

A REPORT OF THE FAUQUIER COMMUNITY COALITION

APRIL 2020

Compiled by Jean Lowe and Ed Jones
Photography Editor Merrill Worthington
fauquiercommunitycoalition.org

About the Fauquier Community Coalition

The Fauquier Community Coalition (FCC) is a 501(c) 3 non-profit agency that combats poverty in Fauquier County by matching needs to resources in a very practical way. Established in 2013, the FCC is primarily a hands-on organization which recruits and mobilizes church groups and other volunteers to address home maintenance issues including repairs, heating deficiencies, roofing, plumbing and insulation needs, etc. Since 2016, the FCC has helped about 85 households. The FCC also supports the firewood ministries of local churches, delivering wood weekly to approximately 45 impoverished homes in Fauquier County which are heated primarily by wood stoves.

We work cooperatively with Fauquier County Family Shelter, Vint Hill Transitional Housing, Community Touch, and the Fauquier County Department of Social Services and other agencies which serve the poor.

Through our work, Fauquier Community Coalition board members and volunteers have found that many citizens are unaware of the extent and impact of poverty locally or of the helping services available to those in need. As a result, we have expanded our mission to include sharing information about these issues. Following our original report published in February 2018, the present document is our second effort in this direction.

POVERTY IN FAUQUIER COUNTY:

**A REPORT COMPILED BY
THE FAUQUIER COMMUNITY
COALITION**

PROJECT OUTLINE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Fauquier Community Coalition 2

Introduction 11

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF POVERTY IN FAUQUIER COUNTY 13

The Statistics..... 13

Responses to the Needs 16

CHAPTER 2

HUNGER IN FAUQUIER COUNTY 19

The Need 19

Local Efforts to Address Hunger..... 21

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
(SNAP formerly Food Stamps)..... 21

Fauquier Community Food Bank & Thrift Store 21

Fauquier FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) 22

The Fauquier County Food Distribution Coalition 23

Community Touch — Clara’s Food Pantry 24

Salvation Army 25

St. Vincent de Paul Society (Local Conference Serving Fauquier County
through Saint John’s Catholic Church) (SVdP) 25

Other Area Churches and Agencies 25

The Heartwood Center: Meals for Hungry Children..... 25

The Fauquier Senior Center 26

Concluding Comments 26

CHAPTER 3

SHELTER AND HOUSING 27

The Need 27

Emergency Housing 28

Starting points for People Needing Immediate Shelter 29

Fauquier Family Shelter (FFS) 29

Hope Center Warming Station 30

Area Motels..... 30

Shelters Outside of Fauquier County which Serve Fauquier Residents..... 30

Culpeper Winter Heat Shelter..... 30

Reformation Lutheran Church..... 31

SAFE (Service to Abused Families, Inc.)..... 31

The Salvation Army 31

Transitional Housing..... 31

Starting Points for People Needing Transitional Housing..... 31

Vint Hill Transitional Housing Program (VHTH) 32

Victory Transitional Housing (VTH) 32

Subsidized Housing 33

Low Income Housing (Section 8)	33
Windy Hill Foundation	33
Fauquier Habitat for Humanity (FHH)	34
People, Inc. Community Action Agency	35
Home Furnishings and Living Supplies	35
Noah's Ark Outreach.....	35
The Fauquier Community Thrift Store	35
The Potter's House	35
The Branch of Hope	36
The Salvation Army Family Store and Service Center.....	36
Toys for Tots	36
Hope Heals – a community free store	37
Financial Assistance with Weatherization and Safety	37
LEAP: The Local Energy Alliance Program	37
Community Touch, Inc. (CTI).....	37
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms	37
Financial Assistance with Rent and Utilities	38
Fauquier Department of Social Services (DSS)	38
Salvation Army (SA)	38
People Helping People (PHP).....	38
Community Touch, Inc. (CTI).....	39
The Morrisville United Methodist Church.....	39
St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP).....	39
Fauquier FISH -- For Immediate Sympathetic Help.....	39
Fauquier Community Coalition Wood Ministry.....	39
Home Repairs (Financial and Hands-On)	40
Foothills Housing Corporation (FHC)	40
Fauquier Community Coalition (FCC)	41
Habitat for Humanity.....	41
Homelessness: Intervention and Prevention	41
Regional Oversight: Foothills Housing Network.....	41
Housing Affordability	42
Impact of Eviction.....	43
Concluding Comments	44

CHAPTER 4

HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES.....	45
The Need	45
Medicaid: Family and Children; Aged, Blind and Disabled; Long Term Care.....	47
Primary Health Care and Medical Services Available to the Poor	47
Fauquier Free Clinic.....	47
Fauquier Health (including Fauquier Hospital).....	49
Fauquier County Health Department (FCHD)	50
Other Health and Medical Services for Low-income Individuals	51
Hospice Services	51
Blue Ridge Hospice	51

Capital Caring Health	51
Hospice of the Piedmont in Culpeper.....	51
Comfort and Care Support.....	51
Pregnancy and Women’s Health	52
CareNet Pregnancy Resource Center/Warrenton Pregnancy Center.....	52
Planned Parenthood.....	52
Fauquier Lions Clubs	52
American Cancer Society/Road to Recovery.....	53
The Foundation of Blue Ridge Orthopaedics	53
Virginia Insurance Counseling Assistance Program	53
Enroll Virginia	53
Concluding Comments	54

CHAPTER 5

POVERTY AND MENTAL HEALTH.....	55
The Need.....	55
Mental and Behavioral Health Services for the Poor in Fauquier County.....	56
The Fauquier Free Clinic	56
Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS)	57
Mental Health Counseling	58
Services to the Jail in Fauquier County.....	58
Lack of Mental Health Beds for Low Income Patients	58
Mental Health Association of Fauquier County (MHAFC)	59
Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT).....	60
Substance use problems	60
Youth for Tomorrow	61
Other programs	61
Concluding Comments	61

CHAPTER 6

TRANSPORTATION AND POVERTY.....	63
The Need.....	63
Transportation Services and Assistance Available to the Poor	64
Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS) Transit Services	65
Care-A-Van	65
The FAMS (Foothills Area Mobility System)	65
Volunteer Transportation Services	66
VolTran.....	66
Road to Recovery	66
Circuit Rider Bus.....	66
Future Planning	66
Concluding Comments	67

CHAPTER 7	
POVERTY AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM	69
The Need	69
Challenges Faced by the Poor in Civil and Criminal Courts.....	70
Civil Court.....	71
Legal Aid Works	71
Criminal Court.....	73
Plea Bargains	73
Status Crimes	74
An inside Perspective: Poverty and the Criminal Justice System.....	74
The Bail/Bond System or “Money Bail”	74
Rehabilitative and Recovery Programs as an Alternative to Incarceration.....	75
The Punishment Cycle of Probation	76
How to get a public defender.....	76
Purpose and Effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System	77
Promising Trends in Corrections and Rehabilitation	78
Alternatives to Incarceration in Fauquier County.....	78
Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center (PDRC).....	78
Mediation	79
Restorative Justice.....	79
Fauquier County Adult Court Services (ACS).....	80
A Re-entry Program: Virginia Cares.....	80
Concluding Comments	81

CHAPTER 8	
POVERTY - YOUTH AND EDUCATION.....	83
The Need	83
Child Development for Newborns and Toddlers	84
Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Infant and Toddler Connection (ITC)	84
Healthy Families	84
Preschool Education	85
The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI).....	85
Head Start	85
Childcare and After School Programs	86
Child Care Assistance (DSS)	86
Fauquier Community Child Care (FCCC).....	86
Caring for Angels Child Care Center	86
Boys and Girls Club of Fauquier County (BGCF).....	87
Windy Hill	87
Childhood Nutrition Inc. (CNI).....	87
Fauquier County Public Schools.....	87
Free School Lunches	88
Special Services for Homeless Students.....	88
HORIZONS.....	88
Summer Camps	89

Salvation Army Camp Happyland	89
Verdun Adventure Bound	89
Windy Hill Summer on the Hill	89
HORIZONS Summer Program	89
Concluding Comments	90

CHAPTER 9

ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO POVERTY

.....	91
The Need	91
Opportunities and Assistance for those with Limited Financial Resources	91
Local Programs which provide both education/training and financial assistance	92
Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC)	92
Credit programs	92
Non-Credit Certificate programs	92
Developmental Studies	93
Local programs which offer education and training designed to raise income and employment levels	94
Piedmont Region Adult & Career Education Program (PRACEP)	94
Literacy Volunteers of Fauquier County (LVFC)	94
Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW)	95
Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS) Bridges Program	95
The Workplace	95
Local Programs which offer scholarship and financial assistance (but not training) to help individuals increase their education and employment levels	96
Northern Piedmont Community Foundation (NPCF)	96
Challenges Experienced by Financially Disadvantaged Adults Pursuing Education and Training with or without Scholarship Assistance ...	96
Concluding Comments	98

CHAPTER 10

RECENT HISTORICAL TRENDS & IMPLICATIONS OF POVERTY IN FAUQUIER COUNTY

.....	99
Concluding Comments	101

CHAPTER 11

MY REFLECTIONS ON ISSUES IN POVERTY AFTER COMPILING THIS REPORT

.....	103
Some Ways of Thinking about Poverty	103
Misconceptions and Other Puzzling Issues	104
Now What?	109
Concluding Comments	110

CHAPTER 12

REFLECTING ON WHAT I HAVE LEARNED 111

Poverty: What does it Mean?	111
Life in the Present.....	111
Generosity and Concern for Others.	113
Civic Involvement.....	114
Decision Making	114
Difficulties in Getting Out of the Trench	115
Gratitude for Help.....	115
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	115
Family Stability	116
Desire to be self-supporting.....	116
Are we really different? A tale of two sailors.....	116
Final Comment	119

CHAPTER 13 - WHAT ARE OUR OPPORTUNITIES

TO HELP THE POOR IN FAUQUIER COUNTY? 121

What Can Local Government Do?	122
Housing.....	122
Warming Shelters	122
Emergency Housing for individual adults and for those with histories of felonies or drug addiction.	122
Gaps in Services for Emergency Shelter “Graduates” who are not eligible for Transitional Housing Programs.....	122
Transitional Housing for Single Men.....	123
More Multi-family Residences.....	123
Criminal Justice	123
Increase Number of Public Defenders.....	123
Additional Support for Legal Aid.....	123
Re-entry Programs.....	123
Creation of a Drug Court	124
Mental Health Services	124
Recognition of Community Efforts to Help the Poor	124
What Can the Business Community and Foundations Do?	124
Transportation.....	124
A Subsidized Non-Profit Affordable Auto Repair Clinic.....	124
Health Care	125
Subsidized Prescriptions for Senior Medicare Recipients	125
What Can Churches and Non-profit Agencies Do?	125
Community Forum.....	125
Coordination of Groups with Similar Missions.....	126
Mentoring Programs	126
Developmental Programs for the Poor.....	127
What Can Schools Do?	128
What Can Individuals Do?	129
What Else Needs to be Done?.....	129
SOURCES	131
Books	132
Acknowledgements	134

INTRODUCTION

This document is a revised and expanded version of an earlier report published by the Fauquier Community Coalition in February 2018. As with our earlier version, the purpose of the current edition is to provide an overview of poverty in Fauquier County, Virginia, by: 1) exploring the needs of the poor in eight particular areas including hunger, shelter and housing, health and medical needs, mental health, transportation, the legal system, poverty and youth, and adult education and training; 2) describing the services that exist to address these needs; and 3) identifying some gaps between needs and services that may need further attention. We have also suggested some opportunities for actions which could be undertaken to address these issues by different segments of our community.

This project was not intended to produce a comprehensive study of poverty in Fauquier County. That would require an effort involving time and resources beyond the scope of the present document. For the most up-to-date information on the accomplishments of any individual agency or program, one should contact that resource directly. In general, however, we hope that this report provides food for thought for those who are interested in supporting present efforts and in creating new initiatives to help those in need.

The information and insights reported here were assembled primarily through interviews, small group discussions and correspondence that our team conducted with a number of area service providers in various roles. (See the Acknowledgments section at the end of this report). During this period the landscape of poverty in Fauquier County has constantly evolved and so have the services of the agencies and programs which exist to help the poor. As a result, there are sure to be errors and omissions in this report, and some statistics are certain to have changed. In addition the 2020 Virginia Legislature made many changes to the laws affecting eligibility for certain services, so there may be changes from the standards listed in this report.

As we have worked on this report, we have been struck by the effort and commitment put forth by the more than 100 people who have contributed to this document and others in community who are dedicated to helping the poor. We all owe a debt of gratitude to these individuals, who work and volunteer with a variety of helping agencies and programs. They have stepped beyond the common stereotypes often promoted by the mass media (*that the poor are lazy, make poor choices, will never change, don't want to work, don't plan ahead, consistently make the same mistakes,*

take advantage of the good will of others, cheat to get more than they are entitled to...) and immersed themselves in daily interactions with those less fortunate. They have described these experiences as transformative as they have discovered, as the rest of us must, that in fundamental ways the poor are the same as the rest of us. We all have made mistakes but have hopes and dreams, and we all struggle to get by as best we can.

As this report goes to press, we suddenly find ourselves in an unprecedented situation. The coronavirus pandemic is spreading across the country and its impact is growing. In Fauquier County; we await our first documented cases. This predicament highlights the fact that poverty is a problem for all of us, not only those who lack personal resources. In her recent column (March 13, 2020) in the **Washington Post**, Petula Dvorak addresses the advice of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: “Don’t go to work, school, or public areas if you are feeling sick.” Dvorak points out that for about 32 Million American wage earners without sick leave, this simply doesn’t work. For these people “calling in sick is not an option...not just during the covid-19 pandemic but every day.” Those with the least income are the least likely to have paid sick leave and therefore the least able to miss work. As she points out, “taking two or three days off work can cost a family a month of groceries.” It may also cause workers to lose their jobs. She cites a study (National Partnership for Women & Families) of fast food workers where a majority of those interviewed said they had gone to work when they were coughing and vomiting or had a fever. This increases the risk of spreading disease to the entire community -an important example of the fact that poverty is a problem for all of our citizens and a responsibility that we must all address.

Our intent in this project has been to present this information to interested citizens, community groups, businesses and local government agencies. It is the hope of the Fauquier Community Coalition that more citizens in this county will be moved to use their personal resources to help their struggling neighbors. By working together on a common challenge, we can make a powerful difference in the lives of many.

—Jean Lowe, Ed Jones

CHAPTER 1



OVERVIEW OF POVERTY IN FAUQUIER COUNTY

The Statistics

Fauquier County's population of approximately 69,465 (2017) is about 81% white with approximately 7.5% each black and Hispanic. By conventional measures, it is one of the richest counties in the nation, ranking from 8th to 14th in recent United States Census reports. Median household income is approximately \$94,775 per year, which is considerably more than state (\$72,600) and national (\$62,000) averages. Based on the same report, Fauquier has an unemployment rate of 2.9%, the same as Virginia's and well below the national average of 3.7%. (Unemployment figures fluctuate monthly.)

Despite the fact that Fauquier is a comparatively prosperous county with the majority of its citizens living in relative comfort, it still has a substantial number of people who are severely disadvantaged. Income inequality is greater here than in many localities. To some extent, because we live in an area that is rich by conventional measures, the stigma of being poor has a greater impact than in communities where poverty is the norm.

Based on an analysis of national statistics, many county residents are

in danger of falling beneath the already low federal poverty standard. Furthermore, a significant (but unknown) number of Fauquier's approximately 4,000 residents living below the poverty line are in "deep poverty" with individual or family incomes of less than half the very low government defined thresholds.

According to current census reports, 6.16% of Fauquier County citizens live in households with incomes below the 2019 federal poverty standard (individuals with incomes of less than \$12,490 for a person living alone with \$4,420 added for each additional person). This compares to 10.7% statewide and 13.1% nationally. (American Community Survey, U.S. Census bureau, 2018) (Note: Virginia ranked 20th in income inequality among all states.)

Poverty is distributed throughout Fauquier County; it is not restricted to a particular region. Two indications of poverty concentrations in the county are enrollments in two federally sponsored programs: the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program implemented by the public schools. According to information provided by the Fauquier County Department of Social Services in 2016, SNAP data reflect substantially more enrollments in the middle and southern portions of the County (approximately 41% and 43% of the total) than in the northern portion (only about 14%). The free and reduced price lunch data, on the other hand, suggests that there is more poverty in the southern and northern portions of the county and less in the middle section.

The two elementary schools in Fauquier County with the largest percentages of students eligible for free and reduced price lunches are Mary Walter (54.25%) and Claude Thompson (53.59%). Mary Walter, located in Bealeton, is the southernmost elementary school in the county while Claude Thompson, located in Marshall, is the northernmost. Other elementary schools with high percentages of students eligible for free and reduced price lunches in the southern part of the county are Margaret M. Pierce (36.79%) in Remington and Grace Miller (34.26%) in Bealeton. Two elementary schools in the northern sector with similar eligibility percentages are H.M. Pearson (37.15%) in Catlett and W.G. Coleman (36.16%) in Marshall. Although free lunch data suggest a somewhat different geographical picture of where poverty is concentrated in Fauquier County as compared to SNAP data, these indicators together provide ample evidence that it is widely distributed.

Should we rely solely on the federal standard to define poverty? It was

established simply as a way to distribute benefits fairly among localities and does not reflect the cost of living in a specific area. That is why many local agencies adapt the standard for their services. While one agency will serve people at 125% of the federal poverty level, another will select 150% of the poverty level or more in order to serve more people on the margins.

In addition to the federal standard of what constitutes poverty, there are alternative ways of defining poverty which cause the numbers of people who are designated as poor in Fauquier County to vary significantly. According to data provided by the Virginia Department of Education (Office of School Nutrition Programs), for example, of the more than 11,200 students in Fauquier County Public Schools, more than 22% qualify for free lunches and another 4.8% qualify for reduced-price lunches under the federally funded school nutrition program. Based on the most recent census reports, approximately 7% of the county's population is without health insurance. While both school lunch and health insurance figures for Fauquier County are below state and national averages, these figures indicate that there are a lot of local residents in serious need who are not included in federal poverty statistics.

An entirely different analysis of poverty nationally and in Fauquier County is employed in the ALICE Report (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) conducted by the United Way in 2017 to focus on the needs of low-income **working** families. The figures in ALICE include an estimate of the additional costs of employment such as child care, transportation and appropriate clothing. Their estimate that 35% of the population in Fauquier lives in poverty is based on income for a single adult of \$33,000 or less, (Federal level in 2017 was \$11,770) and for a family of four of \$80,088 (Federal Level \$24,250). (Note: the federal poverty standard changes slightly from year to year so there is sometimes a discrepancy in figures in different reports.)

Yet another common way for economists to estimate poverty internationally and used by HUD in the requirements for Section 8 housing is 60% of median income. (60% of Fauquier median \$94,775 = \$56, 865.) This accounts for different costs of living in different areas.

There are philosophical differences in how people address poverty – are we to help only those desperate for food, clothing and housing, or should we focus on getting people out of poverty for the long term? Should we provide only the bare minimum which just maintains survival or should we help families to thrive? These are decisions the residents of Fauquier County have to make. It is our hope that this report stimulates citizens and

community leaders to reflect on exactly what defines poverty and what, if anything, needs to be done to remedy the situation. The following chapters will focus on: food, shelter, medical care, mental health, transportation, legal services, children, and adult education and training for employment.



Responses to the Needs

Efforts to help the poor are distributed locally among federal, state and local governments and a wide range of nonprofit and faith-based groups. The largest anti-poverty programs in the county are administered by The Fauquier County Department of Social Services. Some activities such as Foster Care, Adult and Child Protective Services, and Auxiliary Services are beyond the scope of this report. Others will appear in the sections related to the need they address such as SNAP, i.e., Food Stamps-(hunger), general relief and energy assistance (shelter), Medicaid (health), childcare (youth), VIEW (Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare)–(adult education and training).

However, some programs cover such a broad range of the needs of

families that they do not fit under a specific need such as hunger, so that they need a separate description. This is the case with the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF provides temporary financial assistance for eligible families with minor children in the home who are financially needy and meet other requirements as well. An interview is required. Payments depend on the size of the family which may qualify while receiving income from other sources, such as child support. Applicants must cooperate in naming the parents of all eligible children and help in establishing paternity. Some TANF recipients may be required to participate in VIEW, the Virginia Initiative for Education and Work. VIEW participants may earn income in addition to their TANF benefits, but the total income must not exceed the federal poverty level for their family size. For more information or to apply, call the Fauquier DSS Office at 540-422-8400.

CHAPTER 2

HUNGER IN FAUQUIER COUNTY

“I don’t really need food because I can get breakfast and lunch at school, but my little brother doesn’t go to school yet, so he sometimes is hungry.” Six-year old child helping her mother apply for help at a food pantry.

Although Fauquier is by most standards a rich county, it still has residents who do not have enough to eat, as is the case in many counties throughout the nation. This chapter explores the extent of the hunger problem in Fauquier County and describes the different programs and agencies involved in addressing this challenge.

The Need

According to current information provided by the Feeding America website (map.feedingamerica.org), nearly 6% of the Fauquier County’s population, more than 4,000 people, suffer from “food insecurity” as compared to state and national rates of approximately 10 and 12.5%. Food insecurity is a federal measure of “a household’s inability to provide enough food for every person to have a healthy and active life.” Feeding America indicates that the average cost of a meal in Fauquier County is an estimated \$3.50 as compared to \$3.03 in the state as a whole and \$3.02 nationally. While these figures may be falsely precise, they do suggest that food costs in Fauquier County are substantially higher than in many localities. This adds to the challenge for food insecure people, especially those with incomes below the federal poverty line.

As reported in the preceding section, other indices of food shortage in Fauquier County are the numbers of direct recipients of food assistance from two federal programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps) and the Free School Lunch Program. In 2018, about 2,045 Fauquier families and 4,408 individuals qualified for SNAP, which is administered by the Fauquier County Department of Social Services. SNAP provides recipients with a debit card that can be used to purchase approved food items. The dollar amount loaded on the card each month depends on the recipient’s income, family size, and basic expenses, such as rent and utilities. Another indicator of food insecurity, as noted in a previous section, is the percentage of county school children eligible for free and reduced price lunches. While Fauquier’s rate of 26.8% is lower

than those of surrounding counties, it still includes a significant number of area families.

While rough calculations suggest that the number of individuals with incomes below the poverty line in Fauquier County is somewhat comparable to the total number of people served by area food pantries on a monthly basis, these are not entirely the same groups of people. On the one hand, these programs serve some people whose incomes are (at least marginally) above the poverty line and others, including some transients and non-residents, with immediate needs regardless of income status. On the other, there are many poor people who lack the transportation to food pantries, are physically unable to get there, or whose pride does not allow them to use food distribution services.

In order to address the transportation problem, Fauquier FISH and the Fauquier Food Bank and Thrift Store recently combined to operate a mobile food pantry which visited isolated areas of the county where there is evidence of need, but this was discontinued in 2017 because it was not being used. The reasons at this point are not entirely clear.

How do poor people who do not use local food pantries acquire food? Volunteers at some food pantries believe that people often travel out of area because of shame, or they may be assisted by their families, or neighbors, some of whom are sharing their own allotments from food pantries. Others, who may be isolated and/or handicapped by disabilities, must fend for themselves by whatever means they can. First Responders, such as law enforcement and fire fighters arriving at a home for other services, find that some people are resistant to accepting help no matter how dire their situation.

It is apparent that some of the food allocated to poverty-eligible recipients is shared with others who are in need but do not show up in food pantry records. In subsidized housing developments, for example, many people whose incomes are above the poverty line (though often not by much) are actually worse off financially than those whose incomes are below poverty standards because they have greater expenses (cars, more dependents, more expensive medical conditions, etc.).

Local Efforts to Address Hunger

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP formerly Food Stamps)

SNAP is the largest food program provided by the government, both nationally and locally. A program of the US Department of Agriculture operated locally by DSS, SNAP is designed to help prevent hunger and malnutrition by insuring a better diet for low-income households. It is not designed to supply all food needs, only to supplement them. For more information or to apply, go to www.dss.virginia.gov.

Fauquier Community Food Bank & Thrift Store

The Fauquier Community Food Bank & Thrift Store at 249 East Shirley Avenue in Warrenton work cooperatively to provide food distributed by the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. While the Thrift Store's other activities are described in the next chapter of this report, it is important to note that the Thrift Store's sales are used to support the food pantry and other services. With every dollar earned by the Thrift Store, the food pantry can purchase \$4.00 of food. (Note on usage: the term "food bank" refers to the regional Food Banks which distribute USDA food to local food distribution programs which are typically called "food pantries". Nevertheless the Fauquier Community Food Bank has historically been called a "food bank" locally even though it is technically a food pantry.)

Qualifying Fauquier families can visit the food pantry twice a month; families who meet somewhat tighter financial requirements are also eligible for USDA foods at one of their bi-monthly visits. The food pantry also works with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to provide food for families using the SNAP program since anyone meeting SNAP requirements also meets USDA and food pantry criteria. The Food Bank is also widely supported by local grocery stores, schools, farmers, and such groups as Hunters for the Hungry which provides venison in season.

Including repeat customers, FCFBTS records show that 7,805 families visited the food bank for USDA and pantry foods in 2018, averaging about 650 families per month (either one or two visits each). Participants took home an average of about 125 pounds of food per visit, including four or five packages of meat and a variety of other food choices as well. As a separate initiative, Thanksgiving meals were distributed to 550 families (including 225 seniors) in 2018. FCFBTS also provides free lunches to children in need attending a summer camp sponsored by Fauquier Community Child Care. In cooperation with the PATH Foundation and FISH, FCFBTS is

providing clients each month with \$40 worth of “POP Bucks” (Power of Produce) worth \$2.00 each to purchase fresh vegetables at local Farmers Markets.

Who uses the food bank? An individual’s income cannot exceed 163% of the federal poverty level of \$425 per week or \$20,422 a year (\$1,701 a month). A family of four can use the food bank if its weekly income is \$869 or less. This amounts to \$41,737 a year or \$3,478 a month. In addition, USDA Food is provided for individuals who are at 150% of the federal poverty level or less; that is, making \$360 or less a week (\$18,735 a year) and for families of four with incomes of \$743 or less per week (\$38,625 per year).

Food pantry distributions fluctuate because landscape and other seasonal workers are more likely to be unemployed during winter months. Executive Director Sharon Ames believes that FCFBTS has the resources to serve an additional 50 more families per month than it does currently. One important factor that keeps families in need from benefitting is transportation – money for gas, access to a vehicle and/or driver -- and the difficulty residents at the north and south areas of the county have in getting to and from the pantry. Because of the distance from town, residents living in or near Marshall, Linden, and the southeastern reaches of Rt. 17 are underserved by the Warrenton-located food pantries.

Fauquier FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help)

The next-largest food pantry in Fauquier County is operated by Fauquier FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) located at 24 Pelham Street in Warrenton. Instead of taking donations of food from supermarkets, FISH raises cash to buy food and then distributes what they buy. Fauquier FISH qualifies clients on an “as needed” basis. There are no set criteria for emergency participation – if you say you need food, you get food. FISH does require proof of Fauquier residence.

During the past several years, FISH has increased its budget by applying for more grants as opposed to relying exclusively on donations. As a result, it has become a more nutrition-focused program that provides nutritious food both in the pre-prepared meals that it distributes on site and with the food supplies that it sends home in backpacks.

FISH served 7,121 people during 2018, including 2,080 families and provided 378 students with the Weekend Power Pack program for children who receive free lunches when at school and distributed more than 230 Christmas Baskets. This past summer FISH partnered with BOB- Books

on the Bus- to provide a snack (fresh fruit & granola bar) along with a day's worth of food for children to take home. It also partnered with Fauquier Community Child Care (FCCC), Marshall Community Center (MCC), and Windy Hill to provide children enrolled in these programs food for the weekend and also cooperated with FRESH (Fauquier Reaches for Excellence in School Health) to provide cooking lessons for many of these children. FISH provides a similar service to the Senior Center so low income seniors will have nutritious food on weekends.

The Power of Produce program, coordinated by FISH and funded also by the Fauquier Community Food Bank and the PATH Foundation provided vouchers worth \$23,000 in POP Bucks for families to purchase fresh produce from the Farmers Markets in Warrenton and The Plains.

Another initiative with an emphasis on nutrition is DASH (Delicious, Affordable, Simple, and Healthy) which offers several different pre-planned meals with all ingredients (including spices and condiments) and simple instructions on how to prepare the meals. This provides a week's worth of meals at a time.

Through its Book Bag and School Supply program, FISH also provides new book bags and supplies to more than 600 students in need at the start of each school year. They also have a special program with a wide range of baby supplies.



The Fauquier County Food Distribution Coalition

The Fauquier County Food Distribution Coalition, begun in 2003, is a nonprofit 501(c) 3 collaboration among churches, government agencies, and other organizations that distributes food on the third Saturday morning of each month from the basement of the United Methodist Church at 341 Church Street in Warrenton. It distributes USDA food that it receives from the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, as well as food and other items received

primarily from Safeway and Giant Foods in Warrenton. The all-volunteer Coalition collects food donated by supermarkets and other sources and allocates portions of meat, canned goods, produce, etc., to each household.

The Food Distribution Coalition's monthly food give-away in Warrenton has served about 300 people a month in recent years, down from approximately 550 a month some years back. The Coalition attributes this decline to the number of families now getting food from the Fauquier County Food Bank and Thrift Store. They say that the Coalition has the capacity to feed more families than currently participate.

In addition to its food distribution, the Coalition identifies a "theme drive" each month to collect and passes out items such as soap and laundry detergent, winter clothes, children's summer clothes, toilet paper, pots and pans, sheets and towels, school supplies, etc.

Families and individuals who receive SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, or SSI benefits automatically qualify to receive food and other items at the monthly food distribution upon showing their SNAP qualification cards. Others must certify in writing that they meet the Coalition's income guidelines. (For example: income of \$360 or less per week/\$18,735 per year or less for an individual, for a family of four, income of \$743 or less per week/\$38,625 per year or less.)

Community Touch — Clara's Food Pantry

Community Touch, Inc., at 10449 Jericho Road in Bealeton, operates a food pantry, along with their many other services for low-income families, including transitional housing, Noah's Ark Thrift Store in Marshall, emergency help with home supplies and clothing, and childcare. Clara's House Food Pantry is open on Saturday mornings and serves approximately 15-20 people each week. These numbers fluctuate and have been higher at times in the past. Individuals (or families) may be served twice a month and are eligible to receive USDA food on one of these visits. For the other monthly visit, they are limited to food donated from other sources.

Clara's receives food donations from Food Lion (including different kinds of meat three times per week) and other area grocery stores, as well as food collected from drives by the Boy Scouts and other organizations. They also receive eggs and vegetables from a local farm and deer meat and other food donated by local individuals.

Eligibility to receive food from Clara's is determined by federal poverty guidelines. Virginia residency is required. TANF, SSI, Medicaid, and Medicare recipients are automatically eligible.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army, located in Warrenton at 62 Waterloo Street, allows clients to pick up food once a month. In 2018 it provided 608 grocery orders.



St. Vincent de Paul Society (Local Conference Serving Fauquier County through Saint John's Catholic Church) (SVdP)

SVdP operates a small food pantry (including toiletries) which serves needy Fauquier residents by appointment, usually on Thursday morning. In the last ten months (through August 2019), it distributed more than 1274 bags of food (estimated value: \$15,286) to 607 Fauquier residents, including repeat visits. The pantry is supported by donations from the Saint John's congregation.

Other Area Churches and Agencies

A number of additional area churches distribute food to the poor in Fauquier County. In addition to Saint John's Catholic Church (St. Vincent de Paul Society), these include, among others, Mt. Olive Baptist Church (2 Fishes Five Loaves of Bread) in Marshall, Broad Run Baptist Church in New Baltimore, Grace Episcopal Church in The Plains, and Baha'i Faith (Blue Ridge Baha'i Cluster).

The Heartwood Center: Meals for Hungry Children

During the school year two United Methodist Churches (Mt. Horeb and Morrisville Methodist Church) and three Baptist Churches (Zoar, Heart's Delight, and Oak Shade) backed by The Heartwood Center, provide weekend breakfast and lunch bags to the children at H. M. Pearson and Mary Walter Elementary Schools who participate in the federal free or

reduced price breakfast/lunch program during the week. Currently they provide 100 2-day bags per week for weekend meals. This is similar to the meal take-home service provided by FISH as described in an earlier section. In both cases, the numbers of necessary meals are given by the school counselors and the children are not identified to the donors.

During the summer the Heartwood Center provides breakfasts and lunches for six days a week to Mary Walter Elementary School for school children that participate in the federal free and reduced lunch program during the school year. Registration is required and distribution takes place every Saturday morning at Mary Walter Elementary School between 9:30 am and 12 noon. At these Saturday morning distributions, families are provided with bread and bakery products and fresh vegetables that are donated by the Fauquier Food Bank. In addition to food distribution, Heartwood offers a broad selection of books from the Book Cellar from which children are free to make one or two selections each week. Over the past five years, this program has served over 100 children weekly.

The Fauquier Senior Center

Sponsored by Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS) at 430 East Shirley Avenue, Warrenton, the Fauquier Senior Center provides nutritious meals and fellowship for eligible seniors age 60 and over. It also offers educational and wellness programs, socialization and recreation through many fun and interesting activities. Donations are accepted, but there is no charge. Free door-to-door transportation can be provided in most cases, if needed. For more information, call 540-347-7729.

Concluding Comments

Despite the relative wealth of Fauquier County, food shortage remains a serious problem for many people in our community. Clearly, existing food programs are doing a good job with the approximately 1,500 people they serve on a monthly basis, but who else is out there? The fact that nearly 26.8% of Fauquier school children, more than 3,000 students, are eligible for free and reduced price lunches suggests that there is a much greater number of people with some level of food insecurity than one would assume based on federal poverty statistics and the numbers of clients served by local food pantries and other hunger-related services.



CHAPTER 3

SHELTER AND HOUSING

“Because you made repairs to the roof and made this house handicap accessible, we could become guardians of our recently orphaned grandchild.” Clients of Fauquier Community Coalition.

Housing represents the most expensive need faced by low-income families. While this chapter will primarily address specific needs and services, it will conclude with questions about the current housing situation in Fauquier in general, looking at housing availability and affordability as a context for looking for ways to address serious needs.

The Need

The issue of shelter and housing has many components and is very complex. At the most fundamental level, these include emergency and transitional housing, which are designed to help people contend temporarily with hardship situations as they work to position themselves for greater independence in the future. Other housing and shelter programs are subsidized rental assistance, utility assistance, furnishings, and home repairs, which will all be addressed in later sections of this chapter.

Those among the poor who own their own homes must often tolerate poor conditions which they are forced to deal with in make-shift ways: by placing a piece of plywood over a rotten patch in the floor, for example, or a plastic sheet over a leaky portion of the roof. Nonetheless, these houses are in demand as poor people seek any housing that they can afford.

Fauquier County residents include many homeowners who are under significant stress in trying to manage utilities and repairs in addition to their rent or mortgage payments. Shelter and housing needs for people living in

Fauquier County are difficult to quantify. In January of each year, a “Point in Time” (PIT) count is made by various agencies of the number of people who are homeless by HUD criteria. Because this does not include people who are living temporarily with friends (“couch-surfing” or “doubled up”), people in overcrowded or substandard housing, those paying for hotels themselves or others who escape the count by living in their cars or in local “camps,” a supplemental count was made in July 2019 to aim for a more accurate number which is still almost certainly an underestimate.

While it is relatively easy to acquire statistics for the numbers of county residents in various categories of housing (emergency, transitional, HUD supported rental units, etc.), it is challenging to tabulate those who suffer from inadequate housing and are unaccounted for in these numbers. Rural homelessness in particular tends to be hidden. Because of these complexities, the precise number of people in Fauquier County who are homeless is unknown. In July 2019, the PIT count was 101. Of these, in July 2019 there were 11 families in the Fauquier Shelter with children and 31 families in hotels. This count excludes families housed as a result of domestic violence totaling 436 adults and children in 2018. (Note: DSS has historically provided tents and sleeping bags to help the “hidden” homeless.)

When they cannot secure housing in Fauquier, many homeless people go to other localities which are better equipped (and perhaps more willing) to meet their needs and, of course, when people have used their three-month shelter eligibility in Fauquier, they typically go to neighboring shelters.

Does Fauquier County have sufficient services for those needing emergency and transitional housing? While facilities addressing these needs historically have operated at their limits, their policies prohibit some persons such as those with a record of certain types of felonies, illegal drug users, etc., from enrolling in emergency and transitional housing programs at all. Fauquier Family Shelter Services, for example, has sacrificed its eligibility for federal funds by denying acceptance to those it considers a risk to the quality of the living environment it is committed to maintaining for its residents.

Emergency Housing

Emergency housing focuses on people who literally have no other reasonable options, those who would be forced to live on the streets or in their cars if this housing were not provided. This alternative is offered to qualifying individuals (typically those with little or no incomes, who

have not committed felonies, do not have a recent history of alcoholism or substance abuse, do not suffer from mental illness and are not judged to be dangerous to themselves or others). Typically, emergency housing is provided for periods not to exceed three months and often for periods which are much shorter.

Starting points for People Needing Immediate Shelter

The starting point for people seeking immediate emergency housing is usually the Fauquier Department of Social Services (DSS) which they may contact directly or be referred by churches, other agencies, the police or individuals in the community. DSS processes them through its Adult or Child Protective Services.



Fauquier Family Shelter (FFS)

The Fauquier Family Shelter, an emergency homeless shelter sponsored by Fauquier Family Shelter Services, Inc., located at 95 Keith Street in Warrenton, can house up to 52 people. This is the only emergency shelter in Fauquier County. The shelter has a limited number of spaces (4 beds each) reserved for single women and single men. Its ground level is 100% accessible for individuals with physical disabilities, and it has separate rooms for handicapped residents. Trained staff oversee operations 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The shelter's occupancy is not limited to residents of Fauquier County. The purpose of the shelter is to sustain people in temporary crisis situations including loss of employment, recovery from illness, evictions, divorce, death, and other family transitions. Able-bodied adults are required to obtain jobs within two weeks of their admission to the shelter and most residents can meet this requirement. Residents may remain at the Shelter up to 90 days but then must secure other housing which is often a shelter in another county.

Residents are required to pass a criminal background check, remain free of drugs and alcohol, create and follow a budget, and meet regularly

with a case manager to develop a plan to obtain stable housing. A variety of activities for children is also provided, and parents are required to discuss their children's needs with the case manager who assists with scheduling appropriate assessments and referrals. Fauquier Family Shelter Services is a private organization that does not receive federal or state funding primarily because their standards are much stricter than the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines. The organization has been successful in their approach and therefore relies on a combination of private donations, program fees, local government, and fundraising events to meet its operating expenses. For more information, call 540-351-0130 www.fauquierfamilyshelter.org.

Hope Center Warming Station

This shelter in southern Fauquier County at 11229 Brent Town Road in Catlett has hopes that it can open for the last six weeks of winter. The challenge that the planners are facing is transportation to the shelter since many homeless individuals live in northern Fauquier County. This undertaking is a joint project of three churches: Heart's Delight Baptist Church, Mt. Horeb Baptist Church, and Zoar Baptist Church. They are hoping to involve other churches that are more centrally located. For more information, call 202-351-1001.

Area Motels

There are limited resources within the community that pay for motels on a temporary emergency basis in crisis situations.

Shelters Outside of Fauquier County which Serve Fauquier Residents

Emergency Shelters outside of Fauquier County. Some Fauquier residents can be temporarily housed in emergency shelters outside of Fauquier County. This may occur when the Fauquier Family Shelter is full or when its occupants "age-out" (exceed their time limits). This happens most often with shelters in Culpeper, Front Royal, and Manassas and occasionally in Loudoun County, but not in Fairfax County, which serves only its own residents.

Culpeper Winter Heat Shelter

The Culpeper Winter Heat Shelter is an important emergency program which serves Fauquier and neighboring counties. It is supported by participating churches in Culpeper. This program, which operates from November to March at St. Luke's Lutheran Church at 1200 Old Rixeyville Rd., Culpeper, can shelter up to 33 individuals overnight on a first-come, first-

served basis. The warming shelter in the past would meet persons in need at the train depot between 5-5:30 pm. Contact the shelter to see if this service is still current as they do have a list of persons awaiting the available beds. For more information, call 540-317-0030. www.Culpeperheatsshelter.org.

Reformation Lutheran Church (RLC)

RLC, 601 Madison Rd., Culpeper, plans to host a day shelter for those in need on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Call 540-825-1376. www.culpeperlutherans.org.

SAFE (Service to Abused Families, Inc.).

SAFE, a confidential and secure program for members of an abused family, also serves Fauquier residents. SAFE has operated a shelter and provided advocacy services within a five-county area since 1980. The office is located at 501 E. Piedmont Street, Culpeper. For more information, call the toll free hotline at 800-825-8876 or the office at 540-825-8891. www.safejourneys.org.

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army's Charlottesville Center of Hope Shelter houses single people and families. For more information, call 434-295-4058. The Winchester Center of Hope Shelter also serves singles and families and has 48 beds and serves meals throughout the year. For more information, call 540-662-4777.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing is designed as a bridge for people who are homeless or in unsustainable living situations as they work to get on their feet and become self-supporting. Individuals and families may be eligible for transitional housing for periods of a year or more depending on their particular circumstances as they take classes and/or receive training designed to better their situations. Residents may be required to pay rent (on a sliding scale) and to participate in various on-site informational and educational programs designed to help them toward independence.

Starting Points for People Needing Transitional Housing

Some transitional housing residents are "graduates" from emergency housing who have "aged out" of their eligibility for the Fauquier Emergency Shelter or other emergency facilities, though this is not a natural progression for most emergency shelter occupants. Transitional programs often have eligibility requirements that shelter occupants may not meet (that they

have access to a personal vehicle, for example). Admittance to transitional housing programs is not an immediate process, as is often the case with emergency shelters, but requires an application to a particular facility and a few days for review and vetting.

Vint Hill Transitional Housing Program (VHTH)

This program is sponsored by Fauquier Family Shelter Services which also sponsors the Fauquier Family Shelter. This is a rigorous program designed to help motivated families who are homeless make the transition to stability by developing a plan to reduce their debt, build their savings, and develop basic financial discipline. Vint Hill has 22 3-bedroom townhouses which it makes available to qualifying families with children. A single parent head of household must be employed 30 hours per week. In two-parent households, one must work at least 30 hours per week while the other must work at least 20. Eligibility is not restricted to residents of Fauquier County. Residents are required to pay a program fee based on 30% of their gross income.

Residents may stay at Vint Hill for 1-2 years as they prepare themselves for independent living. This preparation involves full participation in extensive case management activities that include budgeting, debt management, and life skill classes. In addition, children are expected to participate in an after-school program focusing on academics and homework assistance. The ultimate goal for each family in this program is transitioning to permanent housing equipped with the skills to maintain it. For more information, call 540-347-7374. www.fauquierfamilyshelter.org.

Victory Transitional Housing (VTH)

Victory Transitional Housing is operated in Bealeton by Community Touch and serves as a bridge between homelessness and permanent housing. VTH houses single women, single women with children, single men with children, and married couples with a broad range of needs. Victory has two transitional housing buildings. The larger facility houses 30 residents and the smaller one houses 10 residents. Together they serve 40 residents totaling 15 families. In order to enter this program, a family must have both a car and a job.

The program helps individuals achieve and sustain a higher quality of life through community resources and various training opportunities. The VTH program provides an opportunity for homeless individuals to save money for a future residence and gain information and access to services they need. Individuals meet with assigned financial mentors bi-

weekly and participate in structured programs where their needs can be met. An assigned caseworker establishes an individualized service plan with each resident. For more information, call 540-439-9300. www.communitytouch.org.

Subsidized Housing

As noted earlier, fewer than 2% of the families who live in Fauquier County's more than 13,000 rental units are technically "poor" according to federal poverty guidelines. It is readily apparent, however, that many others live in housing which is inadequate for their needs. According to data provided by People, Inc., for example, 241 housing units lack complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. In Fauquier County, subsidized housing tends to be clustered in particular communities, especially in the Bealeton area, for example, and needs to be more evenly distributed.

Low Income Housing (Section 8)

Data provided by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, (HUD) reflects that in 2010 (the most recent figures available), Fauquier County had 545 low-income housing units and 68 project-based Section 8 rental units, numbers well below state averages.

Low-income project-based units serve households with incomes between 30% and 60% of area median income as opposed to very low income units which serve those below 30% median income. (Housing Virginia SOURCEBOOK).

The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides housing subsidies to assure that eligible elderly, disabled, and low-income families are able to live in safe, affordable housing. Subsidized housing, through the housing choice voucher program, is provided in locations personally selected by the consumer/tenant and reflects personal and cultural preferences.

Admission to the housing choice voucher program is dictated by regulations established by the U S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA). (Note: In 2020 the Section 8 waiting list was closed until further notice!)

Windy Hill Foundation

The Windy Hill Foundation provides safe, decent, and affordable housing to low and lower-income individuals, families, older adults and adults with disabilities in Loudoun and Fauquier Counties and encourages

self-improvement and self-sufficiency among its residents. In 2019, Windy Hill Foundation provided 310 units of housing, with 49 units located in Fauquier County (The Plains and Marshall). Windy Hill Foundation also supports no-cost onsite programs and services for residents. The goal of these services is to help residents overcome some of the barriers – affordable housing, childcare, financial management, employment – that are making it difficult for them to move themselves and their families from subsidized to market rate housing.

These programs include support for all residents who live in Windy Hill Foundation communities including after school academic and social programs for children, an eight-week summer day camp, tutoring programs during the school year, family programming, personal enrichment, social, and health programs for both younger and older adult residents.
www.windyhillfoundation.org.

Fauquier Habitat for Humanity (FHH)

Fauquier Habitat for Humanity is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International that serves Fauquier and Rappahannock Counties. FHH partners with organizations, churches, volunteers, and families to address housing needs for low income families. Since 1991 FHH has built 52 homes and rehabilitated several others. Most years volunteers work alongside future occupants who have successfully qualified for the FHH process and complete two new houses, which are then sold to participating families through affordable mortgages.

Since eligibility for Fauquier residents requires that successful applicants earn between 27% and 50% of the median family income for the county (minimum \$24,250 for a family of 4), this program does not serve families in deep poverty. It does, however, provide an upward path for some families who have lived in transitional housing and other temporary housing facilities. In November 2019, FHH bought five rental houses with nine living spaces in the Haiti St. - Eva Walker Park section of Warrenton as part of their neighborhood revitalization efforts. For more information, call 540-341-4952. www.fauquierhabittat.org.



People, Inc. Community Action Agency

People, Inc. plans to renovate the Millview Apartments (currently known as Remington Gardens) in 2020. All 28 one- and two-bedroom apartments will receive new windows, paint, flooring, kitchen cabinetry, plumbing and electrical upgrades, appliances, sinks, dishwashers as well as energy efficiency upgrades throughout including new, highly efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. Some apartments will receive accessibility upgrades allowing persons with disabilities to live more independently. Once complete, all apartments will rent to low and moderate income families making less than 60% of the Area Median Income.

Home Furnishings and Living Supplies

Noah's Ark Outreach

Noah's Ark, a subsidiary of Community Touch, is open the first, third and fourth Saturdays of the month from 10 am to 2 pm. It is closed on second Saturdays. Its goal is to distribute free household furnishings such as couches, chairs, beds, dining room sets, and miscellaneous household items to low income families. When clients complete the Victory Transitional Housing program, they can furnish their future homes through Noah's Ark Outreach. The Noah's Ark Thrift Store in Marshall sells gently used household items, antiques and uncommon items with all proceeds supporting the mission of Community Touch.

The Fauquier Community Thrift Store

The Fauquier Community Thrift Store, 249 E. Shirley Ave., Warrenton, which has experienced tremendous growth in sales since its inception, also provides a number of direct services to those in need. Free clothes are given to school-age children through college age in an annual two-day event and as needed during the year. Additionally, those seeking employment can receive not only clothes and accessories but also a consultation to help them "dress for success." Homeless individuals are eligible for a variety of free items ranging from food and clothing to emergency household items such as can openers, coolers and ice packs. Several local churches have established closets to meet these same needs.

The Potter's House

The Potter's House, an outreach ministry of the First Baptist Church in the Plains located at 4216 Loudoun Avenue, receives donations of clothing

and household items from the community as well as from the Fauquier Community Food Bank and Thrift Store. These are distributed to those in need by the church on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 am to noon.

The Branch of Hope

The Branch of Hope, a project of the Long Branch Baptist Church at 5576 Long Branch Lane, the Plains, provides personal hygiene items such as toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant, razors, shampoo, as well as cleaning supplies such as toilet paper, laundry and dish detergent. These are items which cannot be purchased through the SNAP program (food stamps) but are necessary. It is open on the third Saturday of the month from 9 am-1 pm when it serves 35-50 people.

The Salvation Army Family Store and Service Center

The Salvation Army Family Store, located at 62 Waterloo St., Warrenton, has a number of services. It provides clothing vouchers in the case of natural disasters and other emergencies such as homelessness and to victims of domestic abuse. In addition, the Salvation Army trains disaster response teams to help in times of crisis.

Pathway to Hope is a personalized service of the Salvation Army to help families move from crisis to stability and end long term patterns of poverty by addressing goals tailored to their specific needs.

The Angel Tree program of the Salvation Army during the Christmas season provides new toys, clothes, and food (supplied on a debit card) which parents can pick up in advance so children do not have to know of their need.

Toys for Tots

Toys for Tots coordinates with the Department of Social Services, the Salvation Army, Shop with a Cop, and the public schools to make toys available each Christmas to about 1,200 children, up to high school age, whose families request help. Applications can be made at a number of places including DSS and school counselors. Recruiting toys and donations from around the county, Toys for Tots works all year with about 6 adult and 20 youth volunteers (mainly upper elementary and middle school students who have dropped off toys to donate and then stay to volunteer for the entire operation.) They select, sort and distribute toys, including books, that they purchase new for up to \$30 each (except for about 100 bicycles which are donated already assembled.)

Some recipients provide a wish list which Toys for Tots tries to meet

often by asking certain church groups to “adopt” a given set of families. These groups coordinate the amount they give to any family for an equitable distribution among recipients. Toys for those who do not make specific requests are suggested by the young volunteers who know what is wanted by many kids in a certain age group. Requests for clothing, food or financial help are referred to other agencies.

Hope Heals – a community free store

Located at 606 Falmouth St. in Warrenton, Hope Heals provides free clothing and linens. Open Tuesday and Saturday 9 am to noon, Thursday 5pm to 8 pm.

Financial Assistance with Weatherization and Safety

LEAP: The Local Energy Alliance Program

LEAP is a special weatherization program for low-income and age-qualified customers of Dominion Power which provides a free energy assessment and energy-saving measures such as fuel assistance, cooling, and winterization. To help save on energy costs, LEAP is available to qualified owners, renters and landlords, and property managers of single-family homes, multi-family homes (apartments or condos), and mobile homes, all of which might qualify for free energy-saving measures. These might include: efficient low-flow showerheads and low-flow faucet aerators; pipe wrap insulation for hot water pipes; attic insulation and air sealing; and ENERGY STAR® qualified LED light bulbs. For more information, call 434-227-4666 or go online info@leap-va.org or <https://leap-va.org/services/weatherization>.

Community Touch, Inc. (CTI)

CTI has recently received a grant to help with home repairs and insulation. For more information, call 540-439-9300. www.communitytouch.org.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Fauquier Fire and Rescue can provide free smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in order to reduce the danger from home fires. Smoke alarms are essential for safety as most fatal fires are caused by human factors and take as little as two minutes from the time the smoke alarm sounds before smoke spreads throughout the home. Call 540-422-8800 or apply online at fauquierfirerescouer.org and residents will be contacted to schedule an appointment for installation.

Financial Assistance with Rent and Utilities

Several Fauquier County agencies and churches provide financial assistance to low income families to help with rent or mortgage payments, utility bills, and home repairs. These include Social Services, People Helping People, FISH, the Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul (the social outreach unit of Saint John's Catholic Church), and the Morrisville Methodist Church. Often these agencies collaborate, with two or more contributing partners sharing a particular expense (a large monthly heating bill, for example). Typically, assistance with utilities will not be provided without a "cut-off" notice and clients are limited as to the number of times they can receive help.

Fauquier Department of Social Services (DSS)

DSS has a General Relief (GR) program that may be able to assist with rent or utilities. The application process requires a person to apply locally. Call DSS at 540-422-8400 for more information.

Their Energy Assistance (EA) program includes fuel assistance which helps with the costs of home heating and crisis assistance which can help with security deposits and emergency repairs or replacement of heating or cooling equipment. For information, see www.dss.virginia.gov.

Salvation Army (SA)

The Salvation Army provides emergency utilities assistance for clients with a cut off notice with the greatest capacity to serve NOVEC clients because of designated funding. The Salvation Army provides up to two \$150 allowances per year to help needy families with utility payments. In 2018, 248 families received help. For more information, call 540-341-3396.

People Helping People (PHP)

People Helping People provides emergency financial assistance to Fauquier County residents facing unforeseen hardships such as death in the family, loss of employment, or health issues. For more than 25 years, PHP has assisted residents with paying rent/mortgages to avoid eviction or foreclosure, assisted with paying utilities to avoid disconnection of service, and paying for some medications and providing gasoline vouchers to residents of the local family shelter looking for employment. On average PHP assists about 350 adults plus 275 children per year. PHP cooperates with community partner agencies to coordinate payments for very high expenses. For more information, call 540-349-9017. www.fauquierphp.com.



Community Touch, Inc. (CTI)

Community Touch, Inc. is a non-profit agency that provides food, clothing and shelter in one location. CTI also partners with the Foothills Housing Network to provide security deposits and rental assistance to needy families on an individualized basis. The initial point of contact for this assistance is the Central Entry Program coordinated by the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission at (540) 724-6630.

The Morrisville United Methodist Church

The Morrisville United Methodist Church offers fuel assistance to those in need. For more information, call 540-439-2594.

St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP)

SVdP, the outreach program of Saint John's Catholic Church, provides financial assistance with rent or mortgage payments and utilities on an emergency basis to families in need regardless of race, creed, gender, health, or political opinions. SVdP representatives visit the homes of applicants to assess a broad range of needs. Mentoring is offered as needed. SVdP coordinates with other churches in the area if the needs for rent or utilities exceed their scope.

Fauquier FISH -- For Immediate Sympathetic Help

FISH has a defined policy which provides food to families who cannot pay their utility bills in order to free up funds for utility payments. For more information, call 540-347-FISH. www.fauquierfish.org.

Fauquier Community Coalition Wood Ministry

To help low-income families whose houses are often poorly insulated and heated exclusively with firewood, Fauquier Community Coalition has developed a firewood ministry through coordinating the efforts of several churches in Fauquier County: Grace Bible Church in Marshall, Grace

Episcopal Church in The Plains, St. James Episcopal Church and Warrenton Baptist Church, both in Warrenton. Downed trees, cut into sections, are donated and delivered to the spaces designated by the participating churches. Volunteers split the wood and deliver it to clients who have been recommended by the Department of Social Services or other community organizations. Currently, about forty-five homes in Fauquier County are receiving regular firewood deliveries. From July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, the Wood Ministry made 138 firewood deliveries to Fauquier County residents and logged 1,120 volunteer hours. For more information, call 540-729-2743.



In Warrenton, volunteers are needed every Saturday, weather permitting, at the wood lot on Warrenton Baptist Church property located behind Brumfield Elementary School. Volunteers split, stack, and during the busy delivery season (September- April), load wood for delivery. In northern Fauquier County, volunteers should contact Grace Bible Church at 540-364-3832 or Grace Episcopal Church at 540-253-5177 to determine the locations and delivery schedule for the firewood.

Home Repairs (Financial and Hands-On)

Foothills Housing Corporation (FHC)

For the past 47 years, Foothills Housing Corporation, based in Warrenton, has provided a variety of home-related services but specializes in “urgent” home repairs for residents of Fauquier and eight surrounding counties. Founded in 1970, FHC is a non-profit organization which provides plumbing and other home repairs for low to moderate income people with priority given to the elderly and disabled. These repairs are funded through a combination of grant funds and zero percent or low interest loans.

FHC is an umbrella organization that owns several housing complexes

(Fauquier Housing Corporation, Rapidan Housing, Stuart Street Homes, Countryside Townhomes, and the Oaks I and II). It also builds some houses and, through its access to the Virginia Individual Development Accounts (VIDA) program, also helps to create access to counseling and funding for those saving for down payments. In addition, FHC operates a handicap accessibility program in which it builds and repairs permanent house ramps and also lends portable aluminum ramps for up to twelve months at no cost to residents. For more information, call 540-724-6630. www.foothillshousing.org.

Fauquier Community Coalition (FCC)

FCC is an informal “hands-on” organization, which provides home repairs (as well as firewood) to address unsatisfactory living conditions of low income families in need. FCC attempts to match resources to needs by drawing on the volunteer services of its 20 or so associated churches and other organizations. Since January 2016, the agency has engaged in approximately 85 projects serving an estimated 220 county residents. FCC also does repair and building projects in conjunction with other helping organizations and serves as a mechanism for coordination and sharing of information among different agencies and individuals combating poverty in Fauquier County. For more information, call 540-347-8234.

Habitat for Humanity

In 2020 Fauquier Habitat for Humanity will begin accepting applications from those needing home repairs and certain home maintenance. For more information call 540-341-4952. fauquierhabitat.org.

Homelessness: Intervention and Prevention

Regional Oversight: Foothills Housing Network

The Foothills Housing Network (FHN) (not to be confused with the Foothills Housing Corporation described above) serves a five-county area which includes Culpeper, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock Counties in addition to Fauquier. FHN coordinates federal and state grants which in part support two housing programs locally:

Rapid Rehousing, for those who are literally homeless;

Prevention, whose purpose is intervention to prevent homelessness.

These two programs provided support for 124 households between July 1, 2018 and the end of June 2019.

The Foothills Housing Network receives financial support primarily

from the state's Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Virginia Homeless Solutions Program and by the federal government through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). With this funding, FHN works collaboratively with local human service providers including Community Touch, Inc. in Fauquier County to make homelessness rare, brief and non-reoccurring in the region. Foothills Housing Network's Central Entry serves as a single point of entry for anyone experiencing homelessness, or in danger of becoming homeless. To receive free information and referral on available housing and homelessness resources, call 540-724-6630. Central Entry also screens each caller's eligibility for several housing programs, such as Community Touch's transitional housing program and Fauquier Department of Social Service's General Relief Fund. From July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, Central Entry received 2,613 inquiries of which 1,304 households were screened and connected to information and/or resources.

The Foothills Housing Network is the local planning group in the Balance of State Continuum of Care. The Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (RRRC) serves as the lead agency for the FHN and is charged with coordinating community services to the homeless by convening stakeholders and facilitating meetings in which regional priorities are established.

Housing Affordability

Fauquier County has a very high home ownership rate that exceeds both state and national averages, but at the same time, it has a dearth of rental housing, especially affordable rental housing. Is the answer to affordable housing simply to increase the supply of multi-family rental housing? Perhaps, but Fauquier County has a slow growth policy and a lack of infrastructure in service districts which means that virtually any multi-family dwelling requires special use permitting, zoning changes, or even additional services which drive up development time and costs.

How affordable is area housing? The following statistics, while confusing, show the challenge renters face in our area. The National Low Income Housing Coalition in 2019 described the cost of Virginia rental housing in relation to the minimum wage (\$7.25/hour), the typical renter's wage (\$18.27) and the wage required to rent a two-bedroom apartment in Fauquier (\$23.13). They based their estimates on paying 30% of a family budget for housing costs. Their estimates suggest that a minimum wage worker could afford rent of \$377 per month. A household having 30% of

the median income could afford \$671 whereas the average renter wage earner could afford \$950 per month. The average fair market rent of a one-bedroom apartment in Fauquier County is \$1,025; a family size apartment is clearly more and beyond the reach of any low-income families. This paints a stark picture of the challenge facing families of all kinds in handling the costs of housing.

The mathematics of building more affordable housing is challenging. Will rents cover building costs? Are tax credits for developers a reasonable and cost-effective incentive? Is there low-interest financing available for such construction? Who should pay for more affordable housing and who will benefit from such an expansion?

The lack of affordable housing not only impacts families in poverty, but it discourages young families who typically have lower income than seniors from moving here at a time the county population is aging. Should this lack of balance in age distribution concern local planners? The Town of Warrenton is trying to address this need in its current long range plan.

There is also the issue of housing affordability for some groups of professionals such as teachers, law enforcement officers, and other county employees who for economic reasons are forced to live outside of the county and commute to work. Although affordable housing for professionals is a serious issue, for the most part it falls beyond the scope of this report, which focuses on the plight of individuals who are literally challenged to keep a roof (any roof) over their heads.

Impact of Eviction

Today, most poor families spend at least half of their income on housing costs. Only one in four of those families spending over 70 percent of their income on housing will get any kind of help. Under those conditions, it has become harder for low-income families to keep up with rent and utility costs. A growing number are living one misstep or emergency away from eviction.

The eviction rate for the Town of Warrenton according to evictionlab.org is 1.34%. There were 19 evictions in 2016. (Eviction Lab had no statistics beyond 2016 nor for Fauquier County as a whole.)

Eviction causes a family not only to lose their home, but often forces them to leave their community and their children to switch schools. Families regularly lose their possessions, too, which can be piled on the sidewalk or placed in storage, to be reclaimed only after paying a fee. A legal eviction

comes with a court record, which can prevent families from relocating to decent housing in a safe neighborhood, because many landlords screen for recent evictions.

Studies cited in Matthew Desmond's 2016 book, **Evicted** also show that eviction causes job loss, as the stressful and drawn-out process of being forcibly expelled from a home causes people to make mistakes at work and lose their jobs. Eviction also has been shown to affect people's mental health: one study cited found that mothers who experienced eviction reported higher rates of depression two years after their move. The evidence strongly indicates that eviction is not just a condition of poverty, it is a cause of it.

Concluding Comments

Because of housing's many facets and high cost, securing adequate shelter and housing is perhaps the most complicated challenge faced by the poor in Fauquier County. It also involves the largest numbers of agencies and programs and requires the most coordination. While these groups make substantial contributions to the improvement of housing conditions for many people, the severity of this need continues and will not go away anytime soon. The needs include water, sewer, roofing, heat and cooling. Even the lack of broadband access, which is available to only 83.5% of homes in Fauquier County, makes school work challenging for those who have to go to a library or fast food place to get internet access as many schools demand use of the internet for homework. And of course, operating a home-based business without the internet is virtually impossible. Furthermore, because people without suitable housing tend to be quite mobile, often not staying in one place for very long at a time, it is difficult to know how many Fauquier residents are affected. The impact on children of insecure housing is thought to be extensive. (See Section on Poverty and Youth.) The entire community must address this issue if it is to be resolved.



CHAPTER 4

HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES

“These dentures from the Free Clinic have not only made it possible for me to eat real food, but I speak more clearly and I can smile!” Client of the Free Clinic

This chapter explores the numbers of people in Fauquier County who are unable to afford the health care and medical services that they need, the alternatives that they have, and the programs and services available to assist them. As reflected in the discussion below, specific numbers in these areas are difficult to pin down, but there is enough data from different sources to suggest that health care for the poor is a serious problem in our community, as it is in many areas in Virginia and throughout the nation.

The Need

How many Fauquier residents are medically disadvantaged because they live in poverty? According to the 2019 Virginia County Health Rankings Report, an estimated 6,200 adults and children in Fauquier County - about 9 per cent of the population- lack health insurance either because they can’t afford it or don’t meet the residency standards for Medicaid.

The PATH Community Needs Assessment (2017) focused on the health needs of the community as a whole, not specifically on those of the poor. Nonetheless, the detailed process of this research, involving three focus groups, several surveys, and extensive data collection, provides some important insights about the relationship between health and financial needs. Consistent with government standards suggesting that nearly 6% percent of Fauquier residents live below the federal poverty line, the PATH report indicates that approximately 7% of the county’s population uses the Free Clinic and other “low income” alternatives as a first option for their health care.

Of those who responded affirmatively to the public survey question, “Was there a time in the past 12 months when you needed to see a doctor and could not?” 45% indicated that the reason was lack of money or insurance. For those needing dental and mental health services, the numbers are 69% and 46% respectively. According to 586 respondents, the four most significant health needs in Fauquier County are mental health, substance abuse (including alcohol and tobacco), food insecurity, and homelessness.

In a separate survey in the same study, health care providers identified affordable health insurance and affordable health care as two of the top four areas which “impact peoples’ health.” The other two are mental/behavioral health services and substance abuse. All of these are significant issues among the poor and, as one focus group participant concluded, “There’s a hole in the safety net” for the working poor and for people who don’t qualify for Medicaid and other services for the economically disadvantaged.

There are few good options available to poor people without health insurance. They can stay home and not seek help. They can go to the doctor and either pay cash or ask for a free consult. Even if a doctor does not charge them, however, they usually must pay for lab fees and x-rays, etc. Or, as many do, they can go to the hospital emergency room. The hospital is required by law to serve anyone, but a poor person’s decision to use the ER may have more drawbacks than are readily apparent. The individual will be charged ER rates, normally much higher than regular office visits, so the patient stands to owe a lot of money. In addition, the ER is only required to make sure that a patient is medically stable, so in many cases, actual conditions may not be treated.

Poor people with disabilities--or people who have become poor because of disabilities--face particular challenges. It often takes two years or more to qualify for government disability payments. And even for those with documented disabilities, 29% fall below federal poverty guidelines, many more than in the population as a whole.

Any combination of the above can lead to a vicious cycle for families with limited resources, even for those who aren’t dirt poor, where illness and poverty reinforce each other. The financial cost of illness deepens poverty, which leads to more untreated sickness and health conditions, creating debt and bankruptcy and more poverty, all of which limit a family’s ability to get credit and to improve their living conditions, either financially or medically.



Medicaid: Family and Children; Aged, Blind and Disabled; Long Term Care

Medicaid provides payments for health and medical care for people who meet the specified requirements including income and resource limits. All medical services must be provided by Medicaid enrolled providers who bill the program directly for their services. In some instances, a small co-pay is required. To apply call Fauquier Department of Social Services at 540-488-8400.

Primary Health Care and Medical Services Available to the Poor

The three Fauquier County agencies and services described below provide medical assistance to those who either don't have health insurance or can't afford the high costs of health care not covered by insurance. For those families without insurance or ample income, these can mean the fragile but crucial difference between healthy lives and medical catastrophe.

Fauquier Free Clinic

The only local facility that offers free medical services exclusively to the poor is the Fauquier Free Clinic, located at 35 Rock Pointe Lane in Warrenton, which recently celebrated its 25th year of service. It offers medical, dental and mental health services to residents of Fauquier and Rappahannock Counties with limited resources. Clinic services, including prescriptions, are free to those who qualify: in brief, patients must have no health insurance other than Medicaid, limited savings, and income under 200% of the federal poverty level. Typically, patients have jobs and are between the ages of 18-64 since children and those with disabilities qualify for Medicaid and those over 64 qualify for Medicare. Due to the 2019 Medicaid expansion, patients with Medicaid are now welcome at the clinic.

In 2018 the Free Clinic received approximately 7,700 visits for a combination of primary care (3,000), dental treatment (3,000), and mental health services (1,700), the vast majority from Fauquier County residents. For most of these clients, the clinic is the only realistic medical alternative for the services it provides. During the past several years, the number of primary care patients served has leveled off while the new dental and mental health programs have grown significantly. Mental health services provided by the clinic are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The clinic sees patients by appointment three days a week and on a walk-in basis on Thursday evenings. It has two family practice physicians and one physician's assistant on staff. Three days a week, two dentists, plus hygienists, provide dental care. The clinic, which has a pharmacist on staff, provides prescription medicines at no cost to patients and/or pays when patients use the Walmart pharmacy for prescriptions.

The clinic's paid medical and dental staff is supported by a large number of professional volunteers. Most of the doctors who volunteer at the Free Clinic are primary care physicians. In addition, the clinic has a relationship with many specialists and can refer clients to them, with at least the first specialist visit at no cost to the patient. Many doctors and dentists in Fauquier County support the clinic either by volunteering their services or by providing free care. Generally, patients can get an appointment to see a medical doctor within a couple weeks of when they call; a dentist appointment can take four to eight weeks, and an appointment with a mental health professional can usually be scheduled in one to two weeks.

On their first visits, patients provide proof of residency (Fauquier or Rappahannock counties) and are screened for income eligibility. They are given a month of services if they don't have all required documentation, or six months if they do. Eligibility screenings are done every six months thereafter. The screening process is careful and specific; only qualified applicants become patients.

This scrutiny is particularly important in qualifying the clinic to receive subsidized medicines from pharmaceutical companies. Each year, the clinic gives away thousands of dollars worth of free medicine, most of it to Fauquier residents.

Fauquier Health (including Fauquier Hospital)

Like other hospitals, Fauquier Hospital has a financial assistance program that is available to families with limited resources. It is the policy of the hospital that no one should be denied medical care – but this applies only to services provided by the hospital and does not cover physician’s fees, radiology fees, etc. As physicians are not employees of the hospital, they bill separately. The current amount of financial assistance provided by Fauquier Health is more than \$1,000,000 per month.

The hospital’s financial assistance application process is accessible through the hospital’s website, and financial counselors are available by phone and in person during normal business hours. The program is open to anyone using the hospital whose income is less than 200% of the federal poverty level - not only local residents and not only those without insurance. An individual must fill out an application, which is used to determine his or her eligibility and, if eligible, the amount of assistance for which the patient qualifies. This is determined by a sliding scale based on the number of dependents and household income – sometimes 100% of the hospital bill is forgiven and sometimes 80%, 70%, or 60%.

The challenge is that many do not know that they have to register for assistance. Even with the help of counselors, they are confused by the process. Tax returns or other proof of income is required, but many in need don’t file income tax returns.

Fauquier Health also works with the Fauquier Free Clinic to subsidize the cost of lab work, x-rays and mammograms for Free Clinic patients. For patients with any of these “certified” hospital discounts, physicians often provide discounts as well. Paperwork (W-2, proof of income, the application form) has to be submitted and verified. The hospital’s financial counseling office will also check on patients’ Medicaid eligibility/availability. In addition, Fauquier Health reduces the bills of all self-pay patients by 38%, but this is probably of little value to patients without sufficient resources to afford health insurance.

When the Health Department, in May of 2017, discontinued its prenatal program for low-income patients, this created a serious problem for the hospital and low-income women. While some are eligible for Medicaid, care for those with drug addictions pose an even greater challenge in part because women are afraid that admitting their addiction will lead to legal and custody problems.

Care by the Hospital Emergency Department is very expensive. Adequate and more affordable care can be provided by Urgent Care clinics for most non-life threatening conditions, but for many the default choice is the Emergency Department. The cost of providing these services is a challenge for the hospital.

Fauquier County Health Department (FCHD)

The Fauquier County Health Department (FCHD) clinic provides many services, primarily to women and children. Virginia residents qualify for services, although proof of residence is not required. The staff determines financial eligibility for services, proof of income is required, and charges for most services will be based on a sliding scale. As the FCHD is part of the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (RRHD), clinicians and doctors also work in health departments in Rappahannock, Madison, Culpeper and Orange Counties. The RRHD receives funding from state and local governments and from grants.

FCHD has translators and documents available in Spanish. They also have immediate access to a tele-interpreter for almost any language.

Programs and services include:

- Family planning clinic: supports those trying to prevent pregnancy (birth control) or those trying to become pregnant.
- Vaccines: for adults, charged on a sliding scale; for children, program is income based. Proof of income and/or insurance is needed, but insurance is not required.
- WIC program (Women-Infants-Children): provides mothers with supplies such as formula, supplemental milk, fruits/vegetables, etc.
- Clinic for communicable sexually transmitted diseases (STD): program is income based unless the patient meets certain criteria.
- Nursing home screening: for adults, coordinates with DSS for in-home visits to determine eligibility for assistance; for children, health department staff conducts in-home visits to determine eligibility for assistance.
- TB testing/screening: flat fee charged; no proof of income required.
- School physicals (except sport physicals): provided based on eligibility.
- Car seats provided based on eligibility. Parents must attend a child safety class and then are given a car seat at no charge.

Other Health and Medical Services for Low-income Individuals

In addition to the primary services described above, there are a number of specialized services provided by smaller organizations. Some of these are described below.

Hospice Services

Hospice provides end of life care and support services for patients and their families and grief support for any members of the community in need. Hospice may be in a patient's home or in a particular hospice setting. Services may include symptom and pain management, but not medical treatment of patients' conditions. The following not-for-profit hospices offer a range of services regardless of ability to pay. Call them or check their websites for more information about their specific services:

Blue Ridge Hospice

In Winchester Blue Ridge Hospice serves residents of northern Fauquier County. For more information, call 540-313-9200. www.brhospice.org.

Capital Caring Health

Capital Caring Health has a stand-alone Hospice facility in Aldie, and serves Fauquier and surrounding counties with in-home care. Its main office is in Fairfax County. It has recently added a new program called Primary Care at Home which will provide a range of medical services to those who need to age in place. For more information, call 703-957-1800. www.capitalcaring.org.

Hospice of the Piedmont in Culpeper (HOP)

HOP serves Fauquier and surrounding counties. Its main office and Hospice House are based in Charlottesville. For more information, call 434-817-6900. www.hopva.org.

Comfort and Care Support

Formerly known as *Hospice Support of Fauquier County*, Comfort and Care Support provides free bereavement counseling by certified therapists and volunteers and *non-medical* compassionate care including respite services for families and caregivers. Its large medical equipment and supplies loan closet at 42 N. 5th St, Warrenton, offers at no cost the following equipment: wheelchairs, walkers, electric hospital beds, shower benches and chairs, lift chairs and Hoyer lifts. For more information, call 540-347-5922. www.hospicesupport.org.

Pregnancy and Women's Health

There are services from a variety of perspectives for women who face an unexpected or unwanted pregnancy.

CareNet Pregnancy Resource Center/Warrenton Pregnancy Center

In Manassas the Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center accepts patients from around the region. The Warrenton Pregnancy Center serves Fauquier County. Their target audience is women with unplanned pregnancies. Their goal is to educate and support these individuals and their families with alternatives to abortion.

They also provide supplies, including free cribs, to pregnant women and to families with children less than one year of age who attend and complete parenting classes. They do not refer individuals to abortion clinics but do offer support groups for women after abortion. They also offer classes for general and sexual health. For more information, call Care Net at 703-330-4572 and Warrenton Pregnancy Center at 540-602-5556. www.voice4life.org.

Planned Parenthood

Women's health services are available to Fauquier residents in Planned Parenthood centers based in Richmond, Charlottesville, and Gaithersburg. These include family planning, STD treatment, and abortion services as needed. Financial aid may be available. For more information call: Charlottesville at 434-296-1000; Richmond. at 804-355-4358. www.vlpp.org.

Other Services

Fauquier Lions Clubs

Like other Lions Clubs around the country, the three Fauquier Lions Clubs provide free vision/hearing screenings in the schools and free eyewear and hearing aids to those who need them. Fauquier Lions Clubs host the screenings, provide printouts of the results and make referrals if further services are required. They give away used eyeglasses at no cost and will help financially if examinations or new eyeglasses are needed. Those needing these services apply through the Fauquier Department of Social Services or the Free Clinic. Applications are then forwarded to the Lions Club closest to where the individual lives. At the end of the year, the Lions Clubs also make a donation for diabetes supplies to the Fauquier Health Department.

American Cancer Society/Road to Recovery

The American Cancer Society has several assistance programs which serve cancer patients in Fauquier County, including free volunteer-driven transportation to medical appointments (Road to Recovery), workshops for women undergoing cancer treatment, temporary lodging, and other services. (See Transportation chapter for more information.) For more information or to volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345.

The Foundation of Blue Ridge Orthopaedics

The Foundation of Blue Ridge Orthopaedics www.brofoundation.org was established in 2012 to serve Fauquier and Prince William charities that provide medical relief, food, shelter, and/or children's services to improve quality of life for the neediest in the community. In recent years, they have donated more than \$215,000 to dozens of charities, such as the Fauquier Free Clinic, Community Touch, the Boys & Girls Club of Fauquier, the Mental Health Association of Fauquier County, Fauquier FISH, and others. The foundation organizes annual fundraisers and food drives, including its signature fall event, the Bodies in Motion 5K & 10K runs which recently raised \$55,000.

Virginia Insurance Counseling Assistance Program

Offered through the Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Area Agency on Aging, free and confidential counseling is provided to seniors on navigating the Medicare application and appeals process. Comparison of insurance coverage including information on prescription drug plans is tailored to individual needs. For information and appointments, call 540-825-3100.

Enroll Virginia

Enroll Virginia is a non-profit organization that provides free one-on-one application assistance and education from a professional certified navigator to individuals and families applying for government-assisted health insurance programs such as the Health Insurance Marketplace, FAMIS, and Medicaid. Enroll Virginia assists the community with understanding the application process, obtaining health insurance, understanding how to use their insurance and locating healthcare providers.

Individuals and families who have a gross income below 138% of the Federal Poverty Level may qualify for the Medicaid program. This means for a household of 1 having an income less than \$17,237 a year and for a household of 4 having an income less than \$35,536. Other legal Virginia residents who meet the Medicaid financial guidelines but may not meet the

other non-financial requirements (residency, for example) may still be able to obtain health insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Open Enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace is from November 1st to December 15th every year. Apply for Medicaid or FAMIS anytime during the year. For more information, call 1-888-392-5132 or 540-741-2447.

Concluding Comments

Despite Fauquier County's status as one of the richest counties in the nation, it has many citizens in need of medical and health care services. As reflected in this chapter, these services are provided by a number of helping agencies and caring individuals, but the need continues to grow. In the present political climate where financial assistance for the poor is increasingly uncertain, adequate support for the health and medical needs for this segment of the population will continue to be a challenge for the Fauquier community and especially for those residents who are poor and unable to afford health insurance and preventative medical care.



CHAPTER 5

POVERTY AND MENTAL HEALTH

“So many of us have been in circumstances where we feel compassion for a situation, but don’t know what to say or if we should say anything at all—this training changes all of that.” — A volunteer upon completing Mental Health First Aid Training.

While we know that there is a strong connection between poverty and mental health, the specific relationship is difficult to quantify, especially when the latter term is taken to include mental and emotional states which have not been formally diagnosed and treated. Mental and emotional health for all of us, whether or not we have documented conditions, can be profoundly influenced by life circumstances. Downturns in mental health are often connected with increases in life stresses and poverty is certainly a magnifier of other stressful conditions.

In some respects, the relationship between poverty and mental health is circular. Poverty can lead to or exacerbate depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses which, in turn, can deepen poverty by compromising an individual’s ability to work and to contribute effectively to his or her own support and well-being. In some cases, these circumstances can also lead directly or indirectly to alcohol or drug abuse (not only a problem faced by the poor, to be sure) and other behaviors which lead to medical treatments and/or incarceration, further draining an individual’s and a family’s financial resources. As stresses increase, the situation worsens, leading to further destabilization of work and living conditions and the quality of relationships, all of which can make it increasingly difficult for poor people to function effectively. For poor families in particular, this cycle is often perpetuated in later generations.

The Need

It is difficult to estimate how many Fauquier residents who live in poverty have mental health challenges and how these numbers compare with the incidence of such conditions in the county’s population as a whole. One indication of this comparison is suggested by the result of an “inventory” administered to prospective clients when they seek services at the Free Clinic. According to the results obtained from use of the Patient Health Questionnaire “PHQ 9,” about 40% of this group “score” as

having symptoms of depression. In the general population, these numbers are typically in the 10-15% range. Since all of those served by the Free Clinic are poor by definition (below 200% of the poverty line and without any form of health insurance except Medicaid), this would suggest, not surprisingly, that there is a much higher proportion of poor people who suffer from depression than is found in the population as a whole.

Mental and Behavioral Health Services for the Poor in Fauquier County

Fauquier County, as a whole, has a scarcity of mental health services for all of its residents. With a much smaller proportion of psychologists and counselors than needed (many fewer than most comparably prosperous communities), it is challenging for many individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status, to get mental health care in our area. However, it is especially difficult for those who are poor. For all practical purposes, poor adults in Fauquier County have two options for direct mental health services: the Free Clinic and the Community Services Board, both of which have significant waiting lists for many services. Although it does not serve clients directly, the Mental Health Association of Fauquier County is a strong advocate for mental health resources for the poor as evidenced by several initiatives discussed below. Another resource, which is available to families with children who have serious emotional and behavioral problems, is the Family Assessment and Planning Team at DSS.

The Fauquier Free Clinic

The Fauquier Free Clinic, located at 35 Rock Pointe Lane in Warrenton, provides free services to residents of Fauquier and Rappahannock Counties whose incomes are below 200% of the federal poverty standard and who have Medicaid or no insurance. The Clinic began providing mental health services in 2014 and in 2018-19 delivered these services to over 250 different individuals. They have averaged about 120 mental health care visits each month, mostly through their tele-health platform. While some patients come to the Clinic directly seeking mental health services, all are screened for these issues since behavioral health problems can negatively affect the management of physical illnesses and health outcomes. About half of the patients receiving mental health services are referred from these screenings.

Due to the shortage of local psychiatrists and other mental health professionals and with the help of a \$370,000 grant from PATH in October

2016, the Clinic provides appointments for mental health patients with psychiatrists outside of the area. These remote mental health professionals have access to clients' medical records and, in turn, can add to the records based on their interventions. Clients are scheduled for remote tele-psychiatry appointments that allow them to interact one-to-one with a psychiatrist who appears on a television screen. This "collaborative care" approach to mental health services is working well not only for patients, but also for local physicians, who can now refer their patients directly to a mental health specialist. This leads to better overall care as stated in the announcement of the grant funding for tele-psychiatry and counseling services on the PATH website:

This collaborative care model goes beyond mental health; with medical, dental and mental health services under one roof, patients can be referred across specialties to address their overall health needs. In an October 2012 *Cochrane Review* article, 79 randomized controlled trials showed that collaborative care models like those at the Fauquier Free Clinic are the best approach to treating depression.

Dr. Carole Hertz, a long-time counseling psychologist who has a practice in Warrenton and also volunteers at the Free Clinic, has some interesting observations regarding poverty and mental health, which she refers to as "fraternal twins." According to Dr. Hertz, for people who need mental health care but are not able and have never been able to afford it, problems multiply "as the hole grows deeper." As a result, their perspectives become increasingly narrow and their perception more and more limited, rendering them progressively more difficult to treat. Dr. Hertz believes that nearly all of her free clinic patients suffer from a form of post traumatic stress disorder; their lives lived in poverty have battered them with a myriad of stressful conditions, the effects of which are lasting and difficult to reverse. Her role as a therapist is not really to try to cure her patients but to validate and legitimize their illnesses and to help them learn coping skills, to "find their passions," and to identify and evaluate alternatives for their lives going forward.

Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS)

RRCS offers a range of rehabilitative and other critical need services to residents of Virginia Planning District 9 (Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock Counties). RRCS has two offices which serve Fauquier County residents, one at the Fauquier Adult Day Healthcare Center, located at 430 E Shirley Avenue in Warrenton, and another at the Behavioral Health Clinic, located at 340 Hospital Drive in Warrenton.

Mental Health Counseling

In the area of mental health, RRCS provides individual and group counseling, tele-psychiatry services, evaluations, and treatment of moderate to severe mental illness in children and adults at outpatient community centers, as well as urgent care and crisis intervention services in a variety of settings. In addition, RRCS operates a Rapid Access program, also known as same day or open access, which is a process that focuses on improving access for individuals seeking outpatient mental health and substance use services.

In 2018, RRCS served 748 residents with moderate to severe behavioral health issues and an additional 186 with substance use disorders. The agency also provides intervention services to another estimated 470 Fauquier children and adults “experiencing a mental health crisis,” and over 100 with substance use crises. Patients without insurance are charged on a sliding “ability to pay” scale, where everyone pays something, the minimum being \$15.00.

Services to the Jail in Fauquier County

RRCS delivers mental health services to inmates of the Fauquier County jail in Warrenton by a licensed therapist. These services engage individuals in the therapeutic community and general population to address mental health and substance use disorders.

Services include:

- Mental health and substance use evaluations
- Individual therapy
- Group therapy
- Care coordination for those re-entering the community following a period of incarceration

Lack of Mental Health Beds for Low Income Patients

There is not sufficient capacity statewide and local hospitals such as Fauquier Health are not equipped for serving those needing hospitalization for mental health needs. Both statewide and locally there are very few beds for severely mentally ill low income patients who require hospitalization. While Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Rapid Access Program allows many people to be seen, often on the same day they apply, sustained treatment is sometimes not available for several weeks. Acceptance at a state hospital requires an applicant to have been turned down by 10 other mental health facilities.

Mental Health Association of Fauquier County (MHAFC)

While MHAFC deals with the entire county population, not just the poor, it has conducted a range of activities of particular relevance and importance for those in poverty. Its primary focus in this area for the last few years has been to support the work of the Fauquier Free Clinic. In 2014-15, MHAFC contributed \$50,000 to help the clinic expand its scope to include mental health services. The Association helped the Free Clinic evaluate and address the challenge of delivering counseling and other services to the poor in a county with few counselors and psychiatrists. This led to the tele-psychiatry initiative which was implemented at the Free Clinic in 2016. As indicated above, this project has proven to be an effective model that is now being studied for replication in other communities.

Another partnership that exists within the Mental Health Association is with Fauquier County Public Schools. It is known that approximately 25% of Fauquier children qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, indicating widespread poverty in the county. In 2019, the PRIDE Survey pertaining to drug use in the schools was expanded by the MHAFC, Fauquier CADRE, and Fauquier County Public Schools to include questions about mental health.

The survey itself is primarily used to gauge the incidence of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, as well as the age of onset of alcohol or drug use, the perceived risk of drugs, and available protective factors. However, the Mental Health Association wanted to ensure that mental wellness was being considered when administering the survey to youth in grades 6-12. The survey yielded 6,011 responses from students in Fauquier and Rappahannock counties and found that: the average age of first use of drugs and alcohol among local youth is 13 years old; 617 youth used an illicit drug in the past 30 days; 27% of youth reported suicidal thoughts this past year; and 34% of students surveyed reported feeling depressed this past year.

As a result of the findings in the previous PRIDE Survey (2015), MHAFC worked with the schools to implement prevention programs for students and increased the number of Mental Health First Aid training programs, which have now been made available to all school personnel, law enforcement officials, and other community agencies involved with youth. As of November 2019, 1,748 individuals have been trained in Mental Health First Aid in our area. MHAFC also convenes the Mental Health School Coalition, which focuses on the needs of all students but perhaps has its greatest impact on those who come from lower income

families because they are least able to afford private counseling. Using the data from the 2019 PRIDE survey and input from the 2019 Community Dialogue for Youth, MHAFC and its partners will continue to expand prevention programs for young people.

In addition to partnerships focused on youth wellness, the Mental Health Association also plays a lead role in community planning to increase access to mental health services. They convene the leaders of 25 partner organizations, called the Mental Health Collaborative, which sets community-wide goals and measures progress in meeting those goals. Since the implementation of this group, a Strategic Action Plan for Community Mental Health has been developed that focuses on four broad goals: 1) Align Multiple Groups Working on Behavioral Health Improvement; 2) Increase Community Awareness, Improve Prevention Activities and Reduce Stigma; 3) Improve Access to Community Behavioral Health Services; and 4) Optimize Community Service Locations and Facilities. There have also been increased efforts to collaborate and foster the development of opioid awareness and prevention programs.

Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT)

FAPT provides counseling and other services to families with children with serious emotional or behavioral problems. This program is implemented by the Fauquier Department of Social Services in collaboration with Healthy Community Services, the courts, the public schools, and several private agencies. It develops treatment plans to address the needs of entire families and services, which are provided in the home on a sliding scale or in some cases for Medicaid clients without charge.



Substance use problems

Although substance use disorders are not specific to low-income families, and are often addressed with other mental health counseling, the

poor are disproportionately affected because of the lack of resources or access to affordable treatment. While Medicaid covers some services for low-income families, the main service provider beyond the Free Clinic is Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS) which can provide counseling and referrals to intensive treatment. REVIVE training in the use of Narcan (Naloxone) which can often revive someone who has overdosed on opioids and certain other drugs are provided without charge to the public. It is scheduled periodically by RRCS and the Virginia Department of Health.

Youth for Tomorrow

Youth for Tomorrow, located at 20 Rock Pointe Lane, Warrenton, offers intensive 10-12 week outpatient treatment by licensed therapists to adolescents, ages 13-17, who have serious substance use issues. There is a sliding fee scale and Medicaid is accepted. There is also a less intensive counseling program that meets weekly. The goal is to serve 100 youths per week. For intake and more information, call 703-659-9900.

Other programs

In addition to the services provided by Alcohol Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), there are a number of peer counseling or support groups for individuals and families facing mental health or substance use issues such as National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) www.namivirginia.org 540-349-1976) and Come As you Are (CAYA) www.cayacoalition.org which include but do not focus on low income families.

Concluding Comments

Despite the significant contributions of several agencies, the mental health and substance use issues of Fauquier residents in poverty remain a substantial challenge. It is unknown how many poor people in Fauquier County suffer from mental health problems and in what magnitude, but it is apparent that many do not seek treatment who need it. Even for those that do, resources are stretched very thin.

CHAPTER 6

TRANSPORTATION AND POVERTY

“You can’t imagine what a difference it has made in my life to get regular rides to my cancer treatments. I feel as if they have added years to my life.”
Patient helped by Road to Recovery.

Unlike hunger, shelter, medical care and other challenges confronted by the poor, transportation needs, for the most part, are not documented by income levels. As a result, it is difficult to know precisely how many Fauquier residents are handicapped by transportation problems caused or complicated by their lack of financial resources. There is clear evidence, however, much of it indirect and anecdotal, that this is an issue that affects a substantial number of people. Furthermore, as much as in any poverty-related area, transportation challenges create a vicious cycle. If one cannot get to work, his or her financial situation worsens. If one cannot get to medical appointments, health conditions become more severe. These situations contribute to a downward spiral where quality of life continues to deteriorate.

The Need

In terms of its 647 square miles, Fauquier is the 8th largest county in Virginia. Because its population is spread over a wide area, many people live in locations that are significantly removed from their places of employment and the services that they need. In a county lacking in public transportation, this is especially difficult for the 10 percent of Fauquier County’s households who make less than \$25,000 per year. If these people have cars at all, they are often unreliable. As a result, they may be dependent on friends and relatives with different schedules whose vehicles may also be suspect, creating a very unsettling and often undependable situation.

This issue is complicated by the fact that most Fauquier County residents, including many who are poor, work outside of the county in areas where, generally speaking, wages are considerably higher. Access to Metro in Vienna or the VRE (The Virginia Railway Express) in Manassas requires a driver to get to these locations. Many people use car pools or van pools but these are not free. There are parking lots in the area where drivers and riders meet to pair up for rides, and there is a service that in some cases will match people with buses going to certain locations such

as the Metro, the Pentagon, or other high demand destinations. Even if this can be arranged, however, there is no public transportation to these ride-sharing sites. Often those who need rides must also share the cost with the drivers. For many Fauquier residents, especially those who are poor, these “solutions” just aren’t viable and, as a result, without reliable transportation, working outside the county or even at many jobs within the county is simply not possible.

For many of the poor, however, buying and maintaining their own cars is a challenge that is financially unmanageable. Older models, though purchasable at a lower cost, are expensive to register and insure, even for minimal amounts. Gas is expensive and maintenance is ongoing and unpredictable. The need for repairs to vehicles, especially trucks, frequently occurs without warning and often grounds individuals who need their vehicles not only to get to work but in many cases on the job as well. Without steady incomes “the hole deepens” as they are caught in a vicious cycle: without income, no vehicle repairs; without vehicle repairs, no transportation; without transportation, no work; without work, no income.

In addition to employment-related needs, the poor often lack transportation to medical appointments and also to helping agencies such as the Department of Social Services, the Fauquier Free Clinic, and area food pantries. In the latter case, food recipients must often share food with others (who may or may not be eligible for food pantry service themselves) in exchange for transportation.

Appropriately, transportation is a topic that frequently draws attention in the media. The county and the state are often looking at transportation needs of various kinds (improved roads, bikes, sidewalks, etc.) Seldom, however, do these concerns focus on the needs of the poor.

Transportation Services and Assistance Available to the Poor

For Fauquier residents without cars, there are few resources beyond taxi cabs and Uber which are now active in the county. For those with low incomes and health problems, assistance can sometimes be provided to pay for transportation services through the Fauquier Department of Social Services (DSS) and Medicaid. In other cases, rides are provided by volunteers or the Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services. These can be reached through the One Call Transportation Center. For more information on the following services, call 540-829-5300.

Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS) Transit Services

RRCS transit service is the primary source of transportation for the majority of RRCS clients to and from RRCS Senior, Health, and Mental Health programs. Transit service also distributes home delivered meals to individuals participating in these programs.

Care-A-Van

Care-A-Van is a service providing door-to-door transit for healthcare and legal appointments. It is open to those who are: disabled, clients of RRCS, or anyone over the age of 60. The program uses volunteer drivers for RRCS-supplied wheelchair accessible vans. There is no charge for this service; however, donations are accepted.

The FAMS (Foothills Area Mobility System)

One-click/one call transportation information system is also operated by Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services and the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission. The FAMS Call Center works closely with VolTran and other volunteer driver agencies to process requests for transportation, schedule volunteer drivers, track mileage and volunteer hours, as well as collect and analyze a variety of complex data used to create a comprehensive picture of the regional transportation need.

An individual needing a ride must call the FAMS one-call center (540-829-5300) at least 48 hours in advance so a volunteer driver can be located and scheduled to meet that person's special needs. VolTran does not provide rides to and from employment or, for insurance reasons, to and from dialysis.

FAMS provides comprehensive information on all travel modes as well as help with travel arrangements and training in the use of these services for those who need them. The training is designed to help individuals make the best use of the transportation resources available to them.

The one-call center can also arrange for transportation Monday through Friday by a wheelchair accessible bus through Virginia Regional Transit. The fee is usually \$1.00 and arrangements must be made in advance. The challenge that this service presents is that one bus covers the entire county so drivers may spend a lot of time serving passengers in a variety of locations. As a result, users may need to be picked up many hours before their appointments and will often experience delays in return transportation. The center can also arrange bus transportation from Culpeper to the University of Virginia Medical Center several days per week. This service requires

that individuals secure their own rides to Culpeper, which can be difficult because of the lack of public transportation.

Volunteer Transportation Services

VolTran

A small non-profit organization, VolTran provides free rides from volunteer drivers for the elderly, those with disabilities, and others in serious need to medical appointments and critical errands. For example, individuals may request rides to medical and dental appointments, pharmacy visits, grocery shopping, and for other important errands. Last year, VolTran's goal expanded to include driving individuals for social opportunities to enhance a person's quality of life.

VolTran works actively to increase the number of volunteer drivers; however, not all ride requests can be fulfilled due to distance and availability of drivers. In 2019, VolTran received an increase of requests from individuals with a variety of mobility requirements; this has led to expanding driver training for those who are willing to include optional services to those with wheelchairs or other special needs. For more information, call 540-829-5300.

Road to Recovery

Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Road to Recovery will take patients directly to and from medical appointments for cancer treatments, with no stops in route except to pick up prescribed medications. For more information, call 540-829-5300.

Circuit Rider Bus

Another transportation alternative for all residents of the Town of Warrenton is the Circuit Rider bus, which follows a designated route every hour and can accommodate wheelchairs. Riders can take the Circuit Rider for any purpose. The county has made this program more efficient by adding a second bus and by identifying special services for those who need help with wheelchairs, for example, to keep the main route on schedule.

Future Planning

The Coordinated Human Services Mobility Plan--updated and published every 5 years by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation--usually contains some demographic mapping to demonstrate unmet needs. The Department has just recently completed regional meetings to gather input for updating the next state plan. According to Ray Parks, Director

of Aging and Transportation Services at RRCS, “Expansion of affordable public transportation (VRT) availability is the primary method of making an impact [on the ability of people to get around locally.] The volunteer systems should be supplemental, not primary in terms of trying to address this need. This mobility plan does a good job of defining how unmet transportation needs perpetuate the cycle of poverty.”



Concluding Comments

It is clear that the transportation alternatives available to the poor in Fauquier County are far less than ideal. The consequences of this lack of service are especially serious for the poor because their impacts are exponential. Without adequate transportation, other challenges including employment, hunger and medical issues are compounded. Most solutions need to be planned area-wide and are certain to be expensive.

CHAPTER 7

POVERTY AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM

“We know that all men are not created equal in the sense that some people would have us believe--some people are smarter than others, some people have more opportunity because they are born with it, some men make more money than others, some ladies make better cakes than others--some people are born gifted beyond the normal scope of most men.

*But there is one way in this country in which all men are created equal--there is one human institution that makes a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupid man the equal of an Einstein, and an ignorant man the equal of any college president. That institution, gentlemen, is a court. It can be the Supreme Court of the United States or the humblest J.P. court in the land, or this honorable court which you serve. Our courts have their faults, as does any human institution, but in this country our courts are the great levelers, and in our courts, all men are created equal.” (Harper Lee, **To Kill a Mockingbird**)*

This is a portion of the closing statement of Atticus Finch, attorney for Tom Robinson, a black man accused of raping a white woman, in Harper Lee’s acclaimed novel, **To Kill a Mockingbird**, which expresses a long-held ideal of the American court system. Despite the best intentions of those who designed our justice system, however, there are severe limits to how much “leveling” the courts can accomplish. In general, low income people are at a considerable disadvantage in the courts, as they are in most aspects of our society, and there are many factors which contribute to this predicament.

The Need

How much court activity in Fauquier County involves litigants who are poor? We don’t know exactly because court cases are not tabulated by income level. There are various indirect indications, however, that this number is substantial. In FY 2016 Legal Aid Works (LAW) closed 34 cases in which they helped 79 individuals in Fauquier County whose income levels were less than 125% of the poverty line. LAW was forced to decline an estimated 68 additional cases due to the lack of program resources. Presumably, the vast majority of people in the latter category were forced to take their chances in court without representation. Of the

445 cases involving Fauquier residents addressed through the Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center in FY2016, the vast majority were referred by the courts, and of these, 330 were classified as low income. These numbers suggest that the Fauquier County legal system deals with a significant number of people with very limited financial resources.

Poverty, lack of education, mental health problems, and substance abuse issues, which often occur in combination, are predictors of future incarceration. Over a third of the prison population has received public assistance at some point in their lives; 13 percent grew up in foster care; and over 10 percent experienced homelessness in the year prior to entering prison. Approximately 65 percent of prisoners nationwide have not completed high school and 14 percent have less than an 8th grade education. Over 50 percent of the incarcerated have mental health problems, while approximately 70 percent were regular drug users and 65 percent regularly used alcohol prior to being incarcerated. (The Justice Center, The Council of State Governments, 2019. csgjusticecenter.org.)

Challenges Faced by the Poor in Civil and Criminal Courts

In general, the poor are ill-equipped to protect their own best interests in civil and criminal court without the help of counsel. In addition to their probable financial inability to hire legal representation in civil cases, many poor clients are unfamiliar with the rules and processes of legal proceedings, not sure of their rights, unfamiliar with how to testify, unaware of when they can object, etc. As observed by Lawrie Parker, Executive Director of the Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center in Warrenton, this is like trying to dance when you don't know the steps. It is, in fact, common knowledge in the legal community that even for a litigant with the facts on his or her side, a person who self-represents is much less likely to achieve a favorable outcome.

The statistics are troubling. As reported in a Virginia State Bar Council presentation in 2015, for example, 65% of tenants who were represented by attorneys in eviction cases retained their homes while this occurred for only 35% of those who were not represented. Similar figures exist for other types of landlord-tenant cases. Another study indicates that 70% of child immigrants represented by legal counsel successfully avoided deportation as compared to only 10 % of those who were not represented. (*John E. Whitfield, Summary Report on the Findings of the Virginia Self-Represented Litigant Study. April 2018. vsb.org.*)

Many who are poor also confront language and cultural barriers as well as abilities to obtain support and assistance from resources which might

otherwise be available to them. This has led to an increasing need for information and education sessions and other means of orienting the poor about legal processes and their rights and responsibilities under the law. In Virginia prospective clients with low incomes who have legal questions may find useful information at www.legalaid.org.

Civil Court

Litigants in civil court sue each other over perceived violations of their rights. The distinction between criminal and civil cases is particularly important as it relates to people who lack resources. In criminal cases, a defendant has the right to an attorney and the court must provide one for people who cannot afford one on their own. This is not the case in civil proceedings, where a litigant must provide his or her own attorney or go it alone unless he or she is one of the fortunate few who receives free legal services from Legal Aid Works or a similar service. Civil cases include family law, such as child custody, visitation, and child/spousal support; landlord/tenant law, including evictions, and consumer issues such as bankruptcy, utility shut-off, and harassment from creditors. They may also involve public benefits, including unemployment and SNAP/Medicare/Medicaid appeals, and a variety of other areas including job discrimination, access to health care, foreclosures, power of attorney and nursing home issues, etc.

According to Ann Kloeckner, Executive Director at Legal Aid Works (540- 825-3131 www.legalaidworks.org), an organization which provides free legal services to those in poverty, there is one attorney per 346 citizens in the Commonwealth of Virginia, a figure she characterizes as, “a pretty deep saturation level.” By contrast, the number of attorneys available through Legal Aid Works and similar organizations to provide volunteer (pro bono) services to clients who are unable to pay is approximately one per 7,000 poor citizens.

Legal Aid Works

The primary provider of free legal services to the indigent population in our area, serves 17 counties including Fauquier through offices in Fredericksburg, Culpeper, and Tappahannock with a total of only eight attorneys. In 2016, these eight attorneys obtained over a million dollars in court orders for their clients and also helped them avoid more than \$300,000 in wrongly charged debt, fees, rent, and other liabilities. At the same time, LAW was forced to decline the majority of the cases which had been screened as eligible for its services (nationally this figure is about

two out of three) due to lack of resources. While some pro bono work may be provided by other attorneys in the area (figures are unavailable though existing evidence suggests not much), this leaves the poor in an extremely vulnerable position.

The different predicaments of those with resources and those without in dealing with the legal system have often been referred to as the justice gap. Our society tends to stress how deeply we cherish the Rule of Law and Equal Justice under the Law while at the same time that we ignore substantial injustice in the court system.

Two recent personal experiences have expanded my (Ed Jones') understanding of the "justice gap." The first of these occurred several years ago when I received a traffic ticket as a result of a confusing interaction with a school bus. I had friends who understood the court process and knew how the system worked. One friend recommended an attorney familiar with my type of case. I was able to hire this individual who successfully negotiated a much-reduced charge which resulted in a minimum fine and no points on my driver's license. My reflection on this experience has increased my awareness of the resources, including money and knowledgeable associates, whom I was able to rely upon in dealing with the legal system. That would not have been available to the many residents of Fauquier County who lack resources that I and most middle class residents take for granted.

My experience in the Fauquier County court system contrasts significantly with that of a homeless friend of mine who lives in his car. Recently my friend was charged with a serious traffic violation which required a court appearance. When he appeared in court a month later, the judge asked if he had legal representation. When he said that he did not, the judge continued his case for a month to allow him more time to engage an attorney. Subsequently, the judge granted two additional continuances, but when my friend still had not acquired an attorney, he rendered a stiff penalty.

It became apparent later that my friend had no idea how to obtain legal help without the money to pay for it. He did not know about anyone at the time that could help with this matter. As a result, faced with more immediate survival needs, he just let this matter ride, eventually causing the judge to lose patience, resulting almost certainly in a stiffer penalty than he otherwise would have received. Various factors played in this situation. My friend's predicament was primarily the result of his own bad decisions, but it is highly likely that the legal consequences of his actions were affected directly and indirectly by his impoverished condition. He lacked not only

money, but also knowledge and contacts which could have led to a better result in court.

Criminal Court

In contrast to civil court, criminal court has a well-established right to fair representation, but while in theory the laws apply equally to all, rich or poor, the enforcement of laws can differ according to one's ability to pay. Bail, fines, and attorneys all require resources that are not usually available to low income people. Consequently, the outcomes are not equivalent.

Anyone who watches television can probably recite the Miranda warning: "You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you." This misleads many to think that they will be well represented when charged with a crime. In practice there is a huge distinction between the right to an attorney and adequate legal representation. Approximately 80% of criminal defendants cannot afford a lawyer, relying on court-appointed lawyers or public defenders, often resulting in inadequate representation in court. (*New York Times*, "One Lawyer, 194 Felony Cases, and No Time," 1/31/19).

Plea Bargains

According to Gaby Del Valle, (*The Atlantic*, August 2017), "By design, plea bargains are supposed to be a way of avoiding lengthy, costly trials for defendants who are clearly guilty. Instead, they've become a way for low-income people to get out of jail as quickly as possible, even if it means pleading guilty to a crime they didn't commit." An estimated 90% of poor defendants accept plea bargains even when they are not guilty. (Del Valle) Realistically if they cannot afford bail, this is the only way they can be released from custody. In the short run this seems to make sense, but in the long run the consequence is that these innocent people will live the rest of their lives with a criminal record which will interfere with employment, schooling, housing and so on.

To add insult to injury, defendants who are found guilty often must pay for the very lawyer they couldn't afford within 90 days of conviction. If the fines and fees are not paid within the specified time, new fines and penalties can be incurred, such as loss of driver's license, sending them further down the proverbial rabbit hole. (The issue of driver's licenses was addressed in the 2020 Virginia legislature and eliminated. Details unknown.)

Status Crimes

Such offenses as truancy, under age possession of alcohol or tobacco products, running away from home, and ungovernability by parents or school officials among others are labeled “status crimes” for juveniles. These are offenses that apply only because of a person’s age. None of these is a crime for adults. (<https://njdc.info/status-offenses>.)

Status crimes are especially problematic for low income youth because their families can so rarely afford representation in court or treatment for underlying social, academic, or mental health problems. Furthermore, convictions for these offenses often constitute a future minefield because they result in a juvenile record. This is the first step into the often labeled “school-to-prison pipeline” as incarceration as a youth also can lead to harsher sentences as an adult.

An inside Perspective: Poverty and the Criminal Justice System

In addition to our own observations about poverty and the criminal justice system, we think it important to include the perspective of an insider. The comments in this section are provided by Ryan Ruzic, the Fauquier County Deputy Public Defender.

A full accounting of the ways in which poverty can both increase exposure to the criminal justice system and hamper a person’s ability to navigate it successfully would be and is the work of hundreds of texts and studies, but here are some of the many ways in which the economically disadvantaged can truly suffer.

The Bail/Bond System or “Money Bail”

When someone is arrested in Virginia, they appear before a magistrate to see if they will be released pending their court date. Any decision made by the magistrate can be appealed to a Judge, but when the magistrate or future judge is considering granting release, they look at two factors: 1) is someone a flight risk? and 2) are they a danger to themselves or others? If they are not an unreasonable risk of flight or an unreasonable risk to the community, they are released; if they are an unreasonable risk of flight or an unreasonable risk to the community, they are not. Factors examined can be the nature of the charge and criminal history, among many others. A consistent problem, however, is that there is a third choice between release and incarceration, and that is a secured bond. A secured bond, which is a very common result of this process, places a monetary requirement for

release. Given *X* amount of dollars, normally between \$1,000 and \$15,000 though it certainly can be higher, a defendant will be released. The money is held as a guarantee of compliance with the rules of bond, such as coming back to court and not breaking the law.

Placing a financial condition for release from confinement is catastrophic to people who are accused of crimes and afflicted with poverty. Without the income to “make bond,” they are incarcerated without ever having been convicted of a crime. This makes the process of just being accused of a crime a devastating one and one that reinforces a cycle of poverty. Because even a case resolved quickly, such as a misdemeanor, frequently takes a month or more before a suspect appears in court; jobs are almost always lost. Without employment for the loved one accused of a crime, whole families can suffer and put their housing and childcare needs in jeopardy. One of the great tragedies of this system is that there is an alternative option. It is called an “unsecured bond with pretrial supervision” in which the court orders supervision of the accused person, but doesn’t require money to be paid up front. This has proven to be just as effective at reducing recidivism and ensuring that people appear for court as a cash bond.

Rehabilitative and Recovery Programs as an Alternative to Incarceration

At the completion of a case, if someone is found guilty of a charge, the judge decides what kind of punishment is appropriate. In the ever-increasing opioid epidemic, many defendants are convicted either directly for drug use, or for other crimes that stem out of drug addiction. While there are some non-profit and government operated recovery and treatment options, these are few and frequently are available only after conviction, not before. This means that a person afflicted with poverty has fewer options to propose to the judge as an alternative to incarceration than someone with the money or family support to privately fund their treatment. Without robust treatment alternatives, judges are more likely to view incarceration as the only option available to stop the drug use and avoid a future overdose. With more financial resources, a defendant can present not only more options to the judge to avoid jail time, but they can also begin treatment immediately, and perhaps by demonstrating they’re actively in recovery already, convince the Prosecutor to dismiss the charge or amend it to a type of conviction less destructive to their lives. This, of course, is, aside from treatment, actually working far better than incarceration at helping addicts maintain their sobriety and recovery. Incarceration without treatment is not as effective a tool at keeping someone drug free as treatment is. If

someone's poverty prevents them from getting the help they need, further exposure to the criminal justice system is common.

The Punishment Cycle of Probation

At the end of the overwhelming majority of criminal cases, the defendant is sentenced to a term of probation in addition to whatever active jail time they receive. They are told that if they comply with the terms of probation, they can then avoid even larger punishments in the future. An amount of jail time, often several years with felony charges, is suspended on the condition that they comply with the rules set by a probation officer. The goal of this system is to avoid recidivism by supervising the defendant for years after the case is over. This frequently requires, among many other things, regular meetings with a probation officer, maintaining employment, and regular drug testing. These requirements are substantially more difficult to comply with for those without any financial resources.

Those afflicted with poverty frequently have jobs that do not give them flexibility, and they are inevitably confronted with the choice of either going to work or meeting with their probation officer. If they choose going to work, they can be reincarcerated for missing a meeting. If they choose to miss a shift at work, they can lose their job. If they lose their job, then they could be reincarcerated for not maintaining employment. While probation officers often have the ability to try to work around a defendant's employment, and sometimes do, probationers (people on probation) live on a constant knife's edge. For someone afflicted with poverty, particularly in a rural area where having the funds necessary to own a car could be a practical requirement for arriving at meetings with the probation office, this balancing act can prove nearly impossible.

How to get a public defender

Everyone charged with a crime in America has a constitutional right to a fair trial. Over fifty years ago, the Supreme Court of the United States decided that in order to have a fair trial, you need to have access to an attorney for help. When someone is charged with a crime that involves the possibility of jail time, and they cannot otherwise afford to pay for an attorney themselves, they can ask the Court to appoint an attorney for them. The Court will ask an individual to fill out a financial form that they provide to the Court at their first court date, and if they don't have the funds necessary to hire an attorney on their own, the Court will appoint the Office of the Public Defender to provide an attorney. The Court will then send the Office of the Public Defender the court documents informing them of the case as well as give the individual directions to the Public Defender's Office. - Ryan Ruzic

Purpose and Effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System

In the minds of many Americans, the criminal justice system creates safe communities by administering fair and just sanctions for lawbreakers as deterrence against their interference in our lives. In Virginia, for those incarcerated, the cost to society is an average of \$21,299 per inmate per year. What do we expect from this investment and what do we get?

In civics classes, we learned that the Declaration of Independence claims that all men are created equal and that the Constitution guarantees us certain rights that protect us from unfair treatment by the criminal justice system. However, the disproportionate rate of incarceration of poor, young, minority, and mentally ill people cited above raises some questions about our justice system, if not the effectiveness, at least the fairness of it.

We call prisons “correctional institutions” because we imagine that they will change people who are incarcerated, but according to a report of the Congressional Research Service (*Nathan James, Offender Reentry: Correctional Statistics, Reintegration in the Community and Recidivism, 2015*), the recidivism rate (repeated criminal acts after release from prison) of prisoners is a shocking 76.6%. There is a certain irony in calling something a correctional system when we take into account that during imprisonment, often a long way from home, family ties are broken. There is a minimal effort at rehabilitation. This is the start of a descending spiral where many families are left without a wage earner and children without parents.

Unfortunately, conviction for a crime, even a misdemeanor or non-violent offense, can be the beginning of a cycle of troubles, both legal and economic, with the greatest burden falling again on low income individuals. First, with any kind of criminal record, especially when accompanied by a lack of education and skills, ex-cons encounter extreme difficulty finding employment. According to a 2016 report by the Council of Economic Advisors, many federal, state and local laws limit the kinds of occupations available to this group. Similarly, governments often use business license requirements such as for barbers, cosmetologists, and beauticians as a barrier to entry for people with a criminal history. (Louisiana even has a ban on florists with records). These policies are clearly designed to protect not only the public but also those already employed in a given field, even though the licensing requirements don’t necessarily relate to the kind of crime a person has committed.

A person convicted of a crime may be subject to further restrictions on access to rental housing, tuition assistance for education, and a decrease in a person's eligibility for certain public assistance. Such limitations, when combined with the financial burden of unpaid legal fees and fines, often lead to new arrests and re-confinement. These factors affect a community as well as a convict. For example, widespread incarceration reduces the pool of marriageable men, and the absence of parents may lead to inadequate parenting and even foster care. And of course, with many in a community incarcerated, that community will have less income.

Promising Trends in Corrections and Rehabilitation

These are not new concerns. Recently, however there have been some encouraging developments which are especially promising for those who are poor or have limited resources. A number of programs in Fauquier County and elsewhere are focused on alternatives to incarceration and/or how prison time can be used for purposes which go beyond simply keeping criminals off the street. These initiatives include increased emphasis on counseling, drug treatment, education, job training, development of social skills, restoration of victims' costs for property crimes, etc. Increased attention is also devoted to helping released prisoners make successful adjustments as they return to society.

Alternatives to Incarceration in Fauquier County

As described below, Fauquier County has adopted some alternative approaches and is exploring others. These include services of the Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center and Fauquier County Adult Court Services.

Incarceration alternatives include restorative justice, probation, restitution, community service, addiction treatment, and other rehabilitative services. Properly implemented, they can be more effective in deterring crime and reducing repeat offenses than incarceration while at the same time being more cost effective. These are not limited to serving low income individuals. And, to the extent such solutions allow offenders to remain employed and in their homes, they reduce the cost of social services that would otherwise be necessary for the offender's family.

Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center (PDRC)

The Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center (PDRC) in Warrenton has developed a Community Justice and Peacebuilding Program (CJP) to provide early access to mediation and restorative justice services. All services are

confidential and offered for free or on a sliding scale. For more information, call the PDRC office at 540-347-6650. www.PiedmontDisputeResolution.com

Mediation

Mediation is a process where a neutral third party assists disputing parties in resolving a conflict. Mediation focuses on the needs and interests of the parties involved, using a variety of techniques to guide the process in a constructive direction and to help the parties find their optimal solution. This is used for a variety of issues such as landlord-tenant disputes, child custody, and bills from vendors. Mediators help manage the interaction between the disputing parties and facilitate open communication with the goal of reaching an agreement which can be validated by a judge.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is an alternative response to wrong doing and crime. It differs significantly from the typical criminal justice process. In a typical court proceeding, the state is represented as the victim, while the actual victim of the crime is often largely ignored. Restorative justice is based on the understanding that when a “crime” has occurred, all individuals in the community who have been impacted by this breakdown need to be healed. The focus of restorative justice is to hold offenders accountable to the people who have been harmed by the crime and to provide an opportunity for offenders to accept responsibility for their actions.

The restorative justice practice starts with organizing a meeting between the victim(s) and the offender, their support persons, and sometimes with representatives of the wider community. The goal is to “restore” the community by inviting all parties to share their experience of what happened, discussing who was harmed by the crime/wrongdoing and creating a consensus for what the offender can do to repair the harm. This may include apologies, payments of money given from the offender to the victim, and other actions to compensate those affected. Restorative Justice is not a replacement for the traditional criminal justice system but works in conjunction with it.

Often the experience of an offender meeting with and apologizing to his or her victim is transformative for all parties. Both parties gain a deeper understanding of the nature and cause of what happened and the significant impact it has had on the lives of those affected. The victim feels heard and better understood. The offender often experiences sincere remorse and a deep desire to try to make amends and to avoid repeating this sort of harm.

Fauquier County Adult Court Services (ACS)

One of the challenges facing every judge is what to do with a defendant not yet convicted of any offense who, if not granted bail, may languish in jail for many months. The reason that this is a challenge is that many defendants who cannot afford bail might well not show up for trial if released on their own recognizance. The mission of the Fauquier County Office of Adult Court Services is to assist the judge in making a reasonable determination as to who should be released before trial. This enhances public safety, reduces jail overcrowding, and because these defendants have not yet been found guilty, promotes basic fairness.

After referral by a judge, ACS screens candidates for suitability for pretrial release and provides support services and supervision to those awaiting trial. ACS also supervises those who have been convicted of a crime and sentenced to probation. In Fiscal Year 2018, ACS safely supervised 425 people on pre-trial release. In addition, 1,039 probationers were supervised in the community as part of or after their sentencing by the court.

The average daily jail cost per inmate in Fauquier County is \$88.33 in contrast to the \$5.10 daily cost to supervise that same individual in the community. (www.fauquiercounty.gov.) Approximately 89% of the individuals released on their own recognizance showed up for trial. Family life was not disrupted and more importantly, to the extent that these low income people were able to keep their jobs, their families did not need additional public assistance and fewer children were placed in foster care.

A Re-entry Program: Virginia Cares

Re-entry into a community after release from incarceration is one of the greatest challenges a person can face. (*The American Psychological Association, SES indicator, March 2018, From Prisons to Re-entry*) Virginia Cares, operated by People, Inc., Community Action, is one of the few programs directly addressing that challenge in Fauquier County and Virginia.

This program provides immediate help to ex-offenders in finding food, clothing, housing, transportation and forms of identification. Along with helping individuals complete their parole or probation requirements successfully, Virginia Cares helps former inmates to find long term employment possibilities through counseling and workshops in job readiness and job search skills such as resume preparation and mock

interviews. It also helps with opportunities to access additional education and training.

Virginia Cares supports criminals' reintegration into their families and communities. Their activities include post-release individual counseling and support groups which address such issues as making better life choices, identifying what skills and behaviors are needed for successful employment, and conflict resolution. For more information, call People Inc., Virginia Cares at 540-376-3380.

Concluding Comments

As members of middle-class society, many of us are privileged in ways that we do not fully appreciate. This has to do not only with the obvious things that sustain us on a daily basis - adequate food, shelter, medical care, transportation, etc., but also with the resources that we have to deal with unanticipated events and circumstances that may arise. This is especially true in regard to legal situations where those who are poor may not only lack the funds to pay for suitable representation, but also do not know the “dance steps” required to function in their own best interests within the court and legal systems, often leading to unfortunate outcomes.

Of course, in the case of violent crimes, removal from the community may be appropriate, but considering that, according to Nathan James (2015), “Nearly all prisoners will return to their communities as some point,” it would still be in our interest to have them return at whole human beings, educated, suited for employment, and ready to begin a crime-free life. The question is how this can be accomplished.



CHAPTER 8

POVERTY - YOUTH AND EDUCATION

A Google search of the internet shows new research is published regularly about how poverty poses additional challenges for the young, from prenatal services for expectant parents to care for newborns to assure their proper development. Beyond nutrition, shelter, and clothing, there are severe psychological impacts of poverty on both parents and children.

An article in *Money Magazine*, December 2019 by Emma Young, *The Psychological Impacts of Poverty Digested*, reports two findings that raise concerns. The first describes differences in cognitive functioning in the prefrontal cortex of the brain of poor children. Robert Knight, lead researcher, reported that “Kids from lower socioeconomic states show brain physiology patterns similar to someone who actually had damage in the frontal lobe as an adult.” The article goes on to say “the deficits the team observed could cause problems with self-regulation and behavioral difficulties (both of which have been documented among poor children.)” The second finding describes a longitudinal study that described adults who were poor as children showed memory deficits. One hopeful conclusion is that reducing overall stress and providing appropriate remedial services may make a difference. The practical concerns of childcare and education for all parents are intensified when issues of scarcity dominate a family.

The Need

Uncertainty and anxiety which can hinder the development of their children into confident and hopeful adults are constant concerns of poor parents. There are community services now available that try to provide children growing up in poverty with the opportunities that many of us take for granted. Some services such as child care are direct and defined, while others such as fostering the growth and development of children are tailored to individual circumstances.

Child Development for Newborns and Toddlers

Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Infant and Toddler Connection (ITC)

While Infant and Toddler Connection services may be offered in a variety of settings, focus is placed on delivering them in the child's natural environment, including at home and in the community. Early intervention is provided for infants and toddlers (birth through age 2) who have a diagnosed condition with a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay, have an existing delay, or have atypical development. The goal of these services is to help parents and caregivers support their child's development, lessen the effects of the delay or disability, improve the overall functioning of the child, and increase the child's participation in home and community activities. They are designed to address the child's adaptive environment and overall development, including communication skills, physical development, cognitive development, and social or emotional development.



Available services include: Service coordination, Eligibility determination, Physical therapy, Occupational therapy, Speech therapy, and Developmental services. For more information, call 540-829-7480.

Healthy Families

Healthy Families, a program formerly offered by the Fauquier Health Department and now by Skyline Community Action, offers new parents guidance and support in creating a healthy home and fostering the optimal growth and development of their children. Services include: referral to resources and supplies needed for infant care, screening for such issues as post-partum depression for mothers, multiple risk factors in child development for infants, as well as safety screening for the home. They are

offered free of charge to expectant parents and parents of newborns. For more information, call 540-878-9221. www.Skylinecap.org.

Preschool Education

Educational services independent of child care agencies are provided by the following:

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

VPI is a free, full-time preschool program located in five Fauquier elementary schools (MM Pierce, C. Hunter Ritchie, Brumfield, Coleman, and Grace Miller); its intent is to serve preschool students not enrolled in Head Start. The program serves a minimum of 82 students across all five schools. Each classroom has a certified teacher and instructional aide who use an evidence-based curriculum. Transportation to/from school is provided by Fauquier County Public Schools. To be eligible a child must be 4 years old by September 30 of the current school year and families must meet at least ONE of three criteria:

- The household income must be at or below 200% of the federal poverty level; if a child has a diagnosed disability, the household income must be at or below 350% of the federal poverty level;
- The family is considered homeless: living with a family member due to lack of housing, living in a motel/hotel, living in a shelter, etc.; or
- A parent and/or guardian has not earned a high school diploma.

Families are provided with an application for a free/reduced-price lunch and many schools also operate a weekend food program. For families in need of additional supports in the home, school social workers can provide necessary information to connect to appropriate community resources. Throughout the school year, workshops are offered to families to guide them in supporting their children in the home.

When no slot is available at VPI (and the family is not eligible for Head Start), St. James Episcopal Church is sometimes able to offer a limited number of scholarships for attending preschool at a significantly reduced cost. www.fcps1.org.

Head Start

Head Start is a national child development program for children from birth to age 5, which provides services to promote academic, social, and emotional development for income-eligible families. Fauquier Community Action Head Start is a federally-funded preschool program for children

from low income families, ages 3 to 5, in Fauquier County. It provides services to promote academic, social and emotional development including health screening and nutrition. Recognizing that parents are their children's first and most important teachers, Head Start fosters activities that support the well-being of families as learners and lifelong educators. Many opportunities focused on developing leadership skills are provided to families to help them serve as advocates for their children and leaders in building connections to the entire community. www.fcacheadstart.org.

Child Care and After School Programs

Child care for infants, pre-school, and school-age children of working parents can be a huge obstacle because of limited availability and cost. The community offers several public options.

Child Care Assistance (DSS)

The Child Care Assistance program of the Fauquier Department of Social Services provides funding to enhance the quality, affordability, and supply of child care available to families. Child-centered, family-focused services that support the family goals of economic self-sufficiency and appropriate child development are provided for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child while a parent is participating in an approved activity. www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/assistance.cgi.

Fauquier Community Child Care (FCCC)

Fauquier Community Child Care has cared for the children enrolled in Fauquier County Public Schools since 1991. FCCC is located in ten elementary schools and provides affordable, licensed care before and after school. Fees are based on household income and eligibility is determined based on payroll information and other income as reported by parent(s). FCCC also offers a weekly camp program at four locations during the summer partnering with other local organizations, such as FISH and the Fauquier Community Food Bank, which provide lunches and food bags to families in need. Other assistance may include needs beyond quality child care such as tuition assistance, clothing, shoes, bathing suits, backpacks and school supplies. Last year FCCC served 500 children a day during the school year and 250 children a week during the summer program. Subsidies included over \$50,000 in scholarships and tuition. www.fcccva.org.

Caring for Angels Child Care Center

The Caring for Angels Child Care Center, located in Bealeton and sponsored by Community Touch, Inc, provides affordable day care, pre-

school and, in the summer, camps for up to 22 children ages 2-12. Included are educational programs and pre-K readiness, arts and crafts, games and activities, and a library reading program. It is open Monday-Friday from 6 am to 6 pm. For more information, call 540-439-1244.

Boys and Girls Club of Fauquier County (BGCF)

The mission of Boys & Girls Club is to help boys and girls of all backgrounds, ages 5-18, especially those whose need is greatest, to build confidence, develop character and acquire the skills needed to become productive, civic-minded, responsible adults. Located in Bealeton, Marshall, and Warrenton, the club is open for children from 2-7 p.m. Monday – Friday. The Boys & Girls Club of Fauquier is helping to shape the lives of hundreds of our youth with outstanding after school care programs. The BGCF helps to develop critical life skills, encouraging children to be their best while having fun. The monthly membership fee is \$100 per child with a 10% discount for each additional child. Financial aid is available. In the summer, camps are available to rising 5th graders for \$250. For more information, call 540-349-8890. www.bgcfauquier.org.

Windy Hill

Windy Hill Foundation supports a no-cost after school program for the children of Windy Hill residents which includes tutoring and recreation in cooperation with the Fauquier County Public Schools and the Fauquier County Parks and Recreation Department. www.windyhillfoundation.org.

Childhood Nutrition Inc. (CNI)

Childhood Nutrition is a private non-profit organization that has been serving family child care providers in 24 Virginia counties for more than 35 years. CNI offers assistance in meal planning and nutritional information. Providers receive partial reimbursements that assist in their ability to purchase healthy and nutritious foods. CNI currently works with five family child care providers in Fauquier County who serve approximately 40 low-income children.

The benefits of the CNI food program include training for providers in planning and preparing high quality meals and establishing good eating habits in children. www.cnpinc.org.

Fauquier County Public Schools

A range of special services is available to children from low-income families.

Free School Lunches

Many agencies listed above provide food, clothing, and school supplies for low-income children in schools. In addition, the public schools have a free and reduced priced meal program, breakfast and lunch, which may be supplemented for weekends and school breaks by community groups. In addition, qualifying for free school meals enables a family to get assistance with other school fees such as for textbooks, gym supplies, and access to computers where needed. Local schools receive help from community groups, churches, teachers, and Parent and Teacher Organizations (PTO's) which provide financial assistance for field trips and assigned school projects that require families to purchase materials outside of school.

Special Services for Homeless Students

Congress passed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in 1987. This law gives homeless children and youth several rights, principally to remain in their school of origin even if they or their families move out of the school district. The schools provide transportation. When a child moves between counties, the counties cooperate in coordinating and paying for such transportation. Students also get all the school services and supplies they need, and the law specifies that every school must have a homelessness liaison, usually a counselor or assistant principal to coordinate services to the families and children with the Department of Social Services and other community resources. While some children remain in this special program all year, up to 300 children are served during some part of the year. Special arrangements are made for unaccompanied youth who are not living with their parents or a caregiver.

HORIZONS

HORIZONS is a free program in northern Fauquier County that offers weekly well-rounded programming including outdoor and environmental education in cooperation with Fauquier County Department of Parks and Recreation. It also includes: nutrition and physical education that promote a healthy and active lifestyle in collaboration with Fauquier FISH and FRESH (Fauquier Reaches for Excellence in School Health); fine arts, performing arts and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) instruction with local partners, as well as monthly field trips and summer camps. It serves approximately 75 children in kindergarten through eighth grade who attend W.G. Coleman Elementary, Claude Thompson Elementary and Marshall Middle schools. www.fcps1.org.

Summer Camps

In addition to summer camps offered through Community Touch, Fauquier Community Child Care and the Boys and Girls Club, listed above, which supplement their regular children's activities; several other agencies sponsor enrichment programs for children.

Salvation Army Camp Happyland

Located on 635 acres of woodland about two hours south of Washington, D.C. in Richardsville, Virginia, Camp Happyland is a summer destination for more than 1,000 youth from communities that the Salvation Army serves in the Washington, D.C. metro area and Virginia. From sunup to sundown, campers are learning more about themselves and God's creation, while meeting and interacting with kids their age. Camp Happyland provides three nutritious meals daily, water breaks, and snacks. The program is accredited by the American Camping Association and participates in the USDA summer nutrition program. For more information, call 540-399-1197.

Verdun Adventure Bound

Verdun is located on 55+ acres in Rixeyville. Its natural habitat is ideal for groups seeking team building in outdoor educational and adventure experiences. Students from Rappahannock, Culpeper, and Fauquier Counties enjoy customized experiential team building programs. The focus is on building resiliency, communication, collaboration, increasing self-esteem and self-awareness, and lowering anxiety. A limited number of scholarships based on economic need are available. www.verdunadventurebound.org.

Windy Hill Summer on the Hill

Residents of Windy Hill can participate in an eight-week day camp which offers school-age campers an opportunity to increase confidence and self-esteem, improve social skills and make friends, and develop independence and leadership qualities. www.windyhillfoundation.org.

HORIZONS Summer Program

Fauquier County Public Schools offer a daily HORIZONS summer camp, five days a week from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The program provides enrichment activities and project-based learning such as science investigation, nature exploration and data collection, historical research and site visits, for example. Recreational activities include playing team sports, hiking and swimming. www.fcps1.org.

Concluding Comments

While there are many services available to all children in the community, a number address the special needs of children who live in poverty or are homeless to help them keep up with other children their age. These efforts concentrate not only on nutrition, but on support services that promote a child's optimal psychological well being, growth, and development.



CHAPTER 9

ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO POVERTY

The correlation between education and income level is well documented. Generally speaking, the more years of formal education and the more specialized training an individual completes, the greater that person's income will be over a working lifetime. This chapter describes the education and training opportunities offered by several agencies and institutions which help to enable those who are economically disadvantaged to increase and sustain their incomes and to escape poverty.

The Need

The term *need* as used in this chapter has a somewhat different connotation when compared to its use in other chapters. For most poverty-related topics such as hunger or healthcare, need is primarily defined as shortage of a necessary commodity or service. In the case of education and training, however, the term has more to do with the need for awareness of available opportunities and the lack of financial resources which are required to take advantage of them.



Opportunities and Assistance for those with Limited Financial Resources

Educational opportunities and assistance for those who are poor fall broadly into two categories: 1) tuition and other financial assistance which enable individuals to enroll and participate in education and training; and 2)

programs of study which are designed to prepare people for higher paying jobs and more sustained employment. This chapter describes programs and opportunities which provide both categories of assistance.

Local Programs which provide both education/training and financial assistance

Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC)

Lord Fairfax Community College, located at 6480 College Street in Warrenton (Fauquier campus), offers financial assistance to qualifying students in a variety of forms. Opportunities are available to individuals enrolled in credit and non-credit programs.

Credit programs

LFCC provided need-based assistance to a total of 2,274 students in credit courses through a variety of financial aid programs during FY 2018-19. These included a mix of federal grants, state grants, and/or scholarships which could be applied to tuition, books, and fees. A complete list of these opportunities can be found online at LFCC Types of Financial Aid. Through its simplified admissions process involving a single form, the college identifies the eligibility of each individual student for its approximately 180 scholarship programs.

More specialized assistance is provided through funding provided by the Rural Virginia Horseshoe Initiative (RVHI). LFCC has recently employed a success coach who coordinates financial and other assistance for students in need. (The term “horseshoe” reflects the geographical distribution of participating community colleges serving rural areas of the state.) Currently this program provides assistance to 38 LFCC students. This includes financial support for tuition and books and for dealing with other obstacles and impediments which interfere with students’ abilities to continue their enrollments and to succeed in their college work. Such assistance may include, for example, the provision of laptop computers, gas cards, car repairs, and other issues depending on the availability of funds and the judgment of the success coach. An individual student is limited to \$2,000 in “lifetime” support from RRHI funding.

Non-Credit Certificate programs

Lord Fairfax Community College offers substantial financial support to qualifying students in Workforce Solutions, its professional development and continuing education program, using Virginia state funds. Through

its Fast Forward program, the state conducts a detailed needs assessment, updated and revised at regular intervals, which identifies priority topics for workforce development and improvement in the regions covered by each of Virginia's 23 community colleges. This program then provides tuition assistance to students who enroll in certificate programs addressing these content areas.

At present this assistance is available to students in three non-credit curricula at Lord Fairfax Community College: health professions, trades (engineering), and cyber security. Currently, students are enrolled in eighteen certificate programs in these areas, ranging from six weeks to six months in duration. These programs run on a year-round basis, independent of the semester format used for credit programs. Participants pay only one-third of the regular tuition; the remaining two-thirds is paid by the state. In FY2019, 625 Lord Fairfax students used Fast Forward funding in earning 1,052 certificates. Lord Fairfax was one of the first Virginia community colleges approved for participation in the Fast Forward program which began in 2015. The Workforce Solutions section of the LFCC website has a number of success stories from individuals attesting to the fact that their work lives have been transformed by this program and the financial aid associated with it.

For those Fast Forward students who cannot afford to pay one-third of regular tuition, additional support is available through FANTIC (Financial Assistance for Non-credit Training that leads to Industry Credentials). Through this program, qualifying individuals may receive up to 90% of whatever tuition they are required to pay after other discounts. In FY2019, 98 Workforce students received FANTIC funding.

Further financial assistance for qualifying students is available through funding provided through the WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) Act. WIOA, which was updated most recently in 2019, is the successor to the Workplace Investment Act of 1998. Its purpose is to provide workforce investment support for programs that “increase employment, retention, and earnings of recipients.” WIOA seeks to improve the quality of the workforce and to reduce welfare dependence by increasing the “occupational skill attainment” of participants. LFCC students who qualify financially may have up to 100% of their educational expenses covered by WIOA.

Developmental Studies

In addition to the various forms of financial assistance described above, Lord Fairfax Community College offers developmental classes in math and English for students who are not yet academically qualified for admission

to credit programs in order to make up the gaps which prevent them from entering regular degree programs. These classes are available to all students who need them regardless of economic status, but financial assistance is available to those who are eligible. Developmental classes provide a path for some financially disadvantaged students to progress toward credentials which lead to more secure employment.

Local programs which offer education and training designed to raise income and employment levels

Piedmont Region Adult & Career Education Program (PRACEP)

PRACEP is one of 22 regional adult education programs under the Virginia state Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. Headquartered at 6368 Flat Run Road in Locust Grove, VA, it serves Culpeper, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock Counties in addition to Fauquier. The mission of PRACEP and its 21 companion programs is “to prepare as many individuals as possible for postsecondary education and/or careers and to provide English language classes to non-native speakers.” The target audience includes Fauquier residents who do not have a high school diploma, which is approximately 9% of the adult population over 25 years of age.

PRACEP offers day and evening GED (high school equivalency) and English as a second language (ESL) classes which integrate some basic computer and soft skills training. These classes are offered 2-3 times per week during the fall and spring semesters with some summer offerings in Bealeton, Marshall, and Warrenton. Registration occurs by appointment at the Workplace, Fauquier Department of Social Services, at 320 Hospital Drive in Warrenton between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm on Thursdays. During 2018-2019 these classes served 190 adult learners.

Literacy Volunteers of Fauquier County (LVFC)

The primary purpose of Literacy Volunteers of Fauquier County, located at 320 Hospital Drive, Suite 10, in Warrenton, is to teach beginning reading and basic literacy, including writing, basic communication, and computer skills. Generally speaking, this tutorial program serves students at beginning literacy and English language levels who lack sufficient skills to enter PRACEP classes. As appropriate, LVFC also helps students with workplace literacy, identification of employment opportunities, preparation of resumes, interviewing and other job seeking skills. During 2018-2019, LVFC served approximately 42 individual learners primarily on a one-to-one basis.

Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW)

VIEW is a workforce program administered by the Fauquier Department of Social Services which provides employment and training to TANF recipients who are required to participate in the program as a condition of eligibility and to TANF recipients who volunteer to participate. www.dss.virginia.gov.

Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS) Bridges Program

The RRCS Bridges program, located in Elkwood, Virginia, serving Fauquier residents, offers day-support and pre-vocational services for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Bridges utilizes a person-centered approach to provide training and supports, including meaningful community activities and inclusivity. The goal of the program is to provide services built on the principles of normalization, community presence, community participation, individual choice, empowerment, and natural consequences. The support, training, and assistance are in the least restrictive environment possible. The program offers activities designed to help individuals with such skills as daily and independent living, socialization, problem solving, decision-making, self-advocacy, communication, fine and gross motor skills, and learning general work skills. Support, assistance, and training occur during individual and group activities that take place at the program sites or in the community.

The Workplace

The Workplace is not an education, training, or employment agency per se, but encourages and assists clients with independent job searches using multiple resources and connects them to hiring events held throughout the year. Over 1,250 residents were assisted in finding employment during 2019. Located at 320 Hospital Drive, Suite 11, in Warrenton, The Workplace is open Monday to Friday from 10 am to 3 pm and is available to all Fauquier County and surrounding county residents to help them in finding employment. The Workplace offers the following one-stop supportive services free of charge: job postings direct from employers, web sites and local newspapers; computer guidance with setting up emails and navigating/submitting on-line applications; high-speed computer internet access; fax and copy machine use. Resume and interview/job preparation assistance is available by appointment. For more information, call 540-422-8422.

Local Programs which offer scholarship and financial assistance (but not training) to help individuals increase their education and employment levels

Northern Piedmont Community Foundation (NPCF)

The Northern Piedmont Community Foundation, 321 Walker Drive, Suite 303, in Warrenton, provides financial assistance to graduating seniors in Fauquier County Public Schools to help them pursue college and/or advanced training. For the 2019-20 academic years, 63 students have been awarded scholarships from 26 sources. A complete list of scholarships can be found on the NPCF website (www.npcf.org). The majority are for one year, though 20 students have received four-year awards. These scholarships range in value from \$1,000 to several thousand dollars, though a few are for \$500. Many have very specialized criteria for eligibility (for students at a particular college enrolled in a particular curriculum, for example), but approximately 90% include financial need as a primary consideration. Ninety-five per cent go to students attending four-year schools, the rest to two-year and certificate programs. (Support is being increased for these areas.) For some scholarships, if financial need is not obvious in the stated scholarship criteria, NPCF contacts the donor for approval. Other criteria when considering financial aid are: after school activities or work history, involvement in school activities, sports and/or clubs, essays, recommendations, GPA, and number of family members.

Challenges Experienced by Financially Disadvantaged Adults Pursuing Education and Training with or without Scholarship Assistance

The following account in italics was provided by Jane Bowling-Wilson, Executive Director of the Northern Piedmont Community Foundation. It is based on one person's story, but the kinds of circumstances that it describes are common to many who, in addition, may be the first in their families to attempt post-secondary education. These include lack of role models, lack of family support, continuing demands of their families for economic help, undefined life goals, and unfamiliarity with the link between training and employment.

The pursuit of education and training poses many challenges for the poor, even those who are fortunate enough to receive financial assistance. Some of these are reflected in the experience of Angela (name changed), an area resident who received a two-year technical scholarship for \$6,000 through the Northern Piedmont Community Foundation (NPCF), originally

to pursue her interest in welding. This was a great first step in continuing her education, but only a first step. Other challenges remained.

Angela came from humble beginnings. In her early childhood, she was raised by her grandparents because her mother was “not good at taking care of people.” Her father was absent for most of her life. When she was ten years old, her grandparents died. From this point she was in and out of foster homes with periodic stays with relatives who circled in and out of her life bringing some good but mostly bad baggage. She excelled in high school and was captain of the volleyball team, but she basically grew up without role models, without stability, and certainly without resources.

When she began her welding program at LFCC, Angela lived in a rural area with relatives whose family income was about \$18,000 per year. No one in the household had a car, so even with the money for classes provided by the scholarship; there was no way to get to class. Once again things fell in place through the generosity of others. NPCF organized a round robin of drivers; staff, family (outside the home), and friends drove Angela to welding class. Then another non-profit heard of her dilemma and furnished her with a car. This was three years ago. After achieving this certificate, Angela realized that welding did not match her still undefined goals.

Since then she has taken several certification classes while she worked for a construction company and later for another industry where she loaded and unloaded trucks. This work, however, involved a lot of night work which interfered with her class schedule, so she switched jobs again. She now works on a production line from 5:30 AM until late afternoon. She makes \$13 per hour, pays rent, and needs to buy another car. She just found out that her employer needs to cut back all staff members’ hours for the next 3-4 months, which means that she will have to find additional work to pay her bills.

Some months ago, Angela decided that she would like to start her own business and employ mostly women. She registered for a business degree program and signed up initially for three classes. She started business classes at LFCC only to discover that almost all assignments and quizzes were completed on line. She could not afford internet service at home, so she went to the library after work for three weeks. This proved both stressful and unmanageable. She withdrew while she could still get her money back. She is now awaiting the beginning of another certificate program in three months.

In her efforts to pursue education and training, Angela has maintained a positive attitude and demonstrated ability and commitment. Nonetheless

she has encountered a string of obstacles in her three years of educational and training pursuits which are not only financial, but also have to do with transportation, internet access, time to study while still working to support herself, etc. Despite the guidance and assistance of helpful professionals at Northern Piedmont Community Foundation and elsewhere, she lacks the models and family support system that many students can take for granted. As a result, her educational future remains uncertain whether or not she receives scholarship assistance.

While this story illustrates the challenges confronting this scholarship applicant with her frustrating delays in finding a direction, even with her own efforts to succeed academically and the support of the NPCF, it also demonstrates the same issues that many middle class children face in adapting to postsecondary education. For example, many previously good students are homesick or fail classes in their first semester, have to change to a different school, or take a gap year. So addressing just the financial needs of scholarship students is insufficient in helping them move forward when in fact the attention needed to the range of their challenges may be even broader than those faced by young people from supportive families. This may be an area where additional research is needed to make these programs more effective.

Concluding Comments

Significant opportunities, available to financially disadvantaged adults who wish to extend their education are offered through a variety of local agencies and programs. These benefits occur in the realm of direct financial assistance as well as through classes and related experiences which enable individuals to improve their employability and earning power. However, these prospective students often confront substantial obstacles in pursuing education and training even when their tuition and other direct expenses are covered by outside sources.



CHAPTER 10

RECENT HISTORICAL TRENDS & IMPLICATIONS OF POVERTY IN FAUQUIER COUNTY

According to census reports, the percentage of Fauquier County's population with incomes below federal poverty guidelines has decreased slightly in recent years to 6.16% from a high of approximately 7.5%, after gradually increasing during the preceding decade. Since government thresholds are revised frequently, there is probably a false precision to these figures but, taken literally, they suggest that about 1000 Fauquier citizens have escaped the poverty rolls, at least according to federal standards. This, however, raises a number of questions for which we don't have clear answers. How much of this is due to increased effectiveness of Social Services and other programs designed to help citizens in need? How much of it has to do with changes in poverty standards designated by the federal government? Are the majority of people in need today the same individuals and families who were in distress five or ten years ago? How many of these people have worked their way out of poverty only to be replaced by others? While we don't know the answers to these questions, there seems little likelihood that poverty in our area will be eliminated anytime soon.

Poverty is an elusive concept which can be defined and tabulated in different ways. Statistical categories provided by government and other sources are arbitrarily determined and falsely precise. Income thresholds are often misleading since individuals and families differ broadly in their financial obligations and responsibilities. A family without a car, for example, who meets the poverty guidelines may actually be in better shape financially than one who has a somewhat larger income but owns a vehicle and must support that cost in addition perhaps to higher medical expenses (even with government assistance), personal debts, and other obligations which are not considered under the guidelines. In recognition of this fact, local food pantries and other service providers often stretch their eligibility standards to include some people whose incomes exceed official poverty standards because they are in genuine need.

Poverty is not just lack of money to meet immediate necessities. People who lack financial resources are often uninformed about services and benefits to which they are entitled. They may lack the knowledge and the skills to communicate effectively with Social Services and other helping agencies, or in some cases, the literacy skills to deal effectively

with application procedures. In general, those who are economically disadvantaged do not have the luxury of delayed gratification. Those who are poor typically lack the luxury of preventative medical and dental care which they cannot afford, leading to more serious and costly conditions later.

As discussed earlier in this report, a much greater proportion of people in poverty suffer from depression and other mental and emotional disorders than is true in the general population. As in the case of any group, the poor are comprised of individuals who are quite diverse. Some may be stereotypical down-and-outers who constantly work the system to their own best advantage. But, as a whole, this is not a fair description of those who lack the resources to provide fully for their own needs.

According to **These are our People** (Jones and Lowe, 2012), a collection of 24 life stories of clients of the Fauquier Community Food Bank, many FCFB recipients have been self-supporting their entire lives (though sometimes by small margins) until some combination of physical ailments, job loss, and economic conditions in the broader society has rendered them without sufficient resources to meet their basic needs. Often, they rely on the Food Bank only for brief periods until they can get their heads above water again. They usually do not want to be there and leave as soon as they are able despite the fact that their circumstances continue to be challenging. Jones and Lowe comment:

In recent times, all of these individuals have confronted growing challenges. For many, life has become increasingly episodic as they struggle to deal with one crisis after another--serious medical problems, unaffordable car repairs, inability to pay rent and utility costs, etc. If one crisis is averted, another strikes. They often feel as though they are trying to dodge a series of boulders rolling downhill. For the most part, however, these people are not complainers. They cope with difficult problems but maintain a steady resolve and a cautious, almost defiant sense of optimism. (p. xv).

While the passages above do not describe all Fauquier County residents who live in poverty, they are far more representative than might be supposed.



Concluding Comments

What do we make of this information? What does it really tell us about poverty in the relative prosperity of Fauquier County? It is hard to get beyond broad generalizations. At best poverty has declined modestly over the past decade or so, but with variable definitions and different standards of measurement, it is difficult to be sure. We know that poverty still exists throughout the county with, by some indicators, less in the central (Warrenton and vicinity) area than in the northern and southern sections. And we know that those who are poor in Fauquier County and elsewhere face an increasingly uncertain future in the current political climate which threatens the already meager resources devoted to combating poverty.

CHAPTER 11

MY REFLECTIONS ON ISSUES IN POVERTY AFTER COMPILING THIS REPORT

—By Jean Lowe

During the years when I was employed as a social worker and as a teacher of adults who were incarcerated and often functionally illiterate, I often heard sweeping criticisms of the poor: that they are lazy, that they don't want to work, that they work the system to use taxpayer dollars to their own advantage, that they deserve to live in poverty because of the poor decisions they have made, etc. As I have worked on this project over the past eight months, I have encountered similar perceptions from some of the people with whom I have talked. Based on my reading and many extended discussions with poverty professionals, volunteer workers, people who are poor, and others while preparing this document, however, I continue to believe that these perceptions are unfair and misleading. This is not to say that they are untrue in every case, but that they are not representative of poor people as a whole.

At the same time there are other issues surrounding efforts to end poverty. After discussion with others, I am not sure that most people understand why and how being poor is so challenging. I will try to give my perspective on the thinking behind some of these views. .

Some Ways of Thinking about Poverty

There are several ways people think about the causes of and remedies for poverty. (See Bradshaw, Ted. *Theories of Poverty and Anti poverty Programs*, Rural Poverty Research Center 2006). Two of the primary opposing approaches are: 1) Poverty is the result of an individual's behavior so we have to screen carefully whom we help and how much help to give them; and 2) Poverty results from inequities in society and so the way to make improvements is to make changes society wide. My own belief is that both of these perspectives have some merit, but they both are also too narrow to make any significant long lasting changes in people's lives which I believe should be the goal of anti-poverty efforts.

Most people seem to agree that we should approach community wide disasters such as earthquakes, fires, and widespread flooding by looking at immediate practical needs and doing what we can to relieve suffering and save lives. This of course is often the only practical approach. As time

goes on people may wonder about those who might be taking advantage of relief services, but at least at first, people are seen as victims of a terrible accident who not only may have been harmed but who also have little documentation about their residence or other qualifications.

In communities devastated by plant closings, people look at addressing the needs of the entire community rather than evaluating individual merit. This is, of course, because when dealing with millions of unemployed people, it is hard to see who were the good employees and who were the slackers. It is also because we understand that communities as a whole will thrive or fail.

In other areas, some research and a few programs look at systemic problems in a region such as poor transportation, or a lack of broadband access, a low minimum wage, jobs with no benefits, the impact of a high rate of substance abuse, jobs requiring skills lacked by those who are unable to find work. These programs address poverty from a society-wide perspective.

In government welfare programs such as Medicaid, Food Stamps, (now SNAP), and TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families aka Welfare) and some non-profit efforts, we typically look at individual needs and make judgments about what individual behaviors caused the problems. We base our decisions about whom to help not just on their need, but their perceived worthiness. Some people are quick to blame the poor while others feel compassion and don't want to limit services. I believe that we ought to evaluate all programs beyond those whose purpose is to relieve immediate suffering on their effectiveness in bringing people into self supporting status and a reasonable level of comfort.

As we complete our work on the poverty project, I will list some of the misconceptions that I have encountered and discuss the reasons that I believe that they are short-sighted.

Misconceptions and Other Puzzling Issues

Poor families take advantage of public assistance and often have more children just to increase welfare payments.

Of course this has happened. Just read the press. There are those who try to work the system everywhere, but mostly wide-spread cheating is a popular myth. This is the result of very limited opportunities to profit from this particular approach. The benefits are limited in amount and duration and restrictions on how many children can be included in the calculation

of benefits. That is, there is no real increase in income by this approach because the cost of a new baby far outweighs the meager additional benefits. The benefits available to a poor family under TANF, what most of us think of as welfare, are limited to the federal poverty level, which is not at all generous, and caps the number of children that can be helped. TANF also has rather stringent work requirements and may be limited in duration. This is not the way to an easy life.

Note: The 2020 Virginia legislative session has removed the restriction on additional funding for another child and will allow \$79 per month in the future.

Food Stamp (SNAP) recipients sell their food stamps to get money for drugs or alcohol.

This happens just as in any kind of fraud, but audits show that this is rare. (*Schnurer, Eric. Just How Wrong is Conventional Wisdom about Government Fraud, The Atlantic, August 15, 2013.*) Most people use their benefits as intended. Even so, such misuse is widely reported in the media. However, the electronic benefit system has rigorous fraud deterrents and Virginia also has a very strong audit program that deters much fraud. Most people who get these benefits really need them themselves. Still the stories are sensational and attract a lot of attention.

Food Stamp recipients don't use their benefits at the grocery store on food that will benefit them nutritionally or they try to buy other items.

The truth is that Food Stamps are limited to food items only. People who also need toothpaste, toilet paper, or diapers can't get them from food stamps. Living under these constraints is not a road to easy street. At the same time people can buy food that they and their children like to eat. Sometimes their diets are not approved of by some members of the public who feel entitled to criticize their choices at grocery checkout lines, but they like the rest of us get to choose what they will eat. These are not stupid people, and I believe they can be trusted to make good decisions for themselves and their families. Many are very canny in choosing items that are not usually given in government surplus food or readily available to them by other means.

Poor people accept government assistance when they should just get a job.

Of course, employment is the best of all poverty reducers, but this is still not a simple issue. What kind of job do we mean when we say, "Get a

job?” Are there good jobs available? Many who are poor and not seriously ill or disabled are already working one or two jobs at the minimum wage which does not amount to a living wage in Fauquier County. While we are celebrating a low unemployment rate, this does not address the problems with low wages or jobs with no benefits such as health care or sick leave. Good jobs change the entire picture for most people who are not disabled or very old.

Many well paying jobs today have technology requirements that some people can’t meet. For some of these, there is excellent training available from Lord Fairfax Community College, but those who already work long hours can’t find the time (or the energy) to attend such intensive training. It is very easy to see what someone else ought to be doing with their lives, but in making these judgments, we don’t always see the entire picture. The fact that we ourselves may have struggled for success is not always applicable to someone else’s circumstances. Good employment and fair conditions of employment are issues that the entire community must address in its full complexity.

Poor people cause their own problems by making poor decisions such as dropping out of school.

We all know of young adults across all classes of citizens who continue to rely on their parents for support when they could be working themselves. I haven’t seen this as the norm for those who are seeking help. Instead I have seen people forgo benefits that they are entitled to “so others who need them more than I do can get them.” I have also seen people fail to apply for benefits that could be theirs because of pride and not wanting to depend on others. Still others stop getting benefits as soon as they can skin by. Again, this isn’t everyone, but it is typical of many.

It is also true that many people made poor decisions such as dropping out of school when they were young. It is difficult to know what challenges they faced at the time they made those decisions or what options were available to them so again, I don’t want to be too quick to judge.

Dropping out of school isn’t simply a failure of the student but of the school, the teachers, and the community. Some children are frustrated by their continual failure to progress or by bullying at school. Some suffer from mental illness or addiction issues. Others may have competing demands placed on them by their families which need their earnings. Still others aren’t aware of the alternatives they have to get help with whatever problems they are facing. And again, these students are all young. Who among us hasn’t made really dumb choices at one time while we were

growing up? Most of us were saved from the consequences of our poor choices by a network of support.

There is some very important work going on in the Fauquier County Public Schools to address the causes of disruptive behavior leading to student suspensions and which often is a harbinger of later withdrawal. School discipline increasingly looks at many needs of disruptive students and tries to address these along with changing their troublesome behavior. The suspension rate in some Fauquier County schools has been reduced dramatically by these efforts.

When we look at other kinds of poor decisions made through a person's lifetime, we also need to look at how the world looked to them at the time. Things that seemed like a good idea often turn out in retrospect not to have been so in the long run. We need to address issues that are facing people today.

Should we look at helping individuals or addressing societal needs?

The needs of people in a city like Detroit where after a major industry shut down there suddenly is a lack of employment opportunities are different from those who have grown up in very poor areas. Sometimes such an impoverished community has no resources and schools serving the poor are often underfunded so that the playing field is not level. In these cases it is relatively easy to see the need for a community-wide response.

What about a family in which the breadwinner gets sick and can't work? The other parent in caring for a spouse typically becomes a less productive worker as a result of time taken to care for a family member. What if that breadwinner never fully recovers? What if that family is swamped by medical bills far beyond any hope of repayment? Do we have a safety net to help them? Are our expectations for their recovery realistic? Are there many who fit this profile suggesting we need an overall policy?

Helping a family financially over a long period of time doesn't give them the right incentives to make the changes that would improve their lives and encourages dependency.

This viewpoint is especially controversial. Where is the evidence that helping people creates dependence? Is this view based simply on anecdotes? In America we have a strong belief in the value of standing on one's own feet, a view which can influence our judgment. Even though we all know of people who are dependent on others unnecessarily, I oppose the view that long term assistance should be avoided because it causes dependence and reduces people's needs to be independent.

There is new research that shows adequate long term help makes families and communities stronger rather than inducing dependency.

There is increasing food for thought in recent research into long term assistance for the poor. In August of 2019, the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland, (not a group of liberal bleeding hearts, but of wealthy and hard headed business leaders!) released a comprehensive (2.3 million families) long term (10 year) study with a headline reading, “New research busts the myth of welfare dependency.” The article concludes that welfare help does not incentivize people to remain unemployed. “Provided that assistance is dependable rather than sporadic over an extended period of time, it could yield high social and economic returns by allowing families to make long term investments for the future.” (Furthermore, their studies involved cash-transfer to more than 2.3 million households, families in which they had to decide how best to use the funds. After the first month, most families made good decisions benefitting their long term welfare. This should prompt us to question our fear that poor people don’t know what to do with money.)

Furthermore, long term poverty leads to tunnel vision. This view is supported in the book **Scarcity** (Mullainathan, and Shafir, 2013.) which describes how living in scarcity leads to a reduced ability to make plans, to see options, to have hope. It results in a kind of tunnel vision that concentrates only on immediate needs and actually distorts certain brain functioning. Elliot Berkman, who studies goal setting and motivation, wrote an article in the September 22, 2015, issue of the **New Republic** entitled “Poor people don’t have less self-control. Poverty forces them to think short-term.” He goes on to say, “The very definition of self-control is choosing behaviors that favor long-term outcomes over short-term rewards, but poverty can force people to live in a permanent now. Worrying about tomorrow can be a luxury if you don’t know how you’ll survive today. Other research also supports this idea.”

Food bank recipients give their food to others.

People do frequently share food that they get with neighbors or family members in need. They also trade food with those who can provide them with transportation to a food bank. Is this a failing of these individuals or a natural response to solving a problem? In my opinion, the problem rests with society’s failure to provide enough food for the impoverished community and the failure to provide transportation to those who need it.

Many poor people are fat. Obviously, they are getting enough to eat.

This seems contradictory. Excessive weight often results from eating foods high in fat and sugar but lower in nutritional value. But these foods are often cheaper than food that is healthy. There is nothing like a soda to revitalize a tired person. It is quick and readily available often at a low price. Eating out at the dollar menu of a fast food restaurant is easier than cooking dinner after a long workday.

One recent local effort to change this has been the PATH Foundation's support of the efforts of FISH and the Fauquier Community Food Bank to give their clients access to fresh food at the Farmer's market. Furthermore, FISH tries to tailor their food donations to the special needs of each family, such as those with low sodium needs or those facing diabetes. While it is thought that nutrition education will help people make better choices, these efforts must take into account the actual choices people have to make and their preferences. I have seen people in food pantries share ideas on how to spend money and prepare food more effectively and make use of the food that is donated. Peer groups can often make the best counselors.

Now What?

The poor have so many disadvantages. Where should we start in addressing these issues?

I believe that our first priority should be to assure that all children are safely housed, fed, clothed, and also have access to good education and recreation, and to good health and dental care regardless of their parents' situation. This means that children of substance abusers should get food even if this sometimes helps their parents who are people we don't want to help because of addiction, for example. Their children should be able to enroll in day care as necessary without making their parents vulnerable to arrest. This isn't easy, but it is do-able and prioritizes the needs of children.

Fauquier County has programs for parents of newborns and young children to get their children off to a good start not only for nutrition and health but to support a child's strong emotional and intellectual development. Schools offer free or low cost breakfasts and lunches and local non profits arrange for food on weekends and school vacations for children qualifying for free meals. Other groups offer backpacks to low-income students so that they will have the school supplies that they need. Medicaid provides preventive care as well as treatment of illnesses and injuries. Local day

care typically offers enrichment and tutoring programs. These efforts need to be supported and expanded.

There's really nothing that I can do.

Obviously donating and volunteering in existing programs is vital, but so is support for policies that don't penalize children under the guise of not giving their parents the wrong incentives. If housing is denied to drug or alcohol abusers, where can they raise their children? If food stamps and certain types of welfare are limited for those same reasons, how do those children get enough to eat? These are very complex problems. We don't want to provide incentives for drug use, but I believe that we must put the needs of children first and I believe that we can figure out ways to do it.

Note: The 2020 Virginia legislative session has reduced some of the restrictions surrounding helping children of drug users. Exactly how these policies will be implemented and to what extent is not known as of our publication date.

Concluding Comments

I hope that decisions on how to approach poverty will be based on their effectiveness overall and long term rather than on preventing the misuse of services by a few individuals. I hope we will look at issues practically rather than judgmentally.

Opportunities for ways to improve the lives of low income families addressing all these theories will be found at the end of this report. Some are based on government action; other efforts are based on local businesses and foundations while others depend entirely on you and your community or faith-based groups. We hope to meet you in the planned public discussion of these issues.

CHAPTER 12

REFLECTING ON WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

—By *Ed Jones*

In this report we have identified significant conditions relating to poverty in Fauquier County (and elsewhere). We have also outlined specific needs in these areas (hunger, shelter, medical care, etc.), described current activities and programs which address these needs, and discussed gaps that exist between needs and services. While these undertakings have rendered important information which we hope will be useful to non-profit organizations, community policy makers, and others, they have left some important issues inadequately addressed.

For the most part, these pertain to matters of meaning and understanding which do not fully emerge from factual interviews with practitioners, review of agency websites, and reading of annual reports and other documents. Nonetheless, they are important issues for consideration as we shape our views of poverty and initiatives for helping the poor. In discussing these topics, I will draw on my own life experiences as well as insights provided by others in the course of our work on this project and related activities. These observations are not offered as final truths. They are not formally documented research findings, but impressions intended to provide food for thought for poverty workers and policy makers and to serve as points of departure for further exploration.

Poverty: What does it Mean?

What does it mean to be poor? What does poverty mean besides lack of money and other resources? As is the case with all of us, people who are poor are individuals with different characteristics. Their only “universal” trait is a scarcity of resources to meet basic life needs. There is much to be learned about factors which, in varying degrees, characterize and affect people who live in poverty under a variety of circumstances in our community and elsewhere. At this point I offer only tentative insights which continue to evolve. It is important to stress that these are general observations and impressions. They do not necessarily apply to all people who are in financial distress.

Life in the Present

As a person who tends to be overly concerned about possible future developments, I have frequently needed to be reminded to live more in the

present—to avoid obsessive strategizing and planning about how to deal with future uncertainties. For the most part this has been good advice. And yet there have been some instances where focus on the future has served me well: buying economy size groceries, purchasing insurance policies, engaging in preventative medical care and car maintenance, and saving for my children’s education, for example. I was able to do these things because I had a margin of flexibility in my monthly budget and had money left over after meeting my present expenses that I could use to offset future needs. It goes without saying that people whose resources are barely sufficient to meet their immediate needs are not in position to provide for needs that may occur later.

It may be less obviously apparent that the need to spend money on immediate needs may cultivate a broader habit of spending for immediate gratification even when this jeopardizes future well-being. If one comes from an environment where the prospect of future rewards is usually uncertain, there is perhaps a greater tendency to maximize any pleasures available at the moment. This may become a conditioned inclination rather than a reasoned decision in any particular instance.

Several years ago, when I volunteered at a local food pantry on a regular basis, my co-workers and I enjoyed free sandwiches for lunch. This was because the food pantry received significant quantities of left-over day-old food from local retailers, more than was needed for distribution to pantry recipients on any particular day. Except for one of my work associates, a part-time minimum wage employee whom I knew to be in significant financial distress, each of us would select from what was a fairly wide variety of choices on any particular day. He would regularly come to work with a sandwich that he had purchased at 7-11. When I asked him about this, his explanation was that he could never be sure that the free sandwiches available on a particular day would include any that he liked as well.

I viewed his decision in this case as an unnecessary use of limited resources. He viewed it as an affirmation of life. This example of individual behavior, of course, does not prove any broader generalization, but it does provide food for thought.

Apparently, the inclination of lower socio-economic groups to opt for immediate gratification begins at an early age. I remember a research study that I read years ago in graduate school (no reference available) which was focused on small children, perhaps first or second graders, which suggested that distrust in delayed gratification occurs at an early age. The children did some “work” on a Saturday morning and were told that they could have a

small candy bar immediately as their reward or that they could come back the following Saturday and receive a much larger one without doing any additional work. The results sorted out definitively along socio-economic lines. Children from poorer families opted for an immediate smaller reward while those from more affluent families chose to wait a for the larger reward later.

In short, people who are poor and forced to live virtually hand to mouth are unable to save and to accumulate resources. They have no margin available for emergencies or unexpected expenses. Once they fall behind on debts, credit cards, taxes, and medical bills, they have no way to catch up. This encourages the development of a mindset that focuses on the present and not on the future.

Generosity and Concern for Others.

It has been well documented that the poor are more generous in proportion to their incomes and their resources than any other segment of the population. In many cases they show exceptional concern for their families, friends, and other participants in their mutual support system. This can be interpreted in different ways. Since the poor have more direct experience with scarcity of resources to deal with primary needs, they often have more empathy toward others in similar situations. Also, as a practical matter, the poor as a group may be more conscious of their interdependence than other segments of the population because they have continually experienced the need to help each other with basic necessities.

In any case, I have witnessed many examples of people who had very limited resources themselves being the most willing to share with others. I recall an especially warming instance of a woman who purchased a birthday cake for a friend in her GED class. She declined several offers of others to share the cost but the next day quietly borrowed money in order to purchase gas to drive home.

Two other instances come to mind. In my late twenties when I was teaching inner city kids bussed to a suburban high school, I was often besieged by students wanting to borrow lunch money which they tended to be careless about paying back. Finally, at the suggestion of a colleague, I announced to the students that I was placing six quarters (cost of three lunches) in a small box in my desk to which they could have access without asking permission. If they needed lunch money, they could take it without talking to me (saving me from having to pass judgment on the quality of their explanations of need) provided they paid it back the following day. This system would last, I told them, as long as there was money in the box,

but when the box was empty, I would be out of the lending business. At the time I thought that this would happen relatively quickly but, to my surprise, the money lasted for months—disappearing but then being replaced. I did not know who was taking the money, but the students did and they were answerable to each other.

On another occasion many years later, I stopped for gas at a food mart when driving in a deprived area of rural North Carolina. Having paid for my gas, I was browsing in the market, when a man in worn clothing entered with a ten dollar bill that he had found in the parking lot. One by one he approached other people in the store, all of whom gave the impression that they were poor, and asked each person individually if they had lost \$10. Everyone said that they had not. With each negative response, his hopefulness grew. When I, the last person that he approached, also said no, he was obviously pleased at the good fortune that he had declined to claim until he had met what he considered to be his responsibility to other people of limited resources.

Civic Involvement

While the poor tend to be exceptionally supportive of people in their own inner circles, they are often minimally involved in civic matters. I remember working at the food pantry on Election Day several years ago. By the end of the day, all of the staff and volunteers were wearing “I voted” stickers, but none of our clients were. We served approximately 60 families that day. Sometime later I discussed this with several of our regular customers who brushed off the fact that they hadn’t voted, often with casual remarks such as, “I didn’t have time,” or other simplistic responses. It was readily apparent that they didn’t see a meaningful connection between voting and the possibility of life improvement, especially since their basic circumstances had not improved in the past, regardless of who was in office.

Many years ago, when I taught disadvantaged high school kids, many of whose families lived in poverty, I observed that their parents almost never attended “back to school” nights or other school activities. From what I could tell, schools were viewed as a domain of the privileged and teachers were people from another world. Despite the fact that we taught their kids, we were not viewed as people with whom they could have meaningful dialogue.

Decision Making

Poor people who have made questionable decisions, especially financial decisions, from which they have suffered negative consequences,

are often criticized for choices to which their depressed economic status is attributed. But this is an oversimplification. Many of us have made poor decisions from which we have been bailed out by our support systems. While many who are financially disadvantaged have close families and friends, these people are often not in a position to provide financial support. Those who are poor also may not have access to people who can provide helpful guidance about medical and legal resources because they don't know "how the system works" and they don't know people who can help them navigate unfamiliar territory. As a result, they may be forced to make decisions which are uninformed and based on incomplete information.

Difficulties in Getting Out of the Trench

According to federal guidelines, the poverty rate in Fauquier County during the past few years has remained relatively consistent—in the neighborhood of 6%. As indicated earlier in this report, other calculation methods have indicated rates which are much higher. Whatever the standard, however, we don't seem to be making much progress in reducing the number of people in poverty. Furthermore, it is likely that many of the same people comprise these statistics year after year. And now with increased income disparity and more government policies which are unfavorable to the poor, it is more and more difficult for families to overcome the cycle of poverty or for individuals to improve their circumstances. Also, in a recent television program hosted by Washington Post columnist Michael Gerson, it was reported that the sentimental fondness and empathy for the poor which was evident in previous generations has all but disappeared in modern society. This has negatively affected both legislation and charitable contributions which help the poor.

Gratitude for Help

In my experience, many people who are poor are appreciative of whatever assistance they receive from the generosity of others, but not as dramatically as some donors may expect. Many people in poverty believe that they live in a world where some people are favored at a level where others are not. Why wouldn't those with more help those with less? This should be their responsibility. It is what the poor often do themselves within their own inner circles.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Earlier in this report we cite an observation of a therapist (Dr. Carol Hertz) who works with impoverished clients in the Fauquier County Free Clinic as well as clients who are financially more stable in her private

practice. Based on her work with both populations, she indicates that her poor clients are much more apt to suffer from a condition she likens to post traumatic stress disorder. The stress of their lives has had a definite impact on their psychological well-being.

Family Stability

Economic instability threatens family stability. Families under severe financial stress are much more vulnerable than those who are not. They live in constant uncertainty about their ability to deal with medical conditions, maintain their homes, pay their living expenses, and contend with unanticipated events. This sometimes undermines trust and takes a toll on relationships which reduces the potential for effective parenting and other family responsibilities.

Desire to be self-supporting

Ten years or so ago when I started volunteering in the Fauquier Community Food Bank, I anticipated that food bank clients would be largely comprised of “career down and outers,” some of whom would be working the system to their own advantage. For the most part, I was wrong. While there were some that fit into this category, most were people who had worked hard and been self-supporting for most of their lives, only recently to sink below the waterline, often for the first time. Many had lost their jobs because of injury or illness and were now seeking employment again during an economic downturn and a poor job market. They did not want to be at the food pantry but their circumstances had left them with little choice. Often, they took only absolute necessities and turned down food for which they were eligible because, “Others need it more than I do.” They wanted me and my fellow volunteers to know that they had pulled their weight their entire lives though often without much margin to spare. I remember one person telling me with pride that he had received only one unemployment check in his entire life and that had been many years before.

In this section I have reported some of my insights based on my own experience as well as my work on this report. As I stated at the beginning, these generalizations are based on personal observations which, I believe, apply in varying degrees to many people who live in poverty.

Are we really different? A tale of two sailors

All people are different. We are all individuals, but we share characteristics and life circumstances for which we are grouped, categorized, and labeled. One of these designated groups is people who live in poverty.

But in the larger context, how different are poor people (or people of any other category) from the rest of us? Are we really that different? Should those of us who are not poor regard the poor as a separate population or should we think of “us and them” as all one people?

Many years ago during the Vietnam era, at age twenty-five, I enlisted in the navy. This had not been part of my life plan. For the previous year and a half, I had been a high school teacher, having been granted a deferment by my draft board which I thought would last forever. Not so.

My draft board changed its deferment policy, and I was classified 1-A and ordered to report for active duty in the United States Army. A week before my deadline date, I opted instead for a four-year enlistment in the U.S. Navy and reported to boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois. There I was assigned to company of 84 raw recruits. Two of us were 25 years old, two were 22, several were 20, and the rest were 18 and 19. All 84 of us lived in one room. We slept in two-level bunk beds or racks as the navy called them.

I had a bottom bunk while Jason, my 18 year-old “rack mate,” slept above me. With our 82 shipmates in training, we shared the same space, ate the same food, had the same 9-second haircuts, earned the same pay, and lived by the same rules. During our time together Jason and I were equals in virtually every respect (except that I benefitted from his more refined skill in spit-shining shoes for personnel inspections), lived cooperatively, and got along well. In a navy structured environment this was necessary and to everyone’s advantage. Everyone in boot camp had the same status (or lack thereof). No one had special advantages or privileges based on family status, economic standing, or any other factors. We were interdependent and mutually supportive. Our success depended upon it.

In the larger society in which we lived before and after our navy experience, our lives were quite different. Jason came from a poor family which was uneducated, with few models for success in conventional terms. He was a tenth grade dropout who was glad to be in the navy. For him, this represented an increase in status and an opportunity which he hoped would enhance his prospects in the future. My own orientation was quite different. Days before my enlistment, as a tenth grade high school teacher, I had been happy with my work and my prospects. To be compelled to enlist in the military was a severe disruption in my career and a culture shock of huge proportion. Jason and I arrived at our temporary equality from very different directions, but once there, we were treated indistinguishably and performed accordingly.

After nine weeks of boot camp, Jason and I wished each other well and parted company. He was assigned to the deck force of a navy destroyer while I was assigned to the “boat house,” barracks on the other side of the base where I awaited my orders to Naval Officer Candidate School. Eventually I became a commissioned officer, graduated from active duty, returned to teaching, and later went to graduate school and embarked on a new professional career. I don’t know how long Jason stayed in the navy or what became of him afterward, but I imagine that his path forward was quite different from mine. I doubt that he had opportunities comparable to mine because I had many advantages that he did not.

Certainly, we can make too much of the contrasting life backgrounds and similar boot camp experiences of two navy enlisted men. To me, however, these comparisons suggest that the causes of poverty and other handicapping conditions are far more complicated than any simple measure of individual effort or personal worth. They are heavily dependent on the life circumstances into which we are born and the advantages and disadvantages that are inherent in those situations. Life does not provide us with equal playing fields and both advantages and disadvantages compound as we go forward. In the biblical phrase, many of us “live in mansions we did not build.” Others confront obstacles not of their own making which greatly limit their choices and the course of their lives. Some individuals endure and prevail despite negative impacts over which they had little or no control, but these are the exceptions who succeed on an uneven playing field against odds which are not in their favor. I am reminded of a Joan Baez song from the early sixties, “There but for fortune go you or I.”



Final Comment

Did I have this viewpoint before working on the poverty report? At some level, yes, but I understand better now the extent to which the conditions under which all of us live depend on circumstances into which we are born, the situations that we encounter, the helpers that we have, and a good deal of blind luck. In the larger sense we are all one people and poverty in our community is a problem for us all.

As we complete a second edition of our poverty report, I realize that learning about poverty is a never-ending process. There is always another program to be reported, another issue to be examined, and another implication to be analyzed. There comes a time, however arbitrarily determined, when an end has to be declared if a document is ever to be completed. We have come to that place, but our education about poverty and about those in need in our community remains a work in progress.

CHAPTER 13

WHAT ARE OUR OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP THE POOR IN FAUQUIER COUNTY?

What can be done to improve the plight of those in poverty in Fauquier County? As our report suggests, this undertaking presents substantial challenges but also significant opportunities for different segments of our community including county government, local businesses, churches and non-profits, schools, and individuals. Our discussion of initiatives and programs needed to help those who are poor is organized according to this set of categories, but these activities can be described and classified in other ways as well. Some focus on immediate needs specific to the poor such as hunger and shelter. Others reflect “big picture” issues such as: a better transportation system in our primarily rural county, which would benefit the entire community but especially the poor, who often have less reliable vehicles and fewer personal transportation alternatives. Needed assistance generally falls into two broad categories: donations of money and contributions of time and service.

The success of efforts to help the poor also depends in significant measure on support which comes from the state and other sources outside of Fauquier County. In the long run those who advocate activities to combat poverty within the community should also support initiatives to seek funding for a variety of projects designed to serve the common good including the following:

- Extending rail service to Fauquier County.
- Expanding broadband county wide.
- Reducing the barriers to employment and public assistance facing substance –abusers.
- Expanding mental health treatment centers state wide.
- Restoring funding to hospitals and Community Service Boards whose budgets were reduced to fund Medicaid Expansion.
- Restoring funding to corrections for mental health and medical needs.
- Updating Juvenile Justice Policies.

For purposes of this report, however, we will confine our discussion to needs of the poor which can be addressed within Fauquier County with or without outside funding. These needs provide a number of helping

opportunities for different groups within our community.

In the remainder of this chapter, we have grouped needs and challenges under the five different categories listed at the beginning of the first paragraph of this chapter. While we recognize that many needs can be addressed by different agencies, we have placed our description of each individual need under the segment of service providers which we consider best equipped to accept this particular challenge. This is not an effort to create boundaries—any group can be active on any issue. It is instead an invitation and a call for arms for particular groups to lead in categories where they may be in the best position to do so.

What Can Local Government Do?

Local government can take a leadership role in addressing many needs of the poor, sometimes with the help of foundations, businesses, and other community groups and individuals. These opportunities occur at varying levels in many areas but are especially important in the areas of housing, mental health, and criminal justice.

Housing

Warming Shelters

At present, homeless Fauquier residents who need protection from winter cold (November to March) can use the Culpeper Winter Heat Shelter, which is supported by local churches and operates overnight on a first-come first-served basis. Similar programs are needed in Warrenton and/or at other locations in Fauquier County.

Emergency Housing for individual adults and for those with histories of felonies or drug addiction.

The Emergency Shelter does not equally accommodate all categories of people needing shelter. At present, the shelter primarily serves families and has only limited space for single men and women. It does not admit those with drug addictions or recent felonies. The Department of Social Services, local churches, and occasionally other organizations and individuals often pay for short-term motel stays for those individuals, but this is not a lasting solution.

Gaps in Services for Emergency Shelter “Graduates” who are not eligible for Transitional Housing Programs.

In many ways, transitional housing would appear to be the next logical

step for those who “age out” of the Emergency Shelter (who can stay until the end of the time for which they are eligible - up to three months if employed). Some of these people, however, don’t meet the admission requirements for transitional housing programs in Fauquier County, which do not accept single men and require, among other conditions, that applicants have their own cars. More housing options are needed for those who do not meet the requirements for local transitional housing programs.

Transitional Housing for Single Men.

Neither Vint Hill nor Community Touch, the two transitional housing facilities in Fauquier County, accepts single men. Community Touch admits some single women. Vint Hill accepts only families with children. Limited federal and/or state funding is available through Community Touch and also Culpeper Community Development (which serves some Fauquier residents) to provide rental assistance for some single men and women in the community although these funds often run out late in the fiscal year. Single men in particular, who are not eligible for (or have “graduated” from) the Emergency Shelter, have few if any other options.

More Multi-family Residences

Affordable housing is important to the community and especially for poor families. Additional subsidized housing is equally important.

Criminal Justice

Increase Number of Public Defenders

Public defenders in Fauquier County have large case loads and cannot devote adequate time to all their clients. This causes a particular burden for poor people who do not have the money to hire private attorneys. Public Defenders need additional funding.

Additional Support for Legal Aid

Poor people in civil court facing such issues as evictions or child support also need attorneys. There is no constitutional right to such representation, but the need is great, and fairness demands that those facing attorneys representing landlords, for example, also need representation. Support Legal Aid Works and other free services.

Re-entry Programs

Re-entry programs for returning offenders which assist in finding jobs, training, (tuition assistance) housing, medical care, etc., for people who often have no resources have a proven record in reducing recidivism. There needs to be more emphasis and financial support for such programs.

Creation of a Drug Court

A drug court which concentrates on rehabilitation for substance users rather than punishment is being explored in Culpeper County. It is time for Fauquier County to look into a similar program.

Mental Health Services

Mental health services are scarce in this region and limited statewide, especially for those with limited resources. Those who need hospitalization are often not able to find it promptly if they can't afford or don't have adequate insurance for private hospitals. The abundance of private institutions in nearby Northern Virginia has made it difficult to prove need in our area for additional facilities that serve low income residents. We need to increase the number of mental health facilities serving the poor.

Recognition of Community Efforts to Help the Poor

The Fauquier County government should recognize leading efforts to combat poverty by different individuals and organizations which might include non-profits, churches, schools, businesses, and foundations. Awards could be created and publicized in a manner which would bring recognition not only to the recipients and but also to the needs of the poor as a whole.

What Can the Business Community and Foundations Do?

In addition to financial support for food pantries and other services which serve the poor, this project has revealed two areas where the business community along with foundations might take the lead in developing important initiatives.

Transportation

A Subsidized Non-profit Affordable Auto Repair Clinic

Most employment for Fauquier residents both in and outside of the county depends on reliable transportation. Efforts have been made to foster car-pooling and public transportation, but in a county as large as Fauquier, this is not enough to provide transportation for poor families most of whom almost certainly need an automobile. Loss of employment dominates the reasons for people falling into poverty. Therefore assuring transportation to employment is the number one answer to poverty. Reliable transportation is essential. Simple car repairs such as replacing windshield wipers or burnt out headlights can be made by knowledgeable owners. However, most

repair problems with cars rely on computer diagnosis which makes them beyond the capability of most car owners. Professional car repair is very expensive and complex, putting it beyond the capacity of many people whose employment is jeopardized.

What might a non-profit auto repair clinic look like? A project this large would have to be led by professionals in the field who have technical expertise and licensing to perform such repairs. It would also have to be supported financially by local businesses, banks, and foundations. Such a clinic could build on the experience of non-profit and government agencies addressing other needs such as health care in learning how to establish eligibility for payment on a sliding scale with the most generous support for the poorest. A large business group would need to take the initial leadership in developing this service.

Health Care

Subsidized Prescriptions for Senior Medicare Recipients

Many Fauquier residents have incomes slightly too high to qualify for Medicaid but not high enough to afford their co-pays on certain expensive but essential medications. Stories abound from the hospital and local senior centers of those who fail to comply with their doctors' orders and those who are dividing their meds into smaller (and ineffective) portions in order to reduce costs. Just as with other community services, getting help is a big problem for those just a bit above the poverty line. And again, the larger community absorbs these costs when sick people have to go to the Emergency Room to get help. For seniors, failure to comply with prescription medications because of cost can be catastrophic.

A grant-funded non-profit could serve seniors in the gap. Perhaps the new service could consult with the Free Clinic on how to provide medications. It could provide medications to the poorest individuals at no cost and cover all or part of the co-pay for income qualified individuals on a sliding scale based on medical need and income. Funding might well be available from a local foundation as well as local businesses.

What Can Churches and Non-profit Agencies Do?

Community Forum

The Fauquier Community Coalition and/or other groups focused on poverty could sponsor a day-long forum focused on the needs of the poor in

Fauquier County and the services and activities which have been designed to address these needs. A combination of speakers and break-out discussion groups would focus on these issues using this report and other relevant documents as conversation starters. Participants and presenters would include not only service providers, but also clients using these services, students who have been involved in school projects relating to poverty in the community, representatives of local churches and businesses, and others. Ongoing work groups would be formed which would commit to addressing particular problems and challenges in specific areas. This forum could become an annual event which would be used to publicize particular initiatives and begin the planning of new activities for the following year.

Coordination of Groups with Similar Missions

While many of Fauquier County's approximately one hundred churches and other faith communities are involved in efforts to help the poor, there is little coordination or communication among them. Often helping initiatives are isolated activities where one group doesn't know what others are doing, when by working together they could be more effective. In one positive example of cooperation, a church that provides food coordinates with another that provides other necessities such as toilet paper, diapers, shampoo, toothpaste, soap, laundry detergent etc., so that a range of needs is supported by the community. Unfortunately, this level of coordination is the exception rather than the rule.

The same is true of small non-profit agencies which address the similar issues such as, meals for children on weekends. In conjunction with one another, agencies can serve local needs with less duplication and greater efficiency.

Social action committees from different congregations could combine forces and resources in order to accomplish more than any can do alone. A poverty committee comprised of representatives of different faith communities could be formed to coordinate these activities.

Health services could expand their initiatives in self-help and preventive medicine. More could be done to educate the poor and immigrant populations about their protections under the law and the manner in which the legal and court systems operate.

Mentoring Programs

Mentoring is needed in a variety of areas to help people navigate the world of helping agencies. Many low income families are not aware of the benefits to which they may be entitled nor do they have the expertise

(or sometimes the language skills) to explore them. Some have cultural norms which interfere with their compliance with efforts to help. In one example, a person getting free medical care did not feel entitled to speak up about a new medical issue, a heart condition, because he had almost no money and didn't understand that he would not have to pay for a referral to a cardiologist. A companion who had not been present for his previous medical appointments was finally able to explain the situation to him and to help him communicate with his provider.

Many individuals with limited resources could be helped by a one-to-one mentoring program coordinated by the Fauquier Community Coalition (FCC) or by another agency which could also develop and implement mentor training. The mentor's primary purpose would not be to provide money or other direct services but to help individuals navigate to best advantage the resources available to them and to understand and implement decisions that they need to make. Local churches could be recruiting grounds for mentors who could be matched with prospective clients by the Department of Social Services, Community Touch, FISH, People Helping People, or other agencies focused on assisting the poor.

Mentors could provide guidance in financial management, nutrition, and many of the skills of daily living, as needed. People may not need experts as much as they need encouragement, support and occasional guidance or referrals to help. It is important to support the knowledge and expertise that families already have.

Developmental Programs for the Poor

How can the cycles of poverty be broken? How can the poor be helped to climb out of poverty rather than remain trapped in the circumstances that placed them there in the first place? These patterns tend to recur in families in both the short term and across generations. What can be done to disrupt these cycles?

When Helping Hurts is the title of a 2009 book by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (Subtitle: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor or Yourself), which focuses primarily on short mission trips but nonetheless offers a useful framework for analyzing help. The authors classify helping efforts into three basic categories: rescue, rehabilitation, and development. Clearly, most programs designed specifically for the poor are rescue oriented.

Food pantries, emergency shelters, and many free clinic services are provided for people needing immediate assistance. These programs

are necessary and will continue, but how can rescue operations be combined with other initiatives that are more developmental in nature? A developmental program is one which provides the opportunity for growth and/or increasing movement toward independence and self-sustainability.

The emergency and transitional housing facilities in Fauquier County (the Emergency Shelter and the Vint Hill transitional housing program sponsored by Fauquier Family Services and Community Touch in Bealeton) all require educational and training programs for those occupying their facilities as does Habitat for Humanity. Residents (working with staff) are required to develop and implement individual plans designed to help them move toward greater independence. Elements include systematic and monitored saving, education and training as needed and appropriate, and regular progress meetings with staff. These programs operate on limited resources, however, and could benefit from grant funding which would provide support for expansion and further development based on research evidence of what has worked best in housing programs in other areas.

Other initiatives could be developed to educate clients of Fauquier County's programs to help the poor. Food pantries and other food distribution services could put more emphasis not only in providing nutritious food but on educating consumers about nutrition, an area in which FISH has already made considerable progress. Health services could expand their initiatives in self-help preventive medicine. More could be done to educate the poor and immigrant populations about their protections under the law and the manner in which the legal and court systems operate. Progress in all of these areas, of course, would require careful planning in addition to the availability of the necessary resources.

What Can Schools Do?

Students in Fauquier schools have become increasingly involved in poverty initiatives in recent years by engaging in food collections, service learning projects, and other activities to support the poor. There is the potential for considerable expansion of these efforts. Kettle Run High School has a poverty club which helps out in certain projects. Highland School has a course in social justice which is designed to raise consciousness about economic inequality and related issues. Some seniors at Fauquier High School are doing poverty research in the community through their advanced placement government classes; this involves them in interviewing professionals (and in some cases clients) at various agencies in the county who serve the poor.

Honor societies require a minimum of 10 community service hours which meet a range of needs and service clubs take on projects annually designed to serve the community. Among the school service clubs, Future Farmers of America volunteer at the Community Farm which provides fresh produce for the Fauquier Community Food Bank. These activities are promising but limited in scope and, for the most part, not well known. They should be held up to the light and expanded by more teachers and students.

What Can Individuals Do?

The roles of individuals in combating poverty in Fauquier County are extremely important not only in their contributions to groups who serve the poor, but as they function independently. These can be best summarized in three words: *volunteer, donate, and advocate*. These activities are connected and interrelated.

Volunteers who get involved in projects get to know those who are being served and increase their own understanding of needs. Once a volunteer has this experience, it is much easier to speak up and advocate for the needs of the poor and the agencies that serve them. And it becomes much easier to solicit donations when you know about a project in detail. Almost all of the services described in this report rely on continued generous financial support, a substantial portion of which comes from individuals.

Some volunteer roles require extensive training for volunteers, but others such as helping in food pantries, volunteer transportation, and tutoring children, for example, draw on skills an individual already has and require only an orientation to agency policies and services. Often a group of volunteers who know each other can work most effectively on such projects as home repairs or wood ministry where they support one another's efforts.

What Else Needs to be Done?

In addition to the needs of the poor that we have suggested create opportunities for various community groups and individuals, there are other issues which require inter-agency cooperation. There needs to be a more complete system for identifying adults in need as well as more effective orientation and training programs to better equip these individuals to make use of the resources available to them. This would involve identification and dissemination of often overlooked opportunities such as helping people to obtain specific Veterans benefits or other resources, for example, which

often slip under the radar.



SOURCES

Most of the information and insights presented in this document were gathered from individual and group conversations that members of our project team conducted with managers, volunteers, clients, and others associated with programs designed to help those in need in Fauquier County.

Documents and Websites Cited

County Health Rankings Report 2016

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

Evictions

www.evictionlab.org

Fauquier Department of Social Services

<http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/dss>

Feeding America

mapfeedingamerica.org

Law Help MN

www.lawhelpmn.com

Path Foundation 2016 Community Report

<http://www.pathforyou.org/community-report-2016/>

People Inc Community Assessment 2017

<http://www.peopleinc.net/media/About/Publications/Publications-PINC-%20Community%20Assessment%202017.pdf>

Pride Survey

<http://fauquier-mha.com/docs/Pride%20Survey%202015.pdf>

Rapid Rehousing

<https://www.cornerstonesva.org/rapid-re-housing-challenge/>

Virginia Homeless Solutions Program

<https://search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?type=avastbcl&hspart=avast&hsimp=yhs-001&p=virginia+homeless+solutions+program>

Virginia Housing Commission

<http://dls.virginia.gov/commissions/vhc.htm>

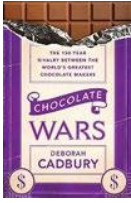
Virginia Department of Education (Office of Nutrition)

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/index.shtml>

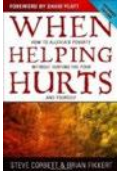
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/home.html>

Books



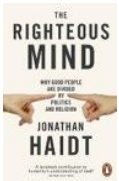
Cadbury, Deborah, (2010). The Chocolate Wars: The 150-Year Rivalry between the World's Greatest Chocolate Makers. Harper Press



Corbett, Steve. and Fikkert, Brian. (2009). When Helping Hurts: how to alleviate poverty without hurting the poor and yourself. Chicago: Moody Publishers.



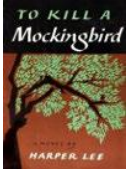
Desmond, Matthew, (2016). Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City, Random House



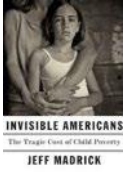
Haidt, Jonathan, (2013). The Righteous Mind, Penguin Random House



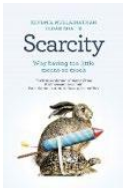
Jones, Edward V., and Lowe, Jean H. (2012). These are our People...life stories of 24 people served at the Fauquier county food bank. <http://www.Amazon.com>.



Lee, Harper. (1960). *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Philadelphia, PA, J.B. Lippincott & Company



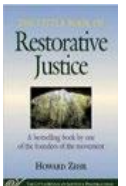
Madrick, Jeff (2020). *Invisible Americans: The Tragic Cost of Child Poverty*, Knopf.



Mullainathan, Sendhil, and Shafir, Eldar, (2013). *Scarcity: Why Having too Little Means so Much*, Henry Holt and Company



Tanner, Michael, (2018). *The Inclusive Economy*, Barnes and Noble



Zehr, Howard, (2015). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice: Revised and Updated (Justice and Peacebuilding)*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge and greatly appreciate the contributions to this report by the following people:

Aaron Addison, April Achter, Rev. Timothy Ahl, Sharon Ames, Marty Baldwin, Lynn Bell, Jenny Biche, Dianna Blackman, Chuck Boaz, Lindsay Brady, Jane Bowling-Wilson, Cathy Boyce, Laura Brown, Cindi Carter, Lisa Capraro, Felicia Champion, Tyronne Champion, Debbie Cloud, Paul Cocuzza, Carolyn Cobert, Sarah Cooper, Mary Correia, Michelle Cribs, Mary Cragun, Steve Crouch, Brandi Day, Pat Dobson, Kirsten Dueck, Brian Duncan, Brittany Dwyer, Danielle Ellis, Julie Fainter, Cindy Fetzer, Frank Finn, Franklin Fishback, Poppy Fodrell, Charity Furness, Melissa German, Honore Hastings, Tara Helkowski, Carole Hertz, Erin Higgins, Donna Hill, Ginger Hilleary, Tony Hooper, Carlene Hurdle, Linda Hyson, Andrew Johnston, Marionette Jones, Earl Kemper, Deborah Kirkman, Ann Kloeckner, Jim La Graff, Ginger Hilleary, Kaitlyn Lambert, Jack Ledden, Andrew Lowe, Danica Lowe, Rob Marino, Jared Martin, Sallie Morgan, Robert Mosier, Jeanette Nord, Lawrie Parker, Ray Parks, Thomas Pavelko, Gayle Porias, Sandra Rozsel, Ryan Ruzic, Elfie Schmidt, Moira Satre, Belle Schultz, Jan Selbo, Dave Seward, Becky Sheffield, Casey Shelton, Martha Skinker, Aubrey Smith, Dorothy Smith, Ann Sutliff, Hunter Snellings, Donna Staton, Bonita Stockslager, Linda Stouffer, Neil Swanson, Jennifer Sweigart, Tim Tate, Tony and Holly Tedeschi, Sheri Thorpe, Jon Trevathan, Erika Visnewskaia, Melissa Walker, Ruth Walker, Pat Washington, Mittie Wallace, Lynn Ward, Alice Weaver, Deb Vogel, Marybeth Wilkinson, Judy Williams, Marshall Williams, Thomas Williams, Craig Wilt, Beth Wittsen, Cathy Zielinski.