

Faith-Based Organizations and *Audubon Area Community Services, Inc.*

Since its creation in 1965-66, Audubon Area Community Services, Inc. has participated in collaborative efforts with faith-based organizations. These collaborative efforts range from the faith-based organizations' active participation on the agency's governing board, to co-sponsoring food banks, to childcare, to housing development/home repairs. *Some examples include:*

- In its earliest days, the agency was the administrative partner — supplying the paid staffing which worked under the coalition in its partnership with this agency's Board — with a coalition of Owensboro churches interested in replacing the then extensive dilapidated housing in the city. Though that coalition, Owensboro Churches for Better Homes, is no longer extant, its strong and positive impact remains.
- Representatives of various ministerial associations have historically. The McLean County Ministerial Association has actively occupied a seat on the agency Board of Directors, providing the agency's chairperson in 1992-94.
- Numerous clergy have headed the corporation as Board chair: 1998-2000, 1990-92, 1974, 1971-74, and 1969-70. Perhaps no other group has been more influential on the agency's Board than, collectively, have the clergy. Presently, there four are members of the clergy on Audubon Area's Board of Directors; another member is a minister of music. A minister chairs the Board's Child and Family Committee, which oversees the largest segment of the agency's operations—child and family development and childcare assistance/childcare resource development. Indeed, numerous clergy and church representatives have historically served in significant leadership roles and had much positive impact on the agency.
- Faculty representatives from the local Catholic university, Brescia University, have served on the Audubon Area Board of Directors for the past decade. The 1996-98 Chairperson of the organization came from that institution of higher learning. The current Brescia representative chairs the Board's Community Support Committee, which, among other services, oversees the agency's housing and transportation services. This seat alternates every several years between Brescia University and Owensboro's other sectarian (Methodist) institution of higher education, Kentucky Wesleyan College, which produced the agency's Board chair in 1973-74.

Faith-based organizations also take an active role in the hands-on services of Audubon Area Community Services. For example:

- Donated, used air conditioners were repaired by church volunteers and placed in homes of Audubon-recommended persons with heart and/or respiratory problems;
- Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets, as well as gifts of clothing for adults and toys for children, were purchased by congregations and dispensed to Audubon-approved families by volunteers from churches;
- Food pantries are stocked by church donations and distributed by volunteers from the churches to serve families in need. Audubon Area staffs and coordinates these services with the active support of participating churches;
- Children of parents who are earning their GED or enhancing their jobs skills to gain self-sufficiency have day care provided in church-based childcare centers by staff trained through Audubon Area programs;
- Churches in a variety of communities provided space for Audubon Area meetings, training events, and community forums related to agency services and projects;
- Funds donated by churches to purchase building materials and the labor supplied by church members made the regional “Repair Affair” a huge success and substantial benefit for those families who applied through Audubon Area for the home repairs.
- Audubon Area Community Services is a Franklin Covey licensee for the “7 Habits of Highly Effective People.” Under its license, Audubon also offers the “7 Habits of Highly Effective Families.” Audubon engages a “7 Habits Community Steering Committee,” including members of the clergy. The “Family” course actively courts the participation of area congregations and churches as the preferred venue.
- Approximately 5% of the nearly 1,600 childcare centers funded through Audubon Area Community Services’ Child Care Assistance Program are faith-based institutions. The agency’s Child Care Resource and Referral Program (R&R) provides these and other area childcare providers substantial additional “scholarship” funding, childcare training and other support to aiding these childcare operators’ services and viability. In September 2001, Audubon Area’s “R&R” is partnering with churches across Western Kentucky in a special networking conference, “*Precious in His sight...Building community partnerships with faith-based programs.*”

These are exemplary of the longstanding and substantial involvement of the faith-based community in the operations, development, governance, and services of Audubon Area Community Services, Inc. The Board of Directors applauds these collaborative efforts and seeks to extend and enhance them further. The Board, its CEO and senior management team, its staff, supporters and associates commit to aggressively seek additional faith-based support both *from* the churches and *with* the churches in the achievement of our Mission.

*Adopted by the Audubon Area Community Services, Inc. Board of Directors
April 17, 2001, at Owensboro, Kentucky*