



## Voices for Action: Michigan's 2008 Poverty Summit

Presented to SCAO Child Abuse/  
Neglect Conference

April 1, 2009



## The Partners

- Commission on Community Action and Economic Opportunity
- Michigan Community Action Agency Association (MCAAA)
- Department of Human Services



## Why a summit?

- **Reframe the role of state government in relation to poverty.**
- Commitment to include poverty in public conversation about economic recovery.
- Need to access and channel the energies being expended to reduce poverty.



## Communication Network

- Build on existing structures
- Identify best and promising practices
- Share information about specific initiatives and events
- Feedback about and participation in statewide initiatives



## Evaluation

- Regionally based technical assistance
- Participatory focus
- Community development model
- Formative
- Indicators using existing data



## Focus on Poverty

- Consistent messaging around poverty
- Grow public will
- Engage new stakeholders
- Media spokesperson for each region



## Focus Investment

- Poverty spending inventory/  
fiscal mapping
- Focus on all sources and  
flexibility from all partners – not  
just DHS
- Recognize under-utilized or  
under-coordinated resources  
– Including consumers



## V4A Regional Network Structure

- Based on Homelessness  
Regions
- Initial Planning Grants:
  - Support continued involvement of  
low-income persons
  - Establish preliminary plans for first  
100 days after summit
  - Identify strategies to involved  
stakeholders



## Road to the V4A 2008 Poverty Summit

- Poverty Forums
- Themes
- Advisory Group – Draft Strategies
- Best Practices: RFPs, Breakouts Sessions
- Mobilization – 15 CAAs Transportation Leads
- Regional Network – DHS and CAA leads



## Voices for Action Summit November 13, 2008

- More than 5000 engaged citizens!
- Largest group represented were low-income persons.
- Students at all levels had a significant presence.



## Broad Support

- 22 foundations, businesses, universities and private organizations provided support.
- Twelve executives from nine state departments moderated a session.
- Business Leaders Breakfast



## Regional Network Launched

- Participants voted on regional priorities after focused discussions.
  - Ranking question with 12 choices
- Each participant made a commitment to do something.



## Statewide Priorities- roll up of regional votes

- 1 – Job Creation
- 2 – Early Childhood
- 3- Homelessness & Housing Security
- 4- Reform Public Assistance
- 5- Link services to school
- 6- Access to Healthcare



## Statewide Priorities, cont.

- 7- Empower Communities
- 8- Literacy/ Adult Education
- 9 –Increase Graduation Rates
- 10- Education and Training
- 11- Corrections Reform
- 12- Asset Building



## Other Priorities Suggested

- Have conversations about race and poverty in Michigan.
- Develop self-sustaining local economies.



## Elements of Statewide Structure

- Regional Network Leadership Team – Core Team
- Statewide Coordinating Team
- Policy Council  
V4A Steering Committee



## Role of Leadership Team

- Identify and plan for technical assistance to regions.
- Generate and disperse support to regions.
- Coordinate evaluation and key indicator data projects.
- Statewide communications and support for regional communication efforts.
- Policy initiatives: new policy & barrier reduction. – **Policy Council**



## Technical Assistance

- Poverty Reduction Initiative models:
  - Traverse Bay and Kalamazoo
  - Donna Beegle.
  - Training for consumers and community advocates.
  - Identifying and analyzing key data.



## Support to Regions

- Fund development at state level.
- Links to United Way and foundation partners locally.
- Prioritizing funding available.



## Evaluation

- First year:
  - Growing engagement.
  - Highlight strategies that work.
  - Identifying key indicators.
  - Regional development
    - Linking to CTEH and other initiatives.
    - Improved communication processes.



## Communication

- Increase communication between partners at all levels.
- New media workgroup ideas.
- Website development and use.
- Database.
- Local and statewide events.



## Policy

- Identify policy issues and opportunities and link regions.
- Identify policy barriers to poverty reduction.
- Work toward implementation of V4A recommendations.



## Lessons Learned

- The state has a lot of talent; and focusing that talent is essential.
- People want to be a part of making a difference in their own community and on a statewide basis.
- Poverty is not a taboo subject – over 5000 people showed up to talk about it!



## Goals 2009-2010

- Poverty Reduction Initiative linked to every county.
  - System Navigators
  - Opportunity Summits/ Conferences
  - Link to ARRA: job creation, education, infrastructure



## Goals 2009-1010

- New Paradigm for Poverty
  - Increase focus on poverty as a key component of economic recovery.
  - Increase focus on poverty as key driver of student and family success.
  - Increase focus on poverty as key driver of family functioning.



## Goals 2009-2010

- Develop Network for identifying and sharing information about best and promising practices.
  - Link local PRIs to regions to statewide team.
  - Use state departments' resources and expertise to strengthen community work.



## Goals 2009-1010

- Create system of community indicators to track poverty reduction.
  - Existing data coupled with university-state-local expertise.
  - Identify benchmarks for poverty, severe poverty, child poverty.
  - Identify benchmarks for gaps related to: race, geography, migrant & immigrant status.



## All Hands on Deck

- V4A Regional Network:  
[www.michigan.gov/poverty](http://www.michigan.gov/poverty)
- Poverty Competency – Donna Beegle
  - [http://www.combarriers.com/online\\_courses](http://www.combarriers.com/online_courses)



## Question? Need More Info???

- [www.michigan.gov/poverty](http://www.michigan.gov/poverty)
- [www.youtube.com/DHSPovertySummit](http://www.youtube.com/DHSPovertySummit)
- Linda Schmidt – Poverty Policy Specialist-
  - 517-241-5718
  - [SchmidtL3@Michigan.gov](mailto:SchmidtL3@Michigan.gov)