



INDIANA FAITH-BASED ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes

January 30, 2007
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Indiana Government Center
302 W. Washington Street
Conference Room 1
Indianapolis, Indiana**

The meeting of the Indiana Faith-Based Advisory Council was called to order at 1:15 PM by Executive Director Paula Parker-Sawyers. Those council members, staff and AmeriCorps VISTA members in attendance were asked to introduce themselves. Those advisory council members in attendance were:

Jerry Alexander
Joan Andrews
Jack Arney
Jim Capps
Rick George
Joseph Gibson

Dan Haifley
Merideth Holloway
Jerry Pattengale
Eugene Spicer
Thomas Walker

Staff members from the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives who were in attendance were:

Paula Parker-Sawyers
Dave Liebel
Janet Simpson

Denny Benson (VISTA)
Marjorie Roberts (VISTA)
AJ Salkoski (VISTA)

Also in attendance was Lt. Jim Bradberry from the Elkhart County Sheriff's Department.

Following the introductions, Executive Director Parker-Sawyers shared with the council that three of the eight VISTA's who are currently serving in the OFBCI were attending today's meeting to make presentations. Additionally, information about the VISTA program was shared with Council members. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers stated her respect for all eight of OFBCI's VISTA's, because of their commitment to service and their availability 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. She also noted that VISTA's receive a monthly stipend of \$846 and at the end of their year of service they can choose to receive

an education award of \$4,725 or a stipend of \$1,300. The education award can be used to retire an old school debt or to further their education at any accredited school.

Mrs. Parker-Sawyers then spoke about the Showing How Access to Resources Empowers (SHARE) Network. She indicated this network was introduced to the State of Indiana by the Department of Labor's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. This program has been offered to several states throughout the country, and Indiana has embraced the resource in partnership with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Department of Correction (DOC). She further shared that Dave Liebel started working with this project several months ago and when AJ joined the OFBCI it was transitioned to him. The SHARE network is an online resource data base that every faith-based and community based organization can use. This is a way for organizations to be connected and make a difference. Currently, this program is intended for anyone who is seeking employment or for people who are having difficulty keeping a job. The site will also include information on programs for substance abuse, child care, clothing banks, creating a resume and much more.. Any organization that provides services is invited to enter their information into this database.

AJ Salkoski demonstrated the (SHARE) Network. The PowerPoint presentation included the goals of the SHARE Network, which are employment and making local community connections. Those responsible for this program are the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI); the Department of Workforce Development (DWD); the Department of Correction (DOC) and the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). In order to make this network a success, the community will need to participate, resources will be collected and published and Share Network Access Points (SNAP) will need to be established. AJ further stated this program is saving Indiana money because the USDOL is funding it for the first two years, a VISTA will be providing the labor, and the information is provided by the community. The USDOL has built the database and at the end of two years, the software company will provide it to participating states at a nominal amount. .

Mrs. Parker-Sawyers thanked AJ for his presentation and noted the website, www.sharenetwork.in.gov, will be available by the end of the week. It will also be linked to the front page of the www.IN.gov website as well. She further indicated the system is programmed to send out an email every three months to remind organizations to update their information. If this information is not updated, the OFBCI reserves the right to remove them from the website. Jack Arney asked how the OFBCI determines if an agency should be on the database. She indicated in order to maintain the integrity of the system, that within 72 hours of the organization registering, they will receive a phone call from someone on the SHARE team who will validate the information they provided. AJ stated if an organization has more than one service, they can list all of them and when a search is conducted, the database will list those sources as well.

Dan Haifley asked how the SNAP locations will be determined. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers stated there will be training for as many SNAP locations as possible and any organization can be a SNAP after receiving the training. The SNAP's are intended to be a place that

an individual, who is either not computer savvy or wants some additional help in finding all of the resources, would go to begin the process of looking for assistance. Some of the SNAP locations already established are some community colleges, libraries and churches. There is also a template within the system that will allow you to print out the information for the individual, including a map and a referral. Mr. Haifley also asked if this program was just targeted for prisoner re-entry or basically for anyone seeking to get a job. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers indicated it is primarily to get anyone who is looking for a job or assistance connected to the service closest to them, but that it made a lot of sense to connect this internally with DOC in order to try to reduce recidivism. Mr. Haifley then asked if there will be SNAP training seminars. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers responded by stating there would be training seminars all around the state. Once the system is live and there is a demand, then someone will come to the different areas to conduct the necessary training.

Rick George asked if there would be a press release reference this network. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers indicated it has been in the silent phase in order to get as much information into the system as possible. She advised those council members in attendance that each one of them represented a mountain of information, and will let them know when it is available for them to log on to add their information. Following that, then there will be a press conference because there will be actually something to show. Those SHARE Network region directors will be responsible for advising their regions, and then there will be a statewide press release. Jack Arney acknowledged DOC's participation in this program but suggested not to emphasize it is for ex-offenders, but to advertise it is for anyone who is in need of assistance. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers said that was a good suggestion.

Jerry Pattengale asked about the 211 resource directories. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers indicated that many of the printed publications are basically out of date as soon as they are published and it was difficult to keep them up to date. It is hoped that SHARE and 211 will establish a complimentary process that will benefit all Hoosiers.

Executive Director Parker-Sawyers then introduced John Rentsch who was formerly an OFBCI VISTA, but is now the Training Manager, to discuss the 2007 Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism. John shared that the purpose of the Governor's Conference is to bring together Indiana's volunteers, faith-based and community organizations, national service members, service-learning participants, non profit and government agencies working in the realm of human services together to celebrate and provide networking and professional development opportunities. He further stated there have been more track sessions added to the Faith-Based Track this year. Last year, the focus was on prisoner reentry. This year, we have added homelessness and health issues. The Fundraising Track has been expanded as well and includes Building Organizational Capacity which includes: working with your board, outcomes measurement, organization and leadership. The Youth Track is titled "Ensuring a Brighter Future for All of America's Youth". The other tracks are as follows: "Mobilizing More Volunteers"; "Engaging Students in Communities Through Service-Learning"; "Harnessing Baby-Boomers' Experience"; "Addressing Local Needs through National Service"; and

“Training Indiana’s Next Generation of Philanthropists”. John also advised the Governor’s Award for Volunteer Service nomination process is much simpler this year and that the nomination form is part of the conference mailer. John encouraged those in attendance to review the nomination form because many of them work with volunteers every day in their respective organizations and congregations who accomplish great things. He further stated the OFBCI is currently working with Governor Daniels’ office to possibly expand the Governor’s Awards for Volunteer Service a year round event, not just an event for the Governor’s Conference. The OFBCI is currently working with the Governor’s Office in getting the Award’s Breakfast on Governor Daniels’ calendar. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers commented on John’s remark regarding the nomination of volunteers. She stated she was aware that many of those in attendance have volunteers associated with their churches or organizations who are vital to the efforts in their own home communities. She asked the council to use this as a time to show their appreciation by nominating them as a faith-based volunteer. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers shared that the Governor’s wife is chairing the volunteer awards selection committee and those on the committee are from northern, southern, and central Indiana which is geographically balanced. She also advised two service projects will take place during this year’s conference. On both days, there will be a room set up where everyone attending the conference will be able to assemble one or more disaster preparation kits. These kits will include a first aid kit, a safety tube, a bottle of water, a mask, whistle, a glow stick, and a laminated card about basic first aid. The OFBCI is also trying to get flashlights, can openers, sewing kits and batteries donated as well. Our office asked the Department of Education for their assistance with our second service project and they have sent information to schools, via their Learn and Serve grantees, asking children to donate items for a hygiene kit. On the second day of the conference, K-12 students attending will be assembling the hygiene kits for an international aid trip to El Salvador, sponsored by Ambassadors for Children. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers asked if anyone was interested in donating items for the hygiene kits to let us know and John will send them a list of needed items. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers continued by sharing that one of the keynote speakers was Terri Hasdorff, who is the director of the Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and she will be speaking about the challenges of volunteering outside of the United States as well as focusing on local and global service. Also, one of the Faith-Based Advisory Council members, Joan Andrews, will be leading a break out session, “Your Agency Can Achieve its Dreams: Taking it to the Next Level.”

Mrs. Parker-Sawyers introduced Marjorie Roberts and indicated she would be giving a PowerPoint presentation about National Mentoring Month, and stated that the OFBCI was asked in mid-December to be the lead partner for this event. National Mentoring Month is the month of January and the OFBCI is currently in the process of planning next years. Marjorie shared some interesting statistics with the council prior to her presentation. Mentoring benefits children and youth, science-based research shows quality-mentoring works by enhancing social skills/emotional well-being; improving cognitive skills; and serving as a role model/advocate. Big Brothers Big Sisters of American conducted a study of 1,000 young people. Those children who met regularly with their Big Brother or Sister were: 46% less likely to begin using drugs; 27% less

likely to begin using alcohol; and 53% were less likely to skip school. Communities as a whole benefit from mentoring because mentoring programs spend approximately \$1,114 per youth per year. This is a small investment compared costs to society because a career criminal costs between \$1.4 and \$1.7 million over a lifetime; high school drop outs cost \$268,113 to \$428,130; and drug users cost society \$408,268 to \$1,070,324. Her PowerPoint presentation highlighted OFBCI's Achievements for 2007, the Vision/Goals for 2008, and Partnerships for 2008. The achievements this year included hosting a National Mentoring Month display for the state employees; sending information to swim clubs, scouting, Sunday schools, schools, and libraries; sharing information at the Martin Luther King Day at the Children's Museum; and obtaining mentoring statements from prominent Hoosiers and individuals (<http://www.in.gov/ofbci/mentors.html>). The OFBCI's vision for next year is to promote mentoring; develop a centralized website; create mentoring incentives; and to research successful programs. Next year's partnership goal is solicit participation by celebrity advertisements; businesses; members from state government; schools; faith-based communities; and organizations. In closing, Mrs. Roberts encouraged those in attendance to visit the OFBCI website and submit their mentoring story.

Pastor Dan Haifley suggested also having a specific Sunday in January designated as Mentoring Sunday. Joan Andrews asked if there was a way to include mentoring in other areas, besides children, such as women mentoring women and having activities to do together. She also suggested the possibility of married couples mentoring other married couples. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers thanked Dan and Joan for their great suggestions.

Mrs. Parker-Sawyers then asked the council for advice reference an issue that was brought to the OFBCI. A county sheriff has been called and asked to make presentations to schools about preparations for a terrorist attack or people coming to do harm to children/schools. He has been overwhelmed with a number of questions from children stating that people from the Middle East or all members of Islam are bad, that they are monsters. He has asked our assistance as to how he should respond and how to advise them that Islam does not teach violence. After some discussion, it was suggested to perhaps have someone from the Islamic faith accompany him when he speaks with the children, maybe a husband and wife dressed in their Hijab. If there isn't anyone available, then perhaps he can bring pictures of them in their communities with their families. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers thanked the council for their suggestions, comments and advice and will relay this information from the Faith-Based Advisory Council to the county sheriff.

In closing, Executive Director Parker-Sawyers distributed information from the Indiana Secretary of State reference becoming a poll worker. She indicated it has been a real struggle to find people to work the election polls. Secretary of State, Todd Rokita, is working on a program called Poll Workers for Charity, which encourages people to volunteer to be a poll worker and then donate the money they earned to a charity of their choice. Mrs. Parker-Sawyers indicated research has been conducted about the motivation of volunteers and their impact around the country. Year after year, two of the personality traits that keep repeating are volunteers go to church on a regular basis, at least once a

month, and they vote. So, by combining the knowledge that a volunteer tends to be someone who goes to their place of worship at least once a month and also vote, then it makes perfectly good sense those volunteers in the congregations may in fact want to be poll workers. She encouraged those in attendance to use this concept or to share it with their volunteers.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM. The next Indiana Faith-Based Advisory Council Meeting will be on **April 17th**. **There will not be a meeting in July, and the last meeting of 2007 will be on October 30th**.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Simpson
Administrative Assistant