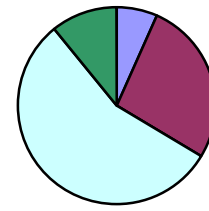


Community Partnership of the Ozarks, Inc.

Established: 1995



Caring Communities Investment



Local Inv	5%
In-Kind	26%
Participant Fee	
Other, State, Fed	62%
Caring Comm	7%

FY09 Result Achievement: CASH Financial Literacy Initiative Helps Build Financial Stability

September 2009

Community Profile:

Community Partnership of the Ozarks is located in the City of Springfield. Although the city's population currently stands at 151,823, its economic impact influences 27 counties and over 936,000 individuals. While the City of Springfield and Greene County serve as the geographic base of our service area, our programming efforts reach 20 other counties in Southwest Missouri.

Community Partnership of the Ozarks is governed by a 29-member Board of Directors, which is comprised of representatives from local government, the faith and education community, local businesses, civic organizations, the media, and other non-profit organizations. We also have the Ozarks Fighting Back Advisory Board, which oversees our alcohol, drug and tobacco prevention services, and talented and committed staff and volunteers that work to facilitate and implement our tremendous diversity of programming and collaborative efforts.

Major Collaborative Accomplishment:

The CASH (Come And See How) Financial Literacy Initiative was developed in response to results from a neighborhood survey indicating that basic budgeting was a top need for families in our community. Demographic intake data collected from participants served by CASH confirms the community need for financial literacy and basic budgeting education--25% were not able to regularly meet basic needs; 39% were able to meet basic needs but were not prepared for crises or unexpected expenses; 44% had to choose between necessities to meet basic needs, and 65% did not have a way or plan to save money.

CASH includes a 4-week *Make Money Work for You* basic budgeting class, in which participants examine money beliefs and how they impact spending/saving habits, discuss the basics of budgeting and develop a workable budget, set a savings goal and meet one-on-one with banking partners. To learn how to save, participants have the opportunity to open a free savings account. If they show consistent deposits and meet their savings goal, they receive a savings match of up to \$100. We also provide 2-week specialized educational tracks that are designed to build upon lessons learned in basic budgeting classes. These tracks target specific topics, such as building assets on a fixed income, homebuyer education, improving and building credit, and using credit cards wisely.

A major component of CASH is the ability of participants who complete the 4-week class to become trained as a CASH facilitator and then earn a stipend for each set of classes they facilitate, building financial assets of each participant/facilitator and helping them develop new, marketable skills that can be used to obtain or enhance employment opportunities. Last year, we served 122 participants and trained 13 facilitators.

We also initiated an evaluation of CASH, completing a six-month follow-up survey with individuals who went through the 4-week *Make Money Work For You* class. 100% of those we surveyed reported that they are currently using a budget compared to 65% who had reported no budgeting or plan to save money at intake!

When we piloted CASH two years ago, the results were so promising that the Community Foundation of the Ozarks provided seed funding last year to expand services and hire a CASH Coordinator. What makes this different than other grant-funded programs is that we went to the community and asked for help and they responded. In fact, nine local banks agreed to act as our CASH Coalition by providing financial and staff support as well as advice/guidance on program growth and development and they stepped up and donated \$26,500 in first year! Along with local churches and schools, this Coalition support has enabled CASH to truly become a community-driven program meeting crucial needs and creating financial stability for many low income families in our community.

Collaborative Partners:

Community Foundation of the Ozarks	City of Springfield
Bank of America	Bancorp South
US Bank	Liberty Bank
Great Southern Bank	UMB Bank
Mid-Missouri Bancshares	Guaranty Bank
Empire Bank	Local Churches
Springfield Public Schools	