

Inside

KCR *Kitsap Community Resources*

Community Support Services >>>

Local Veterans Find A Hand-up At KCR

Walking through the doors of KCR for the very first time, acknowledging that you are in trouble and need help, can be very difficult.



"I had a hard time taking that first step," explains Eileen, an Air Force veteran

and the widow of a 23-yr. Naval veteran.

Disabled and unable to work, Eileen had fallen behind in rent and utility bills and had no one to turn to for help.

"It was humbling to admit I needed help, but I was glad that I did. Once at KCR, I was treated with respect and my family development specialist, Garry, did a great job advising and assisting me through a very difficult time."

Like Eileen, there are more than 37,000 Army, Marine, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine veterans living in Kitsap County.

The KCR-managed Veteran's Assistance Fund Program, provides veterans with direct emergency assistance as well as ongoing access to a comprehensive network of essential support services.

In 2010, KCR served 739 veterans. Local veterans receive the respect they deserve and a hand up out of crisis when needed.

Executive Perspective

Larry Eyer, Executive Director

Community Support Block Grant (CSBG) Benefits



It has been 45 years since Kitsap Community Resources (KCR) first began providing services in Kitsap County. It is satisfying to think back on the various programs we have developed for Kitsap residents, including several food banks, the Community Health Center, our homeless shelter and prevention system, Head Start, weatherization, energy assistance, AmeriCorps, Community Jobs, senior citizen programs and financial education programs.

KCR has been able to develop these programs, in part, due to the assistance of Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funding. CSBG was designed to give community action agencies – such as KCR - flexible funding that could be used to address the unmet needs of low-income people at the local level. Community

action agencies then leverage these funds with public and private funding partners, volunteers and donations to develop high-priority services. Funding for CSBG was in jeopardy of being terminated in the recent federal 2011 and 2012 budget battles. The House of Representatives 2011 Continuing Resolution budget would cut CSBG altogether. The President's

proposed budget would have cut CSBG in half. If either had passed, it would have caused KCR to eliminate

KCR board members and others worked hard on this challenge to secure a positive outcome.

programs as well as lose our ability to develop new services in response to community need. Smaller community action agencies would have had to close altogether. Fortunately, we had strong support in Congress for CSBG. KCR board members and other community action agency supporters worked hard during this challenge to secure a positive outcome. I believe their efforts made quite a difference and we are grateful for their support and optimistic of a favorable 2011 budget. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at larrye@kcr.org.

Head Start Program A "God-send" For Parents

Head Start (HS) is a wise investment that pays dividends to children, their families, and our communities. **Research shows that society receives a \$7-\$9 return-on-investment for every \$1 invested in HS programs.**

For our communities this return means...

- *Greater family stability
- *Decreased welfare dependency
- *Less special education spending
- *Reduced health care cost for employers
- *A stronger economy
- *Better prepared kindergarteners



Michael & AJ Ellington

Michael Ellington is the parent of a KCR Head Start student and he can attest to the benefits Head Start has meant to his son AJ and their family.

"AJ enjoys his classes, loves his teachers, and is very excited about learning. My being a member of

the Head Start Policy Council has also been awesome. It's given me and other parents a connection to what our children are doing and experiencing in school. We're very happy with the HS Program. KCR, as a whole, has been a God-send for our family."



The Ellington family exemplify why HS is one of America's most effective social programs, proving that an investment made today pays innumerable benefits in the lives of HS children, their families, and the community we share.

In spite of these benefits, this critical program was being considered by congress for budgetary cuts. (See CSBG p.1). These cuts would have removed \$1 billion from HS nationwide, gravely impacting more than 3,000 at-risk children in the state of Washington alone. At the time of this publication, however, these cuts had not been approved and we are hopeful for continued fiscal support of this vital program.



New Nature Park

The 1201 Park Head Start Garden has been a picturesque piece of beauty, a rich educational experience, and a source of pride for the Head Start students whose little hands made it grow. This year the opportunities for outdoor learning will be expanded with the opening of *Smith Nature Play Park*.

The park will open early summer to Head Start students and the neighboring community, offering a music and movement, messy play, building, digging, and arts and crafts play area.

The KCR Head Start Program is funding the park supported by Yamamoto Landscaping, Leadership Kitsap and volunteers.

Rising Out of Crisis >>>

Mother's Day Campaign Success Story

KCR's Annual Mother's Day Campaign kicks off this month (See p.4). This year's campaign features a mother's successful transition from crisis to stability to thriving.

Fleeing domestic violence, Natasha relocated she and 2 year-old son, Aaron to Kitsap County. They were sleeping on a relative's couch before Latasha turned to KCR for help.

"I had family in the area, but there wasn't room for us. Thankfully KCR placed us in emergency shelter and gave me the stability and the time I needed to figure out what to do next."

Taking advantage of KCR's comprehensive programs and individualized case management services, Natasha was able to start setting goals and getting back on her feet. "My counselor, Cindy, was so kind and helpful. She and the KCR staff guided me each step along the way."

Natasha first found a full-time job, worked on her associates degree, and began saving for an apartment.

She also enrolled in KCR's Financial Education and Asset Building classes



Natasha and Aaron

and began building her credit and working on long-term financial goals.

Natasha is now close to completing her associates degree and will be transferring to Washington State University.

Access to KCR's programs and services gave Natasha the tools she needed to build a bright, secure future.

The investment of KCR resources to Natasha and Aaron has made a immediate positive impact and will continue to pay dividends for a lifetime to come.

Community Service Worker Program Benefits City

Community Service Workers (CSW) cleaned the filtration system and replaced a \$100,000 pump at Harborside Fountain Park, resulting in substantial savings for the city and the return of crystal clear water.



Harborside Fountain Park

Many times minimum risk offenders are unable to pay fines owed the City or County.

At the cost of \$88 a day they could be jailed, but KCR's Community Service Worker Program offers an alternative to incurring jail cost while additionally reducing staffing cost and meeting community needs.

KCR manages teams of workers who are tasked with various City and County environmental and maintenance projects. Harborside Fountain Park, city and county park upkeep

and roadside clean-ups are only a few of the projects successfully completed by CSW workers all year long.

"The City of Bremerton is one benefactor of the CSW program administered by KCR.



Mayor Patty Lent

The leadership and organization provided by KCR and Director Russ Donahue saves money and city staff hours to accomplish the beautification we are all enjoying as a result of this program's impact," explains Mayor Patty Lent.

Community Service Workers also work with KCR AmeriCorps to tackle more than 40 community projects such as trail clean-up and maintenance of Illahee Park.

The CSW program represents how community partners come together in creative and resourceful ways, benefiting all Kitsap County residents.

Financial Literacy >>>

The Key To Self-Sufficiency

It takes more than a regular paycheck to establish financial security.

Assets such as a savings account, a college education, home ownership, good credit, and financial literacy are critical to sustainable self-sufficiency.

Many low-income and at-risk families fall into urgent situations simply because they teeter daily on the precipice of barely getting by or falling into crisis. Should an emergency occur - lost of a job, divorce, medical issues - the family has no safety net to fall back on. There is, however, an alternative. KCR's Financial Education and Asset Building program, with community partners, provides financial literacy training to all county residents.

Classes, credit counseling, and a host of other services are available at no cost. Visit us online or contact Financial Ed. Coordinator, Kristi Basse for more information (360-473-2126).

Upcoming Classes....

4/14 Intro To Borrowing

4/28 Credit Reports

5/12 Collections & Debt Repayment

The Power of One >>>

Can A 3rd Grader Change The World?

Carla Fontenot, 3rd grade teacher at Crosspoint Academy, however, challenged her 8 and 9 year-old students not to shrink in the face of these challenges, but to consider the different ways they could each impact their communities and the world around them.

Student Andrew Johnson chose to make his difference by raising donations for Kitsap Community Resources. Making up his own campaign letter, soliciting neighbors, and earning money from extra chores Andrew raised \$51.88. His donation will now be leveraged with the donations of other community partners to help house the homeless, job train the unemployed, provide Head Start classes, nutrition programs, and make available many other services for low-income families in Kitsap County. Yes, a third grader can change the world as well as can each member of our community who decides to make a difference.

Community needs are sometimes so great that they can cause us to feel overwhelmed and powerless.



Teacher, Carla Fontenot & Andrew Johnson

This Mother's Day Honor Your Mom While Helping A Mom In Need

This Mother's Day partner with KCR to meet the needs of mothers in crisis by making a tax-deductible contribution to the **2011 Mother's Day Campaign**. Donate before April 22nd and we'll send an "In Honor of You" Mother's Day card to your mother or special loved-one. Donate online at www.kcr.org or mail your gift to:

KCR Donations, 845 8th St., Bremerton, WA 98337



YES, I WANT TO HELP MOTHERS IN NEED

ENCLOSED IS MY GIFT OF:

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other _____

Name _____

Please print your name as you would like it to appear in KCR publications or check here if you prefer to donate anonymously

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Check VISA MasterCard

Card # _____ Exp. _____

Signature _____

THIS GIFT IS MADE IN HONOR OF:

Please print their name as it should appear. If you would like KCR to send the honoree a Mother's Day card, please provide address

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

THE KCR MISSION: *We are committed to creating hope and opportunity for low-income Kitsap County residents by providing resources that promote self-sufficiency.*

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