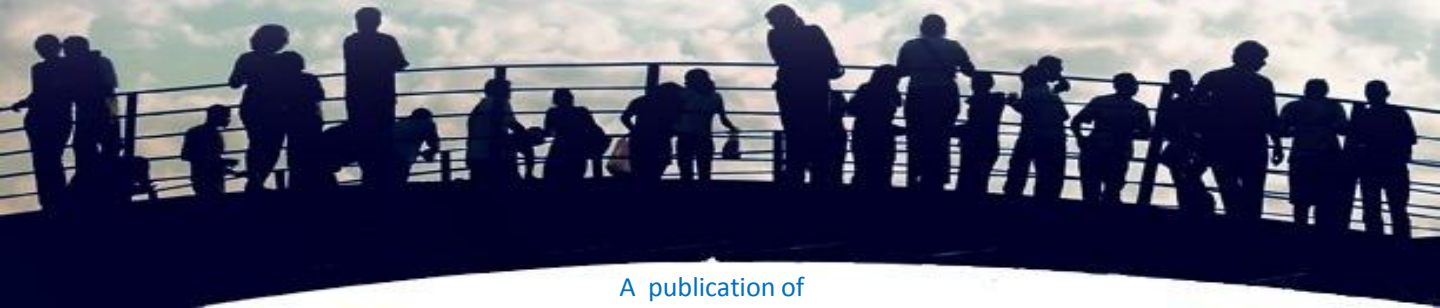


Changing mindsets. Building bridges out of poverty.



A publication of

Unite Escambia's Poverty Solutions Team

## Education Cuts Felt Locally

Don't be confused by the staged media photos of Gov. Rick Scott signing the coming year's Florida budget, surrounded by mostly smiling Florida schoolchildren. The budget, a product of legislators and the governor, isn't anywhere near as child-friendly as Florida's child champions say is needed.



Because of the recession, Florida's children are already poorer, and because of federal and state budget cuts, they will be even poorer this year and in years to come.

Here's how education programs for Escambia County children are being affected:

- Escambia County School system is losing \$20 million, \$13 million due to the end of federal stimulus money and another \$7 million from legislative cuts. Says Superintendent Malcolm Thomas, "We've closed eight schools since 2008 that had declining enrollment and were inefficient to run, and cut 10% of district staff, and incorporated efficiencies. We're getting very close to running out of ways to cut."
- The Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) program in Escambia County is losing \$328,603 in this year's state budget; that's \$148.22 per child, for the expected local enrollment of 2,217 four-year-olds, reports Diane Hutcherson, executive director, Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County. That means that VPK school providers receive less per child – "for some that's money they would have spent for equipment and program supplies."

Florida's VPK already ranked poorly, No. 34 among U.S.-state programs, according to Children's Movement of Florida.

- Federal cuts in school readiness funding, compounded by legislators' failure to make up for loss of federal stimulus dollars as promised by the previous Legislature, are taking \$1.5 million away from subsidized child care funding for low-income families in Escambia County – child care that's often needed in order for parents to take a job. "We have almost 600 children on our waiting list that qualify for subsidy child care," says Hutcherson.



Cuts in funding can have serious consequences, say education leaders. "The place to break the cycle of poverty is with these younger children," says Hutcherson. Notes Superintendent Thomas: Poverty in Escambia is increasing, as measured by children who qualify for free and reduced-cost lunch; that percentage has risen from 57% to 61% in the past two years. "These kids need to have a future. Education is a critical piece of that."

## Bay Area Works

By Jean Norman

Poverty is expensive. Over five years, just one family living in poverty costs \$150,000. Ironically, the US has a shortage of qualified entry-level workers. These positions could be filled by the thousands of people living in poverty. However, those living in poverty have multifaceted barriers that prevent them not only from acquiring a job, but landing an interview, securing childcare, and keeping that job over time. Bay Area Works is the first attempt to replicate a highly successful program established in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Bay Area Works is a step by step intervention that seeks to end generational poverty by removing the barriers to employment that many impoverished citizens contend with. The members of Bay Area Works will find stability in jobs that pay \$8 to \$11 per hour and offer health benefits. The far-reaching goal is for these individuals to attain 200% of the federal poverty level and move to self-sufficiency, breaking the cycle of generational poverty.

How can Bay Area Works achieve this for our Bay Area and why is this program needed in addition to the current programs that provide job placement assistance? Existing programs do not include an emphasis on maintaining contact with employees and employers like Bay Area Works does. Based on the successes of this model in Cincinnati, 75% of people who start this program go to work. Of those, 84% retain employment and are still employed after one year. Of those, 70% move to 200% of poverty over 5-7 years.

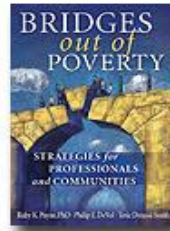
The Bay Area Works planning team is championed by Mort O'Sullivan, managing partner of O'Sullivan Creel. Bay Area Works incorporated in January and has embarked on a six-month fundraising plan to raise \$1.2 million to cover the first three years of operation. As a powerful beginning to its support, Bay Area Works will receive \$300,000 over the first three years through the Pensacola State College federal grant that trains and places people living 200 percent below the poverty level. Leaders plan to have Bay Area Works in operation Spring, 2012.

**For more information about the model, visit [cincinnatiworks.org](http://cincinnatiworks.org) or contact Jean Norman; [jean.n.norman@gmail.com](mailto:jean.n.norman@gmail.com).**

## Bridges to Circles Volunteer Training

### BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY

Concepts training orients thinking around the culture, hidden rules, familial patterns and belief systems characteristic of generational poverty. Book authored by Dr. Ruby Payne, Philip DeVol and Terie Dreussi Smith offers practical strategies to better lives via role models, support systems, emotional resources and mentoring.



**July 7, 2011**

**or**

**August 4, 2011**

### ALLY TRAINING

This two-hour session presents an overview of the Bridges to Circles poverty initiative and begins to equip the individual to serve as an ally for an individual moving from poverty to self-sufficiency.

**July 21, 2011**

**or**

**August 18, 2011**



**All training is conducted at the  
Catholic Charities Outreach Center  
1815 N. Sixth Avenue  
from 6:00-8:00 pm.**

*For more information, contact Haley Richards,  
Bridges to Circles community organizer  
at (850)429-7296, ext. 17 or email  
[richardsh@cc.ptdiocese.org](mailto:richardsh@cc.ptdiocese.org).*



## Fund For Gulf Communities-Florida (FGC-FL) A Project of Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida

Funded by **ROCKEFELLER**  
Philanthropy  
Advisors

### Catholic Charities Chosen to "Regrant" Funds in Northwest Florida

Catholic Charities has been selected to administer a \$3.5-million grant from the Fund for Gulf Communities to continue supporting residents across the northern Florida Gulf Coast still struggling to recover financially, emotionally and physically from the April 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The award was created through an anonymous donation to Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors to enhance the resiliency of the diverse communities along the seven northern Gulf counties, and address some of the unmet needs of individuals, families, and children significantly affected by the triple whammy of the 2004-2005 hurricanes, the ensuing economic crisis, and the oil spill and its aftermath.

"This grant will allow us to continue addressing the priority needs of the people of the northern Florida Gulf coast by responding to the continuing overwhelming demand for emergency financial assistance to meet basic needs, financial literacy education, outreach and mental health services and youth development activities," said Mark Dufva, Executive Director of Catholic Charities.

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors selected regional partners based on the partners' abilities to identify and address critical local needs, deliver quality programs across a regional footprint in the Florida Gulf Coast region, as well as their technical assistance and community building capacity. Six regional partners working in four Gulf Coast states were awarded grants. Catholic Charities chose Brunie Emmanuel, formerly with the EscaRosa Coalition on the Homeless, to manage this Florida initiative.

Brunie was very clear that these funds will be made available through a different methodology, just as RPA used in their selection of Catholic Charities. "It is not the normal 'Request for Proposal' (RFP) process, but rather through Invitations to Apply. These invitations will be made based on recommendations from Advisory Councils in each geographic area."

Brunie commented further, "On the heels of one of the worst budgetary years in the history of our non-profit organizations, and in the face of extreme cuts to services both this year and predicted for next year, we feel especially grateful for the blessing these funds will bring to the people of the Gulf coast, and I trust we will find innovative and effective ways to regrant them."

**For more information** about the Poverty Solutions Team, including our Mission, a Call to Action for both individuals and businesses, Definition of Terms, Team Descriptions / Contacts and Training Programs, visit [www.uniteescambia.com](http://www.uniteescambia.com).

*Together We Achieve More!*