



1025 Park St., Charlottesville, VA 22901 (434) 295-3171 ex. 3044

December 15, 2009

Dear MACAA Supporter,

In the fall of 2008, I did not know whether the Monticello Area Community Action Agency (MACAA) would continue into 2009. At that time, we reduced administrative staff and our budget to match reduced revenues. We did this without cutting programs or services to our clients; and we asked the community for support. Thanks to the great support we received from generous donors we were able to remain open and continue providing assistance to persons experiencing the effects of poverty in Charlottesville, and Albemarle, Fluvanna, Louisa and Nelson counties.

While 2008 held many challenges for MACAA, 2009 has offered us many rewards and opportunities. In 2009, with the help of volunteers, we were able to hold MACAA's two signature fundraisers: MEN WHO COOK and WOMEN WHO GOLF. The United Way Day of Caring brought volunteer workers to MACAA to work on clearing the beautiful Rock Hill Gardens surrounding the MACAA headquarters building. This was especially needed and helpful as MACAA has no grounds crew.

In November of 2008, in partnership with State Farm, MACAA selected a client to receive a completely refurbished automobile donated by State Farm. The person selected is a parent of a Head Start child who was working and going to school. She had borrowed cars from family members to take her two sons to pee wee and middle school football practices. She is an engaged hard working parent who we felt earned that car. What a joy it was for all of us to see her drive away with her two sons!

As a result of the State Farm/MACAA car giveaway and publicity, MACAA received several offers of used vehicles. A local BMW car club contacted MACAA to donate proceeds from a soap box derby and another fundraiser for a Recycled Rides Program at MACAA. We also received a small grant from the Albemarle County Rotary for the program. A local service station agreed to examine donated cars at no charge. Because of this community support we were able to give away five used automobiles in good condition to MACAA clients with school age children.

In May, 130 children graduated from MACAA's Head Start pre-school program ready to enter kindergarten. These children attended one of the 11 Head Start centers for three and/or four year olds. Our program combines academic success with nutritional, physical, and social development. There is also a parent education

component for Head Start parents. Seeing these bright young "stars of the future" appearing confident and ready to take on any challenge is a wonderful and rewarding experience. (cont.)

MACAA's Project Discovery program (exposure to and assistance with post-secondary education) for high school students, most first generation college bound, graduated 57 seniors. Fifty-five (55) of these are college bound; one went into the marines and one went to work. These confident young adults are our future leaders. We are proud of all of them.

Two of the three residents of MACAA's Hope House transitional program for homeless families, both single mothers with children, are graduating from the Hope House intensive case management program this month. Hope House, a fourplex apartment provides a residence and wrap around supportive services for families. Depending upon a family's needs, a family may remain at Hope House from 6 months up to two years. Residents are required to pay off outstanding debt, participate in one on one and group counseling, attend parenting training and work while at Hope House. Successful completion or "graduation" from Hope House means that the head of household is ready to make a successful transition to stable housing. We are extremely proud of these two residents for their commitment to following and completing the program at Hope House.

The CARES (Coalition Assisting Residents in Emergency Situations) program provided assistance to 1038 families in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Assistance included payment of utilities and rent/mortgage, medication, tools and equipment for work.

The Rural Outreach program provides emergency assistance, like the CARES program, in offices in Fluvanna, Louisa and Nelson counties. Rural Outreach also provides food and clothing. Rural Outreach assisted 627 families.

MACAA's newest program is the BACK TO WORK PROGRAM (BTWP). BTWP is a collaboration with MACAA, Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) and the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). BTWP is a program that will provide individual case management, training/retraining for 100 persons who have lost their jobs (due to the recession), are receiving unemployment payments and are seeking work. BTWP will also provide ancillary supportive services: emergency assistance, and assistance with transportation and child care while training and beginning employment. BTWP is funded by federal stimulus dollars. BTWP is funded through September 30, 2010.

In order to continue building and maintaining programs, MACAA needs your generous support. We are required to raise money for administrative costs and match funding for many of our grants. Our Head Start federal grant, for example, requires a 20% match. Our fundraising revenues this year are lower than in the past year; and the need for our services is greater - both due to the current economy. We are seeing people who have always worked and paid their bills on time; and who have never sought help before requesting emergency assistance.

I appreciate the support that I have received from this community, since my arrival in February, 2008. Your support has been most encouraging. I pledge to continue to work hard and with the best team possible provide the best services for those in the most need in our community. At MACAA we are helping people, and changing

lives. With your support, we can maximize our ability to carry out our mission of helping people out of poverty.

A heartfelt thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen L. Shepard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "K".

Karen L. Shepard, J.D.
Executive Director