

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Impact Poverty Holds May Meeting

Paducah, KY May 23, 2011 – The Impact Poverty Task Force held its monthly meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2011 at the Paducah Housing Authority Harvey-Riley Community Center.

Kristin Williams, Task Force Facilitator, welcomed the group and introduced Brandi Harless and Melanie Nunn. Brandi and Melanie are co-facilitators in the Getting Ahead Program. They updated the Task Force about the group they have been meeting with on a weekly basis. They also presented a community assessment activity that was previously taken by the Getting Ahead Group. It included questions regarding housing, banking, transportation, health care and education. After the Task Force completed the assessment, Brandi and Melanie compared the answers of the two groups. The results were similar in most areas.

Kristin then introduced the panel that spoke about Basic Needs in our community. Sally Michelson represented the Community Kitchen, Pam Truitt represented Family Service Society and Ashley Wright represented the United Way of Paducah-McCracken County.

The representatives spoke about their agencies and the service they provide to our community. The services include: food, clothing, dental assistance, household goods and medical assistance. All three agencies noted an increase in need over the last three years. Some agencies have implemented a tracking system called Charity Tracker. This system helps to reduce the duplication of services from many agencies. All agencies agreed that a lack of transportation, lack of access to healthcare and lack of mentorship are all problems that need to be addressed in our community. Pam of Family Service Society said, “We had 170 households receive food from our pantry last month.” Pam also noted the increase of those in need of food. Sally said, “The Community Kitchen feeds 150-200 everyday.” These numbers were alarming to the Task Force and will be discussed at the next meeting.

The Task Force greatly appreciated the insight from the experienced panel members.

The Task Force is scheduled to meet again in June.

The goal of Impact Poverty is to develop a 10-Year Plan to reduce poverty in Paducah and McCracken County and break the cycle of generational poverty for its citizens. The United Way of Paducah-McCracken County is spearheading this effort.

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