

Catholic Campaign for Human Development – national 3-year grant for economic development

Purpose:

Create and support jobs for women in recovery from addiction as employees of a coffee business (wholesale and retail) operated exclusively by women in the program. Provide career development training opportunities for staff to empower them for sustainable recovery and economic self-sufficiency. Our program teaches life practices, reinforced daily on the job, which address recovery from trauma, abuse, violence, and poverty and which empower them in their family and personal lives, as well as on the job. Many of the women have been in jail or prison. All of them have significant history of alcohol or drug addiction. About half are single mothers or have primary care of their children. Some of them have never held a job before. Women in the program begin as interns (placed by the county or referred by a treatment program). We have created over 20 jobs and want to double that.

Organizational Accomplishments

1. Created new jobs for over 28 women in the program and have retained 18 of them. Grants and prizes provide initial funds for new jobs, helping them move toward self-sufficiency and providing a growing staff for a growing business.
2. Opened a third retail coffee shop and cafe, which we use for a growing catering business and private parties. Donations and grants provided funding for equipment and inventory to open the cafe, leading to increased retail sales for the business.
3. Trained our employees (all of them women in the program) to operate and manage our wholesale business and all three coffee shops, do the office work and bookkeeping, tech support, human resources, and work related to operating the business. Ongoing training for broader responsibilities in leadership, strategic planning, fundraising, and grant writing will empower the women for leadership of the whole organization.

Organizational Challenge

1. Business growth, both wholesale and retail, slowed during the past 18 months. We have developed two new partnerships with area businesses who are helping us build our wholesale business. And we have a few volunteers providing pro bono training with our staff to create a more efficient business.
2. Inadequate fundraising, especially developing a larger donor base, continues to keep us from achieving full sustainability. We are working with a fundraising consultant, developing a new database, and growing our community networks - all of which has begun to increase the amount of donations.
3. Limited staff training in business strategy, marketing, and human resources hinders efficient daily operations. Too much time is required of executive staff and key volunteers to manage that part of the organization. We continue to recruit volunteers with expertise in key areas for training and to seek grant funding to pay for outside training in areas we do not have experienced volunteers available for training.