

**FAIM Coordinator Meeting**

**Wednesday October 6th, 2010 at Territory Golf Course, St. Cloud**

**Meeting called to order at 10:03 p.m.**

**Attendees:** Maria Otte, Jan Backlin, Patrick Sheppard, Emily Bezdicek, Cari Evavold, Jill Fyre Anderson, Kate Ouverson, Ann Macgregor, Joan Carrow, Sandy O'Fallen, Mona Elmahdy, Amanda Peterson, Eric Branson, Wendy Heath, Heather Thormodson, Lynn Nesland , Teresa McCauley, Dan DuHamel, Steve Nagle, Maggie Canby, Kelly Ehrenberg, Lyn Hubacher, Kim Shaff, Becki Doty, Nancy Vierstreate, Shannon Lambert

Introductions and new news:

Scott Carver Dakota: new ED, Carolina Bradpiece, started in August.

CAPSH: staff attorney doing monthly legal clinics with volunteer attorneys. Had full enrollment. FAIM is planning a new open house for new home asset, and will be planning a session for business track as well. Looking for input.

Inner County: Just starting FAIM in July – very exciting!

Teresa: annual fundraiser for Women Venture coming up

Emerge: Running an AmeriCORP program focusing on reentry and recent immigrant population. Placed 23 Americorp volunteers throughout the Twin Cities.

Duluth: starting a financial opportunity center. In planning stages, but combining financial lit with employment opportunities . Starting financial lit in group homes, and are receiving funds to continue.

Duluth: Maggie Canby started (woo hoo!)

Sandy: ED retiring Dec. 10.

Mahube: DEED asked to come to Bemidji and presented info about FAIM. Hopefully a provider will be found.

OtterWad: EAP program now including Ottertail County as well as Wadena. Lots of changes in the building and added new staff.

TCC: ARRA reporting. Financial lit working with 135 families in partnership with LSS and \_\_\_ in Morrison and Todd counties.

Heather: Recently finished ARRA transportation – served 27 households with new vehicle purchase. Upcoming Food Drop this month in 4 of our communities in Traverse and Grant County. Heather is staying on for some time in the future.

Emily: Tri CAP – officially the FAIM coordinator (YEA!!).

Patrick: financial coach training trained 64 new trainees- bankers, HR directors, retirees, educators, and more. They will now be training 20-25 people each. 1600-1700 people (applause) This was CAP, United Way, Catholic Charities, and others.

Steve: Affordable Housing program closing, 110 households served, including FAIM participants. Jan, Kate, Joelle and Steve attended CFED conference – had great conversations with staff of Klobachar and Frankin.

MVAC: flood recovery is moving along, and MVAC is preparing.

Kate: Thank you to everyone for their hard work. Question to Patrick: what compelled the discussion to train community members, and what is the funding.

Patrick: approached by United Way to do more please; collaboration created the model and utilize volunteers as “teachers” to their communities. Idea of building the program into existing groups to spread the message ie church groups, community meetings, etc. Agencies chipped in money, and raised \$15,000 from local sources (banks, businesses, etc). Also utilizing VISTA rep to coordinate volunteers. Have also had lots of inquiries from other agencies on how to duplicate in other communities.

#### **State Report:**

Dan D. reported that ARRA is now finished. Reports are being done. Will be one more FSR coming out, to capture all spending (which was completed by 9/30).

CFSI has RFP that went out for innovative solutions to getting people into main stream financial institutions and the state is applying on behalf of FAIM. It will be \$200K-\$300K per grant. Seeking grant to provide match to secured credit card and IRAs. Will be serving up to 150 clients. Will include some staff and training dollars. Kathy Solheim has agreed to partner with us as well as Bremer Bank for the accounts. Will have some idea by November. Eastside Neighborhood of St. Paul has been invited to apply for this grant as well. Projecting implementation as July 1<sup>st</sup> – serving current and past FAIM participants.

Ladders out of Poverty task force (next branch of Commission to End Poverty) beginning. Dan is seeking information on any transportation programs (beyond bus programs), specifically with and IDA-focus. Brief summaries, outcomes, etc, by the end of the week please. Can be purchase or repair. Kim shared she is on 2/3 committees and Dan is on all 3. All hearings are public and they have a website – please participate.

Dan and Joelle will be presenting FAIM to their management.

Aug 3-5 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary CAP training conference. Will be in Duluth. NOT a transplant of Financial Fitness Conference, but will have some sessions pertinent to FAIM coordinators.

FAIM monitoring – Visions reports are able to be accessed. Will be checking in to make sure all are compliant. Please make sure your data is in and as accurate as possible. This includes the items that Dr. Solheim has for her reports. This is a part of our Federal grant.

#### **Visions (Patrick):**

FAIM program needs to be updated so that codes for milestones match the new Federal codes. A group of FAIM coordinators needs to get together to create a working template to send out to IT people at each agency so we are all correct and the same. If your agency does not have IT, work with Visions team when the time comes. Training will take place when it's ready to go. **Volunteers: Ann, Jan, Dan, Kate, Patrick, and Kim.**

Sandy asked Dan if State will let them know if people are coming up on report. Dan responded: no, only if numbers are significantly different will you be contacted.

Patrick: please check your data. Specifically check milestones and activities as well as enrollment. He is hoping to include these types of reports in the upcoming training. Kate: please invite your IT to the training, as it is extremely beneficially for program and IT staff to gain a better understanding and working relationship. Heather: if you are looking for specific training, please share with Kate. Kate: we are looking for the next step so that our programs keep moving forward. This requires accurate reports/outcomes.

Patrick: stressed importance of Participant Satisfaction surveys. Please give your participants and have it sent to Cari (provide envelope?). This assessment is on the exit form on the FAIM website. Question from Heather: how is the midpoint assessment being entered into Visions? Patrick: when putting into Visions that taught class, should put in the assessment information then. {brief demonstration in Visions}

Dan is working with Dr. Solheim in the publication of the assessment results. Kate: please look for future training; will work to make sure there is as much advanced notice as possible, but it is difficult so please be understanding and try to attend. Patrick: if you are attending training, please remember to bring your own laptop armed with Visions and ready to run.

### **Coordinators Report:**

Federal report to congress to be sent out.

### **Question to all coordinators:**

1. Hours weekly staff contribute to IDA program?
2. Are you utilizing volunteers for IDA program?
  - a. How many hours do volunteers contribute.

Please email answers to Kate.

WCMCA staff are working on reports and getting instructions out to coordinators. Patrick suggested that Dan W. be included as trainer in next training to show these reports too.

WCMCA fiscal staff is attending training on W9/tax withholding for all of our vendors, including FAIM vendors. Information will be coming out as soon as we have our processes are developed. Law lists a timeframe for W9s to be returned, and if they are not returned in that time frame 28% of funds will be withheld automatically, and vendor must file for lost funds via tax return.

As requested, brochure has been changed to 4-fold (no insert).

Audit time is approaching. Will be requesting files from coordinators as they are selected by the auditors. Kate stated that the assumption is that all files are accurate and include appropriate documentation esp. eligibility documentation. If you are asked to send files, these can be sent by email (scanned), or copied and mailed to the WCMCA office. FAIM website does include file checklist if you are doing double-checks on your files. There will need to be a quick turnaround on these files, so please make sure that if you will be out of the office you designate another staff person to get this info to us if requested.

Kate and Steve were asked to present a workshop on IDA network in Boston. MN FAIM website provided forms to other networks. Focus on program integration to support FAIM program, and there was much excitement about this.

Group attended CFED conference. Financial Fitness conference planning meeting took place.

OEO is requesting that when you request a payout that you include why the payout is being made (what it was for).

There is a new contract available that has a way to select a 1-year contract vs. a 2-year contract. See the website.

Pam Johnson will be presenting information at our November meeting.

Steve: Kansas CAP representative at CFED conference that is a grant writer for AFI grants. She was encouraging others to request funds from AFI. There is money available for the asking. Input request: is 3840 enough to get done what they need to get done? Should amount be increased and serve less people? Sandy: housing asset – could use more, especially as lending has changed. Teresa: businesses could also strongly benefit. Amanda – education, too. Amanda: could they be served only once. Dan: yes, regulations on a maximum asset: could only be served 1x according to current guidelines. Kim: concerned about serving less people. Jan: can it be staged differently? Could we try financial literacy first, and then look at which people are a good fit for increased amounts? Amanda: are we meeting our maximum goal numbers? Dan: United Way grants meant that we were moving clients into new grants. Activity will change now as that funding disappears. We will now only have the original grants. Patrick: when asking clients what is most beneficial it has never been the money, it's always the other services. Dan: We will be considering these policy changes for July 2013. Maggie: Like to see Financial Lit first anyway. Patrick: now – clock starts with 1<sup>st</sup> deposit... what if clock starts at financial lit? Can we try with some of these clients and not all? Steve: Example of private IDA program that IF they were successful, then could enroll in a larger IDA program. Sandy: Habitat has participants save the amount of the mortgage payment ahead of time to make sure the family CAN pay that amount. Can we have a system like that? Steve: if we serve fewer people might this help coordinators that are struggling with the few they have? Dan: lets table and discuss at next meeting. {issue tabled}

CFED conference: 1038 attendees, lots of workshops. Break out sessions, and MN people at each sessions. Shared best practices. Exciting part going to hill and meeting congress people. 300 people had meet and greets with Klobeshar info who presented IDA program to the congress. BIG CEO's at plenaries. Michael Bar at Treasury was bidder conference speaker: very interesting. Upside-Down: report speaking to IDA strategies and how they can continue with less cost. A delegation from Canada there speaking, and asking a lot of questions about FAIM.

Have a contractor for grant writing for CFSI, Becky Washnick.

### **Conference Planning:**

Dan: surveys collected – location requests half and half. Committee looked at other locations, but Arrowwood is the best deal (least expensive). April 20-21<sup>st</sup>, additional credit repair training (4 hours) available along with the conference (but not part of the conference). Sponsors: MFFN, MN Saves, DEED, FAIM, OEO, Workforce Center, and possibly United Way. LiHEAP, Wex, etc may be integrating... may be national interest around this topic. No dinner this year – but will have awards banquet luncheon instead. Have many possibilities of speakers/presentations. Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> – CAFE... working group conference DEED, DHS, and ... collaborative effort regarding IDA and employment.

**Dan: reminder that if you are utilizing CSBG for FAIM staff salary, eligibility for participants must be 125% of poverty or less.**

**Reporting by grants (Kate):** Currently, we are overenrolled in 0423 by 107 accounts. To accommodate 0375, we need 44 accounts. Net over-enrollment is 64 accounts statewide. That means we have the capacity for an additional 65 accounts to account for the expected drops. Kate reported that we are pursuing an extension for 0423. Currently that grant ends Sept. 30, 2011.

Sandy: what steps should coordinators be taking to fill these slots? Kate: begin doing outreach to find participants that can save for the 1 year. Enroll then submit applications to Cari. When slots are full, email will be sent to discontinue extended enrollments. Maximum to be saved can only be \$480. Reminder that participant can re-enroll in FAIM in an account from the next grant after this one-year enrollment. Amanda: can people enroll for the same asset twice? Kate: yes, but our focus is to continue to reach out to others in your area to “spread the wealth.” Question regarding enrolling participants who have completed an asset previously. Dan: can we add a questions regarding previous IDA participation? **Cari will add the question to the FAIM application.** Lyn H.: If you have an enrollment from a previous coordinator and find that the client is not eligible, are you held responsible? Dan: If the client is the one responsible for not disclosing info, you would be held harmless. If the agency knowingly enrolled when not eligible, the agency is responsible. Becki: If someone enrolled in another state’s IDA are the prohibited from enrolling? Dan and Kate: No.

Please monitor savings patterns of your participants, especially in the homeownership track. If the participants are not taking the necessary steps (financial lit, credit repair, savings) they most likely will not be able to purchase a home. If there is no progress being made, please close their account and exit from the program. If the match obligated is then not spent, we end of up with dollars at the end of our grant period.

Please get your documentation in promptly. Cari has to spend too much time assisting coordinators in getting the appropriate documentation in, and we do not have dollars to support this work. Please submit the correct documents as soon as possible, so we do not have to wait on payouts. For example: if payout is made on a training receipt, make sure you obtain the legitimate receipt when the purchase is made. Ann suggested that you tell your participant that if the documentation doesn’t come in, other participants cannot receive assistance. Patrick suggested keeping a file of undocumented purchases to keep the info in front of you. Kate: keep in mind that an estimate is not official documentation – we

need an invoice. Also, please don't send in the same documentation you have sent previously if new info is requested. Patrick: **requests that Dan W. continue to email the note of "documentation needed" when the copy of the check is emailed.**

Teresa: what is the procedure for school payout? Kate: Submit third party billing, and send in fee statement when it is available. Kate: please send in all documents at the same time (payout request, documentation, and ACH). Teresa: should ACH be sent right away or wait for fee statement? Patrick: should send ACH before third party billing is sent as it is a promise to pay and we want to ensure the money is there to pay it. Amanda: is an invoice enough? Kate: online purchases and mail-in orders are different – we do need both an invoice and some documentation that the product is received (ie packing slip). Kate suggests err on the side of too much rather than not enough.

We have many participants with full match that are not spending out. You may make request an extension if it is needed, but please follow up with your participants.

Lyn H: participant is fully saved in the education track but is taking steps to be English-proficient. Patrick suggests hiring a tutor through the school to go beyond ESL/ELL to help them be proficient to continue on with college education. This could be paid for through FAIM if its being provided through an approved institution.

Lyn H.: If client has documented only \$70 of earned income but she will have EITC, can the contract be for \$80 per month? Kate: no.

Cari explained the change in contract – have added a way to select 1- or 2-year contract. Question: would coordinators like to have the waiver of odd cents on the contract? {Discussion} **Cari will add the waiver with the specific wording that it be \$2.00 or less to be waived.** Ann stated that adding this to the contract would also solve the problem for clients who do not wish to earn interest. Kim suggested encouraging participants to overspend. Cari asked if it was the wish to add the statement authorizing coordinator to withdraw. Unanimously yes.

Patrick: can bullet 3 and 4 being combined? Unanimously yes – delete bullet 3.

Kate: WCMCA is moving along to being paper free. Scanning has begun. Jan: if you can't scan because of cost, what is the retention time? Kate: 7 years after the end date of the grant. Lyn H.: what is the retention policy on unopened accounts? Kate: refer to your own agency procedures, as the grant has no regulations on that. Dan D: keep in mind that if you agency is reporting and services on those clients follow your procedures.

Kate: interest in IDAs for those on SSI, also a pilot on IDAs for children. If you have opportunity to speak about the benefits of IDAs, please do so. We know that they are great opportunities for households, but we need to spread the word, especially before November.

Next meeting is Nov 17 at the Territory Gold Course.

**MEETING WITH UNITED WAY SUBGRANTEES:**

Kate: closed 0291, and all successfully spent. 44 moved from 0423 into 0291 to do so. These 44 are now a part of the 64 available – please enroll as you are able until you are told they are full. Accounts are being moved into 0375 in hopes of spending it in full if the extension is not granted.

Eric: institution holding accounts is being bought out by another credit union soon. Word is that they will not be renewing their contract and may discontinue FAIM accounts. Kate made the suggestion that Emerge begin using Bremer. Ann stated that she has all of the account information and mails it to Cindy at Bremer, and it is a very easy process. Dan D.: will be checking on state law on how best to proceed.

Discussion was held regarding interest-bearing accounts for those who are opposed for religious reasons. Bremer is willing to accommodate in moving these funds to a WCMCA account, but the account itself still earns interest. **West Central will research how to move these funds in VistaShare so the client's account is interest-free.**

Kate: reminder that WCMCA can pull Equifax credit reports on your behalf and bill your agency.

Kim reminded coordinators that you must have signed permission within 12-months of pulling the last credit report.