

# THE LAKE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

AN AFFILIATE OF  
THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST

## **2008 REACH grant profiles**

In 2006, The Lake County Community Foundation launched Realizing Excellence and Capacity Here (REACH), a strategic growth program designed to provide support to build the capacity of agencies serving the residents of Lake County. Organizations accepted into this program have demonstrated their ability to address critical community needs and, in partnership with the Executive Service Corps, have completed the program's first phase by creating three-year organizational development plans. Each organization will receive general operating support, renewable over three years, if they continue to progress toward meeting the goals identified in their respective plans.

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lake County (BBBSLC): \$25,000**

Founded locally in 1980, BBBSLC is one of 500 affiliated chapters of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, which has been in existence since 1904. BBBSLC provides support to more than 600 at-risk children across the county through positive, caring mentoring relationships. Mentors include corporate volunteers, high school and college students, members of faith communities and other caring individuals. As a REACH participant, in the next three years, BBBSLC's goal is to double the size of its programs emphasizing on continuing culturally competent programming that meets the needs of a diverse county. As of February 1, 2008, the mentoring matches totaled 916 for the first year of the REACH grant. This number consists of all mentoring matches served throughout the year. The focus for year two of the REACH grant is to retain the matches for a longer period and focus on the quality and strength of the mentoring match.

### **Christian Outreach of Lutherans (COOL): \$25,000**

Founded in 1983, COOL provides comprehensive assistance to Lake County families by offering transitional housing and a food pantry. COOL is currently deepening the scope of its services by offering expanded opportunities for the children in transitional housing along with more individualized direction for parents. The program is unique in that it offers scattered site housing rather than shelter assistance. To date, fourteen families have purchased their first homes upon exiting the program. COOL's food pantry is open five days a week and one Saturday a month. Last year, the food pantry served 26,369 individuals. In January 2007 a satellite pantry was opened at Trinity Lutheran Church in Ingleside. This location is open every Monday and Wednesday and serves those living in western Lake County. The agency's strategic plan as a REACH grant recipient is to build its infrastructure and capacity to support its programs and service goals.

### **Family Service: Prevention, Education & Counseling: \$25,000**

Founded in 1930, Family Service assists individuals, families and communities in positively adapting to the ever-changing landscape of today's society. The organization is committed to the people it serves, to advancing the field of human services and proactively identifying and responding to the changing needs of society. In response to the growing Latino population, the program's Nuestro Center provides bilingual/bicultural counseling services for the community. Due to its increased presence in northwestern suburban Cook County and northern Lake County, the agency name was changed in 2006 to be more descriptive of the work of the agency - Family Service: Prevention, Education & Counseling. To continue to serve families in the face of severe budget cuts, its REACH goal includes replacing revenue by enhancing relationships with donors, developing a communications plan and strengthening its board.

### **Urban Muslim Minority Alliance (UMMA): \$25,000**

UMMA, which means "community" in Arabic, aims to empower individuals by bridging the wide socioeconomic gap in Lake County. The agency provides GED programs, computer training and financial literacy seminars. UMMA has forged relationships with other organizations to support its work and provide social services, housing and food assistance for UMMA's program participants. Its first REACH priority has been board development and enhancement, as well as fund development and expansion of its GED program. To date, UMMA Center has increased its student volume from 130 students to 172 students, an increase of 32%. This was accomplished by hiring an education empowerment teacher which allowed UMMA to increase its capacity to serve more students.