

Workshop helps attendees understand poverty issues



The audience listened intently as Annette Snider went over causes of generational poverty.

Photo by Timothy Ramsey

BY TIMOTHY RAMSEY
THE CHRONICLE

The book "Bridges out of Poverty" took center stage in a workshop on poverty

at the Lawrence Joel Memorial Coliseum last Saturday, Oct. 22. The workshop was lead by Annette Snider of NETworX USA and sponsored by Crisis Control. "Bridges out of Poverty" helps prepare individuals and companies to address the issue of poverty in a comprehensive manner.

Because of the poverty issue surrounding certain parts of Winston-Salem, Margaret Elliott, executive director of Crisis Control, said there have been many efforts to address the poverty issue in the city over the past 50 years and they have not worked. She wanted to see what could be done differently.

"In Winston-Salem, we have the mayor who is focusing on poverty reduction and has created the poverty Thought Force," Elliott said. "We nonprofit folks who work with people who live in poverty are trying to think of different ways to work with people because apparently the



Workshop facilitator Annette Snider covered a multitude of factors surrounding poverty during the workshop last Friday.

old ways have not worked."

The beginning of the training talked about the history of the making of the middle class and how its was directly related to why we have issues of poverty in the United States today. Snider explored how we came to a middle class standard and expectations of what people in poverty were expected to accomplish.

She then touched on the difference between generational and situational poverty and how those two different situations can have drastically different out-

comes. She spoke about the poverty guidelines and how people who are barely living about the government stated poverty

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line are cut off from benefits that are afforded to those who make just under the poverty line.

"We have explored looking at poverty from a different perspective and that perspective is from resources," said Snider. "We thought about some resources we can put in to help support people to move forward."

Snider went on to say she doesn't want people to look at an individual and say "you made that choice so therefore those are your consequences." She instead wants people to look at the systemic barriers that make it very difficult for people to be able to move forward.

Snider says she feels passionately about this issue because in her lifetime she has felt misunderstood and even though she did not grow up in generational poverty, she understands it.

"I just feel that we truly are afraid of each other and when I decided to dismantle that and realize that everyone is just a person, it became very powerful," Snider continued. "To me this work breaks down the barrier of fear so that maybe we can get to just know one another as people."

Elliott stated she hopes that with the training people received during the workshop, it will enable them to build connections with one another and continue to progress. She wants this training model to be available to more people around Winston-Salem and the country in general so that not only can they help more people but help more people help themselves.



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