



Conference Caucuses



FORECLOSURE COUNSELORS CAUCUS

The Foreclosure Caucus allowed more than 40 counselors and participants a chance to discuss topics critical to foreclosure prevention and network with other counselors throughout Florida. A third of the caucus time was dedicated to discussing the upcoming Hardest Hit Program to assist homeowners facing foreclosure. Susan Parks, from Florida Housing, presented an overview of this foreclosure prevention program. Florida Housing is finalizing Hardest Hit and Susan received valuable feedback and ideas from the counselors.

Several other topics were addressed. Some counselors participate in Court Ordered Mediation and compared how this is being implemented in different court districts throughout Florida. The group also considered new options for funding foreclosure counseling. Some counselors indicated they are seeing a drop in requests for foreclosure assistance, although the number of actual foreclosures hasn't decreased. In addition, Evett Francis, from Fannie Mae, facilitated a discussion on best practices for working with servicers, including an overview of Fannie Mae's most recent activities.

FUNDRAISING CAUCUS OVERVIEW

Judging from the crowd at this caucus, fundraising is a red hot topic in the nonprofit world. Fundraising experts from across the state gave an overview of giving in Florida, shared fundraising ideas, and gave attendees information on community resources.



Jane Curran, Executive Director of the Florida Bar Foundation and Chair of the Florida Philanthropic Network, spoke about the administrative, legal and fiscal requirements

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Leslie Lilly, President and CEO of the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin counties.

involved should your organization be fortunate enough to receive an endowment. Leslie Lilly, President and CEO of the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin counties, provided an overview of charitable giving in Florida, as well

as an overview of the resources available at Community Foundations statewide. Lilly encouraged everyone to develop a relationship with their local office. Jack Johnson, Board Chair of the Miami Beach Community Development Corporation, treated the group to a snippet of their film "Building Lives" and the fundraising efforts surrounding its release. The movie profiled the organization's growth and followed the renovation of the Villa Maria senior housing development, highlighting the residents' personal stories. Johnson closed with the importance of incorporating fundraising into the strategic planning process.

Caucus attendees enjoyed trading fundraising ideas ranging from mud volleyball to black tie events.

SHIP ADMINISTRATORS CAUCUS

More than 66 SHIP Administrators were present to hear and discuss how to advocate for 2011-12 full SHIP funding at the local level. George Romagnoli, the Florida Housing Coalition's Board Chair and the Director of the Pasco County Community Development Department, moderated the SHIP Administrators' Caucus.



FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS/ FLORIDA REDEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

The Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials and the Florida Redevelopment Association combined their caucuses to discuss the current issues and opportunities that would help to improve low income and affordable housing and community services.

The Tampa Housing Authority provided an overview of its experience when working with housing developments within a community redevelopment area, and its presentation led to a spirited discussion from various participants.

Several representatives from community redevelopment areas (CRA) discussed the methodology and requirements for funding housing projects in a CRA, as well as additional strategies related to acquiring, rehabilitating, and preserving affordable housing using CRA funds. Caucus participants also discussed the impact of the real estate market on the project revenues for CRAs and the strategies they were using in view of reduced funding.

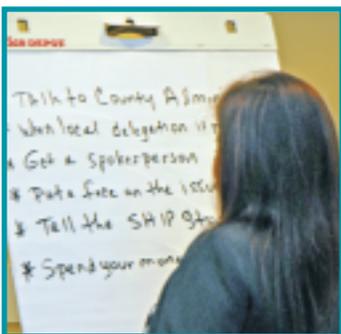


FLORIDA LEGAL SERVICES STATEWIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT

During the Florida Legal Services caucus Christine Allamano, Dorothea Lee, and Debby Hallisky shared lessons learned about Section 8 preservation through partnerships and specific project work. Kent Spuhler led a discussion on LSC grant restrictions and Chuck Elsesser discussed the topic 'who is your client'.

Attendees discussed ideas for advocacy emphasizing meeting with your legislative delegation or having other politically strong organizations, such as local Habitat for Humanity Chapter, Realtors and Builder's associations speak at the legislative delegation meeting on behalf of the SHIP Program.

Additional actions include scheduling meetings with senators or state representatives at their home offices, along with asking the local advocates to join you. This was the perfect place and time to share success stories from people who benefitted from SHIP along with providing the program's data on jobs created, units purchased, private funds leveraged, homes repaired, units built, and the local tax benefit generated. Attendees



discussed the importance of providing information to the media to generate coverage and local support for SHIP by demonstrating the positive impact it has had in your community.

Florida Housing staff members Rob Dearduff and Darlene Raker spoke to the audience, encouraging local efforts and taking questions related to issues facing local jurisdictions including the lack of funding for program activities, as well as administrative and reporting requirements.

Following the caucus meeting, three Regional SHIP Steering Committees met and discussed regional ideas and solutions to existing issues affecting local governments. The SHIP Administrators Caucus will be held again next year because of its overwhelming success.



The caucus also addressed such issues as the need for an early warning system from HUD. Jaimie Ross gave participants an update on mobile home preservation, which brought on a discussion about the elements needed for more success with preservation of mobile home parks and with project-based properties. Caucus participants ended with a discussion on partnerships with other organizations to further the Florida Legal Services' work.



UTILITY COMPANIES AND GREEN PARTNERS

The Utility Companies and Green Partners Caucus, sponsored by Florida Power and Light and Progress Energy Florida, was attended by developers, lenders, educational institutions, local government and various funding entities.

Melvin Philpot, Program Manager with Progress Energy, provided an overview of Progress Energy's main energy conservation activities – duct repair, insulation and window replacement – and explained that their activities are only as successful as consumers' day-to-day practices. He discussed how Progress Energy's programs are implemented and improved based



on a Program Participation Standard (what has to be done for customers' satisfaction) and Inspector Standard (verifies work was done and done to standard).

Cheryl Anderson, with Florida Municipal Electric Association (FMEA), explained that FMEA consists of 34 municipality-owned utility companies, and that programs vary from one area to another; however, by combining resources, a more competitive edge can be accomplished.

It was agreed that the Caucus discussion was extremely informative and that there was a need for an entity to take the lead in establishing a centralized information hub of what is occurring statewide and a statewide partnership effort in addressing renewable and green technologies and energy programs through research, education and incentives. The partnership could consist of local, federal, and state funders, House and Senate Committees, private lenders, homebuilders, contractors, realtors, educational institutions, utility companies, appraisers, and others. The Florida Housing Coalition is seeking opportunities to accomplish this goal. [HNN](#)



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

During the Habitat for Humanity caucus, Habitat affiliates and supporters from across the state participated in a spirited conversation highlighting several statewide Habitat issues. Lori Pampilo Harris, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Florida, led the caucus discussion.

Attendees discussed several strategies on how the Habitat Coalition could support and build upon the Sadowski Act and Trust Fund legislative progress for the upcoming year. As Habitats are going green, the group shared ways to plan for excellence and energy efficiency in Habitat homes. Habitat affiliates also contributed on how to build a collective case value statement for Florida Habitats.