Welcome!
We will be starting soon.
Building a Statewide Anti-Poverty Coalition

Serena Rice, Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey
National Energy Foundation, NJ Shares

September 16, 2015
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. ET
LIFE, the Low-Income Forum on Energy, is a unique statewide dialogue that brings together organizations and individuals committed to addressing the challenges and opportunities facing low-income New Yorkers as they seek safe, affordable and reliable energy.

Supported by the New York State Public Service Commission and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the LIFE dialogue encourages an interactive exchange of information and collaboration among the programs and resources that assist low-income energy consumers.
Monthly webinars
Tuesday, October 27, 2015 @ 1:00-3:00 p.m. ET
HEAP Updates for the 2015-2016 Heating Season
NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

Monthly email newsletter
Sign up at lifenynews.org

Social media
LinkedIn: Low-Income Forum on Energy
Twitter: @LIFEnys
Find more information on the website
www.lifenynews.org

Join the mailing list
www.lifenys.org/signup

Share article suggestions, webinar ideas, events
www.lifenys.org/share

Contact LIFE
1-877-NY-SMART, Option #5
LIFE@nyserda.ny.gov
Asking and Responding to Questions

Welcome!
We will be starting soon.

Type into the text field and click “send.”
Technical Difficulties or Contacting the Host

Click on the “Chat” icon to activate the chat function.
Building a Statewide Anti-Poverty Coalition

September 16, 2015, LIFE Webinar
Jim Jacob, NJ SHARES
Serena Rice, Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey
In **1999** a loose coalition of diverse groups convened to work together on shared concerns, like affordable housing, hunger, and health care.

- Service providers
- Community groups
- Advocates
- Faith Communities
- Labor Unions
- Business partners
- Government representatives
- Individuals, including those with lived experience of poverty
History of APN

This coalition worked well for building connections and shared advocacy.

- Regular meetings to share information;
- Annual Poverty Summit to energize and educate partners;
- Some successful joint advocacy efforts, like the development of the State Rental Assistance Program.
History of APN

In 2014, APN incorporated as a separate organization to continue to grow from the coalition’s foundation, with more focused efforts.

- Building staff and resources to organize partners and conduct initiatives;
- Defined Mission: to fight poverty in NJ by empowering partners, educating the community, and advocating for solutions.
Because poverty is **Structural**

- It’s almost never a single, isolated problem
- Deeper problems require deeper solutions
Because services tend to be silos

- Traditional services are issue-focused
  - Not designed to explore connections between different needs/issues.
  - Not designed to coordinated across fields to work on comprehensive solutions.
- Building these cross-cutting partnerships can be hard
  - A network that intentionally facilitates this kind of collaboration can overcome “business as usual”.
Why have an Anti-Poverty Network?

Because networking creates capacity for change

• There is power in the exchange of information
  • Finding connections
  • Recognizing unintended consequences
  • Identifying solutions

• There is power in numbers
  • Joint advocacy is much stronger with many partners from diverse positions come together
Defined Strategy

- A network has a different focus and strategy than individual members
Core Activities

Educate
- Information sharing
- Community education

Empower
- Partnership building
- Influencing public attitudes

Advocate
- Policy priorities
- Housing, Hunger, Economic Empowerment
How To Build & Maintain a Network

APN NJ is a work in progress, but we have learned some key lessons so far

- Be transparent about focus & limits
  - Can’t do everything
  - Tiered priorities
- Prioritize communication
- Engage members
- Dedicated funding
Seeing the Benefits

One ways we see the benefit of this approach is in earned media

2015 Examples

❖ Roundtable event in June with the Senate President
  • EITC
  • Stories of real workers
  • Platform for legislative partnership
  • Major policy win

❖ Candidates Pledge
  • Increasing attention to poverty & systemic response
  • Platform to build on specific issues.
Seeing the Benefits
Our Mission

New Jersey SHARES, Inc. (NJS) is a statewide non-profit corporation primarily providing assistance to individuals and families in need of help meeting their energy and utility burden. Through advocacy, community outreach, education, information and referral we connect low and moderate income households with available resources.
Our Programs

NJS offers assistance for Energy, Telephone and Water bills through partnerships with New Jersey utility companies, Verizon New Jersey, United Water and New Jersey American Water Company. Our energy program serves low to moderate income households.

NJS partners with a network of over 250 community based organizations and legislative offices with over 300 sites.

Visit www.njshares.org for a list.
NJS-APN-Community Partners
Connecting our Communities

New Jersey SHARES and Verizon New Jersey partnered in 2005 to help our neighbors in need.

The **Communications Lifeline Program** is available to qualified applicants throughout the Verizon NJ service area.
In 2005, NJS and United Water partnered to create UW CARES in New Jersey and five additional states.

In New Jersey, this program offers a UW customer up to $100 on their United Water utility bill if they have a hardship.

There is no income guideline. The customer must have a good payment history and have paid at least $20 on their bill within 90 days of applying.
In 2009, NJS and New Jersey American Water partnered to offer NJAW customers assistance with their water bills.

Through NJAW’s H2O Help to Others Program™, clients with income levels at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level may receive a grant of up to $500.*

*NJAW screens applicants for additional monthly discounts.

A household may receive a grant once annually.
Key Findings

- NJ SHARES serves needy households.
  - 19% have children under the age of six
  - 54% had a child 18 or younger
  - 21% are single parent households
  - 55% had a household member of 50 years of age or older
  - 19% have a family member over 60 years of age
  - 84% had employment income
  - 60% have annual income below $50,000
Partnerships Provide Solutions

- Advocates
- Energy Providers
- Legislators
- State Agencies
- & Regulators
- Community Based Organizations
- Concerned Citizens

APN
ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK OF NEW JERSEY

NJ SHARES
Offering Hope & Delivering Help
Join us for the next webinar:

August 19, 2015 @ 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET

HEAP Updates for the 2015-2016 Heating Season

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

www.nyserda.ny.gov/LIFE-Webinar-Series
Find more information on the website
www.lifenynews.org

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