

Strengthening America's Nonprofit Sector

The Faith-Based and Community Initiative Empowers Service to Neighbor

The Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI) works to boost the vitality of America's "armies of compassion" so they can more effectively address their communities' needs.

The FBCI has delivered in-person training to more than 100,000 social entrepreneurs, teaching them how to better track their outcomes, write grants, engage volunteers, and develop other key skills that help their organizations maximize impact for the people they serve. Examples of training events include:

- **White House FBCI conferences.** Thirty-four national and regional conferences have provided more than 30,000 nonprofit leaders information on government partnerships and first steps for seeking Federal, State, and local grants, as well as key skills for effective service programs.
- **"The Art and Science of Grant Writing."** Training has been delivered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) via 288 two-day seminars to nearly 30,000 nonprofit leaders. In 2007, HUD added a third day of training on "Effective Grant Management."
- **Training for effective partnership with specific programs.** The U.S. Department of Education has trained approximately 9,000 individuals from education-related faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) through 89 intensive workshops focused on ways FBCOs can become Supplemental Educational Services (SES) tutoring providers and partner with other State and local education funding opportunities.
- **Training in skills key to effectively addressing particular human needs.** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has held 253 trainings across 41 States for FBCOs on drug and alcohol addiction and related issues.
- **On-Site Organizational Development.** The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) partners with the nonprofit SCORE to utilize 10,500 working or retired business leaders as volunteer coaches for FBCOs on business models to make their organizations more effective and sustainable. Likewise, AmeriCorps VISTA members serve on site with FBCOs on site to help build organizational capacity.

The Compassion Capital Fund provides grants and intensive technical support to help grassroots FBCOs develop the effectiveness of their organizations and programs. As of last year, the Compassion Capital Fund has awarded \$264 million in small grants to more than 5,000 faith-based and community nonprofits to help them strengthen their organizations and extend their services.

- In a recent survey, 90 percent of the polled organizations funded by CCF reported an "improved level or quality of services they deliver to the needy."
- Other smaller-scale capacity-building grant programs are boosting FBCO effectiveness, as well. For example, the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) works to strengthen new-partner grassroots FBCOs in underserved rural areas working with domestic violence victims. A study of 39 participant FBCOs found they more than doubled the number of services provided to victims per month and boosted their number of volunteer hours by 80 percent.

A wide range of efforts championed by the FBCI and partner agencies have greatly boosted the accessibility and transparency of the Federal grants process.

- **Grants.gov** was launched in 2002 to streamline the patchwork delivery of Federal grants opportunities and unify them on a single, user-friendly Website allowing organizations to find and apply online for all Federal grants.
- **The White House OFBCI Grants Catalogue** highlights 243 grant opportunities of particular interest to FBCOs in an easily accessible format online, frequently drawing more than 10,000 viewers per month.
- Together, the White House OFBCI and each FBCI Center deliver updates on new grant opportunities, training resources, and other information to more than 85,000 individuals.
- **Detailed pre-application instruction on specific grants.** For example, every year since 2003, HUD's annual SuperNOFA Web Broadcast has announced all competitive HUD grants and explained their details, with an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 viewings annually in either its live or archived form.

Federal competitive awards are expanding the good work of FBCOs across America and beyond.

In 2006 alone, the Federal Government provided more than 18,000 direct, competitive awards, totaling more than \$14.7 billion, to America's nonprofit organizations to aid the homeless, at-risk youth, recovering addicts, returning offenders, HIV/AIDS victims, and others. Faith-based organizations were a central part of this work, winning more than 3,000 grants in 2006, totaling nearly \$2.2 billion. In addition to direct grants, thousands more grassroots organizations have received funding via sub-grants and vouchers designed to reach small and novice organizations.

Grant programs that engage small and novice FBCOs include technical assistance and training for grantees, ensuring high performance during the grant period and sustained strength. Grantee training in programs ranging from DOL's "Grassroots" grants to PEPFAR's "New Partners Initiative" to the voucher-based Access to Recovery often include new grantee training conferences, regular conference calls and webinars, phone consultation, as well as site visits for in-person technical assistance and training.

Led by First Lady Laura Bush, Helping America's Youth (HAY) conferences (one national and five regional held to date) engage civic leaders, faith-based and community service providers, foundations, educators, and other experts to collaboratively address the challenges facing America's youth. The HAY *Community Guide to Helping America's Youth* helps create new partnerships to implement proven programs to help youth (www.helpingamericasyouth.gov).

The FBCI delivers a diversity of technology-based information and training for FBCOs, including e-courses, webinars, DVD training videos, and teleconferences. For example, the U.S. Department of Education has produced 13 technical assistance webcasts since 2003 for FBCOs engaged in tutoring, after-school programs and other education-related work. The U.S. Department of Labor's FBCI Center regularly uses teleconferences to train FBCOs, particularly in skills to improve employment-related services, like "Helping Ex-Offenders Find Work" or "Effective Partnership with the Workforce Investment System."

The FBCI also advances trainings designed to boost the work of FBCOs through expanded partnership with State and local government. For example, the HUD FBCI "Unlocking Doors" initiative has held forums in major cities, in partnership with mayors, to boost local collaborations to address housing needs. Likewise, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security hosts "Disaster Preparedness Training for

FBCOs," designed to enable FBCOs to engage disaster response and recovery in partnership with local government.

Led by the USA Freedom Corps, the Bush Administration champions volunteer service through FBCOs. In 2007 alone, 60.8 million Americans volunteered through organizations, serving an average of 52 hours. Nearly 36 percent of those volunteers served through faith-based organizations, followed by 26 percent with educational or youth-service organizations, and 13 percent with social and community service organizations.

- The *White House USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network* (www.volunteer.gov) is the largest clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities ever created, providing a powerful platform for FBCOs to recruit volunteers. Since 2002, more than 2 million volunteer opportunity searches have been performed by more than 20 million visitors.

The FBCI promotes tax policies that encourage private engagement in addressing great needs. 2006 tax changes allowed individual retirees to make tax-free donations from their IRAs to charities. The National Committee on Planned Giving reports that within the first year of this option, 6,330 individual gifts were donated through IRA rollover, totaling over \$111 million to the nonprofit sector. The changes also enabled expanded deductions for food and book donations to pantries and schools.

The FBCI promotes technology to increase FBCOs' access to both government and private non-financial resources. The Department of Labor's SHARE Network creates Web-based referral networks between government job training offices and FBCOs that help struggling Americans obtain employment. The DHS-funded AID MATRIX links FBCOs engaged in disaster response with major donors of in-kind goods across the country.

Reflecting the President's emphasis on solutions that draw upon every willing partner, public-private partnerships are increasingly a key element of addressing need. For example, USAID's Global Development Alliance (GDA) draws resources from the private sector to form alliances quickly as needs emerge. In response to the devastating tsunami of December 2004, for example, the Agency formed 18 alliances with the private sector in affected countries, leveraging more than \$17 million in private sector funds. More than 600 active alliances exist today as a result of nearly \$7.9 billion in combined public-private funds.

- Domestically, the U.S. Department of Commerce is using the same strategy to revitalize distressed neighborhoods, investing more than \$28 million in 41 such projects in 2007 alone, with an anticipated benefit of more than 6,000 new jobs and more than \$229 million in private sector investment.