eliminate the current statutory volume cap on FHA’s reverse mortgage loan program designed to meet the needs of seniors who are in need of cash to remain in their homes.

Homebuyer protections are included in the bill, such as requiring pre-purchase counseling for riskier borrowers and disclosing the costs and risks associated with zero down and lower down payment mortgages.

For multifamily housing, the bill would authorize loan limit increases in high cost areas where the current FHA loan limits do not meet the local construction costs.

The bill has been referred to the Financial Services Committee.

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.

Housing America’s Workforce Act

On March 29, Representative Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) introduced H.R. 1850, the Housing America’s Workforce Act (HAWA). HAWA is expected to be introduced in the Senate shortly.

HAWA’s goal is to use the private market to help address the housing needs of low to moderate income workers. HAWA would use a combination of employer tax credits, tax-free housing employee benefits and competitive non-profit grants to encourage the private market to address affordable housing needs.

Under HAWA, employers who offer their employees homeownership and rental housing benefits via employer assisted housing (EAH) programs would be eligible to receive a tax credit of up to 50 percent of low and moderate income employees’ housing expenses (as high as $10,000 or 6 percent of purchase price, whichever is less), and up to $2,000 for rental assistance. Up to $10,000 in homeownership assistance and up to $2,000 of rental assistance provided through EAH programs would be considered nontaxable income.

Competitive grants would also be offered to nonprofit housing organizations to provide technical, administrative and education support to employers offering an EAH program.

The bill was referred to the Committees on Ways and Means and Financial Services.

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.

Local Ladder for Workers

The Brookings Institution has released a paper examining trends of Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) filers in the 100 largest metropolitan areas. Nationwide, almost all cities and suburbs experienced an increase in EITC filers between 2000 and 2004 with the exception of the Washington, DC area. Approximately one in six households filed for the EITC in 2004, and 46 percent of those claimed the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC). The report notes that supplemental income supports for low income families played an important role in moderating the impact on low-income families of the sluggish economic climate of the first part of this decade.

For the full report, go to www3.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/eitc/20070416_zipcode.pdf

For further information, contact the National Alliance To End Homelessness at the address is Headlines Directory.
Heartland Training Center for Human Service Excellence Presents Case Management Series In Chicago!!

All Trainings will take place at:
1415 N. Dayton St., Suite 3M, Chicago, IL 60622

June 22
Models and Systems: AM - Case management models and systems provides a basic training on the task and processes of effective case management. Participants will interactively review the models of case management and use real life scenarios to define their functions.
Intake and Assessment: PM - Provides trainees with information on the procedures and tools of intake and assessment. Participants will explore the difference between screening, intake, and assessment and gain experience in writing appropriate assessment statements.

June 29
Motivating Clients and Ourselves: AM - Motivating clients and ourselves Trainees will identify and practice strategies that address ambivalence, resistance and denial with clients. Trainees will also discover strategies that motivate staff.
Goal Setting: PM - Goal setting with clients presents information and concepts on the development of a service plan. Trainees will explore effective ways to assist clients in transforming a problem into a problem statement.

July 6
Documentation 101: AM - Documentation 101 provides an introduction and review of effective and efficient documentation practices for human services providers. Trainees practice reporting by utilizing progress notes and incidents report forms.
Making an Appropriate Referral: PM - Networking and referrals training examines creating effective referrals and developing a comprehensive network. Trainees will practice integrating referrals into a service plan for clients.

July 13
Effective Client Advocate: AM - Advocacy training allows trainees to distinguish between case coordination and advocacy and to develop an effective understanding of the components of advocacy and strategies to employ it.
Substance Use Disorders: PM - Substance abuse disorders focuses on understanding the role of the case manager in addressing substance use and abuse in social service agencies. Trainees will review the pharmacology, trends, signs and symptoms of abuse.

July 20
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault: AM - Domestic Violence training provides an overview of domestic violence and sexual assault and information and resources that will promote continued learning. Trainees will gain an awareness of the cycle of violence and how power and control contribute to that cycle.
Relationship Termination and Closure: PM - Trainees will learn valuable termination techniques and identify issues in transition and closure with clients.

Effective case management series is designed to provide case managers with the critical tools and information needed to assist their clients in becoming self-sufficient. Learn to work with the complexities of various situations in a skillful and resourceful way. Trainees will discuss case studies, participate in interactive role-plays, and dialogue with social service professionals. CEUÆs will be offered for each training (each training is 3 CEUÆs).

For further information and registration, contact:
Erin Keiper
Heartland Alliance
1415 N. Dayton St., Suite 3M
Chicago, IL 60622
Phone: 312-660-1860
E-Mail: ekeiper@heartlandalliance.org

* Establish a new prevention program to serve people who have moved frequently for economic reasons, are doubled up, are about to be evicted, live in severely overcrowded housing, or otherwise live in an unstable situation that puts them at risk of homelessness;

Reward communities that get the best outcomes but in a less prescriptive way.

For further information, contact the National Alliance To End Homelessness at the address in Headlines Directory.
The Department expects to award approximately $14 million under the capital grant component. Funding available under this NOFA is being offered to help offset the capital expenses of existing state and local governments, Indian Tribal governments, faith-based, and community-based organizations that are capable of creating and providing supported transitional housing for homeless veterans.

This notice announces the availability of capital funds for eligible entities to: (1) Expand existing transitional housing projects; or (2) develop new transitional housing programs. Supportive service centers will only be considered under funding priority 3. Funding applied for under the capital grant component may be used for: (1) Remodeling or alteration of existing buildings; (2) acquisition of buildings; (3) acquisition and rehabilitation of buildings; (4) new construction; and (5) acquisition of vans (in connection with a new or existing Grant and Per Diem Grant project) for outreach and transportation for homeless veterans. Funding applied for under this notice may be used for aid for supportive housing and service centers. For eligibility criteria please refer to the final rule published in the Federal Register on September 26, 2003.

Due date: An original completed and collated capital grant application (plus three completed collated copies) for assistance under the VA’s Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program must be received in the Grant and Per Diem Field Office, by 4 p.m. Eastern Time on June 28, 2007. Applications may not be sent by facsimile (FAX).

For a copy of the application package: Download directly from VA’s Grant and Per Diem Program Web page at: www.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=3 or www.grants.gov/. Questions should be referred to the Grant and Per Diem Program at (toll-free) 1-877-332-0334. For a document relating to the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, see the final rule published in the Federal Register on September 26, 2003.

For further information, contact: Dr. Guy Liedke, VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, Department of Veterans Affairs, 10770 N. 46th Street, Suite C-200, Tampa, FL 33617; (toll-free) 1-877-332-0334.

For the full text of this notice, go to www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a070504c.html. Scroll down to Veterans Affairs Department.

Fifth Street
(Continued from page 1)

children due to homelessness or near homelessness and to older youth (17 – 21) who become homeless as a result of being released from the state foster care system.

In 2004, FSR established the Reintegration Project for HIV positive individuals, outside of Cook County, with a recent incarceration history. Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center provides holistic case management to all of its clients; therefore, The Reintegration Project provides comprehensive case management services, including education and healthcare links, transportation assistance, housing and utility advocacy, relocation assistance, life skills trainings, food referrals, and some financial services. Clients of this program are aided in reestablishing themselves in society, thus lowering their chances of returning to corrections or infecting others.

The Reintegration Project hosts Prevention for Positives groups. These meetings, held every three weeks, offer discussion and guidance on a wide variety of topics including communication skills (partner disclosure / notification), education about the disease, and safe sex measures. To attract attendance and set a welcoming tone for attendees, food is served and door prizes are offered at each meeting. Currently, there are approximately eleven regular attendees to the Prevention for Positives groups, which is substantial for an HIV positive support group since these types of groups do not typically boast high attendance rates. Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center also offers weekly meeting and testing availabilities at the Sangamon County Jail. Staff holds two groups per week, males on Tuesday and females on Wednesday, as well as testing on Thursdays. This program is not a part of the Reintegration Project; however it does provide a venue to identify possible Reintegration Project clients. Currently, there is a limit of 12 individuals per group and these groups are consistently full with a significant wait list.

HIV positive individuals may also visit Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center’s on-site Food Pantry weekly. The use of this pantry aids our clients in maintaining a nutritious and healthy diet.

It is the sum of these services, accompanied with the Rental Assistance Program, which can provide up to $1500.00 housing assistance over a three month period to eligible individuals, that affords our clients higher opportunities for success and greater contacts within the community.

For further information, contact Denise Fisher of Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center at (217) 544-5040 or fisherdenisefsr@sbcglobal.net.
“Public Aid”  
(Continued from page 3)

- If you bring the application into the office, you should request a receipt from the worker to prove you left an application.

Don’t delay bringing or sending the application into the IDHS office, since the date the application is received in the correct office is the date the state uses to start the clock to make a decision (usually the state has to let you know a decision within 30-60 days – based on the benefit being applied for).

After you’ve submitted the application, the next step is to participate in the interview.

- If you mail or fax the application to the office, an appointment notice will be mailed.
  - The interview is to be done within 14 calendar days of the office receiving the application, so if you don’t receive a letter within this time frame you want to call.
  - Interviews can be done by phone if you have:
    - problems related to health, transportation, or ongoing severe weather; or
    - the hours you work or are in school conflict with office hours; or
    - you lack of necessary child care

- If you miss the interview, all is not lost.
  - If your application included a request for Food Stamps, the state is to automatically schedule a second interview for the Food Stamp benefits. Requests for medical and cash benefits, however, will be denied.
  - If you are applying for other benefits, and file an appeal of the denial due to a missed interview, the state will conduct the interview without you having to complete a new application if you appeal the denial of cash/medical/child care within 60 days or the denial of FS within 90 days. (PM-01-07-08).

During the interview, you will be asked to provide documents that verify what you have told the worker about income, assets, relationship to other persons for who you are applying, residence, citizenship, health care coverage and many others.

- If you do not have everything you need with you, you will be provided a written list of what is still needed with a deadline date usually 10 calendar days after the date of the interview.

- If you need additional time to obtain the requested information, make sure you call or write the worker to request the additional time. This needs to be done before the deadline date. If you call, write down the date and time you called, and who you spoke to.

- If you need the state worker to help you obtain the information, mark the box at the bottom of the form; return it to the worker with a list indicating what items you need help obtaining. Make sure this is done before the deadline date.

- If you don’t provide the needed information, or you aren’t able to contact the worker to request an extension, again all is not lost.

  - You can file an appeal, and provide the requested information during the appeal process (PM-01-07-08). This means you don’t have to complete a new application and interview.

A written decision on all benefit programs for which you applied will be sent to you. The state has to also tell you in the letter the amount of the benefit you will receive, or if denied the reason for the denial and the policy chapter that supports the decision.

- Emergency/Expedited Food Stamp decisions are to be made within 3 days of the application
- Decisions for Food Stamps are to be made within 30 days of application.
- Requests for TANF cash, All Kids, Medicaid due to Age or Blindness, are to be made within 45 days of the application.
- Requests for cash or Medicaid for the disabled are to be made within 60 days of the date of application.

Next Month: Deciding which application to use.

The DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization focused on advocacy and planning in DuPage County, Illinois and designer and trainer of Making the Connection: A Guide to Accessing Public Benefits. The DuPage Federation is affiliated with Northern Illinois University, Regional Development Institute. Questions can be directed to knelson@dupagefederation.org or cking@dupagefedertion.org .