

## Weed & Seed Report

### December 2008

The Weed and Seed Coordinator is working on transitioning out of her role in each of the neighborhoods. She has notified each of the JFF teams and the South NRT about her departure at the end of this month.

In Allied, the Coordinator and a small subcommittee of providers met and discussed how some of the Weed & Seed duties would be handled once the position ends.

- The group felt that it is important for the monthly Allied Stakeholder meetings to continue, and they would like more opportunity to use those meetings to identify issues as they arise and discuss potential solutions once those issues have been identified. Lorri Wendorf, OCS neighborhood services coordinator, will take over the duty of staffing the Stakeholders meeting, and she will work with the JFF social worker, the school social worker and others to develop meeting agendas. With the Coordinator position being phased out, there is no identified person that will help orient new providers or provide support and technical assistance to develop new programs in Allied.
- The group identified that there is no City staff person nor neighborhood-based service provider that can offer the Allied Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood Association (ADMNA) the same level of support as the Weed & Seed Coordinator. The JFF team has agreed to help the Association with their outreach materials for both the monthly (community meal, mobile food pantry, and the monthly meeting) as well as special events (i.e. summer festival and annual banquet). The JFF team has also agreed to help with the planning of the summer festival. There is no plan for OCS staff or a neighborhood provider to help plan nor attend the monthly meetings. Other potential gaps in support that were identified: assisting the Association with a leadership transition; helping the Association continue to develop leadership skills/capacity; and maintaining and building on the Association's connections with providers, government and other community groups.

### Leadership Development

The coordinator continues to work with the South Metropolitan Planning Council (SMPC), the South Police District and GLC-trained and other neighborhood leaders on various projects in South Madison.

- **Penn Park Partners** has continued to meet monthly, and they have developed a committee to plan for the commemoration of the Park this spring. With support from the Coordinator, **Penn Park Partners** successfully completed a grant to the Evjue Foundation to continue the community events in the Park this spring and summer. The Bram's Addition neighborhood officer will continue to work closely with the neighborhood leaders in planning and implementing the Park events next year.
- In November, in collaboration with the SMPC, the GLC and the Community Writing Assistance Program, the coordinator planned and implemented a successful grant writing workshop for community members. The Coordinator provided information about available City grants during the workshop.
- The coordinator will be helping the Burr Oaks Neighborhood Association with their annual Lincoln School Christmas party on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December. Several of the GLC-trained residents are taking on leadership roles in this event.
- Since the last report, the SMPC, in partnership with the Weed & Seed program, hosted the second and third (final) Family and Community Town Suppers (FACTS) – energetic, interactive events that bring people of all ages, race, and socioeconomic classes together to discuss important issues over a meal. The goal of the FACTS is to have an open and honest dialogue about safety concerns on the South side and what the residents that participate in the dialogues are willing to work on with regard to those emerging issues. At our last FACTS, we had about 55 participants, and they divided into three workgroups (activities for youth, neighborhood traffic hazards, and community-building activities) that developed an action plan for the group. The FACTS committee is having a wrap-up meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> to review the action plans developed and determine how to best support the groups to accomplish their goals.

### Youth Court

At this point, the Allied Community Youth Court Steering Committee will need to determine how their quarterly meetings will be staffed, given the phasing out of the Weed & Seed Coordinator. The Allied Youth Court continues to hear about 3-4 cases per month, and the majority of those cases are referred immediately from Municipal Court for juveniles that is

held at the Boys & Girls Club on that same day. Youth Services of Southern WI and the Dane County Timebank continue to build their partnership to bring Youth Court to other Madison neighborhoods. Gloria Reyes, the neighborhood officer in Burr Oaks, is leading the effort to bring the Timebank Youth Court to her neighborhood. At this point, Officer Reyes's group will be collaborating on a joint Youth Court that will happen at La Follette High School. OCS staff will be assigned to monitor the progress of the Allied Youth Court as well as the implementation of new Youth Courts in other neighborhoods.

#### Anti-Prostitution Initiative

The **Community Coordinated Response to Prostitution** (fka the prostitution workgroup) continues to meet and evaluate the success of their initiatives: the Badger Wellness Workshop and The JOHN (Joining and Organizing Healthy Neighborhoods) school. After a few prostitution stings in the area this fall, there were several arrests and a Spanish-language JOHN school is planned for later this month. The Coordinator will be participating in the JOHN school – she will be reading a personal account about how the sex trade industry has affected the life of a woman that has prostituted. With the extension of the federal grant that will allow the City to continue some Weed & Seed programming into 2009, the Steering Committee voted to provide Project Respect with additional funding for their anti-prostitution work that supports the CCR-P's goals.

#### South Side Initiatives

**South Madison Generations** (SMG) is a project that brings Quaker seniors together with Boys & Girls Club kids and CDI kids, and it is a collaboration with Weed & Seed, the South PD and the South Madison Coalition for the Elderly. These groups join together for fun activities and build lasting relationships. The project received some *Hands Across South Madison* funds for summer and fall activities. Because the events and activities were so well attended and successful, they are planning to apply for the grant again for next summer. The South Madison Coalition for the Elderly staff and the neighborhood officer will continue to spearhead the project. In addition, the Steering Committee voted to allocate some remaining Weed & Seed programming funds to the SMG project.

#### Allied Initiatives

The coordinator continues to work with the Dane County Timebank in the development of their Allied membership network and Time Dollar Store. The Timebank has requested the assistance of City staff to identify low-cost or free space in the neighborhood to pilot the Time Dollar Store, which they believe will encourage neighbors to become more engaged in their community while meeting some of their basic needs. Every hour that residents spend volunteering in the neighborhood is counted as an hour of "time dollars", which they can then spend on personal care and other items at the store. After several months of negotiations, the Timebank signed a lease with the City for the store – they are sharing a 3BR unit in the City-owned property with the Allied Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood Association. The store officially opened for business with a potluck lunch on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

The coordinator continues to plan for the 2009 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site with MAP staff. MAP has identified a site coordinator, and she has already attended IRS training in preparation for the tax season. As the neighborhood services coordinator, Lorri Wendorf will be the contract manager for this program. At this time, we are exploring other venues for technical assistance and support that has previously been provided by the Weed & Seed coordinator, including support offered through the federal Community Capacity Development Office (fka federal Weed & Seed office).

#### Transition Planning

OCS staff have been working on the transition of Weed & Seed Coordinator duties related to contracts and the Allied Task Force.

- The coordinator's contract management duties – involving both Community Services programs and Emerging Funds contracts – will be divided among the OCS coordinators, including the Community Services Program Coordinator.
- The Weed & Seed coordinator has had primary responsibility for taking minutes at the Allied Task Force subcommittee and full Task Force meetings. At this point, no staff person has been identified as assuming those responsibilities. In addition to the minutes, the Coordinator regularly connects with residents and other members of the Task Force in between meetings to ensure that they are participating in the most meaningful way possible. No staff have been identified to assume the support role for resident participants.

