

Mr. Sammy Rangel
2301 Slausen
Racine, WI 53403

3643 Kasper Street
Racine, WI 52402
October 14, 2009



Dear Mr. Rangel:

As a result of a county/city/concerned agency task force on the overall issue of Racine area homelessness a few years ago, HALO came into being as the community-wide response to bridging the gap between emergency shelter needs and having a comprehensive approach to our chronic homeless issue. It's not just "another agency", but rather unique in having been recognized by all (including other agencies who also play some role in helping Racine's unfortunates) as an essential new player in combating the ravages of homelessness and what goes with it. Since HALO came into being in 2004 it's consistently met its missionwith tangible, regular, fact-based reporting that attests to its accomplishments in helping those it was formed to help. However, its mission is NOT over; current economic issues only serve to re-enforce the need for a dynamic HALO in our community.

It's in that context that I write to you as I could translate the decision to exclude HALO from ANY CDGB funding for 2010 (after being the recipient of \$50,000 this year) as, in effect saying "...we've now resolved the homeless issue; let's move on to other things...". Obviously, nothing could be further from the truth and I don't really believe you think that to be the case, but that's how it could appear.

You might also have said to yourself that HALO has a relatively large (in the eye of the beholder) budget so surely they can cope with this reduction by making it up elsewhere. The reality is that their budget is very largely made up of grants from various governmental entities and they are not sources that can be appealed to and expect either a quick or a positive response; HUD is an Ex A. Yes, HALO does raise public support money on its own, but those funds are limited plus a good share of that income source is necessary to address the matching funds that many of its grants require.

Given the above, I URGE you to reconsider the committees (and perhaps your) initial vote to exclude HALO from ANY participation in the granting of 2010 funding. Our homeless issue is as large an issue as ever and HALO has proven itself to be a very effective force in helping address it. Combined, these two factors warrant your supporting a significant grant for 2010 for HALO to continue its critical work.

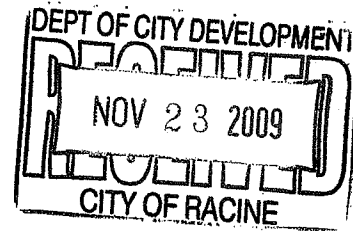
A concerned citizen

Neal Nottleson

November 16, 2009

Cathy Knuteson
12 Redwood Court
Racine, WI 53402

CDBG Committee
Department of City Development
Room 306
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403



Dear Chairperson and Committee Members,

I'm writing to communicate my concerns regarding the impending final decisions about the 2010 CDBG grant fund allocations. As a HALO Board Member, recently serving as Board President for 2 years, I've been so very proud of the work this organization has done on behalf of the homeless of Racine County. HALO was developed following a year-long community planning effort led by United Way. At the time, there was strong community and local political support for this organization. This support was essential to building the organization and we have been very grateful to all who have worked hard on behalf of HALO. We have made a difference in the lives of vulnerable individuals and families.

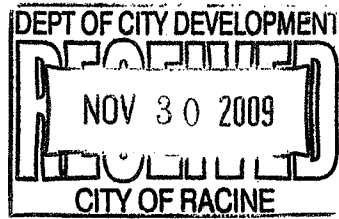
As we planned our 2009-2010 budget, we acknowledged that donations and financial support might wane in the face of this very challenging economy. We've taken seriously our responsibility to be good stewards of our resources. Unfortunately there's a tipping point where our efforts at controlling costs will spill over into cutting services. When we're able to provide our program participants with the support they need to be successful, they make great progress. Case managers conduct individual needs assessment with each participant, help set priorities and monitor progress toward outcomes. Program participants take an active role in becoming self-sufficient. This isn't an easy process as their problems are complex.

I understand many other well-deserving programs have made requests for funding. I also know these allocation decisions are not easy when there are limited funds. But I hope you seriously consider HALO's need for financial support. We cannot be successful without community support. I volunteer each week at the shelter and it has been full since we opened in November of 2005.

Please continue to provide HALO with financial support so the staff can continue to help those who are the most vulnerable in our community. I'm available to meet with you to provide more information if needed.

Thank you,
Cathy Knuteson
639-5621

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empowering women**
ywca



November 23, 2009

CDBG Committee

City of Racine

Dear Joe Heck and Committee Members;

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to restate our project proposal for the Empowering Women Center's (EWC) with Gateway Technical College to provide support and referral services for Gateway students. Racine has one of the highest unemployment rates in the State of Wisconsin and the women in Racine have the responsibility of taking care of their selves and their families. In addition some of the children of these women lack food, childcare, parental guidance, and/or role models. It is for this reason that these women fall through the cracks. They do not have a choice about what job to take – they have their families to take care of first.

In the city of Racine, there are more than 4200 households led by single-mothers; 44% of those households live in poverty. The **Empowering Women Center** (1220 Villa St.) is taking a new direction this spring, combining the greatest assets of our current programming to complement a custom-designed soft skills training program for women in poverty. The result will be one program that provides development of the whole woman; from basic skills to family-work life balance to attire in the workplace.

I have worked as an adjunct instructor at Gateway Technical College for about 10 years and I know from this experience that many of the Gateway students are not able to finish their degrees and if they do, they are not able to obtain jobs in their field of study. If they find employment in their field of study, they have problems maintaining their jobs. A Gateway student is typically a non-traditional student, who has family/children and is typically a single mother. Many of these students have problems that we cannot imagine. I have had students who need to drop out of school because of domestic abuse or because they cannot secure childcare. Many of these students dropped out of high school or struggled in high school. Many of these students have learning disabilities, mental health issues, and need supports to be successful. Additionally, many of these students never learned the basic skills to get along with others and prosper. They are sometimes able to get jobs but soon lose them because they lack the basic soft skills.

Gateway Technical College's Dean Ray Koukari and our employment specialist are in the midst a planning a new program that will address the needs of Gateway students. Our focus will be to work with students who are attending Gateway in their last year by providing supports and services needed to be successful.

We currently have a contract with the Division of Vocation and Rehabilitation (DVR) to work with women with disabilities and have an affiliation with Dress for Success® and after the New Year

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ywca

collaboration with Gateway Technical College to support students in their mission to obtain an education and careers. We are seeking \$26,028.00 to provide support and referral services for this project. This is a program where students have the option to participate to improve their career opportunities and chance for success. This project will start the spring semester of 2010 and run through the year of 2010. Towards the end of the spring semester a meeting is scheduled to determine what is working and what changes need to be made and at that time it will be determined how Gateway can help by using their grant development resources.

This program will be working with these students by providing individualized – one-on-one, career counseling, job development, supports services and referral services by collaborating with area organizations for childcare and in depth counseling services for example.

The YWCA of Racine wishes to continue to provide Racine County residents with relevant and quality programming. If you have any questions or comments about the YWCA or any of its program please contact me at 262-880-0948 or tfriedrich@ywcaofracine.org.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,



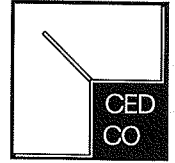
Terri Friedrich

YWCA of Racine Executive Director

CEDCO

Community Economic Development Corporation

November 30, 2009



Department of City Development
Room 306
730 Washington Avenue
Racine, WI 53403

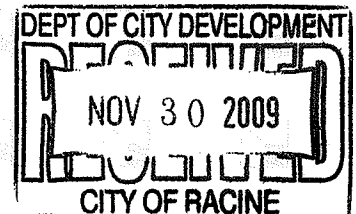
Community Development Committee:

Per the Preliminary 2010 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding allocation, Community Economic Development Corporation (CEDCO) is requesting consideration of an increase to our current allocation of \$100,000 for the year 2010 to \$125,000. CEDCO has no alternative but to shift staff and reduce hours per week scheduled to accommodate the current allocation of \$100,000.

Thanks for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

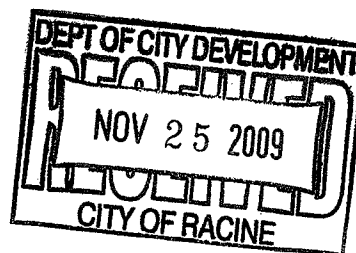
Randy Luter
Interim Executive Director





Serving Racine County Since 1965

734 Lake Avenue
Racine, WI 53403



November 24, 2009

Dear members of the CDBG Committee:

Attached is a report and request for reconsideration for future funding of the Racine Literacy Council (RLC) English as a Second Language program, currently funded by a Racine Community Development Block Grant.

For many of the adults in Racine who want or need to learn English our program is their primary choice due to the hours we are open and the type of instruction given. Employers often refer their employees to the RLC's ESL program. As stated in the enclosed report, knowing how to speak and understand English directly affects types of jobs available, potential for on-the-job training, the level of salary, and wage progressions. Importantly, development of language skills is key for permanent employment and livable family incomes. Greater emphasis on work related literacy is being integrated into educational programs at local and national levels, including the Racine Literacy Council. All tutoring and ESL classes focus on daily life-skills, which directly affect the lives of the participants and their families.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our basis for the requested funds for 2010-2011.

Sincerely,

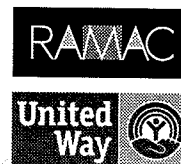
Kay Gregor
Executive Director

Phone: 632-9495

Attachments



Phone: (262) 632-9495 E-mail: RLC@racineliteracy.com Fax: (262) 632-9502
Web-site: www.racineliteracy.com



November 24, 2009

CDBG Funding for the English as a Second Language/ Racine Literacy Council

Given the importance of the ESL program for the Hispanic and others new immigrants and their families in Racine, I am writing to ask that you reconsider the Committee's decision to not fund the Racine Literacy Council's English as a Second Language (ESL) Program for the 2010-2011 year. Possibly the grant proposal or the brief community presentation did not fully convey the importance of our program for the people of Racine.

Past

- **Last year we served 184 adult learners, as indicated in our 2008-2009 CDBG year-end report:** Most of adults come into the ESL program to better their knowledge of English as it relates to their jobs and/or the possibilities of jobs in our area.
- We served people from 24 different countries in 2008/09. 92 % of the ESL adult learners have Spanish as their first language. Last year the RLC served 331 adults, of which 56 % were ESL students.

Present

Current Numbers Served in September alone: 113

- Adults working one to one with a volunteer tutor: 92 (meeting twice a week)
- ESL Conversation Classes: 6 Citizenship classes: 2 Others in small groups: 6
- **Adults working in CDBG funded class on Thursday evening (2 hours): 7**

Jobs: Knowing how to speak and understand English directly affects the types of jobs, on the job training, the level of salary, and wage progressions. Importantly, development of language skills is key for permanent employment and livable family incomes. Greater emphasis on work related literacy is being integrated into educational programs at local and national levels, including the Racine Literacy Council. The RLC staff have recently (fall 2009) attended several conferences where presentation and workshops were given on Workforce Development Centers and their working relationships with literacy and adult basic education programs.

Accessibility: Flexibility of time and place.

Not all adults are able to attend ESL classes at Gateway Technical College due to their job schedules. The RLC is open from 8: 30 a.m. – 8 p.m. on Monday through Thursday to accommodate the different schedules of our adult learners. Some ESL learners are also tutored at Our Saviors Lutheran Church, the Workforce Development Center, and at the Siena Center.

Future Goals for 2010-2011

- **Eliminate waiting lists with ESL Classes:** Current total on the waiting lists is 99 ESL students*.
 - * 85 adults on the waiting list (Have asked for services/ RLC has basic demographics data).
 - * 14 adults currently have been evaluated and are ready to be placed with a volunteer tutor.
- To accommodate these expanded programs, we received funding from the CDBG for 2009-2010 to be able to remodel the RLC lower level. Job focused curriculum is under development for 2010.

Racine Literacy Council

How the CDBG money furthers literacy:

Because of the tremendous follow-up on the evaluation and progress of each of the students and support of their tutors, the ESL Coordinator is vital to the program. The coordinator also supervises the citizenship classes, conversation class, and use of the computers by the students. Importantly, the ESL Coordinator is bi-lingual in Spanish and English.

The position is very similar to the Coordinator of the GED program at the Martin Lutheran King, Jr. Center, where a Gateway Technical College instructor teaches the class. I hope the committee will view the two programs as equally important to the city of Racine.

The ESL Coordinator does the intake and pre and post- testing of all ESL adult learners, she trains volunteer tutors through the RLC tutor training four times a year. She provides curricula and support services for students and tutors and the ESL classes. The ESL Coordinator is paid from CDBG funds (\$17,600), which pays for 2/3 of the positions salary.

Plea:

I am asking you to reconsider the funding of the ESL program for \$25,000. This includes \$18,000 for the ESL Coordinator position and for educational materials for the program, data entry of student progress, and additional administrative support. The coordinator position is vital to the sustainability of the program and to the people we serve.

The full \$35,000 requested would allow for more ESL classes and help to serve those on the waiting list.

If you have any questions regarding the Racine Literacy Council's ESL Program, I will gladly meet with you. Your consideration to our request is greatly appreciated.

Kay Gregor, Executive Director

Phone: 632-9495

Attached letters are from a tutor, employer, and Hispanic community representative.

Racine Literacy Council

Advancing Family Assets **

At the CDBG presentation this past summer, there was interest in programs being relevant to the initiative Advancing Family Assets. As a United Way funded program we address Advancing Family Asset Outcomes in our United Way Grant in two ways:

1. Adults gain substantial language, reading, and /or math skills.

60 adults have reported meeting this goal in September 2009

2. Individuals gain job readiness skills for employability.

31 adults have reported meeting this goal in September 2009.

Racine Literacy Council records indicate that **91** of all adults in the RLC Adult Literacy Program have met these goals that are included in Advancing Family Assets.

*****Workforce Development Board – Higher Expectations/Advancing Family Assets***

Challenge #2 (United Way Challenge convener) “People in the city of Racine need to address and embrace additional education, skill building, and family support opportunities so that they are successful in strengthening their families and increasing their financial stability.”

Milaeger's

November 19, 2009

Dear Members of the Department of City Development and the CDBG Allocation Committee;

I have just been informed by Kay Gregor, Executive Director of the Racine Literacy Council, that funds from the Community Development Block Grant will expire at the end of March. These funds are used by the Council at 734 Lake Avenue to offer English classes. Milaeger's now has two employees enrolled in the Thursday evening class. They are doing very well and actually wish that the class could be offered twice a week so they could progress more rapidly. Now they are being told that the program will not be offered after March 31st.

I am very proud of my employees who are trying to improve their skills to become more valuable workers and accept more responsibility with their job. By learning English, they can better communicate with our staff and our customers. We are as disappointed as they are that this important program will no longer be available to them.

I am asking that you reconsider cutting the funding for this educational program. These employees are citizens and taxpayers of the City of Racine. They and other students in their class depend on this program to help them advance at their place of employment to become not only more valuable employees but more valuable citizens of the City of Racine.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



Dan Reisdorf

November 18, 2009

Dear CDBG Committee,

It was recently called to my attention that CDBG has decided to not fund the Racine Literacy Council's English as a Second Language (ESL) program for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. The purpose of this letter is to respectfully request that this decision be reconsidered in favor of funding this important service to the Racine community.

I am a volunteer tutor of ESL and former Board member at the Racine Literacy Council. I have been tutoring a woman from Mexico named Araceli, who has three young sons attending Racine schools. Araceli has progressed through several levels of English proficiency, and through the ESL training, is now able to communicate in English with her son's teachers to ensure success in their education. She volunteers on a regular basis at her son's school, and helps the teachers during field trips, recess and art activities.

The ESL programs and other services provided through the Racine Literacy Council are run in the most cost effective way possible. These programs help improve students' chances of gaining employment and encourage them to make positive contributions to the community.

It would be greatly appreciated if the CDBG Committee could find a way to fund the ESL programs at Racine Literacy Council in order to provide the opportunity for individuals in need to improve their lives and to become productive members of the Racine community who might otherwise be left on the outside of our society.

Sincerely,


Geri Connelly

Cc: Kay Gregor, Executive Director, RLC

November 23, 2009

Community Block Grant Committee
Racine City Hall
Racine, Wisconsin

Dear Committee Members:

Racine's Hispanic population has numerous members that face language challenges and are fortunate to have a powerful and beneficial program where they are able to learn English in a positive and supporting environment.

The Racine Literacy Council's (RLC) English as a Second Language (ESL) Program proudly serves over 115 students each month. Additionally, there are many more seeking guidance and knowledge from our dedicated tutors via our empowering classes.

We also acknowledge the difficulty regarding transportation. To ensure students have options regarding their education, tutoring is provided at four locations in Racine:

- Racine Literacy Council
- Our Savior Lutheran Church
- Siena Center
- Workforce Development Center

Currently I serve as chair of the Community Out-Reach Committee for the State Public Defender's Board. I formerly have been a Board member of The Wisconsin Hispanic Scholarship Foundation, a member of RLC's Board of Directors and a Tutor for RLC. In all of these endeavors, RLC has afforded me the unique opportunity to personally witness the quality and impact of the RLC's ESL Program. Its importance for the student, tutor, and community, as a whole, is immense.

Please know that our outcomes could not be achieved without the support of the City's Community Development block Grant (CDBG) funding, staff and volunteers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe Morales". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Joe Morales
2100 Creek Ridge
Racine, Wisconsin

718 Lake Avenue
Racine, WI 53403
November 2, 2009

Dear Members of the Racine Community Development Committee,

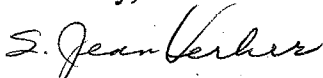
I am a board member at HALO and am also serving on the executive committee of the board. Being a volunteer since its beginning several years ago, I am aware of the community partnerships that were forged in an effort to see this important venture through negotiation, planning, renovation, final opening date, and now through its successful operation for the past four years.

The City has been one of our prize partners, not only with its funding, but also with its strong support for providing a place where homeless individuals and families can find shelter and hope of some day becoming independent residents. As you are aware, HALO has evolved with the inclusion of multiple services to guide residents in addressing needs and personal barriers so they can prepare themselves for transitional housing opportunities as well as eventual permanent residence in the community.

We ask you to re-consider your vote to award no funding to HALO through the CDBG process. While we do not expect to receive the full amount requested since we realize other outreach services certainly merit consideration, we urge you to reflect on the large number who are annually served at HALO with the consequent benefit to the community, not only financially through non-use of other costly emergency services, but also through the sense of wellbeing experienced by the residents themselves as well as the whole community because of the spirit of hope and dignity now enjoyed by these individuals and the many volunteers and staff who are involved in this mission. We are dependent on all sectors of Racine, including City leaders, to assist in continuing this great venture, especially in these difficult economic times.

Thank you for giving this your thoughtful re-consideration.

Sincerely,



S. Jean Verber

November 24, 2009

Department of City Development
Room 306
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
Attention: Brian F. O'Connell

Re: 2010 Community Development Block Grant Allocation
Foundations of Life, Inc.

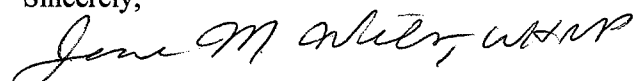
To Mr. O'Connell and Committee:

I would like to take this opportunity to write you regarding my support of the funding application submitted by Tessa Brown on behalf of Foundations of Life, Inc. for the Community Development Block Grant. This newly formed non-profit organization is a sight for sore eyes for Racine. As a women's health nurse practitioner who has worked and lived in Racine for 16 years, I have seen the teen pregnancy rate rise to its' current level of 93.6, the highest in the state of Wisconsin, surpassing Milwaukee! I have longed for a program to help curb recurrent teen pregnancies. This program, modeled after a successful evidence-based program, Rosalie Manor, in Milwaukee, I know will prove to do just that.

In my former job in Chicago, at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Prentice Women's Hospital, we had a teen clinic run by a nurse practitioner which I worked in, which had classes for teen moms similar to those which this program has. The mothers who attended that program had better birth outcomes than the mothers who did not. I believe that these services are not duplicative, because the Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies program of the Health Department presently has to focus on high-risk mothers which do not cover all teens and their caseload is too big. This program meets a vital need and only touches the surface of what we need to do and in fact could expand.

So, in summary, I feel any monies you can allocate to this program would be well spent and a great asset to the city of Racine.

Sincerely,


Jeanne M. Wilton, RN, MS, WHNP-BC

Ellen Clipsham
1041 College Ave.
Racine, WI 53403

November 20, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:
Community Block Grant Board

I am the teacher of the Year Two ESL Class at Racine Literacy Council that has been meeting for sixty-six weeks on Thursday evening from six oclock to eight oclock in the evening.

Recently it has come to my attention that this class may be cancelled in March of 2010 for lack of funds. At the same time, my students have asked for an additional evening of classes each week.

Seven students are enrolled in the class, and five attend regularly. They have presented me with their reasons for wanting an additional class:

Gustavo, who works at Milaegers, wants very much to enter management. He sees improved English as his route to promotion.

Francisco, who also works at Milaegers, would like more responsibility and commensurate pay.

Maria, whose son is entering college next semester, and who now works for Goodwill, would very much like a higher paying job. She is also very pleased with the progress she has made in English in the past year. In her early sixties, she never thought she would be speaking and writing in English as she is now. She feels ready to think of a better-paying job. It is Maria who rallied the others to make the request for an additional night.

Rosalva has been laid off from her job, and she needs another job to make ends meet at home. Her progress too has been good, much to her delight.

Rodolfo, who has his own maintenance business, seeks to improve his English as fast as possible so he can communicate better with his clients and manage his paperwork.

All the students believe in the American dream and in their right to share in it. They come tired to class, but they come, and they come with completed homework.

I hope the Board will consider a way to make more study time available for these deserving members of our community.

Sincerely,



Ellen Clipsham