

# Blue Ribbon agencies show healthy vital signs!

Those worried about the pulse rate of Arizona's compassion (ala the Caring Index on p. 3) will be reinvigorated by visiting and witnessing the clear vital signs our six 2006-2007 Blue Ribbon organizations.

**Six Social Service Categories.** The Collaboration for a New Century has identified six areas that it believes are essential to creating opportunities for low-wage working families: 1) affordable childcare; 2) youth mentoring; 3) affordable housing; 4) job training; 5) family support (addiction intervention, counseling, care giving etc.); and 6) affordable healthcare alternatives.

## What's so special about these Blue Ribbon programs?

**Criteria for Effectiveness.** The Collaboration, with assistance from the Valley of the Sun United Way, has found these "best practice" programs to have five strong characteristics. They are 1) innovative, 2) community-based, 3) holistic, 4) collaborative, and 5) outcome-focused.

They are all eager to receive inquiries from interested volunteers and donors!

	Program	Key Characteristics
Affordable Childcare	<b>Glendale Family Development Center</b> <a href="http://www.familydevcenter.org">www.familydevcenter.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Among the only 10% of the childcare programs in Arizona that meet the gold standard of the National Association for Education of Young Children.</li> <li>• Makes childcare affordable by providing scholarships based on a sliding scale.</li> <li>• Founded by five Glendale churches and has served over 75,000 families since its inception in 1969.</li> </ul>
Youth Mentoring	<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona</b> <a href="http://www.bbbsaz.org">www.bbbsaz.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of only 11 national model programs identified by the University of Colorado as effective in reducing adolescent violent crime, aggression, delinquency, and substance abuse.</li> <li>• Currently serves approximately 2,500 kids. Kids are on a two-year waiting list for mentors.</li> <li>• "Big" and "Little" friendships build character, strengthen integrity and promote personal responsibility.</li> </ul>
Affordable Housing	<b>Community Services of Arizona</b> <a href="http://www.csaz.org">www.csaz.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a typical year, 65 families become first-time homeowners, over 400 households receive homeownership education and counseling, and over 3,000 families reside in CSA's affordable rental housing.</li> <li>• CSA operates a statewide first-time homebuyer's assistance program that includes financial counseling and practical maintenance training as well as follow-up counseling after the purchase.</li> </ul>
Job Training and Placement	<b>Arizona Womens Education and Employment</b> <a href="http://www.awee.org">www.awee.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 1981 have empowered nearly 40,000 individuals, providing employment assistance, life skills and job readiness training, as well as financial literacy.</li> <li>• Remains in contact with each program participant for two years after completion of her/his program to provide moral support, encouragement and help assure long-term financial independence</li> </ul>
Family Support	<b>Save the Family</b> <a href="http://www.savethefamily.org">www.savethefamily.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently provides transitional housing and support services to 176 families.</li> <li>• In 2004 became one of only two organizations in Arizona to become accredited by the Council on Accreditation – a 3<sup>rd</sup> party national evaluator for homeless programs.</li> <li>• Proven effective for 90% of clients who complete program. The average family transitions back to the community within 8 months.</li> </ul>
Affordable Healthcare Alternatives	<b>Chandler Education Foundation – San Marcos Resource Center</b> <a href="http://www.chandlereducation.org">www.chandlereducation.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chandler Unified School District Foundation provides this children's clinic as the area's only source of free medical treatment for low-income children. Has treated more than 10,000 kids over the last five years and seen a positive correlation in academic results and reduced absenteeism.</li> <li>• Represents a wide collaboration of health organizations and a broad network of individual donors and volunteers.</li> <li>• Received a 2002 Leadership for Learning Award for innovation from the American Association of School Administrators.</li> </ul>

## What does the Collaboration hope to achieve?

Our shared goal of increasing prosperity for all will require a community-wide partnership and a change in the way individuals and institutions think, behave, and use our resources. By profiling and working with its growing number

of Blue Ribbon programs each year, the Collaboration hopes to call attention to proven programs that are reaching and changing lives, strengthening and expanding their community impact.

Join us as we roll back poverty in the Valley for one low-income family at a time!