



**Southside Literacy Roundtable  
January 25, 2011  
Information Exchange Summary Report**

Southside Community Partners convened the second Southside Literacy Roundtable on January 25, 2011, 11 a.m.- 2 p.m. at the John Randolph Foundation in Hopewell, Virginia. Attending were 24 participants from a wide range of local and regional nonprofit and governmental organizations representing education, human services, employment services, faith-based, libraries and funders.

**Wendy Austin, Director, Southside Community Partners** of the Appomattox Regional Library System, introduced **Lisa Sharpe, Executive Director of John Randolph Foundation** who opened the meeting by welcoming attendees, and speaking to the importance of addressing the issue at hand. Wendy then introduced the presenters and provided a brief a summary of Southside Community Partners programs including Learning & Leadership training, Nonprofit Resource Center and ConnectSouthside.org. Wendy highlighted the program's focus on supporting the local community of nonprofit and community-based organizations and leveraging collaborative opportunities to support positive community change.

**Harriet Scruggs, Executive Director, READ Center**, opened the discussion period with an introduction of the READ Center and their work. She was joined by **Laura Scholcraft and Peggy Sue Durette**, also from the READ Center, who each took part in talking about how to identify adults with low literacy and the process for referring them to services.

**Wayne Crocker, Director, Petersburg Public Library, Shari Henry, Librarian/Nonprofit Collections Specialist with Southside Community Partners, Dale Temple, Adult Education Program Planner, Southside Programs for Adult Continuing Education, and Harriet Scruggs** each took part in a panel discussion on what their organization is doing and plans to do to identify, address, and serve adults with low literacy. Wayne Crocker discussed the Petersburg City of Readers effort and displayed a logo that had been developed by a community-wide art contest to encourage reading. Shari Henry described the activities and services the adult services librarians at the Hopewell Library are planning such as ordering high-interest low-level books, developing a pathfinder of service providers, and participating in tutor training to help them better understand and serve the library patrons. Dale Temple then talked about a variety of services her organization provides, primarily centered around GED preparation. Harriet discussed tutor training and other free education opportunities through The READ Center.

**Scott Firestine, Director, Appomattox Regional Library System**, provided an overview of the history of efforts to address adults with low literacy in the Southside region. He offered some ideas to kick-off the Breakout session.

The participants then divided into breakout groups to brainstorm about ideas for moving forward. When the groups came back together, Scott Firestine, Wendy Austin, and Shari Henry facilitated the gathering of information. The following outline highlights the feedback:

### **Reaching Out: Suggestions for Places to Advertise Services**

- Fast food restaurants
- Beauty salons
- CARITAS
- Custodial services
- Day cares & Head Start classrooms
- DMV
- Doctors' offices
- Emergency Room
- Health Department
- Homeless shelters/housing offices
- Housing Department
- Mom/Pop fast food restaurants (Asian, Latino, etc.)
- Polling places
- Virginia Employment Commission
- YMCA

Note: Some clients will require staff/volunteer assistance to complete forms.

### **Activities to Consider**

- Library card sign-up, book check-out, & adult literacy program promotion
- local Laundromats
- Launch "READ" campaign
- Prepare "Parking Lot" speech for potential clients and other stakeholders.
- Produce 10 minute spot to run in theaters before feature films

### **Collaborative Groups – possible partnerships**

- Virginia Association of Housing Authorities
  - Recertification process
- Work with United Way director for help developing collaborative opportunities

**Immediate Focus**

- Create directory of service providers w/ contact information & description of services. (Who are the service providers? Where are they located? How do they connect with clients? What types of services do they provide?)
- Prepare parking lot speech

**Measuring Progress**

- Complete/distribute directory – establish milestones
- Distribute and begin using parking lot (elevator) speech  
Collect (survey) feedback on usefulness, etc., of directory and/or parking lot speech

**NEXT STEPS:****Working Groups/Projects**

A Task Force (to be lead by Scott Firestine) was formed which will meet prior to the next general Adult Literacy Roundtable to produce the following:

- Directory
- Parking lot speech

**Next Literacy Roundtable Meeting: June 2011**

A very special thank you to Dale Temple for sponsoring and coordinating the services of Helen Wingate Catering for our event.

Please contact Shari Henry at [shenry@scpartners.org](mailto:shenry@scpartners.org) if you have any questions or comments.