

## **Employment & Financial Security—what have we accomplished in the last year?**

### Things we are doing Differently

1. Workforce Inv. Act (WIA) provides matching training money. Good documentation is needed (WIA does not work with seasonal workers.)
2. Sister city leadership exchange around Latino issues (include mayors, law enforcement, and community leaders). This may work well for corps. as well as cities.
3. Latino Center in Milan has gotten a lot of focus since last year's meeting
  - a. Holding multicultural events
4. Phone companies seem to have lots of bi-lingual people.
5. Providing English skills training with financial assistance coming from the area businesses.
6. Spanish lessons for business managers.
7. Construction trade—ESL options
8. Gateway to Financial Fitness (St. Louis).
9. Money Smarts (working with local volunteers in pairs).
10. Housing Assistance Program/Loan Program at Premium Standard Farms
11. Premium Standard Farms hired a community development person.

### Issues Raised

1. Training and educational needs exist in Agricultural workforce.
2. Latino Center in Milan:
  - a. Schools need language help.
  - b. Transportation needs are high
3. Illiteracy is a problem. Stay at home mom's need English instruction also (St. Charles).
4. How do you access and use the economic infrastructure (set-up a bank account, do tax returns, buy a home, credit unions).

## **Employment & Financial Security—where do we go from here?**

### Issues and Program Ideas

1. Best practices—do not reinvent the wheel.
2. Create a website clearinghouse for information
  - a. Should include tax identification information and country Ids.
3. Cambio de Colores website should have identification information with searching capacity and it should also include.
  - a. Legislative day
  - b. Statewide calendar of events
  - c. Two-way bulletin board

The website should be kept simple, with links to information on housing and have onsite searchable categories.
4. Best practices recognition in banking and business in general.
  - a. Highlight programs that work—recent ones focusing on those without previous experience of a track record
  - b. Identify programs that didn't work or were false starts.
5. We need to get bank information on starting checking accounts, etc...
6. Banker education is needed on how to do outreach.
7. Migrant education
8. Workforce Investment Act—provides some access and benefits, can it provide these benefits for undocumented workers?
9. Housing programs need to be tailored to Latinos such as:
  - a. Money Smarts (use el centro as a template)
  - b. Gateway Curriculum
  - c. Legal pitfalls such as predatory practices
  - d. Educate concerning abuses in insurance, banking and consumer fraud.
10. Educational Assistance is necessary on issues such as nutrition. There are federal dollars available through the FNEP program which can provide grassroots educational assistants.