

# **INCOME**

## **Vision:**

Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley become economically stable through understanding their financial needs as well as maximizing and managing income and other resources toward greater self-sufficiency.

## **Goal:**

Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley have improved economic self-sufficiency through improved employment and other economic opportunities, sound financial management of their own resources and through access to important support services.

**Long-term Outcome 1:** Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley have effective access to employment and other economic opportunities

**Community Change:** Improve the quality and coordination of programs that train and connect residents to existing jobs.

### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support research of best practices in other communities to develop practical model for Roanoke Valley.
- Support mapping of existing resources for training, counseling and placement.
- Work with other funders to encourage and support collaborations that effectively connect residents seeking employment to sources that have identified specific current job opportunities.

**Community Change:** Encourage and support micro-enterprise training and creation.

### **Proposed United Way strategy:**

- Fund efforts to develop and expand programs that encourage and support micro-enterprise training and creation.

**Long-term Outcome 2:** Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley increase their ability to manage personal finances effectively.

**Community Change:** Coordinated, ongoing education program to help people understand how to manage their finances more effectively, and utilize resources in the community to help them do so.

### **Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Work with others in the community to identify criteria and standards for quality financial literacy programs to insure both quality and consistency in those programs, including customized programs for different constituencies, circumstances and life events.
  - Conduct research – federal reserve, etc.
- Identify and evaluate existing resources, utilizing those standards in making funding decisions
  - Comprehensive list of resources – including less formal resources, such as service providers who currently or could provide financial literacy training.

- Provide support for a coordinated program to educate residents to manage finances. For example:
  - Utilize grassroots resources - Peer-to-peer, trusted community leaders, churches, community organizations, etc.
  - Early education utilizing programs working with children
  - Targeted to employed as well as unemployed residents
  - Encourage employers to provide employees access to financial literacy training.
  - Customized to reach different populations
  - Possibly identify entry opportunities in terms of "life events" (age, personal financial crises, etc.)
  - City, banks and community organizations working together
  - Include education on credit cards, exploiting lending practices
  - Identify success stories, mentors, role models
  - Encourage funded agencies to participate in financial literacy program
  - Consider supporting efforts to require direct deposit of benefit program proceeds

The coordinated program should be customized to reach different populations utilizing peer-to-peer approaches, employer programs for their employees, and other innovative methods.

**Long-term Outcome 3:** Families and individuals in the Roanoke Valley have effective access to support systems that help them become more self-sufficient.

**Community Change:** Community institutions work cooperatively to help stabilize individuals and families during crises, meet their basic needs and help them move to self-sufficiency

**Proposed United Way strategies:**

- Support services that assist individuals and families in acute crises to access services that help meet their basic needs and stabilize their situation through housing, support services and case management.
  - Includes support services that prevent homelessness by reducing the occurrence of evictions, disconnected utilities
- Support comprehensive services that guide individuals and families towards self-sufficiency by enhancing coordination among service providers, bridging of services and case management.
- Increase community access to information and resources that can assist families by focusing on innovative strategies that encourage coordination of a variety of organizations that support the ability of families to meet their basic needs.
- Support programs that allow caregivers of aging family members to seek or maintain employment by accessing quality, affordable adult day care services.
- Support opportunities for persons with disabilities to gain employment and increase their independence.