

Report:
MEETING OF NATIONAL ROMA PEER TO PEER
ADVISORY COUNCIL
June 2005

ATTENDANCE: *(some attended via phone conference call)*

Ramsey Alwin, Jenae Bjelland (p), Kip Bomar, Janet Carl, Diane Cooper-Currier (p), Lorraine Daniels, Julie Jakopic (p), Jim Masters (p), Barbara Mooney (staff), Michelle Pulce, JamesEtta Reed (p), Richard Schlimm, Bob Swanson (for Dan Jordan), John Wilson

Dr. Mooney, Project Director, provided an up date on the National ROMA Peer to Peer (PtP) Training Project, including:

- Update of activities (see below)*
- List of participants at In-Service Trainings*
- Topics presented at In-Services*
- Current list of trainers – July 2004 to March 2005*
- List of training length and impact*
- Candidate list for Mentorship Pilot*
- Update on e-course*
- Common Outcomes Project*

A review of the July 2004 meeting was presented along with this summary:

There was an identification of several common themes:

- ⇒ There is a “Cultural change” happening in the CAAs of the 21st Century
- ⇒ We need to identify champions! Motivation is needed.
- ⇒ It is important to reach Boards (more training, more involvement, etc.)
 - And there is a need to engage staff all levels
- ⇒ There is a need for increased cooperation between state CSBG offices and state CAA association offices, as they assist (prod, poke, reward, etc.) local CAAs
- ⇒ We need to strengthen the dual roles of certified ROMA peer to peer trainers, and provide additional support to trainers if they are expected to act as catalysts in the network. Two suggestions were:
 - Use training for information sharing, awareness building, development of common language and common understanding, and skill building
 - Use technical assistance for follow up and implementation

And identification of these “Next Steps”

- ⇒ Distribute videos of interviews with two local CAAs (one in Lancaster, PA and one in Virginia) that were filmed as motivational pieces for board members. The Lancaster, PA segment has been edited to about 30 minutes. The Virginia segment is not focused – but provides a look at a clear outcome (home ownership, safe housing) for one program.
- ⇒ Distribute a draft of the Multi Media Board CD and manual
- ⇒ Develop additional tools and products for distribution through the Peer to Peer training network, (which distribution should occur in collaboration with the state CSBG and state CAA Association offices).
- ⇒ Establish a Continuing Education session for certified trainers, to provide them with new tools and products.
- ⇒ Distribute a draft of the Multi Media Board CD and manual

An update on the actions taken in response to the Committee and Trainer input was provided:

Next Steps identified	Actions taken
Assess status of network	Survey of trainers
Distribute videos of interviews with two local CAAs that were filmed as motivational pieces for board members.	CDs sent to Advisory Committee Members
Distribute a draft of the Multi Media Board CD and manual.	Distribution of Board Training CD throughout the network, via NASCSP, CSBG offices and Associations, as well as to individual CAAs.
Establish a Continuing Education session for certified trainers, to provide them with new tools and products.	In-service Training in Denver (Oct. 04) and Pittsburgh (Dec. 04) <i>*see topics</i>
Develop additional tools and products for distribution through the Peer to Peer training network.	Development of new curriculum in the works: Strategic Planning, ROI, Case Management, Spanish Language version of basic course.
Identify ways to improve collaboration between the state CSBG and state CAA Association offices.	On site facilitation support – Ohio, GA, NC – and stronger linkages with NASCSP.

Following the Advisory Committee meeting, input from the Certified Trainers was also solicited. A survey was sent to 72 trainers, requesting several pieces of information:

- Biographic information about the trainer
- Quantitative data regarding the number of trainings they provided and the number of participants who attended those trainings
- Qualitative data regarding:
 - The kind of participant (CAA staff, state office staff, board members, partners, etc.)
 - The impact they observed as a result of the training
 - Comments, including suggestions for next steps.

55 active trainers responded to all questions.

10 newly certified trainers responded to all but the quantitative question (as they had not done training beyond their internship).

7 trainers provided bio info only (did not respond to survey questions)

Survey data and Advisory Committee responses were analyzed to identify the impact the ROMA training has had on the development of increased capacity of agencies throughout the country. The following chart summarizes the information received.

What has been the impact of the ROMA training?

What the Advisory Committee said:

What Trainers said:

An increase in self -awareness among local CAAs regarding the nature and purpose of Community Action Agencies. At many levels throughout the nation, we are better able to answer the questions: Who are we? Who do we want to be?	Revitalization of CAAs regarding the nature and purpose of the network. One way this has been observed is by the increased relationship among Mission, Needs, and Outcomes.
An increased ability and desire to form partnerships between state CSBG offices and state Community Action Associations.	CAAs have increased focus on working with partners and are considering the impact of these partnerships.
An increased ability to identify and document outcomes that are achieved as a result of CAAs services and programs.	CAAs have increased ability to identify and document outcomes that are achieved as a result of the services and programs provided by CAAs and their partners.
An increased ability to report on outcomes, including those that are achieved through other funding coming into the CAA (not just CSBG) and also those that are achieved through partnerships with other service providers, policy makers and community groups.	CAAs have increased ability to collect and aggregate data for the whole agency.
	Implementation of ROMA in various ways, including: Improved management at all levels and Increased use of six national goals in local CAA discussions about outcomes.

Using the MATF work (draft of their position paper is attached), the Advisory Committee discussed the following question:

How does this project help address the Training and Technical Assistance Planning for FY 2005-2008? The Council Members referred to the three year framework for Capacity Building presented by the MATF, which included five major priority areas. We discussed each area as it relates to the ROMA NPtP project.

1 -- Leadership and Governance -- How can the PtP Network assist in helping plan for “transition” of leadership with the retirement of many long-serving agency executive directors and staff? How can the PtP Network help strengthen tripartite board capacity to oversee the work of community action agencies? How can the PtP Network help to identify the characteristics of effective, antipoverty-focused, community action leadership?

Topics for training could include: Ways to promote and refine Board Training materials available and under development; Identification of the elements of leadership characteristics;

Ways to help stimulate the use of strategic thinking and strategic planning with Boards, key leadership staff and community partners.

2 -- Community Mobilization and Revitalization -- ROMA, as a framework, is designed to encourage the creation of community-wide approaches to addressing the causes and conditions of poverty, the PtP Network – armed with quality information about developing good ROMA practices – should be in a position to support community mobilization and revitalization, and in developing partnerships. MATF suggested that it would be prudent to develop further OCS plans to use its training and technical assistance authority to advance comprehensive community-based poverty solution strategies. Can additional training/support be provided to the PtP Network to assist OCS implementation of such plans?

Topics for training could include: Identifying and promoting strategies that strengthen anti-poverty work and outcomes for families and neighborhoods through coordination and collaboration among public and private community organizations, including those that are faith-based. This might be done through ICEP sessions and/or development of new materials.

Additionally, staff and consultants to the NPtP project are currently involved in identifying ways to reduce Federal barriers to community collaboration and coordination through the promotion of greater program coordination at the Federal level using the identification of common outcomes. This may include identification of ways to reduce or eliminate policies that impede holistic approaches to family or community development. Results of this project will be shared with the PtP Network, and ideas on how information on common outcomes will help trainers promote community motivation and revitalization.

3 -- Family Economic Security and Asset Building -- OCS has identified a number of strategies that community action agencies and other community-based organizations can use to provide low-income families the kinds of human and financial resources that will enable them to move toward greater self-sufficiency. How can the PtP Network support the implementation of these strategies?

Topics for training could include: Best Practices: ways State and local community action agencies are being successful in helping low-income families receive and accumulate sufficient financial assets through a variety of mechanisms (Individual Savings Accounts, tax credits and supports) to support major life-changing opportunities, such as home ownership, college education or business creation

4 -- Financial Management and Integrity – This discussion centered around how the PtP network could support State CSBG lead authorities and State community action associations to help local agencies effectively manage and account for their resources. **This might include the development of new modules** to help broaden the base of community action financial management assistance and competencies.

Topics for training could include: more info on ROI – specifically some examples of real numbers that can be used – value of education, employment, special care, etc.

5 -- Data Collection and Accountability -- The capacity of the Community Services Network to collect and report information on the work of community action for a variety of purposes at the Federal, State, and local levels is increasing. We recently conducted a survey of PtP Network regarding the use of data bases and reporting systems throughout the country. It seems that more states are adopting electronic data collection and reporting systems. Some states are developing statewide common data systems. It is important that the PtP Network understands the power of the continued implementation and refinement of Results Oriented Management and

Accountability as a tool for Network revitalization and evaluation. How can the PtP network help local and statewide CAA systems work toward full implementation of ROMA?

Topics for training could include: Best Practices: ways State and local community action agencies are being successful in identifying data needed for planning and managing, and clarification of the ways data is being used nationally to support the continued existence of the CSBG funding stream. We could share samples of local reports and marketing tools that have been created from good data collection practices.

How do we support the Trainers?

There were several suggestions for In-service Training to be held in September 2005

The main request was to improve communications among trainers and between trainers and other federal initiatives. Some suggestions were: Implement Web site and/or develop newsletter: info from field, best practices, etc.

How do we gather data from Trainers?

Discussion about 2005 Survey of Trainers – we should do a survey to get info, but what info do we need to collect?

Refine survey questions for trainers – will develop a committee and solicit input from them to help with this, and will also seek suggestions for other ways to gauge impact from trainers, state office and association staff, other national projects (NASCS, CAP)

Overall comments:

Trainers need more information about implementation. “This is how to make it work” stories from successful implementation

They need more information about data collection and the national system.

There needs to be more connections with other initiatives such as: the Award for Excellence, the Executive Academy, ROMA1, Poverty Simulation, TANF reauthorization, Family and Community Development Projects, Family Economic Security through Asset Building Projects.

We need to think about “revitalization” as a driving force behind all the work we do in the network. Trainers can help agencies identify how they are known in the communities in which they work. As Self-Sufficiency programs? As charity? And then, how do they **want** to be known in the community and, finally, how does their community want them to be known.