



A Community Action Partnership. Helping people. Changing lives.

From the Executive Director, Larry Eyer



As we enter the fall and temperatures start to drop, KCR experiences a wave of people interested in heating assistance. We are now offering an on-line appointment scheduler to help prevent long lines forming outside our Bremerton Family Services Center that in previous years began as early as 5:00 in the morning. In the first month this new system has worked well.

Also, homelessness remains a big challenge in Kitsap County. Last month KCR co-sponsored our first Kitsap County Homeless Summit. Over 100 people from community agencies, faith organizations, service clubs and governments met at Holy Trinity church in Bremerton to hear speakers and brainstorm solutions.

The results will be used in our Kitsap County ten-year plan to end homelessness. It was encouraging to hear the passion our community partners have for this issue and to recount the progress we have made with services this year.

KCR to Purchase and Rehabilitate Six Units Designated for Transitional Housing

KCR has submitted applications to City of Bremerton HOME and Washington State Housing Trust for funds to acquire and upgrade a six-unit apartment complex located in West Bremerton. The 880-square foot units have two bedrooms and one-and-a-half baths with a carport or garage. The units are conveniently located near schools and public transportation.

KCR receives shelter requests for families on the average of 1 to 2 applications per day, and our waitlist currently exceeds 100 applicants. Once families are moved out of emergency housing, which is offered for up to 90 days, they can enter a transitional unit where they receive case management and are expected to pay 30% of their income toward the rental costs of the unit.



RALF Program to Match up to \$750 Worth of Savings for Rental Deposits

A key goal in KCR's transitional housing program is to help families secure permanent housing at the completion of the program. This has become more difficult in current economic conditions due to long waiting lists for public and Section 8 rental housing and common market practices requiring credit checks, good credit, first and last month's rent and deposits. A \$1500 deposit requirement is common.

KCR has implemented a new program called RALF (Rental Assistance Leveraging for Families) to move homeless families along the "Continuum of Care" through emergency and transitional housing to permanent housing with a new requirement of financial education. Program participants are expected to establish a savings account and save housing money during their stay in emergency or transitional housing. Kitsap Credit Union is partnering to provide deposit accounts to the clients, regardless of credit status.

KCR will match the amount that the participant saves and apply it toward housing expenses, up to \$750. The KCR check will be paid directly to the new landlord. During the time they are in KCR housing, participants attend financial literacy classes provided by KCR and community partners including Kitsap Credit Union and American Financial Solutions (AFS).



Right: Representatives from American Financial Solutions conduct a Financial Education training for RALF participants on Sept. 30 at KCR.





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New Faces: Welcome to Trish Tierney and Jim Stowers

Trish Tierney was recently hired as the South Kitsap Site Supervisor/WIA Workforce Manager for KCR. A life-long native of Port Orchard, Trish has more than five years of experience in grant writing, program coordination, and working with low-income populations. Trish most recently worked as Fund Development Director for the Literacy Council of Kitsap, and previously worked at the Housing Authority of the City of Bremerton. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon.



Trish Tierney



Jim Stowers

KCR also congratulates Jim Stowers who has been selected as the new Housing and Homeless Services Manager. After spending six years in the U.S. Navy, Jim worked over 30 years with Arrowhead Water Company and Waxie Sanitary Supply in the San Diego area. Recently he was employed as a Job Coach with the Bainbridge Island School District, and he joined KCR as a Training Facilitator with the Employment and Training Division over this last summer. Jim holds a Bachelor's degree in Business and Management from the University of Redlands.

Kitsap Asset-Building Coalition to Launch EITC Awareness Campaign

The Kitsap Asset-Building Coalition (ABC) is hoping to educate all of those in Kitsap County of the benefits and qualifications for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). By directing families to the 12 AARP free tax assistance centers, ABC hopes to see Kitsap residents take advantage of the refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. By using free services and the direct deposit option, they can avoid unnecessary charges and advance fees as well.

In addition, the ABC has set a goal to provide financial education for our community, and to encourage savings and building assets with the money they receive from their tax refunds. The coalition, supported by KCR Financial Education Coordinator Kristi Basse, initially consists of community partners including KCR, Kitsap Credit Union, American Financial Solutions, Bremerton Housing Authority, Kitsap County Consolidated Housing Authority, Washington CASH, Olympic College, United Way of Kitsap County, AARP, and the IRS.

Web Site Redesign Launching Later this Month

The newly redesigned KCR web site will serve as a medium for program participants, partners, and the community to research programs and services. The web site will also feature a video that highlights success stories from clients who share their experience with KCR in their own words.

Look for it later this month at www.kcr.org.

KCR Food Services Contracts with Kitsap Mental Health Services to Serve Meals

KCR Food Services prepares over 12,500 nutritious meals each month in our commercial kitchen. Our clients include seniors through the Chuckwagon Senior Nutrition Services, children in Head Start/ECEAP classrooms, and various other childcare facilities in Kitsap County who receive snacks and lunches. KCR has now contracted with Kitsap Mental Health Services to provide meals to patients.



Introducing New Board Members and Officers

KCR welcomes new board members: Sam Westra from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility, and Lisa Mariner from Naval Base Kitsap. KCR has elected the following officers to serve in 2008-09:

- President: Rick MacLennan, Vice President of Student Services at Olympic College
- Vice President: Suzanne Plemmons, Community Health Director of the Kitsap County Health District
- Treasurer: Kristine Cowan, Call Center Manager of Kitsap Credit Union