

Community development initiative makes grants

The North Carolina Community Development Initiative has made grants of \$2.7 million to 21 community development corporations (CDCs) in the state for core operating expenses during this year.

The Raleigh-based initiative is a statewide public-private partnership that provides funds and technical assistance to CDCs that have a track record for creating affordable housing and promoting economic development in poor communities.

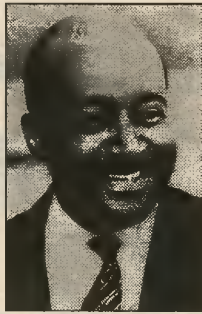
Abdul Rasheed, president of the initiative, says the most recent grants are important precisely because they are not project-specific.

"Grants for core operating expenses, though vital to the financial stability of CDCs, are hard to come by," he says. "Our objective is to strengthen internally mature CDCs so they can be even more effective in

revitalizing low-resource communities."

Thirteen of this year's grantees received funds from the initiative in its first round of grants in 1994. Two of the organizations - Mountain Housing Opportunity in Asheville and Grier Heights Foundation in Charlotte, received their first grants from the initiative this year.

Principal funders of the initiative are the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation in Winston-Salem, the Ford Foundation, the state of North Carolina, and Tar Heel



Abdul Rasheed

banks.

This year's grantees are: Cleveland County CDC, Shelby, \$120,000; Coastal CDC, New Bern, \$120,000; Community Developers of Beaufort-Hyde, Bellhaven, \$150,000; East Winston CDC, Winston-Salem, \$75,000; Gateway CDC, Henderson, \$150,000; Grier Heights Foundation, Charlotte, \$130,000; Hayti CDC, Durham, \$150,000; Metropolitan Housing and CDC, Washington, \$150,000; Monroe-Union County CDC, Monroe, \$150,000; Mountain Housing Opportunity, Asheville, \$125,000; Durham Community Land Trust, \$116,000; Northeastern CDC, Camden, \$147,700; Northwest Corridor CDC, Charlotte, \$52,650; Passage Home, Raleigh, \$150,000; Project Homestead, Greensboro, \$150,000; Rocky Mount/Edgecombe CDC, Rocky Mount, \$150,000; Reid

Park Associates, Charlotte, \$120,000; Southeast Raleigh CDC, \$150,000; UDI, Durham, \$150,000; Wilson Community Improvement Association, Wilson, \$150,000; Wilmington/New Hanover CDC, Wilmington, \$75,000.

Fax us your comments and ideas.

(919) 832-2369

MCKAY

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health fairs. I really want to find out who the leaders are. I'm coming in new to the state, so I certainly want to be in partnership with community leaders. That's been for me in these last two months the biggest challenge - not to do everything at once. We really need to gear up for a statewide approach. The new money we've received from Blue Cross [which increased its contribution last year] and the General Assembly have given this program the capacity to reach across the state. Now, we have to put the infrastructure in place to make that happen.

JOURNAL: How many staff and how much money do you have to work with?

MCKAY: We have six staff members - five of whom are working on enrolling kids and another who's our office manager and replaced a person who resigned just before I came on. We have under a half million dollars for program operations from Blue Cross and the General Assembly. All of the donations to the program go right to [purchasing] insurance. So that leaves about \$430,000 projected for 1997.

JOURNAL: Tell us about the community councils that the Caring Program has established.

MCKAY: This past year we set up community partnerships in Pitt and Burke counties. Those counties formally requested that we establish what we're calling Caring Program Councils. They are people who want to partner with us in both enrollment and fundraising. In Burke County, they're working with employers to encourage them to offer the program [to employees]. They've got flyers sent out in all of the schools. Pitt County has a very active group that's done some great money solicitation. In a certain way, this is a pilot idea. I should also say that we have a board member, George Kloster, who has just rotated off the board but has made a personal commitment to work on initiating new councils. This kind of program, I think, will probably always be more specific to communities, rather than regional. We're in a period now where we're going to support these councils.

JOURNAL: Has the controversy that swirled around the Caring Program last year - over the resignation of Karen Mortimer [the previous director] and the increased role of Blue Cross - died down at all? Do you feel the program's image has been hurt?

MCKAY: In the two months I've been here, my experience has been that there are a lot of people who knew something about the program, but not much, and a lot more people who knew nothing at all. I was at lunch the other day with someone who does consulting for nonprofits and we were talking about how this [Caring Program] might be a model of a corporation with resources part-

nering with nonprofits. A lot of nonprofits are drained because they don't have resources. Here, we have office space, state-of-the-art computers - and all of that comes from our partnership with Blue Cross. The other thing I've verified is that outside of the Triangle, people are not worrying about the controversy. I'm not seeing that we will lose energy focusing on what was. People have a right to their opinions and I'm alert and will be alert as I talk to leaders of nonprofits. But I don't think that [past controversies are] going to be a deterrent to our progress.

JOURNAL: What can you say to reassure those who were concerned that Blue Cross was trying to take over the Caring Program?

MCKAY: I've met with key leadership at Blue Cross over the last two months and I think I have enough professional experience to sort out truth from fantasy. I truly believe that they are committed to supporting the Caring Program. To give you an example, I've gone to the corporate communications department at Blue Cross for help with outdated publications. It's so much easier and cheaper for us to do it that way. That's just one recent example of support.

Another example is that the Burke County Council wanted statistical information about the effects of being insured. [Because of Blue Cross' role as the Caring Program's major sponsor] I can go to the marketing people there and get information and respond to the people who are partnering with us.

Those are just some examples of the way the Caring Program is stronger because of the partnership with Blue Cross. And for people who are worried, I really don't see why they are. You know, I worked in Brazil for seven years [as a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph] and when I came back, I went to work for a large medical center in Rochester. A lot of people thought I had sold out. But it sort of demythologized for me the notion of the big, bad hospital. As a part of taking this job, I had to look at all of the facts. And I didn't see anything that worried me.

JOURNAL: What attracted you to the job at the Caring Program?

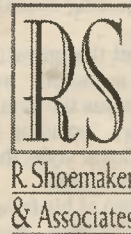
MCKAY: The mission of the organization. I think my life has been about helping to create a better world. And that's part of what the Caring Program is doing. It's also [a program that focuses on] not just one large city, but a whole state. Also on a personal level, my dad had a stroke when he was 41 and I was 10. He was an advertising executive. I'm the oldest of nine kids. So I'm a child of a family that did not have resources. I saw my parents struggling to love us and give us resources. And in many of these counties I've visited in North Carolina, I've seen the same situation.

JOURNAL: Who will be your allies in working on expanding the Caring Program? I'm wondering, now that the Health Reform Commission

has disbanded, who you see as your major supporters?

MCKAY: I would like to look at the major players who were part of the Health Reform Commission. My belief would be that we'd be most successful at connecting with people who already believe in the Caring Program's mission. Rather than inventing something new, is there a way we can fit in with goals and agendas that are already out there? That's something I'll be looking at.

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•Health & Human Services American Red Cross, Greenville County Chapter, Greenville, SC ~ Baptist Home of Maryland/Delaware, Owings Mills, MD ~ American Red Cross, Northeast Florida Chapter, Jacksonville, FL ~ Crystal Run Village, Middleton, NY ~ Friendship Trays, Charlotte, NC ~ The L.I.F.E. Center, Concord, NC ~ The Pines at Davidson, Davidson, NC ~ The Salvation Army of Tamaqua, Tamaqua, PA ~ The Salvation Army of Warren, Warren, PA ~ St. Mark's, Inc., Charlotte, NC

•Education Meredith College, Raleigh, NC ~ Hollins College, Roanoke, VA ~ Partnership 2000 - Campbellsville University, Campbellsville, KY, Cumberland College, Williamsburg, KY, and Georgetown College, Georgetown, KY ~ Austin College, Sherman, TX ~ Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Richmond, VA ~ Regents Park College - Oxford University, Oxford, England ~ Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, FL ~ The Christian Academy of Knoxville, Knoxville, TN ~ Central Piedmont Community College, Charlotte, NC ~ The Episcopal School of Knoxville, Knoxville, TN ~ Franciscan University, Steubenville, OH ~ Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs, NC ~ John A. Logan College, Carterville, IL ~ Peace College, Raleigh, NC ~ St. Andrews Presbyterian College, Laurinburg, NC ~ Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC ~ Mercer University, Macon, GA ~ Mississippi State University Foundation, Mississippi State, MS

•Church and Religious Institutions Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Atlanta, GA ~ Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, Columbia, MD ~ Catholic Diocese of Greensburg, Greensburg, PA ~ Covenant Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC ~ Davidson United Methodist Church, Davidson, NC ~ Eastchester Presbyterian Church, New York, NY ~ Munsey Memorial Methodist Church, Johnson City, TN ~ Myers Park United Methodist Church, Charlotte, NC ~ St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Charlotte, NC ~ West Market Street United Methodist Church, Greensboro, NC

•Arts & Sciences The Robert Abbe Museum, Bar Harbor, ME ~ Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Waterford, CT ~ National Science Center/ Fort Discovery, Augusta, GA ~ National D-Day Memorial Foundation, Roanoke, VA ~ Trust for Public Land, Miami, FL ~ Omniplex Science Center, Oklahoma City, OK ~ The Royal Oak Foundation, New York, NY ~ South Carolina Waterfowl Association, Charleston, SC ~ Victoria Mansion, Portland, ME ~ Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Garden, Dallas, TX ~ Friends of the ZOO, Greenville, SC

•Youth Services Bay-Lakes Council, BSA, Menasha, WI ~ Cleveland County Family YMCA, Shelby, NC ~ Comal County YMCA, New Braunfels, TX ~ Fair Winds Girl Scout Council/Tall Pine Council, BSA, Flint, MI ~ Georgia Children's Home, Macon, GA ~ Girl Scouts of Middle Georgia, Macon, GA ~ Mecklenburg County Council, BSA, Charlotte, NC ~ New Horizons Ranch and Center, Goldthwaite, TX ~ Northeast Georgia Girl Scout Council, Athens, GA ~ Santa Clara County Council, BSA, San Jose, CA ~ Stonewall Jackson Area Council, BSA, Waynesboro, VA ~ Texas Boys Ranch, Lubbock, TX ~ York Place, York, SC ~ Georgia Children's Home, Macon, GA ~ YMCA of Iredell County, Statesville, NC

•Community Development Cranberry Township Community Park, Cranberry Township, PA ~ Lima/Allen County Humane Society, Lima, OH ~ Veteran's Memorial Civic & Convention Center, Lima, OH ~ SPCA of Texas, Dallas, TX

•Sports Dallas International Sports Commission, Dallas, TX ~ US Swimming, Colorado Springs, CO