

Audubon Area Community Services, Inc.
2009 Strategic Work Plan

Introduction/Background

In 2008, utilizing data from a variety of sources including responses from seven focus groups conducted in 2007, the senior management staff conducted a series of planning meetings for the purpose of completing and submitting the 2008 Pathways to Excellence Organizational Self-Study to the Community Action Partnership on April 30, 2008. This process utilized a rigorous self-study and third party peer-expert review and feedback process to assist participating agencies' improve and increase efficiency, effectiveness, and exceed customer expectations in thirty-four Standards of Excellence.

In August, 2008, the agency received the Comprehensive Organizational Feedback Report on the self-study that Audubon had submitted. This report provided direct feedback as to whether the agency had achieved each standard and provided specific strengths and opportunities for improvement (OFI's) for each standard.

On September 24-26, the senior management staff and two Board officers (Chairman and Secretary) participated in a three-day retreat with the primary purpose of developing a 2009 Strategic Work Plan. Utilizing the 2008 Pathways to Excellence Organizational Feedback Report as a primary source, specific strengths and weaknesses were identified. In addition, the participants identified specific "threats" and "opportunities" for the agency in 2009.

Having identified strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities, the participants developed a strategic framework for the 2009 Strategic Work Plan that would include the following:

- Four (4) Priority Goals
- Two (2) "Wildly Important" Measurable Objectives
- Ten (10) Priority Departmental Goals: One each for these departments: Management & General, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Child Care Assistance/CCR&R, Counseling Services, Green River Intra-County Transit System, Head Start/Early Childhood, Housing Services, and Senior Service Corps.

Agency-Wide Strategic Goals

Agency-wide strategic goals were identified for 2009 to focus the agency's program improvement efforts in four key areas. The purpose of these goals is to provide *strategic direction* for the agency and to facilitate communication of these goals to the Board, advisory groups, and to staff within each department. To focus attention on these goals and to provide a level of accountability to the Board, a "Strategic Progress Report" will be provided to the Board in the packet disseminated prior to each Board meeting. This report will also be disseminated electronically to staff. This report will list the specific activities or accomplishments of the agency and/or of each department *during the prior two months* that contributed to the agency's progress in achieving each priority goal. It should be noted that three of these strategic goals are continuations of goals from the 2008 Strategic Work Plan.

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- 1. Strengthen and enhance Audubon’s financial standing and systems with specific attention to risk-management and internal control processes.**
- 2. Create an agency-wide system for the collection, consolidation, and reporting of agency and program-level performance measures and outcomes to ensure agency progress and improvement.**
- 3. Expand the agency’s advocacy and outreach efforts to the low income community and enhance the public’s awareness of the agency’s mission.**
- 4. Develop additional policies and procedures to insure systematic and effective management of agency assets and strategic initiatives.**

“Wildly Important” Measurable Objectives

Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric once said “Goals cannot sound noble but vague. Targets cannot be so blurry they can’t be hit”. Current management theory and research consistently indicates that organizations that focus on a few “wildly important” goals or objectives that are measurable and achievable are more successful than those who simply make progress on multiple objectives.

Therefore, for the 2009 Strategic Work Plan, two (2) “wildly important” measurable objectives have been identified, one each for the two highest priority strategic goals. Listed below are the two objectives and the tasks or steps to be completed to accomplish each objective. The “Strategic Progress Report” to the Board will also include a report of the status of each “wildly important” objective.

- 1.1 By December 31, 2009, the agency will accumulate a minimum of \$400,000 in cash reserves to facilitate cash flow.**
 - 1.1.1 All federal and state reports will be filed on-time to insure timely reimbursement.
 - 1.1.2 Increase the number of programs receiving electronic transfers or payments to reduce elapsed time between submission of reports and receipt of reimbursements.
 - 1.1.3 Green River Intra-County Transit System (GRITS) will closely monitor expenses and revenues to accumulate an increasing margin of revenue over expenses each month.
 - 1.1.4 Increase agency-wide efforts to minimize expenses; increase revenues in programs that have additional sources of revenues resulting from fees or donations; and maintain carry-over balances where allowed.

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2.1 By December 31, 2009, a trial implementation of a model of an agency-wide scorecard will be completed with a minimum of three agency-wide outcome measurements of progress and improvement.

2.1.1 By March 31, 2009, the format for the agency-wide scorecard will be identified and selected.

2.1.2 By June 30, 2009, a minimum of three common outcome measures for agency-wide reporting will be identified.

2.1.3 By September 30, 2009, a comprehensive plan and process will be developed for how to collect the data for the three common outcome measures from each program or department.

2.1.4 By December 31, 2009, a trial implementation of the model of the agency-wide scorecard will be completed.

Departmental Strategic Goals

Each department or program within the agency has completed a strategic planning process and identified specific program or department goals and objectives. To facilitate communication to the Board, each department has identified one high priority goal for primary focus for the 2009 Strategic Work Plan. Each department will report to its respective Board Committee every two months their progress toward achieving the designated goal. This report will be incorporated into the Board committee minutes for reporting to the Board and will be included in the “Strategic Progress Report” submitted with the packet disseminated to members prior to each Board meeting.

The ten departmental strategic goals, one for each department are listed below:

Management & General

By December 31, 2009, the Executive Director will foster, grow, and lead a more highly effective Senior Staff team through the implementation of the following activities:

- Team building training or activities at least quarterly
- Conduct a minimum of one session devoted specifically to improving team meetings
- Develop and implement a plan or process for assessing team effectiveness
- Completion of a minimum of one team-based project or initiative

Finance

By December 31, 2009, the Finance Department will achieve zero significant deficiencies and material weaknesses for the audit year of 2009 including monitoring audits by major federal programs.

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Human Resources

By December 31, 2009, the Human Resources Department will complete the revision, update, and dissemination of AACCS Personnel Handbook through implementation of these activities:

- By March, 2009, current handbook will be compared to current policies
- By June, 2009, appropriate changes will be made to draft of handbook
- By September, 2009, any additional policies that need to be added to the handbook will be identified and finalized in a draft of the manual
- By December, 2009, the new updated Handbook will be disseminated to all staff.

Information Technology

By December 31, 2009 Information Technology (IT) Department will perform at least one complete audit of information technology services in the two highest expense categories of communications and equipment through implementation of these activities:

- By January 31, 2009 IT will review all communications expenses.
- By March 31, 2009 IT will work with appropriate parties to revise the policy and procedures manual to outline procedures for maintenance of an accurate inventory; for the purchase, transfer, and disposal of equipment; for ordering, cancelling and billing communications circuits; and for maintenance of network security for all computer system access including employees, temporary help, volunteers, and contractors.
- By July 31, 2009 IT will complete a hardware inventory of all communications devices, servers, and personal computers by location.

Child Care Assistance/Child Care R&R

By December 31, 2009, the Child Care Resource and Referral Program will meet national best practices standards by obtaining and maintaining a quality assurance designation through the Quality Assurance Program of Child Care Aware and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

Counseling Services

By December 31, 2009, the Counseling Services Department will improve the coordination and access to trainings within the department and cross training throughout the agency and local partners through the implementation of the following activities:

- Director of Counseling Services will meet quarterly with all supervisors to ensure that all staff receive a minimum of four hours of training of various topics each quarter.
- Provide quarterly information regarding possible trainings to all staff in the department
- Provide on-site trainings to front-line staff
- Collaborate with local agencies to utilize at least one top trainer for a local area training
- Develop and implement an instrument or process for obtaining direct feedback from staff for identifying training topics needed.

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Green River Intra-County Transit System (GRITS)

By December 31, 2009, GRITS will improve its management of program operations to improve its margin of revenues over expenses through the implementation of the following activities:

- Obtain additional grant funds to replace higher mileage vehicles thus reducing maintenance costs — focusing on hybrid and/or other fuel-efficient vehicles.
- Revise drivers' schedules to reduce overtime costs
- Purchase new or upgraded software to improve efficiency and improve data collection.
- Increase coordination of rides to decrease the cost of service delivery
- Regularly monitor state reporting and invoicing

Head Start/Early Childhood

By December 31, 2009, the Head Start program will increase the awareness of meaningful learning and developmentally appropriate practices thus reducing child behavior issues resulting in increased academic progress through the implementation of the following activities:

- Reintroduce/educate staff on intentional child learning through resource teacher consultation
- Create videos of appropriate teacher/child interactions to use as training resource.
- Offer specific professional development and mentoring opportunities for staff on intentional child learning and strategies for reducing child behavior issues
- Form a committee of staff, parents, and Policy Council members to re-evaluate the referral process
- Form a team of specialists for training and technical assistance on specific child behaviors.

Housing Services

By December 31, 2009, the Housing Department will improve customer service through the implementation of the following activities:

- Utilize staff meetings to communicate to employees the importance of and strategies to improve customer services.
- Establish a written log of each complaint
- Address complaints received as soon as they occur and document how addressed
- Conduct reviews of complaints received and identify strategies for alleviating the complaint in the future

Senior Service Corps

By December 31, 2009, the Senior Service Corps will increase their respective volunteer base as follows:

- Increase of 10% or 6 new volunteers for the Foster Grandparent Program
- Increase of 10% or 9 new volunteers for the Senior Companion Program
- Increase of 5% or 27 new volunteers for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program