



*Community
Foundation
of the Eastern Shore, Inc.*



Lower Eastern Shore Community Needs Assessment 2007

Prepared for:

*Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore
United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore*

By:

*The Business and Economic and Outreach Network
at Salisbury University*

July 2008

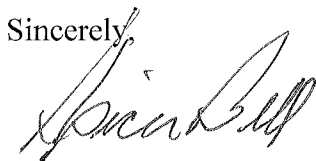
The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore and the United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore are pleased to present the latest assessment of the needs of the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland. It is our intent in producing this report to provide the community with a tool to assist community leaders, nonprofit organizations, government agencies and residents in directing resources to help meet the most pressing needs here on the Lower Shore. Both of our organizations will be incorporating what we have learned through this needs assessment in our ongoing support for area nonprofit organizations.

We would like to thank Dr. Memo Diriker and the graduate students in the Spring 2007 Marketing Strategy class at Salisbury University's Perdue School of Business. Their data collection and analysis provided valuable insights to the many needs facing the Lower Eastern Shore.

Identifying needs in the community is a challenging task, which often results in new questions rather than simple answers. We know that many of the issues and needs identified in this report are multi-faceted and will involve the work and dedication of many individuals, organizations, agencies and governmental jurisdictions to effect change. It is our hope that this report will be used as a tool to initiate further discussions, information gathering, analysis and action to address the problems and challenges in our community.

The citizens of the Lower Eastern Shore are known for their compassion to those less fortunate and for their unselfish charitable response through volunteering and giving to address needs in this community. We see this every day in our work. It is our hope that precious resources can be brought to bear to address our community's needs, and as a result, continue to strengthen this special place we call home.

Sincerely,



Spicer Bell
President
Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore



Kathleen Momme'
Executive Director
United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore

Lower Eastern Shore Needs Assessment

Introduction

The 2007 Lower Eastern Shore Needs Assessment was conducted by the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network at Salisbury University (BEACON) and sponsored by the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore (CFES) and the United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore (UWLES). The study area included Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. The objective of the assessment was to provide data to CFES and UWLES to allow them to more effectively allocate their resources to best match the community needs and issues identified through this process.

Methodology

The assessment was conducted in two stages. In stage one, a meta-analysis of various local, regional, and statewide studies and databases was conducted in order to match key community needs and issues to known information and data about the existing solutions to those needs and issues. In stage two, a regional opinion leader panel was used to determine the relative importance of these pre-identified needs in the study area. Over 250 opinion leaders from the study region were invited to serve on the panel; panelists were selected because they are key informants who are knowledgeable about specific segments of the community.

General Findings

The following summary of key community needs and issues is the result of an analysis of the findings of the assessment.

Lower Eastern Shore (combined results of all four counties):

- 1) Affordability of Health Insurance and Healthcare for the Elderly
- 2) Availability of Affordable Health Insurance
- 3) Quality of Job Opportunity
- 4) Needs of the Aging
- 5) Availability of Low-Income Housing
- 6) Drug Use (in general)

Somerset County:

- 1) Adolescent Drug Use
- 2) Adult Substance Abuse
- 3) Affordability of Health Insurance and Healthcare for the Elderly
- 4) Juvenile Crime

Wicomico County:

- 1) Affordability of Health Insurance and Healthcare for the Elderly
- 2) Availability of Affordable Health Insurance
- 3) Needs of the Aging
- 4) Quality of Job Opportunities
- 5) Homelessness
- 6) Drug Use (in general)

Worcester County:

- 1) Availability of Affordable Workforce Housing
- 2) Affordability of Health Insurance and Healthcare for the Elderly
- 3) Availability of Affordable Health Insurance
- 4) Availability of Prescription Drug Coverage
- 5) Quality of Job Opportunities

Dorchester County:

- 1) Quality of Job Opportunities
- 2) Affordability of Health Insurance and Healthcare for the Elderly
- 3) Availability of Affordable Workforce Housing
- 4) Quality of Job Opportunities