The Cameron Foundation Launches New Web Site

Following extensive redesign, The Cameron Foundation recently launched its new, enhanced web site (www.camfound.org) to serve as a greater resource to the community. “Early on, we conducted research among some of our users to inform our thinking about how to improve the site, and several changes came out of that dialogue,” explained Coordinator of Communications Risha Stebbins. She added, “With capacity-building so central to our ethos, we’ve created a better window for nonprofits to tap the many capacity-building resources available to them, and we’ve also increased the functionality of our administrative tools, such as reporting forms, to better serve our grantees. We’re grateful to those who helped us find these opportunities for improvement.”

Among the notable changes, this new site includes a login section where applicants and existing grantees are now able to access, save, and reuse their Cameron forms. Courtesy of Southside Community Partners (SCP), a news feed on the home page brings timely information to visitors about relevant news and activities in Southside Virginia for local nonprofit organizations. Links on the site’s “Nonprofit Knowledge Center” also connect users to SCP’s tools as well as an assortment of Cameron resources. Throughout the site, information has been reorganized to make it easier to find, and greater visibility is given to the Foundation’s many nonprofit partners to more fully reflect the community being served.

To assist organizations in making the transition to using the online forms, the Foundation is sending out additional instructions to its existing grantees. Web users are also encouraged to contact Stebbins (rstebbins@camfound.org) directly with any questions or comments about the new site.

The Cameron Clarion is dedicated to promoting the resources available to area nonprofit organizations and initiatives through The Cameron Foundation, and to reporting on the successes of these organizations. We welcome any comments or editorial contributions, and we thank you for your support as we continue to serve the Tri-Cities and Southside region.

Taking Action: 2012 Housing and Community Development Summit

Fostering opportunities to address the need for sustainable community development and equitable housing choices in Petersburg

Last year, at the inaugural Housing and Community Development Summit, more than a hundred people gathered for what could be considered one of Petersburg’s most comprehensive and productive brainstorming sessions. The topic? The revitalization of housing in Petersburg – a city, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, with the highest percentage of vacant homes in the region, the lowest rate of ownership, and a rent-to-income ratio that civic leaders and stakeholders agree is simply unacceptable.

Hosted by The Cameron Foundation and the City of Petersburg, this year’s Housing Summit, on Wednesday, June 27, is designed to foster opportunities to address the need for sustainable community development and equitable housing choices in Petersburg.

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Handy Lindsey, Jr., president and CEO of the Cameron Foundation said, “The conference will engage the people that are directly impacted by the City’s approach to housing and the transition that needs to happen to ensure Petersburg is a sustainable community.”

According to Brandy Cramer, program officer with the Foundation, the first Summit was an important milestone. “Every effort put forth to help create lasting partnerships and align resources within the community through forums like the Summit will have a positive impact on the housing challenges facing Petersburg.”

Indeed, one of the most important takeaways from the first Summit was a genuine awareness of the need for a second. “Within the City of Petersburg, community leaders, developers, and area nonprofits, as well as The Cameron Foundation recognized a significant opportunity to synergize existing development and revitalization initiatives,” said Cramer. The Summit is a chance for those involved in community and economic development to come together to discuss ways to move forward around a strategic approach to better housing choices.

As a result of the 2011 Summit, opportunities for collaborations increased, geographic targets were highlighted, and various initiatives gained attention across the Petersburg community. After last year’s event, several activities ensued, including a city bus tour and the Resources Enabling Affordable Community Housing (REACH) Virginia workshop, an event dedicated to convening housing stakeholders to discuss sustainable development opportunities for homeownership, mixed-use sites, and mixed-income communities. A community developers’ luncheon, was also held to continue the dialogue the first Summit began with the goal of focusing on developers aligning their efforts with those of the city.

That said, opportunities like the 2012 Summit are crucial. Here, strategic networking among public officials, developers, important housing entities, and civic leaders can lead to important collaboration, and ultimately, revitalization.

The event will kick off with comments from City of Petersburg Mayor Brian Moore who will offer a celebratory presentation recapping the progress that has been made in Petersburg over the last year. Soaring examples will be shared of how other localities have overcome similar housing challenges and created strong communities using mixed-use and mixed-income strategies. Through facilitated group discussion, participants will engage in a reality check about what is needed to align efforts across sectors to achieve more successful outcomes for the city.

Summit attendees will hear keynote speaker Herman Brewer, bureau chief for economic development in Cook County, Illinois, where he heads up all departments within the newly formed area of Cook County government, including capital planning, building and zoning, real estate, works, and community development. Brewer is a national expert in economic development.

Register for the Second Annual Petersburg Housing & Community Development Summit at: http://www.connectsouthside.org/PetersburgHousingCommunityDevelopmentSummit/tabid/993/Default.aspx

Download a complete report on the inaugural Housing Summit, or visit www.camfound.org/about-us/publications

To learn more about housing in the City of Petersburg, please visit GiveSouthsideVa.org and click on Learn.
Announcing The Crater Region’s Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

In July 2011, Homeward received a grant from The Cameron Foundation to provide technical assistance to the Petersburg Continuum of Care. Working with the United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg, the Crater Region’s continuum’s lead agency, and area service providers during the course of the grant period, the group focused intensely on planning and coordination activities to be carried out in the community. The main objective of the grant was to develop a community strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness in the Foundation’s service area.

The Crater Region’s Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, is available online at www.camfound.org. It represents the culmination of two years of community collaboration and partnerships focused on improving housing stability and streamlining homeless services in the Crater Region.

Valerie Liggins, Foundation program officer, said, “The plan provides the community with a blueprint and structure for developing the capacity needed to meet the needs of those experiencing a housing crisis. It also provides community-wide goals that will assist the community in developing high quality effective interventions.”

Rather than being based on a ten-year time frame, the plan is a three-year strategic plan that provides direction for establishing the needed structure for a successful continuum and implementing the best practices that will help the community achieve its programmatic goals.

This project has been sustained by the philanthropic support of The Cameron Foundation, and the guidance and expertise of all involved proved extremely helpful in navigating the community development process that supported the creation of this plan.

Liggins credits the community partners with helping to make the strategic plan a reality. “The planning process itself has been an amazing community development process and the newly formed Crater Area Coalition to End Homelessness is a direct outcome of increased community capacity.”

Summit (cont.)

on community development and housing and their alignment with the improvement of public education and regional policy. Renowned for his foundation expertise, the speaker previously served as the director of the Chicago Working Group of The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. He has in-depth experience in the coordination of community development corporations, state and local government, financial institutions, and foundations around these issues. No stranger to the region, early in his career (from 1984 to 1991) Brewer served as senior planner and assistant to the city manager for Richmond.

The 2012 Summit will conclude with a review of next steps, a rundown of opportunities for further dialogue, and a call to action for a continued commitment to sustainable community development and equitable housing choices in Petersburg.

Claiborne Square: Housing Success Story

It was a critical need identified by many, including Restoration of Petersburg Community Development Corporation (ROPCDC) and the Better Housing Coalition (BHC), and now it serves as a benchmark.

Claiborne Square, an apartment community for low and moderate-income seniors in the City of Petersburg completed in 2011, was the site of an official dedication ceremony in January of this year.

Regina Payne, ROPCDC Chair, said this housing success story is more than a construction project. She maintains that the development is expected to “change the face of the Halifax community and act as a catalyst for new investment in the neighborhood.”

The shortage of safe and decent housing for the area’s senior residents was well-documented. In the Halifax neighborhood, in excess of 25 percent of the homes were abandoned, and 78 percent of the existing housing stock consisted of low-income rental units. What’s more, the neighborhood was plagued by an active drug trade as well as criminal activity. In a community-wide planning process funded by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Foundation, the neighborhood was selected as a key area for reinvestment for its proximity to downtown and the Multi-Modal Transit Center.

continued on page 4 - see Claiborne
Claiborne (cont.)

In late 2008, BHC joined forces with ROPCDC to launch construction of Claiborne Square. The 47-unit complex was the first development resulting from LISC’s community engagement process. Claiborne Square represented a significant outcome from the Petersburg Strategic Investment Plan.

In November 2009, construction crews broke ground for Claiborne Square and what Payne of ROPCDC was confident would be “a beautiful new apartment facility and a beacon of light and hope for the area.”

According to Lynn McAteer, vice president of planning and special projects with BHC, the Claiborne Square community represents an investment of $6.5 million. The Foundation's support over the past three years of $470,000 has leveraged approximately $4.5 million into the Petersburg community. Claiborne Square is expected to generate over $28,000 annually in real estate revenue to the City.

But there is more work to be done.

“BHC will continue to focus on the Halifax neighborhood revitalization,” McAteer shared. “The appropriate mix of housing and services will be identified working with residents and key stakeholders. It is through this process of community engagement that consensus is built and ultimately by which success will be determined.”

Today, after a slight setback caused chiefly by Hurricane Irene, McAteer proudly reports that Claiborne Square is at 70 percent occupancy.

“Currently 27 residents call Claiborne Square home, with another 8 applications approved. We're hoping to be fully leased by July,” McAteer said.

Situated on a highly visible site on Halifax Street, the project is expected to be an important impetus for future development efforts in Halifax and its surrounding neighborhoods in Petersburg. It stands as an inspiration and as a housing revitalization success story in its own rite.

Cameron Foundation Earns Kudos from Red Cross

The Cameron Foundation was honored with the Philos Philanthropy Award as part of the American Red Cross, Virginia Capital Region volunteer recognition event held last month at the Richmond Convention Center.

The Philos Philanthropy Award is bestowed annually on an individual or organization that best exemplifies the spirit of charitable giving.

“The Cameron Foundation has been a strong supporter of the Red Cross since 2004,” said Southside Area Location Director, Rosalyn Andrews. “Support from the Cameron Foundation has allowed our organization to respond to the needs of the community and we are honored to present them with the Philos Philanthropy Award.”

The award was presented to the chair of The Cameron Foundation’s Board, Larry Tucker, by Red Cross CEO Reggie Gordon, and Board Chairman John Duval.
Chequila Fields Named New Board Member

“I am results-oriented,” said Chequila Fields, newest board member of The Cameron Foundation. “At the end of each day, I need specific tasks – whether it is direct service, a productive meeting, or a program review that I can identify as success. My question to myself each day is, Did I make a difference?”

Employed with Sussex County Department of Social Services for the past 28 years, that is exactly what Fields has tried to do. For the last 11 years, she has served as director of the department, furthering its mission to provide self-reliance and protection for all residents of Sussex County through community-based services. Now, Fields brings that drive to The Cameron Foundation as a member of its board.

A native of Dinwiddie County, Fields is wholly invested in the Foundation’s service area. Currently a resident of Petersburg, she attended Dinwiddie Public Schools, Richard Bland College, and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) before beginning her career in social services in Sussex County.

Larry Tucker, chair of the Foundation board, welcomed the newest member, noting, “Although Chequila is a new member of our board, she is not new to the Foundation. She understands our calling to improve the quality of life for people in this region.”

Recognizing the value and opportunity for nonprofits, Fields recalled the first grant Sussex County Social Services received from the Foundation in 2006 for operations and direct services for the Sussex County Resource and Technology Center. In 2007, Fields was tapped to serve on the selection committee for the Foundation’s Cleveland A. Wright Award for Outstanding Community Service in its inaugural year. Additionally, she has been a member of the Foundation’s Health Advisory Council, which informs and guides grant making in its health programs area. The veteran social servant said limiting some of these individual commitments has been the biggest difference about serving on the Foundation board so far.

“Having to give up participation on some other committees and councils because of the demands of board participation has been a major adjustment,” said Fields.

Fields is a member of the VA League of Social Services Executives (VLSSE); member of Sussex County’s Comprehensive Services Policy Management Team (CPMT); member of Public Assistance Investigators of VA (PAIV); Co-Convener of Greensville/Sussex Regional Prisoner Reentry Council and Steering Committee; member of Smart Beginnings-Crater Advisory Council; administrator of the fiscal agency for the operation of Sussex Resource & Technology Center; and a member of Sussex County Emergency Management Team.

Chequila also has been a church musician for the past 35 years and has had the honor of serving in many area churches. She is currently responsible for the music ministry at Hassidiah Baptist Church in Jarratt, Virginia. She has two children: a daughter, Kamiran, and son, Kenston.

Q&A with New Board Member Chequila Fields

Q: How long have you been active with The Cameron Foundation, and in what capacity?
A: Approximately five years ago I was invited to serve on the selection committee for the Cleveland A. Wright Award for Outstanding Community Service. I’ve been affiliated on some level since then. Also in 2006, we [Sussex County Social Services] received our first grant for operations and direct services for the Sussex County Resource and Technology Center from Cameron. Most recently, I served on Cameron’s Healthcare Advisory Council until my appointment to the Board of Directors.

Q: What do you want the nonprofits The Cameron Foundation serves to know about you and your new role as a board member?
A: I believe that the welfare and safety of people is paramount and will always be first and foremost when presented with requests. However, I also believe that an individual’s learning far surpasses the classroom and our area is rich in culture, history, and the arts. Therefore, I believe I am able to extend my support of such programs in the service area.

Q: As a native of Dinwiddie County, a resident of Petersburg, and a product of Dinwiddie schools, is there a message you can share to encourage community investment?
A: Dinwiddie, much like Sussex County (where I’ve been employed for the past 28 years) lacks the ability to define a specific area of need as priority, largely, because there are so many. The Cameron Foundation is assisting both those localities in developing community assessments as well as facilitating focus groups with community partners. I encourage everyone from each locality to participate in either the meetings or surveys in order to obtain the information needed to begin defining and addressing realistic goals.

Q: What is the last movie, play, or musical you saw?
A: The musical FELA! featuring Patti LaBelle on Broadway.

Q: Who is your favorite musical performer and why?
A: That’s a tough one; it depends on my mood. I like all music. For the office, if I need to concentrate it would have to be Kenny G.

Q: What’s the technology you can’t live without?
A: Facebook – my family and friends are scattered. It keeps us in touch at all times!

Q: Finish this sentence. “Clarion readers would be surprised to know…”
A: how sensitive I can be.
During the Foundation’s board retreat in February, several updates were made to the Foundation’s 2012 grantmaking plans. According to President and CEO Handy L. Lindsey, Jr., “Given the backdrop of the economic recession, over the last few years it has been the practice of The Cameron Foundation’s Board of Directors to review the Foundation’s grant priorities annually and make adjustments.” Because the current circumstances might affect an organization’s next approach to the Foundation, it is recommended that prospective applicants understand these modifications.

The Foundation will ensure that the majority of its resources will be allocated to its first tier priorities. These include health, human services, community and economic development, and education. Limited funding will be available in the remaining program areas of civic affairs and conservation and historic preservation. Additionally, in the conservation and historic preservation category, the Foundation will only consider capital requests (building projects and equipment) at this time. In February, the Foundation also announced it had suspended funding for the cultural enrichment program area for the remainder of the year.

Technical assistance grant funding will continue to be available to eligible organizations operating within all seven of the Foundation’s program areas. Priority will be given to organizations with which the Foundation has an existing relationship, either through current or past grant funding, and to organizations engaging in collaborations and partnerships. Additionally, the Foundation will support demonstrated, effective approaches to problem-solving over untested trials. Capital requests are assigned lower priority, with the exception of this type of funding for the health and conservation and historic preservation program areas. It also is important to note that the Foundation continues to severely limit its consideration of multi-year requests.

Passing of the Gavel

The Cameron Foundation’s board opened the first meeting of the year with its new slate of officers. These individuals include Larry C. Tucker, chair; Pam Martin Comstock, vice chair; Kevin A. Hill, secretary; and Donald L. Haraway, treasurer. Ann C. Taylor is immediate past chair. Above, Taylor passes the gavel to Tucker.
Feasibility Study to Explore
The Benefit Bank of Virginia

For many, applying for state and federal benefits like Food Stamps or Medicaid can be confusing and time-consuming. Some might find it downright intimidating.

What’s more, securing these benefits often requires participants to move from office to office seeking assistance, or spend hours online, before making important connections with the right provider. The result? Billions of dollars in public funds go unused each year, and tens of thousands of eligible Virginians go unassisted financially.

What if there was a proven program to help eligible recipients access the benefits that are already available through state and federal programs? Not coincidentally, helping recipients access benefits that are already covered by these programs would lower the cost of services in the region, likely reducing the level of support the Foundation would need to supplement the budget of many of its service providers.

It certainly sounds like a program that warrants further investigation.

It’s called The Benefit Bank (TBB), and the Foundation recently announced it has joined four notable Virginia foundations in funding a feasibility study to examine how the administrative service model might work in Virginia.

The Cameron Foundation Vice President for Programs Jill Coleman said helping fund the feasibility study is an important step for the Foundation. “As the landscape changes, and more need for services surface, the role of philanthropy is changing,” said Coleman. “As leaders in charitable giving, we are challenged to find ways to bridge the gap between needs and resources. This combined effort is birthed from that emerging role of consistently surveying the landscape and helping communities respond appropriately.”

TBB is a web-based and counselor-assisted service designed for low- and moderate-income individuals and families that simplifies and centralizes the process of applying for many state and federal benefits. Through its eligibility screening tools, TBB can ensure that people are fully aware of the benefits to which they are entitled. As an expert system it helps maximize the benefits, tax credits, and refunds clients can secure.

One of the major advantages of TBB’s hub concept is the time-saving element for its users with its centralized system of application for eligible candidates. Furthermore, the information a person enters is stored securely, so an individual who wishes to reapply for benefits, apply for new benefits, or file future tax returns simply needs to enter his or her username and password to initiate new action. In addition to its home on the Internet, TBB is physically housed in a local nonprofit with trained counselors who help participants navigate the intricate system that bestows state and federal benefits.

Currently, there are three states with successful TBBs: North Carolina, South Carolina, and Ohio. In 2011, TBB served over 86,000 people in those states. Since 2006, TBB has helped clients access over $694 million dollars in benefits and refunds, connecting communities with resources to combat poverty and promote economic wellness.

Last fall, key staff from approximately ten foundations across the Commonwealth met to discuss TBB as a model and what impact introducing the program in Virginia might have. The meeting was convened and facilitated by Karl N. Stauber, president and CEO of Danville Regional Foundation, and was hosted by The Cameron Foundation. The discussion led funders to agree that TBB is a practical and useful model that would help Virginians access unused committed state and federal benefits. An action plan was suggested that included a feasibility study that might lay the groundwork for ultimately rolling out TBB in Virginia.

To date, the following foundations have committed to funding the feasibility study to explore TBB of Virginia: Danville Regional Foundation, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, The Community Foundation Serving Richmond and Central Virginia, The Harvest Foundation, and The Cameron Foundation.

The group conducting the feasibility study is MDC, a Durham-based nonprofit, which has worked with various partners to launch TBB in the three states currently using the program. The organization has more than 40 years experience in education, employment, and asset building. The group specializes in developing social innovation models that have demonstrated long-term sustainable social impact in communities by connecting people with resources that decrease poverty, increase employment, and stimulate local economies.

Developed for use by a wide range of agencies, TBB can be an integral part of a broad-based community response to poverty, an innovative public–private partnership of state/local governments and a broad, statewide coalition committed to helping neighbors move towards self-sufficiency. Within a six-month period, MDC will provide a full report, including research, analysis, and recommendations for establishing TBB of Virginia. Stakeholders will be updated on next steps.
Call for Nominations and Applications

For the sixth consecutive year, The Cameron Foundation seeks to recognize nonprofit organizations within its service area by soliciting nominations, both from the community and from the nonprofits themselves, for the Foundation’s renowned recognition award programs.

Cleveland A. Wright Award for Outstanding Community Service

In a time of great need, a number of local organizations have emerged to demonstrate a commitment to caring and service that stands out among the rest. Others have evolved or adapted to exemplify an unwavering generosity of spirit in the communities within the Foundation service area.

Now, the Foundation calls for members of the community at large to acknowledge these local organizations with nominations for its Cleveland A. Wright Award for Outstanding Community Service.

Nominations from the community should be submitted by May 30, and must include the appropriate form, available at www.camfound.org or by contacting the Foundation at 804 732 8900. After review of the pool of preliminary nominations, organizations meeting the award criteria will be contacted and formally invited to submit an official application. From these candidates, one local nonprofit organization will be selected to receive the Cleveland A. Wright Award for Outstanding Community Service, an honor that bestows an unrestricted $40,000 gift.

Past award recipients include Stony Creek Volunteer Rescue Squad; Waverly Volunteer Rescue Squad; the American Red Cross – Southside Area Chapter; The James House Intervention/Prevention Services; and in 2007, the inaugural year of this recognition award, Crater Community Hospice, Inc.

Excellence in Organizational Management Award

Facing the challenges of staff reductions or budget restrictions, was your nonprofit organization able to achieve its goals and meet the needs of its constituents? Similar to an internal audit, this award application process presents local nonprofits with an opportunity for self-assessment to measure performance.

The Foundation calls for staff or board members to apply on behalf of their organization for the Excellence in Organizational Management Award. Applications, due June 18, can be accessed online at www.camfound.org.

One nonprofit will receive a single, unrestricted $30,000 award for demonstrating excellence in overall organizational management. Up to two honorable mentions, with gifts of $10,000 each, will go to entities demonstrating excellence in one or more of the specific areas reviewed during the scoring process.

Interested organizations should attend the Foundation’s pre-application information session to get more details about the Excellence in Organizational Management Award. Two sessions are scheduled at The Cameron Foundation’s office: Monday, May 14, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; and Monday, May 21, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The classes are free, but registration is required. Please visit the Foundation website for details or contact Director of Capacity Building Athan Lindsay at alindsay@camfound.org or 804 732 8900.

Last year, Virginia’s Gateway Region was named recipient of the Excellence in Organizational Management Award, and The James House was chosen to receive an honorable mention. In 2010, American Red Cross – Southside Area Chapter was honored with first place for the Excellence in Organizational Management Award. Pathways-VA, Inc., received an honorable mention for the fourth consecutive year, and Virginia’s Gateway Region secured the same for its third consecutive year. In 2009, the primary honoree was Crater Community Hospice, and in 2008, it went to Southside Virginia Emergency Crew. In 2007, the first year of this recognition award that promotes self-examination, the Hopewell-Prince George Chapter of the American Red Cross received first place, with Southside Virginia Emergency Crew, Inc., garnering an honorable mention.
For more than two years, The Cameron Foundation’s Healthcare Advisory Council has provided valuable feedback to the Foundation, offering input on Letters of Intent (LOI) submitted by potential grantees in the program area of health.

In addition, the council has been instrumental in providing guidance regarding initiatives that have been established to examine the needs of the rural communities within the Foundation’s service area.

After polling focus group participants representing the areas of health and human services, business, education, youth and recreation providers, and faith and civic groups in Dinwiddie and Sussex Counties, two major reports were compiled that put forth the priority health and human services needs of these rural communities. The report is available for review on the Foundation website.

As a result of these studies, Program Officer Valerie Liggins reports that the Foundation will take a closer look at addressing those priority needs in a convening role within those communities.

“In Sussex County, planning meetings within the community have started to occur with an emphasis on identifying opportunities, enhancing community engagement and supporting community leadership,” said Liggins.

For Additional Information on the Healthcare Advisory Council and to access the two reports (Dinwiddie County Health and Human Services Needs Assessment and the Sussex County Focus Group Report: Exploring Health and Human Services from a Community Perspective), go to www.camfound.org/about-us/publications.

2012 Health Care Advisory Council Members

Shayla Anderson, Community Health and Prevention Supervisor, Crater Health District
Dr. J. Elisha Burke, Director of Health Ministry, Baptist General Convention of Virginia
Karen Cameron, Independent Health Care Consultant
Jill Coleman, Vice President for Programs, The Cameron Foundation
Dr. Martin Doperak, Community Member
Joseph Hubbard, Executive Director, District 19 Community Services Board
Ann Holsinger, Director of Assessment and Student Services, Dinwiddie County Public Schools
Teresa Isom, RN Health Services Coordinator, Prince George County Public Schools
Joan Ivey, Executive Director, Stony Creek Community Health Center
Ann Key, Coordinator, Sussex County Resource and Technology Center
Valerie Liggins, Program Officer, The Cameron Foundation
Handy Lindsey, President, The Cameron Foundation
Brenda Mitchell, Chief Executive Officer, Crater Community Hospice
Sheena Mackenzie, Development Director, Central Virginia Health Services
Gail Sutler, Nurse Manager, Chesterfield Health District
Sharon Williams, Nurse Manager, Sr., Crater Health District
It’s called being driven to succeed, and it’s a good thing,” said Athan Lindsay, the Foundation’s director of capacity building. “But sometimes, in the case of nonprofit organizations in particular, this commitment to others’ success, this drive to help others rise above economic adversity, or overcome physical or emotional challenges, comes before the healthy growth and development of the nonprofit itself.”

That’s where the Foundation’s Technical Assistance Grant Program comes in. An invaluable tool in helping nonprofits remain competitive and viable, technical assistance makes it possible for organizations to access independent, professional nonprofit consulting. Through the program, organizations work with consultants to obtain services such as fundraising and marketing assistance; financial planning; program development; strategic planning; board and staff development – all critical components for the success of the nonprofit, which often does not have the in-house expertise and other resources to develop these tools on its own.

“If an organization is managing itself, in developing assets and resources, in forging stronger collaborations and delivering valued services, it is a sustainable enterprise,” said Lindsay, who stresses the balance between being passionate and pragmatic. “For today’s nonprofit, capacity building is not a fad. It’s the key to long-term sustainability.”

Since the creation of the Technical Assistance Grant Program, the Foundation has streamlined the application and reporting procedures to help more nonprofits get the assistance they need with the ultimate goal of helping these organizations become both successful and sustainable for the long term.

Nonprofits can apply for a Technical Assistance grant at any time during the year, and no letter of intent is needed. The maximum award is $15,000, and organizations may request funding for multiple content areas and receive multiple Technical Assistance grants per year. It’s important for nonprofits to realize that applying for or receiving a Technical Assistance grant will not negatively impact an organization’s ability to apply for other forms of Foundation funding.

To apply, qualified nonprofit organizations and local government agencies that are headquartered in and assist the residents of Tri-Cities area should use the pre-assessment form and Technical Assistance grant application at www.camfound.org. Applicants can and should request funding for multiple content areas to meet the needs of the nonprofit through operational or management consultation services.

Lindsay said Technical Assistance grantees will complete post-assessment and 12-month follow-up interviews. According to the director, the process and assessments that are part of the Technical Assistance Grant Program should be seen as an enhancement of the program, rather than an impediment for nonprofits. “We’re asking organizations to identify their vulnerabilities so they can become more effective. In this way, the assessment process can be a tool for organizations, a way for them to be open and honest about what they need to grow and develop,” Lindsay said. “If the nonprofits are completely transparent about these issues and possible solutions, anything can be achieved.”

Technical Assistance grant applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with initial review conducted by Lindsay. Program area funding priorities do not apply to the Technical Assistance Grant Program, so indigenous organizations operating within all seven of the Foundation’s program areas are eligible to apply for this type of funding. The program areas include health, human services, community and economic development, education, civic affairs, cultural enrichment, as well as conservation and historic preservation.

A directory of consultants is available via Southside Community Partners’ website www.connectsouthside.org. Grantees may use a consultant from the directory or another qualified consultant with at least five years prior experience in management consulting. This experience must include at least three years of in working with nonprofit agencies as well as programmatic knowledge.

The Technical Assistance Grant Program is a central capacity-building resource for the Foundation as it works with local nonprofits to secure the future and effectiveness of the nonprofit sector in the Tri-Cities area.

Questions about Technical Assistance grants? Contact Director of Capacity Building Athan Lindsay, alindsay@camfound.org or call 804 732 8900.
Southside Community Partners
Spring/Summer 2012 Learning and Leadership Calendar

Workshops and training developed to assist nonprofit organizations striving to bring sustainable, positive change to the Southside region.

Tuesday, May 15, 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. Building Blocks for Nonprofit Board Members Presenter: Partnership for Nonprofit Excellence

Wednesday, June 6, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. The Cameron Foundation's TA Grant Information Session (Free) Presenter: Athan Lindsay, Charles Faison

Tuesday, June 12, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Marketing Your Nonprofit Using IRS Form 990 Presenter: Melody Stone

Tuesday, July 17, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Find Funding: Tracking Down Prospective Donors (Free) Presenter: Southside Community Partners & Appomattox Regional Library Staff

Thursday, August 9, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. The Perkins Five Finger Philosophy of Nonprofit Board Composition Presenter: Eric Perkins

Wednesday, September 5, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. The Cameron Foundation's TA Grant Information Session (Free) Presenter: Athan Lindsay, Charles Faison

Wednesday, September 19, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Process Mapping Presenter: Sheila Marsh

Workshop fee, with the exception of the no-cost TA grant info session, is $25 with advance online registration, or $30 at the door. Register online at www.connectsouthside.org/NPTrainings.

Handy L. Lindsey, Jr.
Appointed Chair of GEO Board

In 1997, a handful of visionaries in philanthropy recognized a need for an alliance of grantmakers committed to improving organizational effectiveness — a place where grantmakers could assemble to share knowledge and best practices, and inspire their colleagues to act. Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) was established to promote strategies and practices that contribute to grantee success.

Handy Lindsey, Jr., president of The Cameron Foundation, joined the board of this nationwide coalition of professionals in 2007. Today, the organization boasts 3,000 members across 370 grantmaking organizations. GEO recently named Lindsey its chair.

“This appointment is quite an honor,” said Lindsey. “Our work here at The Cameron Foundation has centered on capacity building for many years, and GEO provides a conducive environment for us to exchange learning about best practices in philanthropy with our colleagues across the country. It is quite a testament to The Cameron Foundation that we are able to participate with our peers through board service with GEO.”

Lindsey has spent more than thirty years in professional philanthropy, the last 25 of which have been in leadership roles. He has worked across a variety of institutions, including community, corporate, private independent, and health legacy foundations, as well as support organizations.
The Cameron Foundation hosts information workshops for organizations to learn about the Foundation, its mission, and grant submission procedures. Onsite workshops are offered at our headquarters at 228 S. Sycamore St. in Petersburg and are led by the Foundation's program officers.

Sessions begin promptly at 9:30 a.m. and run for approximately two hours. Organizations are encouraged to have a representative attend one of these workshops to find out more about the Foundation’s priorities and the application process. Existing grantees or organizations currently under review for grant consideration do not need to attend information workshops.

To inquire about the onsite workshops, please call the Foundation’s offices. Because space is limited, participation will be on a first-come, first-served basis. To reserve a space at an onsite workshop or to request a copy of the Foundation’s guidelines and application materials, you may email us or call 804 732 8900.

The onsite session dates that are currently scheduled include:
- July 19, 2012
- July 26, 2012
- November 15, 2012
- November 29, 2012

More onsite sessions will be scheduled as needed, so please sign up to receive notification of new information workshop dates as they are added.

Rural Outreach Information Sessions

The Foundation periodically schedules offsite information sessions to accommodate nonprofit organizations that may be located in the outlying areas of the Foundation’s service region. For further information or to arrange a meeting for a Rural Outreach Information Session, please email Athan Lindsay or call him at 804 732 8900.

Calendar of Events

Grant Letter of Intent (LOI) Deadlines: Letter of Intent (LOI) deadlines are January 2, May 1, and September 1 of each calendar year.

Grant Proposal Deadlines: After reviewing an organization’s LOI, The Cameron Foundation will inform the applicant if it is invited to submit a proposal. The deadlines for submission of proposals are February 15, June 15, and October 15.

Grant Decisions: If approved, proposals submitted in February are awarded in June; proposals submitted in June are awarded in October; and proposals submitted in October are awarded in February.

Information Workshops

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Please provide the following information when you make your reservation: organization, your name and position in the organization, phone number, date of workshop you would like to attend, and email (if available).

Staff Changes

Welcome

JASMINE WESTBROOKS has joined the Foundation as communications intern. Jasmine is working toward her bachelor of science in mass communications at VCU and will graduate in December. She is assisting in implementing various communications projects and activities during her time here, working three afternoons a week.

Farewell

Severin Odic, who worked directly with the Foundation’s coordinator of communications last fall, left for an opportunity to intern at the General Assembly. Severin is in his senior year at VCU and will complete a bachelor’s degree in political science with a concentration in international relations.