



Center for People In Transition

Strategic Plan

2009-2014

Center for People In Transition
Gloucester County's Displaced Homemaker Center

Gloucester County College
1400 Tanyard Road
Sewell, New Jersey 08080





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Advisory Board Authorization of the Strategic Plan

<u>Board Name</u>	<u>Signature</u> (All Signatures on File)	<u>Date Signed</u>
Peggy Van Natta Schoen <i>Center for People In Transition Advisory Board Chairperson Supervisor, General Assistance / NPA Food Stamp Programs</i>	_____	1/9/09
Jeanne LaBuz <i>Director, The Center for People In Transition</i>	_____	1/9/09
Dr. Russell Davis <i>President, Gloucester County College</i>	_____	1/14/09
Susan Allen <i>Displaced Homemaker Representative</i>	_____	1/8/09
Steve Awalt <i>Accountant, Gloucester County College</i>	_____	1/8/09
Christine Bork <i>Professor, Gloucester County College</i>	_____	1/8/09
Lisa Charon <i>Displaced Homemaker Representative</i>	_____	1/12/09
Christine Cockerill <i>Attorney, Puff & Cockerill, L.L.C.</i>	_____	1/14/09
Patricia Fletcher <i>Consultant / Retired Director of the Center for People In Transition</i>	_____	1/13/09
Gina Ridge <i>Program Director, Services Empowering Rights of Victims (SERV)</i>	_____	1/9/09
Sarah Hart <i>Administrator of Services Department, Gloucester County Division of Social Services</i>	_____	1/12/09
Nancy Hawn <i>Mediator, South Jersey Mediation Center Social Service and Legal Resource Assistant, The Center for People In Transition</i>	_____	1/12/09
Robbenmarie Insogno <i>Director of Information Services, Center for Family Services, Inc.</i>	_____	1/14/09
Susan Nevins <i>Team Coordinator, The Center for People in Transition</i>	_____	1/9/09
Barbara Turner <i>Assistant Professor, Gloucester County College</i>	_____	1/9/09



VISION

Provide services to displaced homemakers who are experiencing the three greatest stressors in life: divorce, death of spouse & loss of employment / unemployment to reach a new beginning of self worth and self sufficiency.

MISSION

Assist displaced homemakers (someone who has lost their main means of support through the death or disability of a spouse or as the result of separation and/or divorce) to become emotionally and economically self-sufficient through life skills training, education or vocational training, advocacy and supportive services.

VALUES

The Center for People in Transition respects and accepts the diversity of our clients and firmly believes that each displaced homemaker deserves the opportunity to evolve from a life of shattered dreams to a life emanating dignity and self worth. Therefore, The Center for People in Transition affirms the following values and beliefs:

Commitment to Clients

Each client has the potential of overcoming the negative obstacles during this transitional time if given the support and resources to enhance their personal and career growth.

Commitment to Confidentiality

Every client has the right to privacy and confidentiality and will continue to respect these rights at all times.

Commitment to Preventing Further Mental Health Deterioration

Services provided by The Center can be instrumental in preventing a client's mental health from deteriorating to a deeper level with grave consequences.

Commitment to Funding Sources

Recognize that our funding sources have guidelines that must be followed and outcomes that must be reached.

Commitment to Community

Displaced homemakers are our primary clientele, but will continue to make every effort to provide group services to other members of our community in assisting to enhance economic growth and quality of life.

Commitment to College

Displaced homemakers are our primary clientele but will continue to take the extra step to assist the college in areas that can enhance the lives of students, faculty, administrators, and staff.



ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

The Center for People in Transition (the Center) started in 1981 by Gloucester County College (GCC) to assist women returning to school. Since that time the Center has expanded its mission and has become a semi-independent social service agency dedicated to assisting displaced homemakers to become self-sufficient. We are also identified as one of the 15 Displaced Homemaker Centers in the New Jersey network.

The Center receives no funding from GCC. It is externally funded through grants from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Division on Women (DOW) (since 1985), and the United Way of Gloucester County (since 1988). The College provides fiscal monitoring and space. The Center maintains a separate Advisory Board to assist with its functions.

ORGANIZATIONAL SERVICES

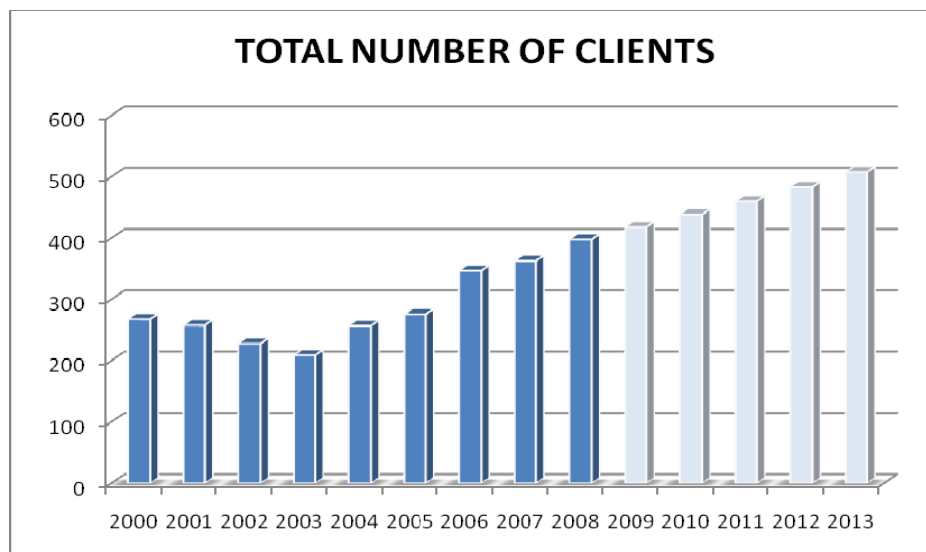
The Center provides the following services:

- Assessment to determine individual needs
- Referrals to community resources
- Disseminator of information on NJ divorce law
- Professionally facilitated support groups for people going through separation and divorce
- Professionally facilitated support groups for widows and widowers
- Workshops dealing with self development
- Computer literacy courses
- Vocational testing and assessment
- Information on returning to school or vocational training at any level
- Financial aid and scholarship leads
- Job search skills, including resume writing, interview techniques and developing job leads
- Legal and financial workshops



OVERALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The DCA DOW grant requires that we serve 100 new displaced homemaker clients a year. However, we regularly serve approximately 200 new clients each year and continue to serve approximately 175 on-going clients from previous years.
- Our life skills and informational workshops are open to the public and are attended by an additional 650 to 750 men and women a year.
- The Center sends out by mail and email a quarterly newsletter describing all of the Center's upcoming activities to approximately 4,000 clients, social service agencies, community-based organizations, mental health, and legal professionals. The Center strives to be responsive in a timely manner to each prospective client that calls for services.
- Vast majority of services continue to be FREE OF CHARGE for displaced homemakers.
- Vast majority of clients have successful outcomes as a result of seeking one on one services and / or attending workshops.
- Over the last 24 years approximately 16,800 people in the Gloucester County and surrounding areas have benefited from our legal, financial and life skills workshops and support groups.
- Additionally, we have served over 4,800 displaced homemakers, helping them to come to grips with the emotional trauma of separation, divorce, death or disability of a spouse. Forecast client growth of 5% per year is expected.





2009 – 2014

STRATEGIES, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

- GOAL # 1 Strive to acquire the funding to service displaced homemakers and members of the Gloucester County community.
- a) Show justification to the Department of Community Affairs, Division on Women and United Way of Gloucester County that many successful outcomes are being achieved, and increased funding is a necessity in order to service the growing numbers of displaced homemakers.
 - b) Quantify successful outcomes by information on quarterly, bi-annual, and annual monitoring and fiscal reports; and qualify successful outcomes by client feedback of the services provided.
 - c) Pursue donations from individuals and businesses dedicated to the Mission of the Center.
 - d) Investigate additional grants and donation opportunities.
 - e) Reach out to local, county and state government officials on an ongoing basis to explain our services and to ask for their support of the Center's funding.
- GOAL # 2 Continue to communicate with our funding sources with information and to express our appreciation of their support of the Program.
- a) Director will interact with Department of Community Affairs, Division on Women on a regular basis thanking them for their support as well as being responsive to their requests for our presence at State affairs throughout each fiscal year.
 - b) Director will make every attempt to be responsive to the requests of United Way of Gloucester County whenever there is a need for our presence at events and meetings.
 - c) Director will spearhead on an annual basis thank you letters to local, county and state government officials expressing appreciation for their support of the Center's funding.



- GOAL # 3 Increase staff from two full-time and one part-time to three full-time employees in order to meet the needs of our clients.
- a) Show justification for this need to our present funders and other possible donors through number of clients being served, successful outcomes reports and client evaluations.
- GOAL # 4 Continue to work with our clients in achieving the necessary training / education which is needed to obtain jobs and become self-sufficient.
- a) Director will continue to serve in dual capacity as Career Counselor administering and interpreting career inventories and teaching ways to do realistic career research so clients set up goals that are closely related to job market trends.
 - b) Director will continue to assist clients in choosing appropriate training / educational facilities that are aligned with realistic career goals, and will also refer to sources for financial aid including scholarships.
 - c) Director and Social Service & Legal Resource Assistant will continue to work with clients on resumes, interviewing skills, dress for success, job search skills, and job leads.
- GOAL # 5 Continue to provide our clients with resources to assist in their children's physical, educational and emotional needs.
- a) Work with collaborative agencies and local business in providing backpacks, school supplies and hair cuts for clients' children to start school.
 - b) Provide funds (i.e., gift cards) to clients to assist in meeting their children's basic needs of food and clothing, particularly school clothes.
 - c) Offer workshop on parenting for families in transition.
 - d) Assist clients whose children have dropped out of school by referring the children to GED programs.
- GOAL #6 Assist our clients in working with their lenders in helping to prevent house foreclosures.
- a) Social Service and Legal Resource Assistant, a certified divorce mediator, can also mediate between lenders and borrowers along with disseminate this information to our clients who are facing possible foreclosure.



- GOAL # 7 Continue to cross train due to such a small staff and increased clientele.
- a) Director and Social Service & Legal Resource Assistant will continuously strive to be knowledgeable in each area of expertise, as well as know the Team Coordinator's responsibilities as a safeguard for "business as usual" in case of unexpected leaves or absences.
- GOAL # 8 Recruit additional professionals to facilitate workshops FREE of charge and justify workshop viability based on enrollment for those with paid professional facilitators.
- a) Center will offer four new pro bono workshops per fiscal year.
 - b) Director will continuously cost justify the implementation of workshops by number of registrant versus cost to run the workshop.
 - c) Team Coordinator will continuously make all necessary follow-up calls to registrants to obtain firm yes attendance commitments so Director can make sound decisions as to the implementation of workshops.
- GOAL # 9 Continue to collaborate with other agencies to keep current on information in each of their respective services to best meet the needs of our clients, and to continue to reach out to businesses within the community to stimulate job leads for clients.
- a) Staff will do in-service seminars with the agencies that primarily meet the needs of our client every three years.
 - b) Staff will identify and contact six businesses per fiscal year.
 - c) Staff will continue to communicate with partner agencies whenever the need arises for services, case management or case follow-up.
- GOAL # 10 Reduce costs in supplies used by the Center and for our clients.
- a) Staff will be vigilant in reviewing product pricing on a continuous basis and make recommendations to Director as far as purchasing.



GOAL # 11 Streamline the Center's Plan of Action (POA) procedures in order to provide improved direction and case management for our clients whom we meet in one-on-one sessions that have multiple needs.

- a) Reevaluate yearly the POA utilized by Director for intakes and career goals.
- b) Reevaluate yearly the POA utilized by Social Service & Legal Resource Assistant for contacts to community and legal resources.
- c) Reevaluate yearly the POA utilized by Financial Consultant for explicit directions for budgeting, credit scores, payment plans, etc.

GOAL # 12 Improve our workshop evaluation procedures to aid in collecting more thorough statistical information for measurable outcomes and improvement of services.

- a) Director will continue to improve the process that ensures that facilitators distribute workshop evaluations and that the evaluations are completed by the participants.
- b) Director will continue to communicate with facilitators that participants should be told that their feedback is a necessity not only for measurable outcomes but also continuous improved services based on their needs.

GOAL # 13 Continue to publicize our services and outreach to displaced homemakers and member of the Gloucester County community.

- a) Team Coordinator will maintain mailing and email lists, arrange for internal advertising throughout GCC's campus, and work with the Continuing Education Department for external coverage in its couriers.
- b) Director will request press release coverage from GCC's Public Relations Department and arrange any media coverage when feasible.
- c) Director and/or Social Service & Legal Resource Assistant will meet with agencies and businesses whenever a request is made or a need is recognized.
- d) Staff member(s) will attend events at the college to let perspective GCC students and their families know about the Center's services.



GOAL # 14 Continue to be responsive to our host agency, Gloucester County College (GCC) when requests are made in efforts to continuously maintain the very positive working relationship that exists between The Center for People in Transition and the staff and students of Gloucester County College.

- a) Center's staff will continuously remain approachable and will gladly respond to questions as students make inquiries as they pass through our office area or in the hallways.
- b) Center's staff will participate in College tours by providing information about our services as perspective students pass through our office area.
- c) Center's staff will make every attempt to serve on committees whenever possible as long as it can be accomplished without interfering with the daily job responsibilities as set forth in the grants' guidelines.
- d) Center's staff will provide in a timely fashion all reports that are needed by GCC's Administrative staff.
- e) Center's staff will remain responsive to the needs of students and staff experiencing difficult times in their lives.

GOAL # 15 Review Strategic Plan to evaluate that the strategies, goals, and objectives continue to meet the mission and vision of the Center.

- a) Staff will review annually and will hold discussions with Advisory Board to gain further input as it relates to possible need for changes.





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Gloucester County's Displaced Homemaker Center

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The Center for People In Transition is funded by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division on Women, and the United Way. The Board of Trustees of Gloucester County College is committed to providing a work and academic environment that maintains and promotes affirmative action and equal opportunity in all categories of employment and education. The Board will continually attempt to carry out its responsibilities to provide all persons with equal access and fair treatment regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, atypical heredity cellular or blood trait of any individual, nonapplicable disability or because of genetic information or refusal to submit or make available the results of a genetic test. For questions concerning discrimination, call Affirmative Action Officer, Almarie J. Jones, at 856.415.2154. For disability issues, contact ADA/504 Officer, Dennis M. Cook, Office of Special Needs, at 856-415-2265.