

"Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others."

- Danny Thomas

Faith Communities Resource Directory

The Compassion Action Network is in the process of developing a directory of **social service offerings from our Faith Communities**. This is a means to inform other faith communities, non-profits, and government agencies of services available to those in need, which could avoid duplication of efforts and develop great networking possibilities. Examples of offerings are: family table, food shelf, clothes closet, counseling, etc.

Please complete the "What Do You Have to Offer" form that we have attached along with the newsletter and email it back to compassion-net_mn@yahoo.com. **Please!** act now as this directory is greatly needed by many in our communities. If you completed a form at a forum, please disregard the request and we thank you for your participation.

A **Community Resources Guide**, developed by members of the Circle of Influence, is now available on our website. compassionnet-mn.com. This document serves as a guide for Faith Communities and non-profits on how to obtain emergency and non-emergency services for those who ask for them.

- Mary Jo Loftus

Are You *Invitable*?

The Rev. Bruce Bjork, Executive Director of Programs for the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches opened the Fall Faith Forum at Oak Hill Baptist in Columbia Heights with sort of a "Show and Tell" demonstration. Picture this: A good looking blonde, well-dressed Caucasian, professional man, who, in the first few minutes of his opening remarks removed his suit coat, loosened and removed his tie; then the white shirt came off revealing a brightly colored shirt that he received as a gift when he was in Liberia, West Africa. He changed right before our eyes just as the "faces of our community" is doing. He underwent a transformation! Our community is undergoing a transformation.

He explained how necessary it is for us to be "**invitable**" as opposed to being only "invitational" to the unfamiliar faces moving into and residing in our communities. We were challenged to be open to **transformation as individuals** and as **organizations**. Immigrants and minority populations do not always readily seek out what might be available to them. However, if we make ourselves "**inevitable**," they are more likely to be open to seeking and asking for what they need.

So, how do we do that so our community thinks of us as **individuals** and our **organizations** in time of need?

1. **Learn from others. Share the power.** Give credit where it belongs. No one person or organization has all the answers or all the resources. Learn from people what it is they need. Don't assume you know!
2. **Be empowering** -- work at empowering those we serve -- children, parents, community. Go beyond the Band-aid approach when at all possible.
3. **Embrace collaboration. Work with and through others.** That's what the Compassion Action Network is all about.
4. **Submit to the authority of others.** Really listen and learn. Be open to our own vulnerability.

This is not easy! It reminds me of the concept of being a "servant leader" as opposed to a top-down approach. As leaders, we are here to serve, not because we know it all, have it all, or want to put ourselves above others. Receiving is very humbling experience. It all starts with building trust and those all important relationships.

-Lyla Pagels

Hungry to Help? Part II

Welcoming the Faces of Our Community

Community in Action Panelists

As part of the Fall Faith Forum, four community members told us about their experiences working with immigrants and refugees in Anoka County, inspiring us to consider how we might collaborate to welcome our new neighbors. The panelists were:

St. Mary's Health Clinics – Barbara Dickie, Executive Director

St. Mary's Health Clinics seeks to provide accessible health services to the medically underserved. One of their 4 focus areas is the volunteer run clinics, which offer free medical care in 9 metro locations twelve times/week. Emmanuel Christian Center hosts a St. Mary's Health Clinic, providing free primary care, medications, specialty and hospital care to local residents. Since 1994, they have served over 8,500 patients at the Emmanuel site with 40% of those served in 2007 being non-Caucasian. Contact Info: Barbara Dickie 651.690.7020

Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation – Joel Luedtke, Program Officer

The Phillips Family Foundation is a local philanthropic organization that shares resources for the public good, while exercising leadership and flexibility in responding to emerging community needs. A major focus of the foundation is to provide support for organizations and projects that address unmet human and social needs. Joel encouraged organizations to think creatively about ways they could collaborate to meet the unique needs of immigrant and/or refugee populations and discuss their ideas with him as the Phillips Family Foundation is interested in funding initiatives that improve the quality of life for all community members. Contact Info: Joel Luedtke 612.623.1651

Bridging – Mary Proepper, External Relations Manager

Bridging's purpose is to "bridge the gap" between those who have and those have not by providing the economically disadvantaged in transition with quality furniture and household items free of charge. Bridging, partners with community organizations who then refer people in need to Bridging for furniture. Immigrants and refugees are among the many populations served at Bridging as they seek to rebuild their lives in our community. Faith communities can participate in a furniture drive to assist with the collection of much needed items. Contact Info: Mary Proepper 952.888.1105

Bosnian Women's Network – Emina Peljto, Executive Director

The Bosnian Women's Network was established in 1999 to meet the significant social adjustment needs of the estimated 7,000 Bosnians who migrated to the Twin Cities area in the mid 1990's in the aftermath of a horrific civil war. Today the organization works with many local partners to provide ongoing support to Bosnian refugees with offices in Columbia Heights, an area with a high concentration of Bosnians. Contact Info: Emina Peljto 612.275.5136

- Gayle Alexander

Volunteer & Communications Mail Group

"When everyone brings something, there is more than enough"

In the true spirit of collaboration, the Compassion Action Network has established a Yahoo Mail Group dedicated to Volunteerism and Communication. Whether you are interested in volunteering or are in need of a volunteer, or you have important information to share, please follow these simple procedures to get your information posted on the CAN mail group.

It's as easy as 1-2-3:

1 - Set-up Your Yahoo Account

Access the Compassion Action Network Website – compassionnet-mn.com.



Select the Yahoo Groups Icon

Select "Sign-up"

Enter all required information, including your primary email account.

2 - Verify Your Yahoo Account

Open a second internet session and access your primary email account.

Open mail from yahoo and activate your new account.

3 - Join canvolunteer mail group

Go back to the Yahoo website.

Select "Add new email address" and enter your 'primary email address.

Enter encrypted code to finish.

Note: By entering your primary email address, you will receive all correspondence relating to the **CAN volunteer/Communications** mail group. If this proves too much mail – simply change it back to your Yahoo ID account. You can then see all correspondence via Yahoo.

Once you have joined the mail group, you will receive a welcome letter with further information and instructions using the site.

- Sue Kennell
763-754-9638



Mission Statement

To mobilize community organizations to recognize the value and benefits of working together, because when everyone brings something, there is more than enough.

Vision Statement

Working together to serve our community, every community organization will recognize and utilize its own unique gifts and recourses.

Advisory Board

Mary Jo Loftus, Co-chair
St. Katharine Drexel Church

Gayle Alexander, Co-chair
Anoka County Human Services

Lyla Pagels
Mercy & Unity Hospitals

Ellen Raeker, Secretary
St. William Catholic Church

Jamie Morrow
CEAP

Sue Kennell, Newsletter/Website
R.S.V.P.

Contact Information

13233 Lily St. N. W.
Coon Rapids, MN 55448
763-218-0650

Email:
Compassionnet_mn@yahoo.com

Website:
www.compassion-mn.com

AFTER THE FORUM:

Diverse Populations in Anoka County

The recent Oct. 11th Compassion Action Network Fall Faith forum focused attention on growing population diversity in Anoka County. Did you know that:

- Anoka County has experienced steady increase in the diversity of its residents with more than a doubling of the immigrant/refugee population in just the last few years?
- School district data indicates that over 50 different languages are spoken by current students with Hmong, Russian, Spanish and with Vietnamese being the most frequent?
- Anoka County municipalities with the most rapid increase in diverse populations include Blaine, Anoka, Hilltop, Fridley and Columbia Heights but communities further out such as Ham Lake and St. Francis are also beginning to see more population diversity?

In January 2005, the Minnesota State Demographic Center projected there would be steady Anoka County diverse population growth over the next 25 years. As people join the community, they have various needs that will have to be met. As discussed during the forum, some of those key needs are:

- Adequate access to medical and dental services.
- Jobs with living wages and adequate benefits.
- Transportation to get to schools, jobs and services.
- Enough affordable housing.
- Good educational system opportunities.
- ESL classes, interpreters, other services to reduce language barriers.

Finally, as Anoka County population diversity grows, it will be important for local institutions and organizations serving community needs to build relationships with immigrant/refugee community members, work to gain understanding of different cultures and seek their valuable input to be of service in the most effective ways.

- Ellen Raeker

Circle of Influence Meeting

1st Thursday of every month
1:30 pm

Emmanuel Christian Center
7777 University Ave N E
Spring Lake Park
Everyone Welcome