

SMILE



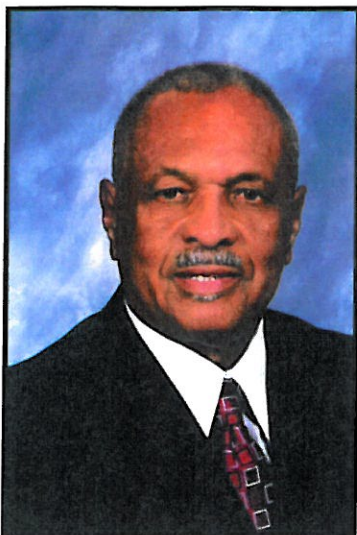
40 Years and Growing

**Annual Report
2008-2009**

St. Martin • Iberia • Lafayette
Community Action Agency

"PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE"

A Letter from the Executive Director



With great pride, we celebrated our 40th birthday. We didn't have a mid-life crisis. Instead, midway into the fiscal year 2009 – November 21, 2008, we joined together to mark the anniversary of our beginning.

The 40th Celebration of SMILE Community Action Agency brought out employees, family, friends and supporters for a wonderful evening at the Heymann Performing Arts & Convention Center.

It was an opportunity to reflect on four decades of service.

Yes – 40 years and growing, and we're proud of it.

That's because we are able to make such a difference in so many people's lives.

During those 40 years, we were able to respond to so many needs in the communities of St. Martin, Iberia and Lafayette Parishes. And through our state contracts for Weatherization and LIHEAP (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program), we were also able to meet the needs of families in Acadia and Jefferson Davis Parishes in recent years.

We believe in what we do. We believe in our motto: *People Helping People*.

We remain committed to service.

As long as there are disadvantaged populations, SMILE will be there to provide a *helping hand*. We will be there to provide a *safety net*.

Our goal will always be independent living – for everyone.

We have been foretold that the poor will always be with us. That's what the Bible tells us. Therefore, we are prepared to remain *our brother's keeper*.

But we rely on our local, state and federal funding to assist those in need.

We also rely on the public for donations, and ask that you consider sponsoring one of our Head Start Centers or Family Shelters. Perhaps, you would just like to make a contribution to help a family.

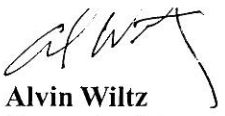
We thank you for all your support over the years for being there *for us* and *with us*.

We thank our many partners for being there for us.

We could not survive without the commitment from all.

Once again, thanks for all.

Sincerely,



Alvin Wiltz

Executive Director

• Administrative Staff

Alvin Wiltz
Executive Director

Irma J. Bourgeois
Director of Field Operations

Alvin Jones
Director of Head Start/Early Head Start

Brenda Foulcard
Director of Finance

Rosalie Brannon
Director of Human Resources

Ruth Foote
Director of Grants/Communications

RoxAnne Chaisson-Pitre
Equal Opportunity Officer

Rita McCoy
Executive Secretary

Veronica Figaro
Receptionist

• Parish Coordinators

Paulma Johnson
Coordinator of St. Martin Parish
Community Action Center

Michael Sorrell
Coordinator of Iberia Parish
Community Action Center

Lois Andrus
Coordinator of Lafayette Parish
Community Action Center

*An Equal Opportunity
Employer/Program
Auxiliary Aids and Services are
available upon request to
individuals with disabilities*

About SMILE

The St. Martin, Iberia, Lafayette Community Action Agency, or SMILE (as it is widely known by its popular acronym), serves as the primary provider of social services in a tri-parish region. Chartered as a 501 (c)(3), tax-exempt corporation in 1968, the Agency is headquartered in Lafayette. This fiscal year -- June 1, 2008 - May 31, 2009 -- marked the continuation of 40 years of service by SMILE, a landmark anniversary.

The Agency's motto, "*People Helping People*," stems from the Economic Opportunity Act's goal to uplift the nation's disadvantaged, and to assist them in obtaining self-sufficiency.

SMILE's programs include Head Start/Early Head Start, comprehensive housing counseling, emergency assistance, family transitional shelters, utility and rent/mortgage assistance, prescription assistance, senior volunteers/expo, youth mentoring/tutoring, weatherization, parenting education, job placement /referrals, and the distribution of clothing, food and hygiene products.

AGENCY MANAGEMENT

SMILE operates under the administration of Executive Director Alvin Wiltz. He oversees a managerial staff that includes the Director of Field Operations, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources, Director of Head Start/Early Head Start, Director of Grants/Communications and Equal Opportunity Officer. These supervisors, in turn, have staff members who oversee their various departments.

In-service training is a vital part of the Agency's operations. The Agency also has an accounting system in place, and conducts an annual audit. It also practices non-discrimination.

SMILE is governed by an 18-member Board of Directors, representing a cross-section of the public, private and low-income sectors of St. Martin, Iberia and Lafayette Parishes. The volunteer Board serves as the legal entity of the organization, and is committed to its success.

NETWORKING WITH AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

Collaboration has always been an integral part of the Agency. Not only does the Agency collaborate, but it has also been instrumental in the development of important programs in the region, including the Council on Aging and Meals-on-Wheels. SMILE has also assisted agencies in their start-up efforts, including 232-HELP. The Agency was also instrumental in the creation of ARCH (Acadiana Regional Coalition on Homelessness and Housing), and served as a founding member.

The Agency also collaborates with the La. Workforce Commission.

History of SMILE

People Helping People is a noble phrase, one that almost assumes a spiritual connotation by an American public influenced by Judeo-Christian principles and practices. But without a concerted effort of vital resources and funding, the concept lacks the means to significantly change the lives of poor people. The federal government acknowledged this fact with the enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act in August 1964.

The Act provided for the establishment and funding of Community Action agencies and programs. Its purpose was to focus all available local, state, private and federal resources so that low-income individuals and families could attain the skills, knowledge, motivation and opportunities needed to become self-sufficient. Its primary mission was to make the entire community more responsive to the needs and interests of the poor.

Although the undertaking of such a mission was monumental, concerned local citizens were determined to set into place the mechanism to assist the area's poor. In 1965, a non-profit organization called *Acadiana Neuf* was founded to serve the needs of the poor; it was the forerunner of SMILE Community Action Agency. The consortium of nine parishes included St. Martin, Iberia and Lafayette, as well as Acadia, Avoyelles, Evangeline, Pointe Coupee, St. Landry and Vermilion.

While representatives struggled to define the organization, three of the parishes -- Avoyelles, Evangeline and Pointe Coupee -- withdrew. The remaining six parishes persevered against odds and even achieved a measure of success. The organization selected Mr. Gordain Sibille as its first executive director, and was awarded an initial grant of slightly over \$40,000 to serve the needs of school dropouts through education, training and counseling. This was later followed by grants for Head Start, remedial reading and other projects that were consistent with the organization's mission.

Inasmuch as the Economic Opportunity Act made provisions for the delegation of activities, *Acadiana Neuf* entered into contractual arrangements for many of its services. Organizations as the St. Martin Parish School Board, St. Landry Parish School Board and the Southern Consumer Education Foundation were engaged to administer pilot programs such as Head Start. *Acadiana Neuf* was also successful in securing funding for programs such as Medicare Alert, Neighborhood Referral Workers Program and Neighborhood Service Centers.

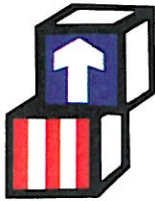
Even while achieving moderate success in these initial endeavors, the young organization still did not have the internal stability required to be truly effective. Instead, sectionalism and personality clashes eventually led to *Acadiana Neuf* being phased out in April 1967.

In its aftermath, individual parishes opted for autonomy, having become disillusioned by the consortium concept. Iberia Parish formed a single-parish agency; Lafayette attempted a limited agency for sponsoring Head Start, which had emerged as a highly effective vehicle for realizing social competency among mostly lower income families. While acknowledging that these single-parish organizations were serving a useful purpose, the general consensus was that they were much too limited in scope to truly serve the needs of the area's disadvantaged populations.

Movement toward a multi-parish agency was started by such visionaries as the Rev. Stovall and State Sen. Edgar Mouton. The concept of a tri-parish agency -- serving St. Martin, Iberia and Lafayette Parishes -- was developed through the efforts of pioneers such as Dr. James Oliver, Mr. Dennis David and Mr. Carlton James, who were formerly associated with *Acadiana Neuf*, as well as newcomers such as Mr. Charles Finley, Mr. L.L. Broussard, Mr. William Trade and Mrs. Jessie Taylor. These concerned citizens became the principal architects of what is now known as the St. Martin, Iberia, Lafayette Community Action Agency -- SMILE.

As the Agency looks to the future, painstaking efforts are taken to ensure that SMILE remains true to its primary mission -- serving the needs of the impoverished. The founding fathers would indeed be pleased to know that the torch has been passed without cessation or deviation these many years. While challenges are ahead, the concept of *People Helping People* remains the guiding force -- interwoven in SMILE's history.

SMILE Programs



• HEAD START

Perhaps one of the greatest social programs of recent years, Head Start provides a part-day program for 1,300-plus preschool children, ages three to five. Includes social competence in health, educational, social and nutritional activities. Also offers disability services for children, and provides special needs for them so that they can interact and assimilate in the learning environment. In addition, the program provides training and technical assistance to the staff and parents to better prepare them to achieve the overall goals and objectives of Head Start. This includes workshops and college credit courses in Early Childhood Development.

• EARLY HEAD START

Provides comprehensive early childhood development and family support services on a year-round basis for 80 children under age three and pregnant women in order to enhance children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. Also supports parents in fulfilling their parental roles, and helps parents move toward self-sufficiency. The program is interwoven with Head Start, and offers the same support system.

• CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

Provides funds to assist with food service costs for the Head Start and Early Head Start Programs.

• COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CSBG)

Provides support services for community-based, anti-poverty programs and projects, such as emergency assistance, transportation, housing and weatherization.

• LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LiHEAP)

Provides direct payments to home energy suppliers on behalf of eligible households, particularly the elderly and disabled.

• WEATHERIZATION

Provides energy conservation and preventive measures to eligible households.

• GENERAL TRANSPORTATION

Provides transportation services (within and outside of respective parishes) for a nominal fee so that clients may attend hospital and medical appointments and social service appointments.

• EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER NATIONAL BOARD PROGRAM

Provides emergency food and shelter, and helps with rent or mortgage payments and assists those families in need of emergency shelter and food.

• EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Provides emergency assistance with food, clothes, shelter and prescriptions.

• LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Provides supplementary assistance for transportation, housing and emergencies.

"The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But...the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'"

— Dr. Martin Luther King



"When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed."

— Mother Teresa



Housing Feature

Comprehensive housing counseling is just one of the many services provided by SMILE's Housing Department. Families at risk of foreclosure are provided counseling on how to obtain mortgage relief. On behalf of the clients, staff members make contact with mortgage companies.

The Housing Department also oversees the operations of three Family Transitional Shelters, which are known as the "*Stepping Stone to the Future I, II and III.*" Two shelters are located in Lafayette, and the third is located in New Iberia. During the fiscal year, the department assisted 22 families with transitional housing services. Of those served, some 95% moved into subsidized housing, and one even purchased a home. All families received mainstream services, and 90% of them were employed when they left the SMILE shelters.

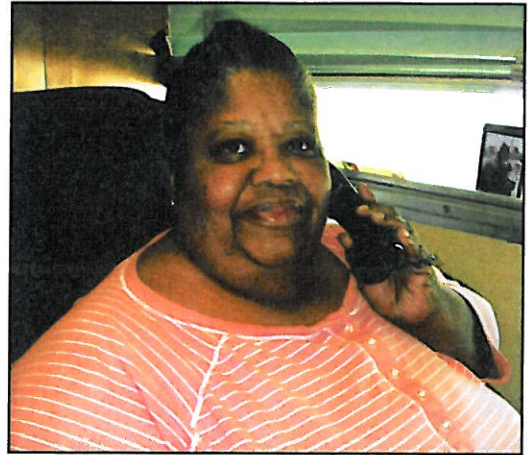


Photo by Nia Henry

Louisa DeRouen
Coordinator of Housing Services

Through Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funding, the Housing Department provides operational, support and home prevention services. In addition, nutrition and budget counseling are provided by the La. Department of Agriculture. Families in the SMILE shelters also receive mental health counseling, including professional child care services for the children.

The Housing Department also provides referrals to housing complexes for homeless individuals and families, as well as for elderly and disabled persons, so that they may receive a preference. Staff members also provide pre-and post-occupancy counseling to HUD residents.

COUNSELING AND REFERRALS

Provides counseling services to clients who have been referred by other social agencies. Also provides referral for alternative services that may be available to clients.

HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Provides the homeless with the opportunity to make the transition out of poverty. Also provides social and maintenance assistance.

HUD-APPROVED COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING COUNSELING

Provides housing counseling assistance to HUD-related clients. Housing counseling activities include mortgage default, pre-purchase activities, consumer education, reoccupancy rental, rental delinquency, relocation assistance, and others. Provides the pros and cons of becoming first-time homebuyers.

RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP)

Places retired senior volunteers in various social service agencies, which is beneficial to both the volunteers and the community.

STEP-TRANSPORTATION

Provides transportation for qualified participants, including clients and their preschool children who are transported to education sites and day care facilities, respectively. Previously referred to as the FIND Works Program and Project Independence, it is designed to assist certain groups of TANF clients in securing independence from outside sources.

EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANTS (ESG) PROGRAM

Provides transitional housing for the homeless, including supportive services, to help them achieve independent living.

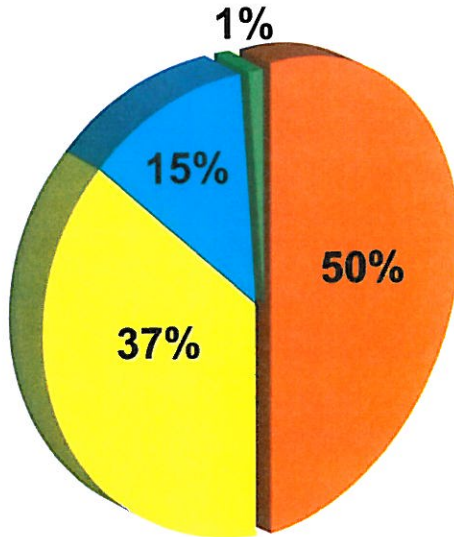
MEDICAID APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

Assists with completing applications for clients wishing to enroll in the Medicaid Program. Eligibility determinations are made by the state.

FAMILY RESOURCE/PARENTING CENTER

Provides community education in St. Martin Parish on developmental stages of child growth, importance of parenting skills, stress/anger management.

Financial Report for the fiscal year ended May 31, 2009



Resources (Funds/Match) Received

- Federal Funding
- State Funding
- Local Funding
- Unrestricted Funding

Resources	Total Funding	Percentage
Federal Funding	\$9,487,262.00	50%
State Funding	\$6,939,599.00	37%
Local Funding	\$2,377,784.00	12%
Unrestricted Funding	\$55,750.00	1%
TOTAL	\$18,860,395.00	100%

Resources Allocated by Program Costs

• Early Childhood Development Programs (Head Start/Early Head Start/USDA).....	\$12,211,259.00
• Low-Income Home Assistance Program (LIHEAP).....	\$4,227,286.00
• Transportation (Elderly, General, STEP).....	\$606,078.00
• Community Services (Rent/Mortgage, Utilities, Shelters, Food, Medication.....	\$721,846.00
• Weatherization.....	\$376,806.00
• Elderly (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program--RSVP).....	\$79,823.00
• Administration.....	\$637,297.00
TOTAL.....	\$18,860,395.00

SERVICES PROVIDED

Service/Source	Households	Household Members Benefiting
CSBG	240	625
FEMA	108	292
LIHEAP - Non-Crisis	8,630	19,497
LIHEAP - Crisis	1,550	4,305
Weatherization	81	126
Toys for Tots	800	1,600
Medicaid Enrollment	17	32
Referrals	1,861	4,591
Food Pantry (St. Martin)	75	300
Income Tax	478	478
United Way - Medication	55	100
United Way - Homelessness	50	132
Lafayette Consolidated Government External Funding Agency	45	135
ATMOS - Share the Warmth	127	508
Other Utilities/Rent		
TOTAL	14,117	32,721

TRANSPORTATION

Service/Source	Unduplicated Served	Services Provided
Transportation (STEP)	549	6,994
Transportation (Title XIX)	7,864	34,368
Transportation (General)	1,099	5,044
TOTAL	9,512	46,406

HOUSING

HUD	312
Non-HUD	220
TOTAL	532

RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program)

Volunteers	627
Donated Hours	23,860.95
TOTAL	24,487.95

SMILE Board of Directors*

Mr. Richard Potier, President
St. Martin Parish, Public Sector

Mr. Bronel Hebert, Treasurer
Iberia Parish, Private Sector

Mr. Albert Menard, Vice-President
St. Martin Parish, Low Income Sector

Ms. Patricia Douglass, Parliamentarian
Iberia Parish, Public Sector

Mr. Pernell Livingston, Secretary
Lafayette Parish, Low-Income Sector

Ms. Margaret Guidry, Chaplain
Lafayette Parish, Public Sector

Ex-Officio Members of the Board

Mr. Ervin Mitchell, Head Start Policy Council Chairperson

Ms. Kim Clement, Head Start Policy Council Member

St. Martin Parish

- **Low-Income Sector**
Mr. James Charles
- **Private Sector**
Mr. Zachary Landry
- **Public Sector**
Ms. Vonda LeBlanc

Iberia Parish

- **Low-Income Sector**
Mr. Arnold Green
Ms. Rosemary Rochon
- **Private Sector**
Ms. Deidre Ledbetter
- **Public Sector**
Ms. Norma Vital

Lafayette Parish

- **Low-Income Sector**
Mr. Kendall Wiltz
- **Private Sector**
Ms. Bianca Chretien
Mr. Eldridge Simon
- **Public Sector**
Mr. Regis Allison



SMILE Central Office

**501 St. John Street
Lafayette, LA 70501**

(337) 234-3272 • www.smilecaa.org • (337) 234-3274/Fax

St. Martin Community Action Center

**2097 Terrace Rd.
St. Martinville, LA 70582
(337) 394-6013**

Head Start Central Office

**306 S. Theater St.
St. Martinville, LA 70582
(337) 394-6071**

Iberia Community Action Center

**722 Walton St.
New Iberia, LA 70560
(337) 365-8151**

RSVP (Retired Senior and Volunteer Program)

**501 St. John St.
Lafayette, LA 70501
(337) 234-3272, Ext. 252**

Lafayette Community Action Center

**501 St. John St.
Lafayette, LA 70501
(337) 232-6810**

Transportation Headquarters

**722 Walton St.
New Iberia, LA 70560
(337) 369-9387**