

Metro Social Services

Community Connection

Message from the Director

Special points of interest:

- The 2010 Community Needs Evaluation update was released in December 2010 and Mayor Karl Dean called on the community to come together and address poverty.
- The Poverty Council is meeting quarterly to oversee the city's Poverty Initiative
- Cremation is on the increase at MSS' Indigent Burial program
- MSS move to the Clifford Allen Building, 800 2nd Ave. N

On December 9, 2010, Metropolitan Social Services released the 2010 Community Needs Evaluation Update at P.R.N.-Poverty Reduction Nashville event that was held at Scarritt-Bennett Center. The Executive Highlights were distributed at the event.

When the first Community Needs Evaluation was created in 2009, it establish a systematic process for gathering, interpreting, and reporting data about service gaps in Davidson County. Metropolitan Social Services' Planning & Coordination staff produced this annual report to provide data and descriptive information about existing and projected unmet social service needs in Davidson County. The MSS Board

of Commissioners determined that the focus of Planning & Coordination should be data driven and would use available information on pertinent and related social service issues as well as community input.

In February of 2010, Mayor Karl Dean acknowledged the work of Metropolitan Social Services and tasked the department to continue "conducting annual community needs assessments and organizing community-wide, public-private partnerships."

In addition, Mayor Dean asked Metropolitan Social Services to "monitor and coordinate" the implementation of the Nashville Poverty Reduction Plan. Seven implementation teams provide public-private partner-



Renee Pratt,
Executive Director

ships toward achieving the recommended actions in the Plan.

The Community Needs Evaluation has received quite a bit of media attention since its release. The Tennessean, The City Paper, and News Channel 5

continued on page 4

Inside this issue:

Community Needs Evaluation Update	2
Poverty Council (continued)	2
Indigent Burial Program	3
Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway	3
MSS offices move to 800 2nd Ave. North	4

Poverty Council

The Poverty Council, the oversight body of Nashville's Poverty Initiative, has been meeting quarterly since last July to review progress and address issues that may arise during the implementation process of the Poverty Initiative.

Initially, the following individuals and groups were invited to serve on the Poverty Council: The Implementation Teams, the Poverty Initiative Action Team Chairs – which is the group that created the plan, the Poverty Initiative Planning Committee, the Chairman of the Planning &

Coordination Committee of the Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners, a liaison from the Mayor's Office (Tam Gordon) and a liaison from the Nashville Livability Project – an interagency group that works together with

continued on page 2

Community Needs Evaluation Update

The 2010 Community Needs Evaluation update is available online at www.nashville.gov/sservices/planningcoordination/2010cne.asp

At the P.R.N. – Poverty Reduction Nashville symposium held Dec. 9 at Scarritt-Bennett Center, Metro Social Services also released the 2010 Community Needs Evaluation Update.

The document provides countywide demographic and socio-economic data describing social services needs for Child Care, Food, Health, Housing, Neighborhood Development, Workforce & Economic Opportunity, and Home & Community Based Services for Adults and Seniors.

Mayor Karl Dean attended the event and called on Nashvillians to pursue pov-



Dinah Gregory, director of Planning & Coordination received an award by Mayor Karl Dean thanking her for her work and dedication to the Mayor's overall Poverty Initiative.

erty reduction in our city with the same spirit that was unleashed after the May 2010 floods that devastated entire neighborhoods.

“If we once again put our minds, hands and hearts toward helping people in need, we can make a significant dent in poverty,” he said.

Poverty Council

continued from front page

“In its total scope, the Poverty Initiative ... is an independent, public-private collaborative system. That’s the beauty of it.”

Howard Gentry, chair of the Poverty Council

the goal for better coordination of community planning. MSS Board Chair Howard Gentry, who is the CEO of the Nashville Chamber Public Benefit Foundation, one of the lead organizations in the Poverty Initiative, said the Poverty Council does what is necessary in reviewing and approving changes and recommendations.

“The fact that Tam Gordon is on board now enables us to bring some of the recommendations online quicker,” Mr. Gentry, who chairs the Poverty Council, said. “Her participation provides us

with an opportunity to bring government into play when needed.”

Mr. Gentry explained that the Poverty Initiative is a true public-private partnership.

“There are functions within the Poverty Initiative that involve Social Services,” he said. “There are functions that involve the Mayor’s Office. But in its total scope, the Poverty Initiative does not fall under government or any one agency.

“It is an independent, public-private collaborative system. That’s the beauty of it.”

The Poverty Council is in the process of prioritizing tasks

and creating a timeline with short-term recommendations. The actual work, however, takes place in the work groups with guidance from Dinah Gregory, MSS’ director of planning and coordination.

“This is a 10-year plan,” Mr. Gentry said. “It has long-term implications with short-term opportunities. We know that this plan won’t reduce poverty in half over night. But we certainly hope it won’t take 10 years either. We’re working very hard to get the services out to the people as quickly as possible.”

Indigent Burial Program

Six Feet Under was the headline of an article penned by local author Christine Kreyling for the Nashville Scene.

“The least known of Nashville’s cemeteries, not surprisingly, are those for the poorest people,” Kreyling wrote under a section headline entitled “Potters’ Fields.”

But even in that Scene article, the Potters Fields were listed last. But that’s not how Metro Social Services social workers feel when dealing with family members and friends of the people they serve.

Many people may not know, but there were two Potters Fields and both are filled now.

When an indigent Nashvillian dies, Metro Social Services funds the burial ex-



Bordeaux Cemetery served as the second indigent burial ground for Davidson County.

penses.

The cost of an adult burial is \$1,900. In comparison, an adult cremation costs \$700, according to Carol Wilson, who oversees Metro’s Indigent Burial Program.

“As the public became informed about cremation services offered by MSS, the demand for cremations began to increase during FY 2008 and has continued to increase,” Ms. Wilson said.

The original Potters Field is located in a residential neighborhood on 18th Avenue North.

A second Potters Field opened up on County Hospital Road, but is now filled as well.

Currently, Metro Social Services purchases burial plots at Hills of Calvary Cemetery on Ashland City Highway.

“A burial/cremation is usually provided within 2-3 working days,” Wilson said, adding that a social worker attends the funeral if there is no family member or loved one available.

Burials (B) & Cremations (C)

FY05/05: 82 B & 10 C

FY06/07: 104 B & 4 C

FY07/08: 116 B & 24C

FY08/09: 97 B & 31 C

FY09/10: 99 B & 54 C

FY 10/11: 79 B & 25 C

(until February 2011)

To read the Nashville Scene article on local cemeteries, visit: www.nashvillescene.com/nashville/six-fee-under/Content?oid=1195026

Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway: 1,000 Turkeys distributed

The number of Thanksgiving Baskets handed out to families in need at the TSU campus has doubled in the past couple of years.

Demitria Norman, MSS director of programs, said she had been part of the Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway for the past five years.

“We have gone from a target number of serving 300 families to a target number of serving 1,000 families,” Ms. Norman said.

The Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway has been sponsored and organized by the National Black

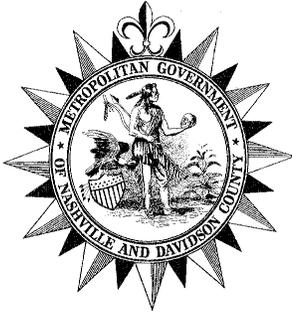
Police Association for 12 years.

About 14 partner agencies and civic groups come together each year to provide a holiday meal to families in need. Metro Social Services has been a long-standing partner.

“This was a wonderful opportunity to be able to assist families during the holiday with a complete Thanksgiving dinner to where they could enjoy the holiday as well,” Ms. Norman said. “This would have not been possible if we didn't work with such a wonderful group of partners who care about the people of Nashville.”



1,000 turkeys were distributed to local families



Metro Social Services
800 Second Ave. North
Nashville, TN 37201
(615) 862-6400

Board meeting:
Every 4th Wednesday of the
month at the address above.

Contact Numbers of Metro Social Services

Administrative Offices
(615) 862-6400

Adult and Family Support Services
(615) 862-6432

Information and Referral
(615) 862-6458

Brief Counseling
(615) 862-6432

Adult Homemaker Services
(615) 862-6480

Senior Nutrition Services
(615) 880-2292

Burial Assistance
(615) 862-6458

Relative Caregiver Assistance
(615) 862-6432

Homeless Services
(615) 880-2526

Planning and Coordination
(615) 862-6419

The best number to call to find out about services available through MSS and elsewhere in the Nashville community is
(615) 862-6458.

www.nashville.gov/sservices

MSS Offices Move to Clifford Allen Building

Metro Social Services moved offices in April 2011 and is now located in the Clifford Allen Building, 800 Second Avenue North, Suite 100. The offices are located just up the road from the Department of Children's Services and the Department of Human Services.

Please note the following:

- Easy bus line access
- Will be co-located with Metro Action Commission
- Hours 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- Free Parking



Message from Director

continued from front page

have all used the data to describe the current day issues of people in poverty and how the data reflects the worsening situation for our city's most impoverished.

If you or your agency is interested in how the Community Needs Evaluation data can help you plan for the future of your agency please contact us at 862-

6400. We will be more than happy to meet with you to discuss the data and provide assistance with any additional information that may be requested.

FIND THE 2010 COMMUNITY NEEDS EVALUATION UPDATE AT:

www.nashville.gov/sservices/planningcoordination/communityneeds.asp