

PARTNERS IN ACTION
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

We have been incredibly busy with a unique problem. We received almost one million dollars in stimulus funds! You would not think that is a problem but the process itself has been somewhat of a whirlwind and we are adding new programs while maintaining current programs.

We held a community forum in June to get ideas from people about the best way to spend the stimulus monies. Out of that forum came eight partnerships with local agencies. While I wish we could have spread the funds to more partners, it just wasn't feasible. I would however, like to thank everyone who attended and invite them to our next forum tentatively scheduled for sometime this fall.

I want to ask all of you to save the date to help us celebrate 45 years of service to low-income people from the greater Springfield area. We will hold a Gala Celebration on **October 29th** at the Springfield Sheraton. I hope that you will be able to attend and help us honor some wonderful people that evening. More information will be coming as we finalize the details. I look forward to speaking with each of you there,

Sincerely,
Paul F. Bailey

Springfield Partners Updates and News

You probably watched local television coverage of the governor's visit in June. Governor Patrick announced stimulus funds for Weatherization to Springfield homes.



Our Executive Director Paul Bailey listens to Governor Patrick make his announcement.

We recently hired Elizabeth Godek, Weatherization Accountant, Erica Sulikowski, Education Coordinator, Janis Gatling and Lourdes Garcia, childcare teachers. And our Childcare Director, Wanda Banks, recently received an MA in English from Western New England College.

Our Director of Planning and Development, Mary Cassidy, recently was designated as a Certified Community Action Professional (C-CAP) after completing rigorous requirements and testing. Mary is the only C-CAP in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and will receive national recognition for her accomplishment at the National Community Action convention in Philadelphia in September. Her status will enhance the image of Springfield Partners in the eyes of regulatory agencies.

We held the second Food Policy and Obesity Conference on April 18 in conjunction with the YMCA's Healthy Kids Day. The Keynote Speaker was Roberta Friedman, Director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale University. The conference was attended by almost 100 people and everyone left with new ideas for recipes, healthy eating and exercise.

Our IDA program held a backyard cookout to promote the program; free matched savings accounts for purchasing a home, college costs or expenses related to business start-up. More than 100 people attended and enjoyed hamburgers, hot dogs, and popcorn, and 40 people completed the application process making it a very successful evening.

We held First Time Homebuyer Workshops in August with 13 participants completing the entire series.



August 1st Time Home Buyer Graduates

Graduates will go on to Pre-Purchase Counseling where they meet individually with our Housing Counselor.

Program Profile

For this edition, we are focusing on a program that we have been able to offer again thanks to stimulus funds; our Home

Furnishings Program. We offered this program for many years but had to close it because of budget cuts. We are once again collecting donated furniture items and distributing them from our warehouse at 721 State Street to individuals and families transitioning from shelters into stable housing.

This is a referral only program. We are provided with names of eligible families from local shelters and service providers and we are able to help them choose appropriate furnishings thanks to generous donations from Kavanagh's Furniture and from area residents. Many thanks also to the good people at Williams Distributing and Peter Pan Bus Company for storing and delivering the furniture to our warehouse. If you have gently used furniture, free of rips or stains that you would like to donate, please contact us at the number below.

Upcoming Events

As our Executive Director mentioned, we will hold a gala dinner at the Springfield Sheraton on **Thursday, October 29th** and hope that you will all join us. We will be honoring some truly exceptional people but don't want to give away too much just yet. We are also speaking with some very interesting people about providing a keynote address so stay tuned for up to the minute details.

Board News

We would like to welcome two new board members: Tom Sullivan, appointed by State Representative Sean Curran and Eileen McGrath, representing District Six, the Indian Orchard neighborhood.