

**OVERVIEW:  
FAITH-  
BASED &  
COMMUNITY  
INITIATIVES**

## HOW TO REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE

Please visit the FBCI website at:  
<http://l.gov.state.ak.us/fbc>

The conference is free, but  
registration is required.



<http://l.gov.state.ak.us/fbc>

## STARS OF GOLD

The Stars of Gold award program celebrates service. It recognizes community individuals and groups who improve the lives of Alaskans.

Service providers help solve social challenges and build stronger families and communities. By actions, they inspire caring for others.

Governor Murkowski and Lieutenant Governor Leman want the Stars of Gold program to elevate service as an important and ongoing responsibility.

For information on the Stars of Gold program, please visit:

<http://l.gov.state.ak.us/fbc>

Lieutenant Governor Loren Leman  
Contact: Gwen Hall

## Faith-Based & Community Initiatives Conference



## Stars of Gold Award Banquet



Friday, April 30, 2004  
Egan Center  
Anchorage, Alaska

## A GOAL WORTH PURSUING

Alaskans have a long history of helping each other. Now it is important that we fully tap the resources of our faith-based and other community organizations.

The State of Alaska, in partnership with the Faith-Based & Community Initiatives (FBCI) Task Force and the Salvation Army, hope this conference will open up new opportunities for the partnership between government and faith-based and community organizations.

Governor Murkowski and Lieutenant Governor Leman share a sincere interest in fostering successful partnerships among faith-based and other community services and State agencies.

Like President Bush's work on the national level, Alaska's faith-based and community initiative is intended to promote increased ministries and services.

This effort is designed to maintain the integrity of faith-based missions, strengthen private support and reduce bureaucratic barriers. In some cases, this may improve opportunities for service providers to compete for government grants.

<http://llgov.state.ak.us/fbcf>

## A DAY WORTH EXPERIENCING

- Learn more about FBCI
- Make strategic connections with other community leaders and organizations
- Identify additional resources available to your organization
- Learn tips for writing successful grant applications
- Understand keys to successful FBCI-agency partnerships

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 8:00 - 9:30 Registration
- 9:00 - 9:20 Remarks from Lt. Governor Leman
- 9:20 - 9:30 White House Greeting
- 9:30 - 10:45 Session 1: Resources Available to FBCI
- 11:00-12:00 Session 2: Do's & Don'ts for FBCI Organizations
- 12:00 - 1:30 Lunch & Keynote Address
- 1:45 - 3:15 Session 3: Keys to Successful Partnerships
- 3:30 - 4:15 Session 4: The ABCs of Grants
- 4:15 - 4:30 Closing Remarks
- 4:30 - 5:30 Session 5: Networking
- 7:00 - 9:30 Stars of Gold Award Banquet

## A DAY WORTH EXPERIENCING

President Bush recently recognized Alaska as a leader in expanding the contribution of faith-based and community organizations.

This conference and banquet will take Alaska's participation to the next level. Please consider supporting the FBCI conference and Stars of Gold Award Banquet. You can help by:

- Sponsoring a table at the Stars of Gold Award Banquet.
    - \$1000 for a table of 10
    - \$500 for a table of 5*Sponsors will be featured at their tables and in the program.*
  - Becoming a Conference Sponsor.
    - Gold Sponsor: \$5000
    - Blue Sponsor: \$2500*Conference Sponsors will be featured on the conference banner and in the program.*
  - Making another financial contribution. Make checks payable to The Salvation Army
- Visa, MasterCard and American Express are also accepted

If you have any questions please contact Jenni Ragland by email: [jenni\\_ragland@usw.salvationarmy.org](mailto:jenni_ragland@usw.salvationarmy.org) or by phone at (907) 276-2515.

# FBCI Conference

Please count on my support for:

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143 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
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# Faith-Based & Community Initiatives Conference and Stars of Gold Award Banquet

Friday, April 30, 2004 • Egan Center – Anchorage

## **An Accomplishment Worth Celebrating**

President Bush has recognized Alaska as a leader in expanding the contribution of faith-based and community organizations.

## **A Goal Worth Pursuing**

Governor Murkowski and Lieutenant Governor Lemman share a sincere interest in fostering successful partnerships between and among faith-based and other community organizations and State agencies. This initiative is intended to promote and increase ministries and services.

The State of Alaska, in partnership with the Faith-Based & Community Initiatives (FBCI) Task Force and the Salvation Army, hopes this conference will open up new opportunities for the partnership between government and faith-based and community organizations.

## **A Day Worth Experiencing**

- ❖ Learn more about FBCI
- ❖ Make strategic connections with other community leaders and organizations
- ❖ Learn tips for writing successful grant applications
- ❖ Understand keys to successful FBCI-agency partnerships

## **Registration Deadline: Friday, April 23, 2004**

- ❖ The conference is free, but registration is required
  - ❖ Registration is on first-come, first-served basis
  - ❖ Indicate on the registration form if you would like to attend the Stars of Gold dinner banquet, which is \$15 per person

## **Register online:**

<http://ltgov.state.ak.us/fbci/registration.php>





**Faith-Based & Community Initiatives Task Force**

Legislative Briefing

House Health, Education and Social Services Committee

Juneau, Alaska

April 19, 2004

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative Task Force is:

- To enhance Alaska's health and social service capabilities by expanding the contribution of faith-based and community initiatives.

To accomplish its mission, the Task Force will:

- Develop and help launch innovative ideas for increasing the contribution of faith-based and community initiatives.
- Foster partnerships between and among government agencies and faith-based and community organizations.
- Identify and work to eliminate barriers that hinder faith-based and community initiatives.
- Promote the expansion of volunteerism and highlight outstanding examples of neighbors helping neighbors.

*"Promising  
Volunteers"*

## SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

- The FBCI Task Force has been running for five months and has met four times.
- Task Force members have completed more than 60 interviews with organizations that provide services in Alaskan communities.
- Task Force members have educated themselves on the legal issues surrounding faith-based initiatives.
- The Task Force has reviewed FBCI legislation in other states.
- The Task Force has worked to identify the most pressing social needs and gaps in services in Alaskan communities.
- As a result of the Task Force's efforts, the White House has identified Alaska as a FBCI Role Model State.

## INTERVIEWS WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

### Objectives

One of the FBCI Task Force's primary objectives is to obtain input from a wide range of organizations that are currently providing services to communities throughout Alaska. The extent of our impact depends on the quality of our information; so this "front-line" perspective is critical to success. Consequently, Task Force members will be proactively interviewing numerous entities throughout the coming months. These interviews will accomplish a number of goals:

- Broaden and deepen the Task Force's knowledge base--both individually and collectively.
- Stimulate fresh thinking about potential new ways for faith-based and other community initiatives to expand their positive impact throughout Alaska.
- Clarify how the Task Force can be of maximum service to our state.
- Surface issues and obstacles that need to be addressed.
- Expand the Task Force's visibility and help defuse any community concerns about its role.

### Interview Questions

Task Force members will ask the following questions in their interviews:

1. What is your organization's core mission/purpose? What are the primary goals you are trying to accomplish?
2. How are you accomplishing your mission? What programs/services do you offer? Is there a faith component to your organization?
3. How do you measure success?
4. What steps do you take to help your people be successful in their roles? What kinds of training do you provide? Do you use an accreditation process of any kind?
5. What other organizations are critical to your success? Who are your key partners? Do you have connections to any State or Federal agency?
6. From where do you receive your funding and how much comes from each source?
7. What are the three greatest obstacles or barriers you face in accomplishing your mission? Are there any government-related obstacles or barriers?
8. How can the FBCI Task Force help your organization be even more successful?
9. Overall, what should the Task Force try to accomplish?
10. What would you like the Task Force to know?

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED

Juneau Youth Services  
Catholic Social Services  
Covenant House  
Crisis Pregnancy Center  
Alaska Bible College  
SEND International of Alaska  
Cordova Family Resource Center  
Cross Road Medical Center  
Victory Ministry  
Alaska Women's Resource Center  
Southcentral Foundation  
National Association for the Education of  
Young People  
Reach, Inc.  
Gastineau Human Services  
Nugen's Ranch  
Hope Community Resources, Mat-Su Region  
Love, Inc.  
Narcotic Drug Treatment Center, Inc.  
Center for Drug Problems  
Interact Ministries  
Frontier Community Services  
Women's Resource and Crisis Center  
Salvation Army Clitheroe Center  
Cook Inlet Tribal Council (New Beginning  
Healthy Family Program)  
Community Councils Center  
Skate to Greatness, Inc.  
Alaska Youth and Family Network  
Alaska Youth and Parent Foundation  
Alaska Child Abuse Response and Evaluation  
Services (CARES)  
The Christian Business Men's Forum  
Alaska Center for Children and Adults  
Anchorage Literacy Project  
Challenge Alaska

Alaska Children Services  
Christian Health Associates  
Alaska Center for the Blind and Visually  
Impaired  
National Association for the Mentally Ill  
KCAM Radio  
Literacy Council  
Salvation Army  
Upper Tanana Head Start Program  
Upper Tanana Aging Program  
Whitestone Care Services  
Southcentral Counseling Center Day Break  
Christmas in May  
Alpha Omega Life Care, Inc.  
Kodiak Mental Health Center  
Kodiak Senior Citizen's Center  
Kodiak Women's Resource Center  
Tanana Valley Conference of Churches  
Careline Crisis Intervention  
LOVE Social Services Center, Inc.  
Make a Wish Foundation  
Catholic Community Services  
Christian Homes and Special Kids  
Cook Inlet Housing Authority  
"Let's Talk" Healthy Relationships Program  
Relief Offered by the Congregations of the  
Kenai Peninsula (ROCK)  
Cook Inlet Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
Soldotna United Methodist Church  
South Peninsula Women's Services INC  
Division of Public Assistance  
Alaska Police Chaplaincy Program  
Family Medical Center  
Cook Inlet Housing Authority  
Salvation Army: Adult Rehabilitation Program

**Alaska Faith Based and Community Initiatives Task Force  
Gaps and Needs Survey Report  
February 2004**

This survey was undertaken to provide the members of Alaska's Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Task Force with a sense of what people saw as the gaps and needs in Alaska's social service system and where and how they thought faith and community organizations might help to fill those gaps and needs. More importantly this survey gave people an opportunity to share their vision and ideas as to how we might ignite a new momentum to rally the spirited volunteer resources of Alaska's faith and community groups to minister to those in need.

Countless reports and studies have been completed to document the gaps and needs in social services, education, services for seniors, health care systems, safe and affordable housing, job opportunities and economic development. This survey is not intended to replace any of these existing assessments, in fact the views and perspectives of those who participated in this survey serves to corroborate the findings of these more scientific and objective snapshots of our human and social condition.

This survey is not an exhaustive inventory of every gap and need in our social systems. The Task Force acknowledges there are challenges facing Alaska that were not identified by those who participated in the discussions that lead to this report. Faith and community groups are strongly encouraged to come together to help solve any need or concern whether it is or is not included in this survey.

The Task Force appreciates the input and involvement of everyone who participated in the gap and needs inquiry conducted by Group 1. It is hoped this survey will be viewed as a primer to what is to come as Alaska moves forward to improve the lives of its citizens through our faith-based and community initiatives.

**Background**

In 2003 Lieutenant Governor Leman appointed 21 citizens from around Alaska to the Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCI) Task Force. The Task Force was asked to identify how Alaska could maximize its resources of compassion to meet the challenges faced by those in need. At the November 5, 2003 Task Force meeting, Chairman Scott Merriner established working groups to examine key questions to help this task force meet its mission. Group 1 was asked to identify the

major gaps and needs in Alaska's social service system and to identify ways FBCI organizations could become involved to help meet those gaps and needs.

Group 1 solicited written comments from around the State to identify major gaps in social services in Alaska. People were also asked how and in what areas they felt faith and community based groups could assist the State in meeting its social service program objectives. The group hosted public video and audio conferences on November 18 and December 2, 2003 and received verbal and written responses. Forty individuals from faith, community and State agency groups submitted 125 gap/need statements to the working group. These 125 statements were reviewed and assessed and are presented in this report.

### Social Services gap and needs

Gaps and needs in social services systems can limit a person's progress toward self-sufficiency and hamper program efforts to effectively support the health and well being of Alaskans in need. Most of those who provided input to the work group generally expressed their concerns with regard to specific client populations including women, children and teens, seniors, those leaving adult or juvenile correctional facilities, single women with children, families, veterans, disabled persons, the homeless, those receiving public assistance and victims of sexual abuse or other crimes. Looking at the 125 statements as a whole, people generally focused their concerns on just a few gaps and need categories or subject areas. Regardless of which specific client group someone spoke to, the concerns raised most often related to one of these three subject areas:

- Housing
- Personalized care and services
- Relational support

- ❖ At any given time there are between 3-5,000 families on the Section 8 and Public Housing statewide wait lists and close to 5,300 households in Alaska are receiving housing assistance from AHFC. (Alaska Housing Finance Corporation FY 2003 Annual Public Hosing Agency Plan 07-01-2003)
- ❖ In 2002 among the 2,000 plus applicants on the Anchorage Housing Choice Voucher wait list, 20% were on the wait list for more than two years. (Alaska Housing Finance Corporation FY 2003 Annual Public Hosing Agency Plan 07-01-2003)
- ❖ Market analysis suggests that upward of 50% of landlords in Fairbanks and Anchorage will not accept voucher assistance. (Alaska Housing Finance Corporation FY 2003 Annual Public Hosing Agency Plan 07-01-2003)
- ❖ The number of homeless in Anchorage shelters has grown 8 to 9 percent per year and the increase is projected to continue at the same rate in the near future. (Final Report of the Anchorage Comprehensive Homeless Program Strategy Group, June 2002)

A few statements were submitted relating to gaps and needs in single and unique subject areas like rural subsistence preference or development of international trade. While concerns in these areas are valid, this report will focus on the common concerns over the gaps and needs related to these three main subject areas identified above.

### Housing

The concern voiced most often was the need for safe and affordable housing. Those who provided input to the work group identified housing as the greatest challenge and the most significant barrier to a person's progress or success.

Gaps and needs related to housing include:

1. Transitional housing for those moving into the community from closed programs;
2. Foster and group homes and half ways houses;
3. Emergency shelters for families, especially single parents with children;
4. Assistance to cover expenses (security deposits, utilities) not included in housing subsidy payments;
5. Drug and alcohol free low income housing;
6. Affordable housing, especially for the elderly;
7. Housing for special populations including the disabled, former offenders, addicts, etc.;

The statements below are indicative of those made with regard to gaps and needs in housing:

- *There is a need for affordable, drug and alcohol free housing for individuals and families. Those who complete treatment or who are waiting to get into treatment have a hard time finding safe, affordable, sober housing.*
- *Many prisoners return right back to the situations that contributed to their incarceration. There is a need for safe housing for felons re-entering society.*
- *The "working poor" can't qualify for housing assistance because they make too much money, but don't earn enough to acquire decent housing.*
- *There is insufficient shelter space for homeless, 2-parent families.*

- *Most federal housing programs don't cover various rent or utility deposit costs set by landlords, the power or water and sewer companies. A person who would otherwise qualify for housing assistance continues to be homeless because they can't come up with the cash to cover these ancillary expenses.*
- *Housing lenders don't provide enough financing for multi-unit housing.*
- *Homeless people trying to get their lives together by getting a job need an address they can list on an application or a message phone number where a prospective employer can contact them for work.*
- *Released inmates, recovering substance abusers, homeless, older teens and low-income families need both transitional and long-term housing.*
- *Convicted felons who need help re-entering society after they are released from jail don't qualify for housing assistance, and all too often they either end up on the street or back in bad living situations like those they were in before they went to jail.*
- *There are not enough foster or group homes to meet the needs of children under the state's care.*

People listed a host of housing problems including lengthy waiting lists for the few shelter beds that are available, no safe and supportive housing alternatives for single fathers with children or for felons who have completed their jail sentences, delays in completing simple inspections to get a home on an approved housing list, and market prices that put 2-bedroom rental units out of the reach of the working poor and those who are underemployed. Many of those who voiced concerns for safe and affordable housing said that without adequate housing, little else mattered.

**Examples of how faith and community groups can meet needs and close gaps.**

- Promote and recruit foster and adoptive families from the congregation or membership of the organization.
- Develop and operate a group home or transitional housing program for teens, women with children or other client groups.
- Group members can be trained to complete simple home and rental unit surveys to help housing authorities expedite the approval process to qualify a home for a housing subsidy program.
- Groups could offer classes or personal mentoring and transportation support to those in a housing subsidy program.
- Groups could construct and then lease and manage affordable multi-unit apartments for low-income individuals and families.
- Encourage group members to offer rental units to those who may be involved in social service, classes or mentoring programs provided by the church or community group.
- Group members could mentor or befriend people in public housing units to help them continue their progress once they return home after completing substance abuse

### Personalized care and services

This broad subject category serves as a heading for the care and service activities provided directly to an individual or family to ameliorate an undesirable condition or circumstance.

Gaps and needs related to personalized care and services to support a person's physical, emotional, behavioral or spiritual well being, include:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Mental health and substance abuse treatment, especially in rural areas; | 11. Health care access for working families;                             |
| 2. Childcare;  | 12. Support for a range of senior services;                              |
| 3. Housing for seniors, the disabled, former offenders, addicts, etc.;     | 13. After school study and tutoring programs, especially in rural areas; |
| 4. Domestic violence;  | 14. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders;                                    |
| 5. Transportation;   | 15. Coordination of care by service providers for individual cases;      |
| 6. Job Training;   | 16. Suicide prevention;  |
| 7. Sex offender and victim support;  | 17. Early intervention emphasis;   |
| 8. Resources for court referrals in rural areas;                           | 18. Resources for court referrals in rural areas;                        |
| 9. In state long term mental health treatment, especially for youth;       | 19. Food programs for seniors and the poor;                              |
| 10. Resources to fill gaps in state funding;                               | 20. Support and assistance for distance and home schooling programs      |

The following comments were made with regard to the gaps and needs in the personal care and service category.

- *More mental health and substance abuse treatment services are needed in rural Alaska, for both adults and juveniles. There is a significant difference in the number of direct services available to meet needs of those in urban areas compared to what is available in most rural communities.*
- *There aren't enough services, programs and placements for children, adolescents and adults impacted with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.*

❖ Alaska's FAS rate is 4 times the national average at 1.4 per 1,000 population. The lifetime cost of care for one FAS infant is about \$1.5 million. (1999 Annual Report of the Alaska Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse)

❖ Alaska's rate of alcohol dependence and alcohol abuse is nearly 14 percent, compared to about 7 percent nationally. (State of Alaska, DHSS, *An Integrated Substance Abuse Treatment Needs Assessment for Alaska*, January 2002)

❖ In fiscal year 2002, DHSS provided at least one episode of mental health care to 5,930 children in Alaska. (Children and Youth Needs Assessment, ACSES Report by UAA, 10-29-02)

❖ Over 97% of crimes committed by Alaska Natives are committed under the influence of alcohol or drugs. (Alaska Commission on Rural Governance and Employment, Final Report to the Governor, p 106, 1999)

- *Families need help dealing with issues of domestic violence and spousal abuse. Training in conflict resolution would help people find ways to deal with conflict without violence.*
- *People who suffer from undiagnosed mental illness often self medicate with drugs and alcohol. Mental illness, substance abuse and domestic violence play a huge part in child abuse and neglect cases and more services are needed to meet demands in these areas.*
- *Suicide is a big problem for many Alaskan communities. There is a need for screening, diagnosis and professional care to help those who may pose a danger to themselves or others.*
- *There is a need for treatment on demand for substance abusing parents. We need programs that allow parents to have their children with them while they are in treatment.*
- *Teens need after school programs, study and tutoring assistance and the support of positive adult role models. It is difficult for people in rural areas*

*to get help to prepare for and pass GED exams.*

- *Those who make too much money to qualify for Medicaid, do not have health insurance or are not eligible for Native health services need access to doctors, medicines and health care.*
- *Families wanting to home school their children need support to get started and stay on track.*
- *More supervision and treatment services are needed for sex offenders and more counseling and support resources are needed for victims of sexual assault, especially in rural Alaska.*
- *Transportation is a big issue for those moving from welfare into the work place. Public transportation is either not available or is limited in service.*
- *There is a need for service providers to become informed about the state's behavioral health integration efforts. Families can face a set of uncoordinated requirements when they participate in more than one program. Agencies providing direct care to clients need to communicate and coordinate more effectively when serving the same clients.*
- *There aren't enough services, programs and placements for children, adolescents and adults impacted with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.*
- *Families entering the workforce need a lot of help with childcare. There is little or no childcare in rural areas and parents don't feel they have safe alternatives for their children as they pursue work or job training.*
- *People and communities need sustainable economies. We need to work together to develop resources, generate jobs, provide job training while protecting our environment and beauty of Alaska.*
- *Disadvantaged persons can suffer from a variety of issues ranging from mental health, poverty, alcoholism,*

**Examples of how faith and community groups can meet needs and close gaps.**

- *Faith groups can offer scriptural based substance abuse intervention programs*
- *Groups can offer parenting classes and child care services*
- *Faith and community groups can offer after school programs for teens that would include some recreation and academic skill development opportunities*
- *Congregations, service clubs and group members can offer rides to seniors, women with children and others who need transportation assistance.*
- *Groups can host a suicide prevention training event for their congregation and the community at large.*
- *Groups can encourage their members to offer job or job training opportunities to those wanting to get off welfare or those coming back into the community from a correctional program.*
- *Groups can conduct special fund raising events to provide money to individuals or families to buy furniture, dentures, car repair, etc.*

*homelessness, etc. There is a need for coordinated, comprehensive case management. Integrated case management would help maximize the service benefits of individual programs and agencies serving those in need.*

- *Before the system is able to help someone, they must reach bottom. We need more services dedicated to earlier interventions so people don't have to get so bad off before they can get help.*
- *There is a need to increase efforts to promote abstinence education.*
- *Services are needed to help families and children deal with a variety of issues when one or both of the parents are incarcerated.*
- *When the court makes a referral for services such as anger management, batterers intervention, etc. there are few if any of these services available in smaller communities.*
- *Alaska doesn't have a long-term mental health treatment program for youth so youth needing this help have to be sent out of state.*
- *Some on public assistance or fixed incomes like SSI only qualify for \$10 in food stamps per month. Income qualified seniors need higher food stamp allowances.*

Some individuals commented that their faith organization or faith coalitions provide a variety of mental health, anger management, couples counseling and treatment services for substance abusers but their programs are not approved to receive State funding. Groups have an interest and desire to work with the State to establish a mechanism that would open a governmental funding stream to support these faith centered mental health and substance abuse treatment services.

This subject category also includes gaps and needs for materials, equipment, and special needs funding to meet expenses that are not funded through State and Federal social service programs. This would include dentures or baby cribs as an example.

#### **Relationship support**

Individuals who are confronted with difficult challenges in life often times need a friend or helper, someone who can provide encouragement and support to see them through. This category speaks to relationships between individuals that would be more

personal rather than professional. These support relationships would be informal and much less structured than the interactions that typify the relationships between a counselor and client, therapist and patient. People saw a need to support those who were moving into the community after they completed treatment or finished a period of incarceration. In various ways people identified the need of social service client populations to have a companion or friend supporting them as they moved towards greater self-sufficiency and independence. In this category, a volunteer wouldn't necessarily do something for another, but rather would do things with the other person.

The following gaps and needs were identified as barriers to providing more effective and efficient relationship support to individuals in need:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Transitional support to aid ex-offenders in making successful transitions into the community;</p> <p>2. Respite care for families;</p> <p>3. Support for victims of crime;</p> | <p>4. Advocacy and moral support for those negotiating with landlords or navigating their way through the court or welfare system.</p> <p>5. Support to strengthen marriages;</p> |
|--|---|

These statements illustrate the concerns related to the gaps and needs in the area of relationship support.

- *Youth returning home from a detention or youth facility need relationships with healthy adults willing to help the youth "make it." This would be the same for an adult leaving jail too.*
- *Students need assistance and support to engage in distance education and home school services.*
- *Families and caretakers who care for a disabled person need support and help. There are services for the disabled person, but families and caretakers need support too.*

Examples of how faith and community groups can meet needs and close gaps.

- Groups can "adopt" someone transitioning back into the community from a treatment or correctional program and provide them with companionship, recreational and social activities.
- Group members can volunteer as victim advocates, tutors or playground attendants at the local school during lunch periods.
- Group members could be a "buddy" and be available to others after hours to talk on the phone or help when some challenge comes up after the caseworker is off duty.

- *Women re-entering the community following release from jail are often returning to the same environment they left. These women need help to develop social skills, increase their self worth and transportation to help them re-integrate into the community.*
- *Agencies and families would benefit if volunteer "grandma/grandpa" could watch the children during court hearings or appointments with caseworkers.*
- *Victims of crime need support and advocacy.*
- *Volunteers are needed to supervise visits between children and parents involved in the child protective services system.*
- *Relationships can be strengthened between husbands and wives through involvement in faith group activities and classes.*
- *A person eligible for a housing subsidy sometimes doesn't know how to present or sell themselves to landlords. They may find a suitable apartment to meet their needs, but they don't know quite how to interact with the landlord to complete a rental agreement. Maybe if these people had a "friend" or "buddy" to go with them to look at apartments and to talk with landlords and apartment managers to finalize rental agreements, perhaps more of these people could get off of the street and into homes.*

Success may be easier to find when the person has the support of a friend or mentor as they make their way through a transition processes, learn appropriate social skills or finish school and training programs. Beyond the formalities of our structured social service assistance and treatment programs, people need the help, understanding and encouragement of friends and neighbors long after the social service program case files have been closed. This category is as much about being a good neighbor as it is meeting a program gap in our State social service system.

#### Areas of need for state agencies and community groups

Agencies were invited to identify areas of need where they thought faith and community groups might render assistance to help them meet their missions. Programs often have a variety of requirements and constraints place on them that limit their organization's ability to meet all of the needs of those they serve.

Some of the gaps and needs identified by State agencies include:

1. Cash grants to cover the ancillary costs of housing and medical care;
2. Vehicle maintenance;
3. Training for staff and volunteers;
4. Volunteer school tutors, mentors and class room aides;
5. Pastoral visits with those in facilities and treatment programs;
6. Meal delivery for shut-ins.

The following is a list of goods and services state agencies and community groups said would help them help those in need.

- *Clients need cash grants to cover rent and utility deposits. Sometimes for the want of \$250 cash, a person remains homeless because they can't come up with the funds for rent and utility deposits.*
- *Low-income people need help to keep their vehicles operational. They could use the help of a friend who could help them learn how to change the oil or do minor maintenance of their vehicles. Sometimes they need financial help to get emissions inspection or vehicle registration.*
- *Schools need volunteers to help mentor students in reading, math and science. Volunteers can also help as classroom aides, lunch room and play ground monitors. Volunteers can also help supervise after hours sporting or social events.*
- *Funds have been cut for services and staff training. When someone has a training session, it would be good if the training could be opened to others who otherwise might not be able to afford or have access to that training.*
- *Youth need adult mentors to help them learn good social skills and appropriate behaviors.*
- *State funds usually don't cover the costs of a baby crib, linens, kitchen utensils, personal care items like hairbrushes, deodorant, etc. Women's shelters, foster families or families moving into a new apartment for the first time are some of those who could use help with these things.*

- *Youth and adults in residential, treatment and correctional facilities welcome opportunities to visit with ministers and lay people who are willing to provide moral and spiritual guidance and support.*
- *People in rural communities and those who are disadvantaged need others to advocate for them so policy makers can be made aware of their needs and concerns.*
- *Volunteers are needed to deliver meals to homebound seniors. Volunteers are also needed to help seniors with transportation to appointments or the grocery store. Volunteers might also help with routine cleaning tasks around their homes.*
- *Volunteers are needed to teach home economics (simple cooking, budgeting, cleaning, etc.) to teens with mental health issues.*
- *Due to Senator Stevens' efforts, Alaska has created Community Health Centers (CHC) to offer health care to patients who meet poverty guidelines at a substantially discounted cost. People need to be better informed about the availability of these local health centers.*

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

There are numerous gaps and unmet needs in our social service system in Alaska. Most of the gaps and needs identified by those who provided input to the work group could be classified under three general subject categories of:

- Housing
- Personalized care and services
- Relationship support

As we in the faith-based and community groups, tribes, local governments, state and federal governments work together we can respond to these gaps in service and answer the unmet needs of Alaska's people. The work group recommends the Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Task Force adopt a policy statement to encourage faith and community groups to marshal their resources to address the challenges of housing, personalized care and services and relationship support for those in need throughout Alaska.

**FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVE TASK FORCE**  
**Resolution on Social Service Gaps and Needs**  
Adopted January 28, 2004

WHEREAS, the mission of the Faith-Based And Community Initiative (FBCI) Task Force is to enhance Alaska's social service capabilities by expanding the contribution of faith-based and community initiatives,

WHEREAS, the Task Force has identified a number of gaps and needs in Alaska's social service network,

WHEREAS, the most critical gaps and needs identified can be classified under the three general categories of Housing, Personalized Care and Services, and Relationship Support,

WHEREAS, the spirited volunteers of Alaska's faith and community groups are well positioned to address many of the gaps and needs identified,

IT IS RESOLVED, that the FBCI Task Force calls upon all Alaskan faith and community organizations to marshal their resources to address the following areas of need:

1. Housing
2. Personalized Care and Services
3. Relationship Support

## LOOKING AHEAD

- The Task Force is studying 68 carefully selected faith-based and community organizations in order to understand the keys to successful initiatives and partnerships.
- The Task Force will hold a statewide FBCI conference at the Egan Center in Anchorage on April 30.
- The Task Force will develop a prioritized list of specific ideas for new faith-based and community initiatives to address the social service gaps and needs identified.
- The Task Force will be working specifically to understand the unique issues and opportunities present in rural Alaskan communities.
- The Task Force State Department liaisons will report on the FBCI barriers identified by each department and the actions being taken to address them.

## **Transformational Living Community**

### **Program Update**

Provided by  
Reverend Mike Enschede, Chaplaincy Coordinator  
Division of Institutions  
Alaska Department of Corrections

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> of this year, the Department of Corrections Chaplaincy program launched its first Faith-based residential program in an Alaska correctional facility. Located at the Palmer Correctional Center, this program occupies one complete housing unit of 32 prisoners. Prisoners volunteer to enter the program and may volunteer to exit the program at any time. To date, there have been several hundred prisoners who have expressed interest in the program and the department has a waiting list of qualified applicants.

The program is operated by Alaska Correctional Ministries under the direction of the Department of Corrections Chaplaincy Coordinator. All program operations, including program staff, equipment, and curriculum, are being funded by private sector resources, primarily from the faith community. To date \$187,000 has been raised. Major financial partners include Faith Christian Community church, Southcentral Foundation, and the Family Wellness Warriors Initiative. Many other donations have come from churches, individuals, and over \$3,000 from the residents themselves.

Called a Transformational Living Community (TLC), this program was designed to provide a new alternative to traditional types of correctional habilitation programs. Specifically, one in which the spiritual dimension of an offender's life becomes the primary gateway to habilitation.

The program is 12 to 18 months in duration and is designed to create a healthy, positive and spiritually-centered community learning environment, conducive to facilitating lasting positive change in the lives of the residents. The residential setting provides the opportunity to limit the negative influences of the general prisoner population and provide an intense focus on personal change.

This program is extremely structured and intense. Their day begins at 5:30 a.m. and does not conclude until 9:00 p.m. Throughout the day they are involved in community group meetings, prayer meetings, work, individual counseling, exercise, and core programs each evening.

The entire program is built on 10 core Biblical values which provide the foundation for the structure, the programs, and all the rules and regulations that govern the community. One of the most important values is accountability and every aspect of the program builds in accountability and personal responsibility. One of the core elements in the program is teaching the residents how to internalize God's truth into their lives. Every aspect of the

program is designed to help the residents internalize truth, and to make the kind of changes that are necessary, so that when they re-enter the community they will be better equipped for return to society.

One of the most exciting parts of the TLC is called MentorNet which occurs each Monday night. Every resident is assigned his own personal mentor from the church community. The Mentors all come to the prison each Monday night as a group. The mentor's role is to provide discipleship, encouragement, accountability and role modeling. The goal is that the relationship that is developed will become a spiritual care net from incarceration back into the community. The relationships and bonds that are created can be very powerful.

Some of the major issues that the program deals with in the lives of the residents have to do with life controlling problems such as sexual addiction, anger, and substance abuse. Focus is also placed on criminal mentality, coping with incarceration, relationships, inner healing issues, moral and character development and preparation for release. All of these issues are dealt with from a biblical perspective through classes and seminars, community group meetings, mentoring, as well as the individual counseling that the men receive.

While the program is very new, early indicators of change include the fact that residents are beginning to take appropriate ownership for their community and pride is being exhibited through the cleanliness of the housing unit and their own personal hygiene. Participating inmates appear to be sincerely seeking change for their lives and, so far, good behavior is providing a management benefit to the correctional staff.

Future outcome measures will be developed as residents complete and graduate from the program and reenter society.