

1999 Annual Report Executive Summary

Upper Kanawha Valley Enterprise Community

Upon designation of the Upper Kanawha Valley Enterprise Community (UKVEC), the Kanawha County Commission had the foresight to hire a staff to begin the process of setting up the organization that would administer the Strategic Plan. A staff was hired on April 12, 1999 including initially an Executive Director, a Community Development Director, and a Program Manager. Since June 1999, an Administrative Assistant and a Housing Specialist have been hired.

The staff has been involved with many economic development endeavors as well as assisting the UKVEC through community development efforts. When staff came on board, there was nothing to work from. We have been successful in organizing the UKVEC Governing Board. This included a 90 day temporary board followed with a nomination and election process for the permanent board members.

Staff also drafted Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, and the necessary paperwork to obtain the 501c3 status from the Internal Revenue Service. Every step taken has been presented before the Governing Board and approved. The working committees have been active in getting started working toward those benchmarks that fall under each committee's expertise. Staff presented to the Governing Board members as well as members of the community that had agreed to serve on various committees a listing of all benchmarks and under which committee these benchmarks fell in order to ensure that nothing was overlooked.

We have been very active in trying to educate the community to entice more people to become involved in UKVEC activities and programs. Staff has been attending meetings throughout the various municipalities as well as attending other grassroots organization meetings, i.e. watershed associations, etc. We have also been successful in developing partnerships with various agencies and businesses throughout the UKVEC. We have applied for 20 grants and have received awards on four of them to date.

The UKVEC staff has been very aggressive in targeting structures for demolition which will provide an opportunity for new housing to be constructed on these parcels of land (Benchmark 12). To date, seven have been demolished, while 24 more are slated for demolition. During the summer of 2000 the Group Work Camps will be arriving in Kanawha County to rehabilitate 80 houses. The Group has already committed to rehabilitating 80 houses in Kanawha County for the summer of 2001 and 80 homes in Fayette County.

As we progress we plan to continue drawing new people into our organization to strengthen not only our Governing Board but also our grassroots committees.