

**Minutes from Steering Committee Meeting Written by Santana Brown
Thursday, September 20, 2012 at 3 p.m. until 4:15 p.m.**

Present: Kathleen Olivieri, Lee Winter, Nancy Walsh, Stedmond Ware, Hannale Hylander (she is the new Bridges Social Work intern), Clara Ware, Lisa Long, Lynn Phillips-Gaines, and Santana Brown. [New time was a deterrent to attendance].

Moderator: Lynn Phillips-Gaines

- 1) Opening of Meeting
 - A. Opening Prayer- The Very Reverend Lee Winter
 - B. Opening Remarks- Lynn introduced Hannale Hylander as the new *Bridges* Social Work intern. She also introduced Clara Ware as a new *Bridges* volunteer and steering committee member (who completed her day one training with Hannale at Overstreet).

- 2) Old Business- Lynn discussed the following...
 - A. We are waiting to hear from the Episcopal Church about the Seed Money grant. We are also waiting to hear from the Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, and State Farm. Lynn stated the applications are completed; we need to follow-up on these grants.
 - B. Celebrate, the IRS has approved our 501(c)(3)!
 - C. The 2012 *Getting Ahead* class has been successfully completed.
 - Lynn asked Nancy to comment about the 2012 *Getting Ahead* graduates.
 - Nancy stated some participants were lost due to difficult situations such as job hours changing, family health problems or different expectations, but seven are graduating. When Nancy, Pinks and Lynn took over as facilitators there were 9 participants in the class. Nancy stated it was a joy to work with the participants; the 2012 class is very unique. She stated it was an amazing experience when the participants realized other people are dealing with similar problems. Nancy stated the *Getting Ahead* course is the preparation stage to prepare the participants to take action.
 - Nancy stated Shirley Ross, Co-Facilitator, was beneficial to the class because she knew valuable information about where to find resources.
 - Nancy stated citizens will be surprised about the resources available in the Starkville community. Nancy stated the 2011 GA graduates are on the bridge.
 - Nancy stated most of the participants' networks are informal versus formal networks. The participants gain information from other people.
 - Reverend Winter mentioned a 411 information center opening in the area for people to get information.

- Lynn asked Stedmond to provide a report on the BB4K program and to provide multiple copies of the BB4K video. Lynn asked Santana to upload the video to the *Starkville Bridges* website.
 - Stedmond stated BB4K was a rewarding experience. He truly enjoyed working with the children. Stedmond stated towards the end of the program, as the parents left, so were the children lost. He stated BB4K had wonderful mentors, who contributed to the success of the program. Stedmond stated he hopes the mentors exceeded the children's expectations and gave them as much as the children gave them as mentors.
- D. The graduation is planned and scheduled for **Tuesday, September 25th at 6:30 pm at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection**. We hope to see you there!
- Lynn discussed the order of service.
 - Lynn thanked Clara Ware for making the stoles. She stated the stoles will be worn by the graduates and co-facilitator. Each year the stole will be inscribed with the graduates' name. Lynn stated the inscribing of the names will demonstrate that people stand on the shoulders of the people before them. Lynn stated one stole will be dedicated to the inaugural class and worn by the co-facilitator during service, Shirly Ross.
 - Lynn thanked Kathleen Olivieri for the invitations and certificates for the ceremony.
- E. Santana attended a *Bridges out of Poverty* Day One training in Jackson, MS on August 25th. She spoke about what *Starkville Bridges* is doing.
- F. We completed the in-service training on August 16th. The training was conducted by Tequilla Manning and there were volunteers from the counseling center. Cassandra Kirkland offered to help *Starkville Bridges*. Dr. George Miller with the Building Strong Families program wants to get involved with *Bridges* after attending the *Bridges out of Poverty* Day One Training.
- G. We had some additional people to complete the *Bridges out of Poverty* Day One training in Starkville on August 31st.
- Congratulations to Grant Arinder, Ned Browning, Jim Ellis, Hannale Hylander, Samantha Miller, Betty Tucker, and Clara Ware.
 - Lynn stated Ned Browning and Walt Newsom have volunteered to be allies.
- H. *Starkville Bridges* has new steering committee members:
- Grant Arinder, Ned Browning, Jim Ellis, Clara Ware, Betty Tucker, Jean Ferguson, Joe Ferguson and Walt Newsom.
- I. Lynn stated she will teach a financial education course requested by the *Getting Ahead* graduates.

- Lynn stated in chapter three the graduates missed some vital information. After graduation, for two additional Tuesdays, the graduates will come to the SBOP office to do financial planning with her to help them evaluate their debt to equity ratio. Most had not done the exercise.
- Lynn stated Bobbie Shaffett is available to conduct financial classes. Some options are four classes for two and a half hours or six classes for two hours.

3) Financial Business:

- A. *Starkville Bridges* has received contributions in honor of Sandra Sistrunk's mother, enough to fund a student for 2013.

4) Current Projects and Needs:

A. Define the SBOP master calendar

- The committee decided during the last meeting to have only one *Getting Ahead* class a year, beginning in May and ending in August.
- Lynn stated *Bridges* needs a master schedule because it will help the group block out the resources needed for a year's activities. Plus it will allow for advanced planning.
- Lynn mentioned we have two students from West Point, MS and we should make sure Starkville and Oktibbeha County participants get to have places. She will work with Clay County to establish a BOP there. Lynn stated we need to inform the Starkville community about the *Bridges* program.
- The 2012 GA class had two participants from West Point. Lynn stated we are thankful to have those participants, but we know there are more people in Oktibbeha County, who could benefit from the program.
- Make sure we set expectations correctly

B. Wine Tasting Fundraiser

- Lynn stated Rhonda Keenum assisted with covering logistical expenses for the wine tasting fundraiser last year and has agreed to help again this year. Lynn asked the committee about their thoughts on the location. Lynn mentioned keeping the venue from the last wine tasting or changing to another location, such as the Hunter Henry to accommodate more people.
- Lynn stated contributions from the wine tasting event are not tax deductible.

C. Community Training

- Lynn stated *Bridges* needs to commit to an annual Day One Training like last year with Jodi Pfarr. The Day One Training targets those in the middle classes, from where we draw our volunteers since BOP is mandatory.
- Kathleen mentioned some people in the middle class really do not understand people in poverty.

D. Facilitator Training/Ally Training

- Lynn stated that Joan Butler had an excellent strategy, rather than send 10 people off to be trained, bring trainer here. Butler stated it will be cheaper to bring a speaker to Starkville, then to send 10 people to the training. Lynn stated this will allow more people to be trained.
- Lynn stated the allies and facilitators should train together so the allies understand what the facilitators cover with the participants.

E. GA- Next Facilitators?

- Lynn stated we have connections with Pinelake Church through Kathleen and Allison, who works with the Pinelake Outreach group. We also have support from Grant Arinder of Calvary Baptist Church and Jim Ellis to help us recruit people to work with *Bridges*.

F. Speaking Opportunities

- Lynn will speak to the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) at the Hilton Garden Inn on September 27th at 11:30 am.
- Santana has been invited to speak at the Statewide Episcopal Church Women Fall Conference in Brandon, MS on November 9th-10th.
- Please help us get on the program of other civic clubs, church organizations, etc.
- We need volunteers for the *Bridges* speaker's bureau. So far Kathleen Olivieri is on the speaker's bureau.

G. *Moving Ahead (Master's Program) (MA)*

- Lynn stated a date needs to be set for the committee to meet to organize MA for November start.
- Current allies are John Breazeale, Chair, Ned Browning, Lorenzo Crowell, Marianne Crowell, Pinks Dudley, Walt Newsom, Lynn Phillips-Gaines, Nancy Walsh, Stedmond Ware, Jean Ferguson and Joe Ferguson.
- Lynn stated we need to launch the *Moving Ahead* program soon because the participants need the one-on-one support.
- Nancy stated we need to develop an ally job description to hand out to potential allies, which includes a detail explanation of the allies' responsibilities.

- An ally job description committee was formed: Lynn Phillips-Gaines, John Breazeale, Kathleen Olivieri, and Nancy Walsh.

5) The next steering committee meeting is Thursday, October 18th at 2 pm.

A. The time change to 3 pm was difficult for many of the steering committee members, so the time was changed back to 2 pm:

- Most members of the steering committee reported the difficulty of attending a meeting at 3, so the time was changed back.
- The former GA graduates plus new graduates are invited.

6) Questions/Comments- Lynn asked who would be interested in a monthly meeting at McAlister's. This can be a Dutch treat. People are welcome to bring others interested in learning more about *Bridges*, the *Bridges* video can be viewed if there are new participants, and it will be a time to socialize and share information. The time is to be announced for the monthly McAlister's meeting. The tentative day and time are Wednesdays from 11:30 am -1 pm. The committee agreed to attend the monthly luncheon.

A. Lynn stated Robbie Ward is helping us. He is coordinating the media from Pennsylvania.

B. Reverend Lee Winter stated the Episcopal Church has a projector that can be used to run the *Bridges* video during the reception.