



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Southside Community Partners to host open forum on Collaboration

HOPEWELL, VA—Southside Community Partners, a new name for the merged programs: Southside Virginia Nonprofit Resource Center, Focus INC and ConnectSouthside, providing communications, training and information resources for nonprofits, government, civic-minded individuals and businesses in the Tri-Cities/Southside region, will present an open forum on October 19th to discuss, Collaboration for Long-term Sustainability: Building a Strong Southside Community.

At this free community conversation, private and public sector leaders will discuss degrees of collaboration including shared resources, fiscal sponsorship, partnerships and mergers -- framed within the challenges presented by the current difficult economic outlook. “Strong communities anticipate change, talk about it and prepare for it,” said Wendy Austin, director of Southside Community Partners. “That’s our purpose for this event, to bring people together to talk about opportunities that develop through communication and cooperation.”

The keynote presenter will be Peggy Eagan, Executive Director of the Children and Family Services Center, a 100,000 square foot facility in Charlotte, North Carolina that houses ten nonprofits serving children and families. Her topic will be "Collaboration & Shared Services Can Help Your Bottom Line."

A panel discussion on local perspectives of effective collaboration will follow. Panelists include Handy Lindsey of The Cameron Foundation, Lisa Sharpe of the John Randolph Foundation, Rosalyn Andrews of the American Red Cross, Joan Drewry of The Wakefield Foundation, Dennis Morris of the Crater Planning District Commission, and Cliff Bickford of BB&T and the Chesterfield Sustain our Communities Committee.

Southside Community Partners, a program of the Appomattox Regional Library, helps build strong communities. A local nonprofit program with deep knowledge of the sector and of the community, Southside Community Partners works to connect and empower community leaders to

undertake and sustain work that assures accessible health care, affordable housing, improved literacy, stronger families, increased arts and the many components of a vibrant and strong community.

More than 600 nonprofit and community-based organizations are currently part of the Southside Community Partners network, using and benefiting from the free services that include the Nonprofit Specialty Resource Center, Learning & Leadership training, and ConnectSouthside.org, the free web-based social and knowledge network.

Collaboration for Long-term Sustainability: Building a Strong Southside Community will take place on Monday, October 19, 2009 at the Beacon Theatre, 401N. Main St., Hopewell, VA 23860. The event will begin at 2 p.m. with networking. Presentations and discussion are set for 2:30 to 4 p.m. Seating is limited. Please register at www.connectsouthside.org or or call 804-458-6329, ext. 2013 if you would like to attend. For more information, contact Wendy Austin, Program Director at ext. 2017.

Event sponsors and partners include The Cameron Foundation, the John Randolph Foundation, the Beacon Theatre, and IK Catering

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Southside Community Partners serves the cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell and Petersburg and the counties of Dinwiddie, Prince George, Sussex, Surry and southern Chesterfield