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Mark Your Calendar!



ACCESS Community Partner Summit

It's that time again. The 2nd Annual Southeast Region's ACCESS Community Partner Summit is coming full steam, and this year's theme will be "Health and Nutrition." Last year's event was such a huge success, and was well-received by our community partners throughout Broward and Palm Beach counties. This year's event will take place on Thursday, June 3rd, at the Marriott Boca Raton at Boca Center, located at 5150 Town Center Circle. We have chosen an ideal location that is easily accessible for travel in either direction on Interstate 95. Your RSVP Invitation will be forthcoming via an e-mail.

**Feeding South Florida Community Breakfast
 January 22, 2010**



(Left) Marla Tallant, a former recipient of assistance, is now a valuable employee of **Feeding South Florida**. Marla started the event with a trio of songs describing her journey and triumph. She also thanked the audience for the diligent work they do throughout the community and for helping her family in their time of need.

(Right) Anethea Pennant, Director of Development, served as the mistress of ceremony. She delivered a very heartfelt and motivational speech, thanking the community for all they do and encouraging them to continue their worthwhile efforts. More than 100 people attended the event representing provider agencies throughout South Florida.



(Left) Judith Gatti, Executive Director, spoke about the history of **Feeding South Florida** (formerly Daily Food Bank). She also encouraged agencies to become community partners and help increase participation in the ACCESS program.

Broward and Palm Beach counties food stamp recipients have doubled

There are now 2.5 million Floridians receiving food stamps. More than one of every eight residents, 13.6 percent of the population, rely on the program to help put food on the table. The number has been growing steadily for the past three years.

Florida's food stamp issuance has steadily increased since April 2007, when the state paid out \$109 million to 1.2 million residents. In March 2010, the state issued a record \$352 million in food stamp benefits.

In Broward and Palm Beach counties, the number of food stamp recipients have doubled since 2007, with 188,000 in Broward County and 117,000 in Palm Beach County.

Miami-Dade County has the largest food stamp population in the state, with more than 490,000 people receiving benefits.

This has been a real benefit to the people in great need, and it has also stimulated the economy.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps, offers nutritious benefits to participating clients, supports work, and provides economic benefits to communities.

The SNAP brings Federal dollars into

communities in the form of benefits which are redeemed by SNAP participants at local stores. These benefits ripple throughout the economies of the community, state, and nation.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), every \$5 spent in SNAP benefits generates \$9.20 in total community spending. Also, every additional dollar's worth of SNAP benefits generates 17 to 47 cents of spending on food.

On average, \$1 billion of retail food demand by food stamp recipients generates 3,300 farm jobs.

**"2.5 million
Floridians on food
stamps"**

**"People can come
in and donate or
take- no questions
asked."**

Donation drive nets almost 10,000 pounds of food

The **Jubilee Center of South Broward**, also an ACCESS Florida site, collected almost 10,000 pounds of food during a recent food drive, as part of a program sponsored by Disney and HandsOn Network.

The "Give a Day, Get a Disney Day" program promotes volunteering by offering a ticket for a free visit to a Disney theme park, to those who donate their time and effort.

With more than 600 people signed up for the

event. Volunteer Broward, along with the Million Meals Committee, organized the food. The aim of the food drive was to raise awareness of the services offered by the Jubilee Center.

In addition to the food pantry and soup kitchen, the center provides a variety of services, including legal aid, clothing substance abuse and mental health counseling.

"We are really a one-stop area for everything people need," said Joyce Curtis, the center's executive director. "People can come in and donate or take— no questions asked." The economic crisis has increased the demand for the center's services. For more information, please call 954-920-0106 or visit <http://www.jubileecenterbroward.org>

Source taken from the Sun-Sentinel dated 03/09/10

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Award Programs

The Outreach Coalition of the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) announced it is accepting nominations for the Golden Grocer Hunger Champions Award Program. This award represents the retailer component of the Hunger Champions Award Program by recognizing the instrumental role they play in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Retailers committed to the FNS vision of ending hunger and improving nutrition and health have ensured the success of SNAP. Highlighting the successful activities improve service to recipients of SNAP benefits and low-income customers, will provide other retailers with exemplary models to replicate. The 2010 Golden Grocer Hunger Champions Award will be given to retailers that provide excellence in customer service, outreach, and nutrition education. For more information, please visit http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/coalition/2010_golden-grocers.htm

Also, nominations are open for the 2010 Hunger Champions Award Program. This program will be honoring local county assistance offices that provide exemplary service in assisting eligible clients to obtain SNAP benefits. It is the goal of the award program to recognize and support those local county assistance offices that make an enduring effort to embrace the mission of SNAP. The nominations must be submitted with justification of no more than one page by July 2, 2010. For more information, please visit http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/coalition/2010_hunger_champions.htm

Around the Southeast Region

North Broward Regional Processing Center

Customers who require an interview can call the intake unit at 954-202-3600.
To return requested verification or information via fax: 954-267-4055.
To return verification via mail: P.O. Box 40750, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33340.

Broward Institutional Care Program (ICP)

To return requested verification via fax: 954-202-3649

Broward Medically Needy Program

For Bill Tracking on active Medicaid cases, fax medical bills to: 954-267-2133.
To return requested verification via mail: 1400 W. Commercial Boulevard, Suite 160,
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33309.

Broward Central Service Center

To return requested verification or information via fax: 954-797-8332.
To return verification via mail: 311 North State Road 7, Plantation, Florida 33317.
For customers who require an interview, call the intake unit at 954-327-5160.

Palm Beach County Service Center

The Ocala Call Center has accepted the responsibility of assisting with the interviews for Circuit 15 (Palm Beach County). All of the notices will have the Ocala Call Center phone number listed as 1-888-444-4358. If your customers are unable to get through for a phone interview, please send an email to ACCESS@dcf.state.fl.us. If you have any verification to return on behalf your customers, please fax the documents to 561-963-3151 or 561-357-4832. You can also mail verification to: P.O. Box 5509, Lake Worth, Florida 33461.

Please Remember: The customer's case number, ACCESS number or social security number should be listed on all faxed documents. You may also send inquiries to the South Florida Customer Call Center at DII_SF_CallCenter@dcf.state.fl.us.

Please join me to congratulate the following employees for being promoted to new positions:

Kim Gorsuch, Regional Program Director

Lisa Henson, ACCESS Regional Program Manager

Susan Vitale, Circuit 15 (Palm Beach County), Operations Manager

Elizabeth Massey, Circuit 17 (Broward County), Operations Manager

Melanie Swager, Circuit 15 (Broward County), ACCESS Operations and Management Consultant Manager

Joe Tammy, Circuit 17 (Broward County) ACCESS Operations and Management Consultant Manager

Upcoming Community Events

Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) is hosting its 29th Annual Broward Aging Network Conference May 10-11, 2010. For more information, call 954-745-9567 or visit their website at www.adrcbroward.org

New Life Brazilian Christian Church is having its New Life Health Fair on April 24. For more information, contact their office at 954-946-5256.

News Flash

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) created a national Call Center for homeless veterans. The hotline will ensure that homeless veterans or veterans at risk of homelessness have free access, 24/7 to trained counselors. The hotline is intended to assist homeless veterans and their families, VA Medical Centers; federal, state and local partners; community agencies; service providers; and others in the community. To be connected with a trained VA staff member, call 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838).

In the Spotlight

The Coalition For Independent Living Options (CILD) is a private, nonprofit agency whose mission is to promote independence for people with disabilities. Incorporated in 1990, CILD provides services for children and adults with disabilities in Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie and Okeechobee counties. As a civil rights organization, CILD promotes equal rights and full inclusion of people with disabilities. The center adheres to the Independent living philosophy: "People with disabilities have the right to self-determination and to make choices in their lives." For more information regarding their services, please call 1-800-683-7337 or visit their website at www.cilo.org.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Broward county has been the prime focal point for planning, coordinating and funding services beneficial to the multiple needs of Broward residents, 60 years of age and older. The ADRC contract with governmental bodies and primarily nonprofit groups to administer: Meals-on-Wheels, senior and adult daycare centers, minor home repairs, and in-home transportation services. The prime mission of the ADRC is to assure the merited right of the older citizens of Broward county to live their retirement years, with dignity, in their accustomed environment. For more information, visit their website at www.adrcbroward.org or contact the Elder Help Hotline for Broward County at 954-745-9779.

ACCESS Florida

The ACCESS Florida program is responsible for public assistance eligibility determination and ongoing case management of **Food Stamps, Temporary Cash Assistance and Medicaid**. ACCESS Florida is the service delivery model for economic self-sufficiency services. It is based on stream lined workflows, policy simplification and technology innovations. ACCESS Florida provides enhanced access to services through a combination of Department staff and community providers. Recognized as a national model, this service delivery system offers eligible clients a self-directed path to economic services seven days a week, 24-hours a day through a Web on-line application and an integrated voice response system.

This system makes it easier and faster for clients and potential clients to apply and access information about their accounts. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) rewarded/recognized the Department in 2009 for excellence in service to those facing economic crisis. The state of Florida was awarded a \$7.1 million bonus for achieving the best payment accuracy rate in the country for the food stamp program.

Through our newly implemented MyACCESS Account System, our customers can access their personal account information quickly and securely. They are able to view their case information and interact with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) through the Internet at their convenience, 24-hours a day, 7-days a week.

The ACCESS program overview is also available on the DCF Internet Web page at <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/admin/training.shtml>

Southeast Region's Community Partner Liaisons:

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John Heckathorne (Circuit 17, Broward County)

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Richard Mead (Circuit 17, Broward County)

Southern Region's Community Partner Summit

The Southern Region hosted its Community Partner Summit on March 26, 2010, at the Marriott Biscayne Hotel in downtown Miami. Community partners throughout the Southern Region attended the event. They were able to gain keen insight from keynote speaker Donald Arnett, USDA, Southeast Regional Administrator, and various workshops that they attended throughout the day. Mr. Arnette addressed the benefits and the efforts to increase participation in the Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps. The agency will be awarding grants of up to \$5 million to improve access to and increase participation in SNAP.

We're on the Web!

www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/access/

ACCESS South Florida Customer Call Center

1-866-762-2237



Rajonia Roberts and Sabriena Gibbs (Program Specialist) USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)



Monica Bither, Research & Training Specialist, Office of Disability Determination during her workshop presentation



Community Partners at SNAP workshop



Southeast Region's Liaisons Cheryl Altman and Kathie Beeson