

FO Call Minutes 5-14-09

Attending Call: Itzel Spehar, Brenda Lewis, Rebekah Barger, Thomas Jensen, Letty Duran, Rebeca Potasnik, Peter Hainley, Maggie Reilly, Lonnie James, Deanne Grant, Irena Solomon, Kenny LaPoint, Laura Fritz, Leah Murray, Sarah Castagnola, Jay Stewart, Joy Hunt, Cynthia Winter

Not in Attendance: N/A

Check Ins

CASA – Moving full steam ahead on accepting applications. To date they are receiving approximately 20 applications per week. The training they have done with their partner organizations is beginning to result in a broader diversity of participants. They are also working to expand the regions they serve, and they're working with their existing partners in those regions to start opening more accounts in targeted counties around the State. Also working on various program developments related to IDAs such as a "Build-A-Loan" program with their CDFI as well as expanding their MESA program.

E'Dev – Things are going well. Their biggest challenge has been riding out the transition from WaMu to Chase. As part of the transition the bank has switched to quarterly statements versus monthly statements. Leah is working closely with their local branch manager to get the information she needs each month. New slots are filling up. They plan on applying to AFI in June for additional funds.

MCNW – They are in the process of enrolling 20+ applicants that are pre-qualified.

NAYA – Irena Solomon is transitioning into working on IDAs. Ben is teaching a "Life Connections with Money" course. This class was spurred by popular demand from participants in their Financial Wellness classes. All of NAYA's Homeownership IDA slots have been filled for the year, and their waiting list is closed. They have 38 slots available for Education IDAs and 3 slots available for Microenterprise. They are still interviewing candidates for their Achievement Coach.

NI – They are taking applications and have approximately 10 thus far. Approximately half of those are Habitat participants. They continue to work with Umpqua CDC on combining their two processes.

PHC – They have had one graduate so far this month and two more are expected to close later in May. No more slots are available. To date they have met several of their SMART goals!

UCDC – They have had a higher than normal dropout rate this month, but are attributing it to the 19% unemployment rate in Douglas County. Hopefully this will improve. They are about to graduate their first participant purchasing Adaptive Technology. They have learned lots along the way about dealing with issues associated with people with disabilities. They have also enrolled their first foster youth for their June Financial Fitness class and expect more to enroll shortly. They have signed on with Bank of the Cascades and are working to do the same with Sterling Bank.

WSCAT – They are maintaining the clients they currently have and working to fill their open staff position. Unemployment is high on the reservation making it difficult for people to qualify. They are working with the First Nations OWESTA program to get technical assistance to do a youth financial fitness camp this summer. Ten youth will be employed as peer counselors to do financial education in the community.

Program Updates and Announcements

- Approximately \$244,000 in contributions have been received to date. This is slightly above 2008 but not by much. Peter Hainley requested more clarity on the bigger picture strategic for

marketing tax credits for the coming year. Cynthia met with Richard Rosen for two hours earlier this week to draft a plan to increase the reach of our tax credit marketing. One area we are exploring is leveraging the utility companies (PGE, NW Natural, Dougless Electric, Etc.) to share information about the IDA Tax Credit with their customer base. Part of this will entail stories of IDA participants that are going green. Cynthia requested input from the FOs on participants that they could recommend. She shared that in order to get close to \$10,000,000 we need to reach out to everyone and anyone in the state. This will include working with the FOs to get their assistance in these efforts via their donor bases, etc. Cynthia will be in contact with everyone shortly as the marketing plan solidifies.

- Income Guidelines – HB2258 has passed the legislature and has been signed by the Governor. HB2258 will allow FOs to choose between 80% of AMI for the participant's county of residence or 200% of the federal poverty line to determine OR IDA income eligibility. The Bill is not effective until January 1, 2010.
- Vision Retreat – NPF is meeting with HCS on May 18th to get their signoff on the Success Measures and Outcomes suggested during our visioning retreats. This will be discussed further at the June FO meeting.
- PSU Evaluation
 - 248 Grad Exit Surveys have been received
 - 32 One Year Post Surveys received
 - 9 Non-Completer Surveys received

Joy reminded everyone that there are three different types of surveys (an exit survey for graduates, an exit survey for non-completers, and a one-year follow up survey). She requested input on ideas for increasing the response rate for the non-completers survey:

- Send surveys out separately from termination paperwork (CASA)
 - Remind partners to administer surveys for voluntary terminations (CASA)
 - Have participants complete their exit surveys before they receive authorization to withdraw their funds (UCDC)
- The next FO meeting will take place on June 10th at the Black Bear Inn in Salem. Joy reminded everyone to be ready for 'Best Practice Peer-to-Peer Sharing' at the June FO Meeting.
 - Kippi Clausen from Mile High United Way will be our trainer during the June FO Meeting. Partner Organizations and FOs will be invited to attend. Kippi is an expert on youth and foster youth IDAs as well as being the head of Colorado's Asset Building Coalition. Kippi's training will begin at 1:15.

Statewide Expansion

Joy restated that one of the outcome measures of the IDA Initiative is to have IDAs available in every county in the state. It is the preference of NPF to do this through existing FOs; however, we understand that not all FOs have the capacity to serve our targeted areas for expansion and those target areas may not be covered in every FO's mission. The counties being targeted for expansion are:

- Grant County
- Gilliam County
- Morrow County
- Umatilla County
- Wheeler County

CASA expressed interest in working with Joy to open accounts in these counties through existing VIDA partners and/or new partners. Joy will follow up with Thomas.

New & Improved Quarterly Report Form

Joy asked for feedback on the new quarterly report form, and stressed that we need to receive "IDA Story Waiver" forms so that we can use the wonderful participant stories that are being submitted. Brenda expressed concern about the length of the form (1,800 words). Joy and Cynthia will look into combining one or more questions. Cynthia noted that this year HCS may also require an end of the

year report. Brenda suggested combining the 4th quarter Quarterly Report with the end of the year report. Joy and Cynthia will look in to this possibility and report back to the group.

Financial Reports

Karie is looking for an FO that is willing to be a test site for the new IDA Financial Report Form. She will need assistance from financial staff and possibly IDA staff. CASA and Umpqua CDC volunteered. The goal is to release a final version of a new Financial Report Form in time for the next round of Quarterly Reports.

Microenterprise Purchases

Joy shared that more and more of the FOs are finding that some “big box” stores no longer accept 3rd party checks for IDA asset purchases. In fact, some major retailers such as Ikea no longer accept checks in any form. Ways to work around this issue currently used by FOs are:

- Building relationships with local vendors so that they are encouraged to make an exception for the IDA program (by accepting a traditional or Cashier’s checks from the FO).
- Authorizing clients to buy items using their personal credit cards. FOs generally issue a check directly to the credit card company once a copy of the receipt has been submitted.
- Reimbursing the client directly for cash purchases.
- Using organizational credit cards to make purchases and then transferring funds to cover the cost. This either involves staff members accompanying a client to the retailer, or having the client making purchases online from the FO’s office.
- Working with business to open a trade account for the participant.
- Gifts Cards.

Prepaid Debit Cards (pros & cons)

- Fees are involved.
- Fees vary so it is important to find the most competitive card available.
- Some cards may give FOs the ability to view a client’s purchase history online and add additional funds online.
- There is no way to guarantee that all funds will be used to pay for IDA purchases; would need a policy for use and a program-wide procedure for addressing any instances of misuse.
- They are accepted virtually everywhere and can be used to make purchases online.
- Many prepaid debit cards offer theft protection in case the cards are lost or stolen.

Leah is working with US Bank to see if they can create a product for e’Dev that does what they need. NPF is also in conversation with Shore Bank. CASA has been talking with various banks about this type of option. Joy cautioned that some companies promise to create a customized product as a marketing technique. At this time, gift cards are not a viable program-wide option. The decision was made to keep exploring the use of prepaid debit cards and other options.

Meeting Adjourned