



Stewardship results when the need to give is greater than the need to have.



Plan

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Deacon Murphy noted that sometimes partnering with some groups involves honest criticism as well. For example, CCI has worked in a spirit of cooperation with the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency to regularize immigration snafus for several families. However, it did not stop CCI from criticizing ICE officials following raids on local businesses and residences, rounding up undocumented workers and subsequently breaking up families when those workers are forced to return to their countries of origin.

"We can be critical when we need to be," he said.

Gonzalez noted that CCI has a reputation for bringing together parties that are on different sides of an issue, to open dialogue and perhaps find middle ground. She and others from CCI

CCI. He cited the regular Loaves and Fishes political roast and Bishop Michael P. Driscoll's Ring of Charity reception as events when board and staff meet those who fund their efforts.

During the last five years, CCI has been able to increase the percentage of donors supporting the agency's \$1.1 million by 43 percent, Gonzalez said. Grants bring in 40 percent of revenues, up from nine percent five years ago; program fees provide five percent; and direct fundraising, about three percent. Her goal is to see donors move up to 60-70 percent of revenues because they provide the stable source of funding and commitment, especially compared to grants.

Direct fundraising only recently became a revenue source and requires outlays of staff time and resources have yet to show the same results as donor solicitation. "You put in a



LEAP BAND — The young musicians were part of the Literary, Enrichment and Academic Program last year in Jerome. It was aimed at bringing families together and keeping children safe after school. (ICR photo file)

Telling stories of the clients CCI serves is important. Gonzalez cited the story of Sossan Razaee, a member of an Afghani refugee family who spoke at last year's Loaves and Fishes Gala. Razaee told how her family was forced to flee several countries before landing in Idaho, and how much CCI helped them establish their home here.

have met with ICE leaders and local law enforcement officials to find ways to mitigate damage to families following raids, as a family's main breadwinner, usually the father, is about to be deported.

"One of our strengths is convening," she said. "I see those as opportunities."

To help with the third focus, agency sustainability, CCI has begun to better organize its database of donors, attempting to understand their needs. In doing this, Gonzalez said, CCI can better communicate where the donated funds are going. "We want our donors to know who we are and we want to create opportunities for them to visit our sites and see what we do."

Deacon Murphy said board members have also taken on the task of meeting donors, thanking them for their support and providing them with any information they might want about

good deal of time and effort but you don't always get as much results," she said.

Since last July 1, 163 new donors have come on board, Gonzalez said. "We find that donors give (once) and continue to give."

The staff is currently studying donor retention rate, she said, so she can determine donor satisfaction. "When they are giving a donation, I want to make sure CCI is meeting their needs.... We value each of them."

That's also why telling stories of the clients CCI serves is important. Gonzalez cited the story of Sossan Razaee, a member of an Afghani refugee family who spoke at last year's Loaves and Fishes Gala. Razaee told how her family was forced to flee several countries before landing in Idaho, and how much CCI helped them establish their home here.

"We were able to put a face"

on a client helped by CCI because of donors' generosity, Gonzalez said.

During the last year, donations have been affected by the economic downturn, she added, and to balance the budget, she had to tap into CCI reserves. Among its goals is to set aside six months of operating expenses, Gonzalez said.

Balancing the budget sometimes requires difficult choices, she acknowledged. The agency operates centers in all but the North Central deanery, for two reasons: Other agencies are performing some of the things CCI would do, and because CCI needs to continue to sustain its resources in current areas.

"I have to be very focused on efficiency of services," Gonzalez said. "We'd love to have an office in Lewiston, but operating an office anywhere comes with a cost. We just don't have enough resources."

CCI is one of only two non-government agencies that offer services statewide, and that presents special challenges, Gonzalez said. She looked at Catholic Charities agencies sponsored by other dioceses around the country, and she could find none that attempted such a comprehensive program for such a wide geographic area.

"This can be a challenge to manage when offices are eight hours away," she said. "I haven't found a Catholic Charities agency in any other diocese spread out like this."

The hope is to have the plan — or a reasonable facsimile of it — completed by 2014. Deacon Murphy noted that with the way society changes so quickly, it's conceivable that what's needed today won't be the same five years from now.

"We might need to change action steps, but not the focus areas," he said.

Both also suggested that the plan has internal flexibility. Needs, funding, staffing or other variables may lead to some of the actions outlined being scrapped, or adding new plans if new areas are identified.

Also, just because the plan is designed to meet needs up to 2014, it doesn't mean that CCI expects to have proof that it is meeting all its goals by then, said Deacon Murphy. Getting board members and staff to buy into the plan was critically im-

portant, Gonzalez said, adding that staff reports must reference what part of the plan are being addressed in every instance.

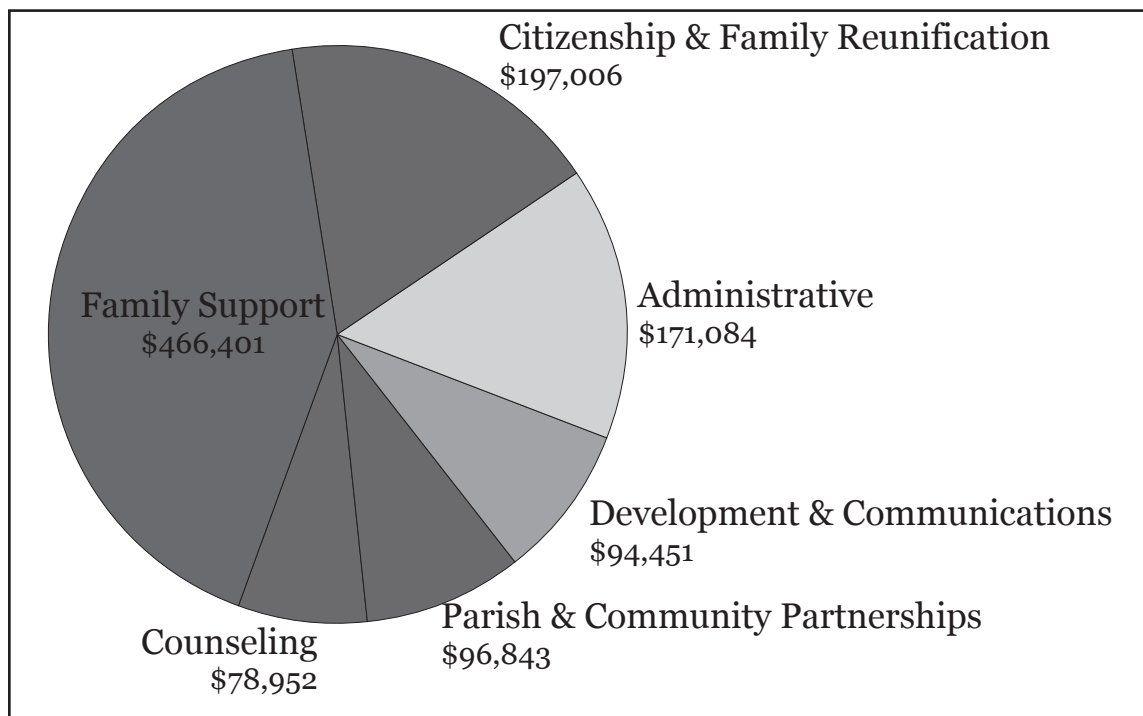
Staff evaluations also measure familiarity with the plan, she added.

The ultimate goal of the plan is to consider "how we continue what we are doing well," Gonzalez said, "and how we find funding to support what we are doing."

Editor's note: To give to CCI, visit their Web site www.ccidaho.org or call 350-7480.

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