

Department of Planning and Community & Economic Development
Community Development Division

Madison Municipal Building, Suite 225
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
P.O. Box 2627
Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2627
PH 608 266 6520
FAX 608 261 9626

MEMO

TO: CDBG Committee Members
FROM: Michael Miller, CDD Office
DATE: September 25, 2012
SUBJECT: Mentoring Positives

Mentoring Positives, Inc. Update

The Community Development Division has been working with Will Green of Mentoring Positives, Inc and his staff since March of this year to assist with creating a plan for their Darbo/Worthington community initiatives. Since the final summer funding recommendations staff has assisted Mr. Green with the development of a feasibility study for his Madison Urban Ag Enterprises. Staff provided a reserves fund application and encouraged Mr. Green to apply for our Future Funds. Staff has also provided Mr. Green with a referral of an individual with expertise in this area. As of this date the two parties have had a couple of meetings and are working on completing the CDBG application.

Community Development Division staff also attended a meeting with Will Green, Becky Green and some of the Mentoring Positive members to discuss some potential business ideas of their members. After the presentations CDD staff and Mr. Green felt it would be advantageous for their members to get additional technical assistance training on starting and owning their own business. This will incorporate training put together by Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC) at no charge to the organization. The training will be a consolidation of several current classes such as: "Are You an Entrepreneur?" "Starting Your Own Business," and "Resources for Your Business." Members will be given information in an interactive atmosphere on what is needed to start-up a business and what to expect when they become business owners. Students will also have access to business owners to ask questions and get real life feedback. We are in the process of finalizing the training program structure. We have received feedback from a few of the Mentoring Positive members and will look to incorporate that into the curriculum. We are looking to start the training programs in late October. The main goal of this training is to teach members how to fish, rather than just give them a fish. Members will also be encouraged to sign-up for other training sessions offered by WWBIC to build on this knowledge base.

CDD staff has also coordinated WWBIC to work with Mentoring Positives on their social enterprise *Off the Block Salsa*. WWBIC's experience with operating their social enterprise *Coffee with a Conscience* should provide valuable technical assistance and business planning. WWBIC has also extended an invitation to Mentoring Positives staff for their 11 week *Start Smart: Business Planning Series* at no charge (\$300 fee). Mentoring Positives will have one staff member attending the class.