



## Moving Forward on a “Mission to Greatness!”

### FISCAL YEAR 2008-09 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

#### BACKGROUND

Last June, following an extensive review of long-standing programming, Catholic Charities adopted a new strategic plan and embarked on a “Mission to Greatness,” committing ourselves to reaching new heights in service as we approach our 100th anniversary in 2010. This strategic plan provided focus in four major areas:

1. **providing excellent service** to assist with immediate needs while empowering our clients to attain self-sufficiency;
2. **perfecting communication and collaborations** with other service providers and within parish communities;
3. **enhancing outcome measurements** to evaluate the implementation of strategic goals, measuring management and employee effectiveness, and improving communications agency-wide; and
4. **being excellent stewards** of all our resources.

In the first year of this strategic vision, we have already begun to implement nearly two-thirds of our 28-initiative plan! This extraordinary pace was in direct response to this distinctive point in time when the needs of our community are so great and the economy continues to challenge our resources. Many changes have been made to date including:

- A. **Began efforts to establish a stronger relationship with the Diocese of Pittsburgh and parishes to allow greater outreach, collaboration and communication.**
- B. **Reviewed and began to restructure/reconfigure our programs to provide better service in a more efficient manner.**
  - **Information and Referral Services** was renamed Basic Needs Assistance and realigned through restructuring and collaboration with United Way so that clients have better access to safety net services. Plans are underway to institute more intensive case management in order to help clients achieve self sufficiency.
  - **Parish Social Ministry, Outreach to the Elderly and Bereavement Services** were reconfigured so that Elderly Services is now included in the Basic Needs program and Parish Social Ministry and Bereavement programs have been included with a revised training and coordination within the new Parish Resource program.
  - **The Refugee Resettlement Services** staff were reconfigured first and foremost to improve the caseworker to client ratio and to begin to incorporate a much-needed life skills and mentoring program as well as targeted efforts to improve English skills and job training and enrichment skills.

- **Counseling** has been modified to limit the provision of individual, marital and family counseling at certain offices in order to avoid the duplication of services with other providers and free up resources to respond to the increasing demand for basic needs assistance. The revised counseling outreach will be configured as follows:
  1. **All Catholic Charities county offices will retain one licensed certified counselor on staff** to facilitate effective referrals, handle emergency cases, see clients as needed, and run pre-identified counseling groups (post-abortion, gambling addiction, anger management, etc.) In addition:
  2. **In Allegheny County** – A staff licensed therapist will oversee volunteer therapists for clients of the Catholic Charities Free Health Care Center who do not have insurance, effective September 1. Individuals with insurance will be referred to appropriate providers. This arrangement will replace the present Allegheny County Family Services program.
  3. **In Beaver County** – Group counseling and limited individual counseling for anger management, trans-parenting and co-parenting during divorce will be maintained.
  4. **In Butler County** — Individual, family and marital counseling will be provided on a limited basis at our satellite office at St. Ferdinand parish.
  5. **In Greene and Washington Counties** — Individual, family, marital and drug and alcohol counseling will remain as currently configured.

**C. Created an outreach to Spanish-speaking individuals. This new outreach allows us to provide basic needs assistance, counseling, case management, and health care services to individuals who speak Spanish.**

**D. Introduced new efforts to streamline expenses as good stewards of the resources entrusted to us including:**

- The creation of a new budget process that allows our program budgets to be the most effective tools possible.
- A review of purchasing has been implemented with the goal of purchasing supplies and services more effectively and streamlining expenses.
- An agency wide Coordinator of Volunteer Services was created in order to utilize volunteers and interns in a productive way to improve services to clients without the expense of additional staff.

**E. Changes from the strategic initiatives allowed us to respond to the economic crisis with a variety of initiatives including:**

- The Basic Needs Assistance (formerly called Information and Referral Services) was enhanced and changed to provide our staff with a better technique to respond to clients with a higher level of assistance. This effort was greatly enhanced by the generosity of the parishioners of the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh who donated more \$200,000 to a second collection as a way to help their neighbors in need.
- A program was coordinated with the Diocese of Pittsburgh to provide referral resource information to parishes as well the public at large. The effort resulted in an entire edition of the Pittsburgh Catholic being dedicated to resources and services that featured highlights of Catholic Charities' programs and the information that Catholic Charities compiled in the "Gifts of Service" booklet.
- Heightened communications with a number of groups like St. Vincent de Paul to work together to provide solutions for those in need.