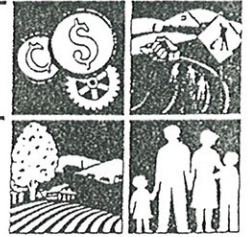


FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

NEWSLETTER May 1999



BEN & JERRY'S FOUNDATION SAYS YES TO Y.E.S.

A group of ambitious teens from the town of Orange are about to become the area's newest and youngest entrepreneurs thanks to the Young Entrepreneur's Program (Y.E.S.), FRCOG's Resource Development Program, and a number of generous contributors, including the Ben & Jerry's Foundation.

Y.E.S., which is part of the Orange Revitalization Project and trains teen in entrepreneurial skills, sought fund raising assistance from the Resource Development Program last summer. Program Manager Phil Korman worked alongside Y.E.S. founder, Tim Cohen-Mitchell, to help the program take off and become sustainable. Their planning and hard work was rewarded with a \$7000 grant made by the Ben & Jerry's Foundation. In addition, several other donations of money and time were made by area groups such as the Community Coalition for Teens, Athol/Orange Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, and Tobacco-Free Greater Franklin County.

As Y.E.S. graduates its first class of entrepreneurs, and prepares for a second group in the summer, it is very clear that these investors made a wise choice with Y.E.S. The program stands apart from other similar business courses and teen programs in that it aims to foster entrepreneurial skills, self-confidence, and independence in its participants, mostly at-risk youth who have fallen through the cracks of traditional public schooling. Graduates walk away with feasible business plans that can be carried out in the town of Orange, helping to revitalize the local economy.

The positive effects of Y.E.S. reach far beyond the teens themselves. Many participants have reported that their new interest in business planning has spread to friends and family, who have their own dreams of seeing the town of Orange's economy alive and well.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT - GRANTWRITING AND MORE

In addition to writing grants that have secured almost \$2 million and conducting workshops, the Resource Development Program offers a number of other services to its town and non-profit clients.

Resource needs- When the Pioneer Valley Regional School District Foreign Language Department recognized a need for a language lab, the Resource Development Program solicited colleges and universities for donations of old equipment. Currently, a generous offer from the UMass Boston Foreign Language Lab looks promising.

Surveys- In the past year, the program has designed and conducted surveys for both the Greenfield Recreation Department and the Greenfield Planning Board. Recreation survey results will be used to consider a new job position for the department. Planning survey results were used to secure a \$1 million community development grant.

Strategic planning- Resource Development has worked with community groups and towns, such as the Brick House and a teen center, to assess their organizations and set short-term and long-term goals, objectives and strategies.

Leadership transitions- In the last 6 months, the program has worked with four different non-profit groups in aiding in the development of their boards, searching for new directors and training newly hired directors.

For more information, contact Resource Development Program Director, Philip Korman, at 413-774-3167.

TECHNOLOGY TIPS

Free Y2K kit By accessing www.compumentor.org/y2k municipalities and non-profits can get free info and technical help to prepare for January 1st 2000. Just click on "Y2K Audit Manual" or "Virtual Help Desk" to find out how vulnerable your computer is, and what you can do to become Y2K compliant.