

United Methodist Community News

Bridges Out of Poverty Update

On Saturday, June 26th, we held our first 2010 District Bridges Out of Poverty workshop in Croton Ohio (Licking County). The main presenter, Carlos Guarjardo, is an AmeriCorps Vista worker who himself grew up in generational poverty. Carlos told the story of how he was involved in self destructive behavior as a youth, but that enrolling in a Getting Ahead class (a nineteen week course for persons struggling to get out of poverty, part of the Bridges Out of Poverty curriculum) helped him to turn his life around. He said it wasn't because of monetary assistance or material aid; it was because for the first time in his life, someone believed in him. He remembered being asked, **“What do you have to give that no one else can give?** Seeing that he had something unique to give back is what led him onto a positive journey and into eventually becoming a facilitator for Bridges out of Poverty workshops.

Bridges Out of Poverty helps people move from a loss of hope and feelings of inadequacy to empowerment to be all that God created us to be. Here is the schedule for upcoming Bridges Out of Poverty workshops:

- 1) Saturday, Aug 21, 9am-4pm at Community UMC in Circleville, Pickaway County
- 2) Tuesday, Sept 21, 2-5pm at Columbia Heights UMC- training only- before the Community Ministry Festival (5:30-8pm)
- 3) Saturday, Oct 9, 9am-4pm at Marysville First UMC in Union County
- 4) Saturday, Oct 30, 9am-4pm at Broad St UMC in Columbus
- 5) Saturday, Nov 6, 9am-4pm at Powell UMC in Delaware County

Here are a few of the benefits:

- The hidden rules of economic class will begin to make sense to you
- You'll have better skills to understand the very complex issues of low income families
- You will be more effective communicating with low income persons
- Your organization will be more effective in delivering your services
- You can reduce the stress level of your frontline staff who work directly with your customers
- You can begin to reduce the turnover within your company of entry level staff

Our goal is to offer these workshops not only to congregations but also to schools and other agencies across the nine counties in the Capitol Area Districts. We are mostly offering them on Saturdays, with two parts (a simulation of poverty in the morning plus the Bridges training in the afternoon) with Lou Seipel as the presenter. On Tues Sept 21st it will have the 3 hour Bridges Out of Poverty Training which can be attended before the Community Ministry Festival. Jesus calls all of us to build bridges with those we serve- to do ministry **with** the poor, not just **to** the poor. To register, go to our website, www.umcommunityministries.org or call me, Beth Weisbrod at 877-228-0521 for more information.