

Advancing Our Community coalition
December 13, 2007
1:30-2:30
Centennial Hall

In attendance: Curt Ledford – Community Schools, Ryan Kauffman – Community Schools, Don Jones – Sitka Community Development Corporation & Global Warming Group, Gordon Blue - SCPS, Anita Didrickson – Raven’s Way, Annette Becker - YAS, Amy Christel - SAIL, David Kreiss-Tomkins - SAFV, Marilee Fletcher & Greg Traulin – DBH, Dan Etulain – Northstar TV, Taylor White – Sitka High, Willow Griffin – SAIL, Alicia Williams – SCDC, Doug Osborne – SEARHC Health Promotions.

Announcements:

SAFV – theater project happening Feb 12-17th for ages 13 and up: 6-day workshop, 6-8 hours/day, theater projects and group building exercises to create a space to talk about social power re: domestic violence; includes interactive presentation on 17th (sun), probably in Sheet’ka Kwaan Naa Kahidi.

YAS received two grants: Transitional Living Project and AK Mental Health Therapeutic Foster Care start-up, which helps them enter the realm of identifying and recruiting resources families. Looking for people in Sitka leading healthy, normal lives, able to give of themselves to teens having a hard time. YAS will recruit, screen, train and support the families, place teens into homes, and provide wrap-around services and support. First families will be trained in late-Jan, early-Feb. Email David Voluck or Jon Wunrow or call YAS if you know families that might be good & interested. The amount of training involved still unknown – looking at other programs and piecing together the right curriculum. They’re also searching for a case manager and a therapist to hire with these programs.

SAIL – program director position open. (People expressed lots of thanks to Willow for all her contributions to AOC and forming bridges to Commission on Health Needs)

Raven’s Way – next cohort starts Jan 7. SEARHC going through reorganization – Behavioral Health is reorganizing and trying to increase continuity of care. One new position will oversee all BH and substance abuse programs in Sitka and Juneau; the goal is to create intensive outpatient program – people who need detox or time before entering a program to stabilize. They have a grant to build short-term patient housing on campus. Aryeh is leaving soon. Raven’s Way’s recent postcard covers best practices – you can get it at searhc.org/ravensway/practices

Sitka Community Development Corporation – affordable housing advocates; City granted this group the remainder of Felix’s money, moving forward on those projects; HUD has Home Opportunity Program – they have admin of that, to assist low-income residents with housing;

Global Warming Group – Mayor and Assembly signed onto national Mayor’s agreement to abate global warming;

Peer Helpers – MADD handing out red ribbons at Lakeside this weekend to say “don’t drink and drive over the holidays”; also, upcoming topic for AOC is minor consuming – sometime next semester we’ll open up that topic for discussion.

Community Schools – moved main office to Hames Athletic & Wellness Center and are settling in there. Just got notice last week of a 5-yr, \$270,000+ AmeriCorps grant – Sitka is going to be own AmeriCorps location instead of going through Juneau, which means lots more volunteers for Sitka!
www.sitkacommunityschools.org – takes you to the CS website, Hames info, etc.

AOC facilitators: helping with Hames task force, starting Community Indicators project, and Health Summit 2008.

Flexible Funding

Brochures are now available for service providers. Counselors/case workers are the gatekeepers for the funds – it's intended for cases that are being managed by an agency. Submit request online, goes to committee, they approve or deny. Small grants.

Now that the word's out there, we'll be spending the money down, at some point will need to replenish the funds. Two grants recently funded: one to send a Hanson House resident to Seattle to spend Thanksgiving with his terminally ill mother; another provides 3 months of guitar lessons for a young lady who needs some positive activities to help her through difficult times. YAS staff reported that the Hanson House resident is seriously emotionally/mentally disturbed, separation from mother was causing great anxiety, impacting his treatment – having him travel at Thanksgiving made a huge impact, and they thank AOC very much.

Matthew and Kayla will print some brochures and send to agencies, including Home-to-School Liaisons and Center for Community.

Arc of AOC

There is maybe only a year left of funds for AOC facilitation; may need to start thinking about it. Matthew and Kayla propose that this is a good time to review where AOC is at and how we can better serve our members and the community. AOC has been around since 92 in different permutations; some of the original intentions and goals/objectives that formed this group have evolved and changed. This org is made up of those who show up and drive it, but there is a Steering Committee that keeps it on a steady path. The SC tends to be long-time AOC folks; regular meetings bring in a wider variety of community projects. Committees have waxed and waned – Steering Committee ideally sets the direction and steers the course; Flexible Funding committee to manage that account; Behavioral Health committee; youth committee – come to meetings when they happen, but they also keep an open door to access engaged youth and get their input and participation. Ad Hoc as needed. The Behavioral Health Committee is in the process of reconvening again to work together on common goals and strategies.

We feel it's time for us – as a big group – to come together and look at where AOC is going, look at purpose, direction, funding – is it doing what it needs to do, what we want it to do. Probably in January, set aside a couple of hours one evening to have a facilitated discussion to find out what serves the people at the table, what we need to have and what's nice to have, and what resources are needed to make it happen.

Next meeting: talk about how to get missing people to table (STA, police, etc.) – JANUARY 10