

NFDM Quarterly Report

Quarter I of 2010



2010

Education and Housing Departments

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INTRODUCTION

Financial education is essential to help consumers understand how to prevent becoming involved in transactions that are financially destructive, how to avoid becoming victims of fraud, and how to exercise their consumer protection rights. Financial literacy can empower consumers to be better shoppers, allowing them to obtain goods and services at lower cost. This optimizes their household budgets, providing more opportunity to consume and save or invest. Having basic financial planning skills can help families to meet their near-term obligations and to maximize their long-term financial well-being. "We teach it, we believe it."

HIGHLIGHTS

Education Department

- **Navy Region Southeast Reserve Component Command:** January 21st, James Feazell met with Matthew Davis, Family Readiness Program Administrator for the Navy Region Southeast Reserve Component Command. This partnership would allow NFDM to facilitate financial literacy seminars throughout the entire southeastern region of the United States to reservists and their families empowering them to become sound personal money managers.
- **Pinellas Habitat for Humanity Home Dedications;** January 23rd, February 10th, and March 17th, with assistance from our Hispanic Financial Literacy Advisor Eric Muñiz, five different families have received the keys to their new Pinellas Habitat for Humanity homes this year. Eric, with referrals from Pinellas Habitat for Humanity, personally coaches families to be credit worthy of owning their own homes by implementing a financial road map that guides families to financial freedom.
- **United Way Tampa Bay Visit:** January 29th, Emery Ivery, Vice President of United Way Tampa Bay's Community & Partnership Development visited NFDM to discuss the possibility of our organizations partnering on an I.D.A (Individual Development Account) program for the U.S Department of Treasury. In addition, we mapped out a strategy that would enable us to become a community partner with United Way. Mr. Ivery informed us that the services we provide would assist greatly in one area of need for their organizational goals. Furthermore, we would have to meet with their Board of Directors to present our programs to them and obtain approval from the Board to become a partner.

- **Mr. Bob Wilson – WWII Veteran:** January 30th, Veterans Plus was invited to be a vendor at the Congresswoman Ginny Brown - Waite Veteran's event in Brooksville, Florida. One of the WWII Veterans, Mr. Bob Wilson, stopped to talk and obtained our educational information. The following Monday morning, he called the office and asked for additional assistance. He was days away from becoming an 82 year old homeless Veteran and Veterans Plus seemed to be his last hope. We drove back to Brooksville and took Mr. Wilson to look at apartments. We found one that was affordable and safe. Next, we called United Way of Hernando County and they immediately agreed to help with his down payment on the apartment. We still needed help to get his electric and water turned on therefore, we contacted the Hernando Count Health and Human Services Department and they agreed to pay for his electric hook-up, and the Marines took care of the water. Publix gave us \$200 in gift cards to fill his pantry and Jericho Ministries helped by giving Mr. Wilson a bed and other furniture items. We went back up one more time to see that he was all settled in and had everything he needed. Eric Muñiz, from the Education Department, donated a microwave oven to Mr. Wilson for him to cook without using the stove. Marlene Ware, Financial Literacy Advisor, took personal ownership of this case until completion.
- **J.A Hall of Achievement Celebration Dinner:** March 4, Marlene Ware, Niurka Rosario, and Eric Muñiz represented the NFDM team at the Junior Achievement (J.A) Hall of Achievement Celebration Dinner at Busch Gardens, Florida, where outstanding volunteers, educators, and donors were recognized for their exceptional work and participation in educating and motivating young individuals to value free enterprise, business, and economics. In the last school year, 7311 volunteers inspired 68,555 students in West Central Florida. The top two Hall of Achievement winners included Gus A. Stavros, founder of the Pinellas Education Foundation & Stavros Institute, and David H. Wilbanks, Financial Representative with the Northwestern Mutual Financial Network.
- **J.W.B Afford My Life:** March 16, NFDM was requested to teach a two - hour workshop concerning family finances. The attendees were all partners with the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) who work off-site. We covered credit, communication, saving strategies, and budgeting. This was a paid workshop and we have been invited to host three other similar events this year.
- **United Way One-On-One Counseling's:** As new partners with United Way of Tampa Bay, NFDM has been invited to take part in a new initiative being tested by United Way. During the 2009 Tax Return season all residents who utilized a free VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) site to get their taxes done, filled out an "Intake Form" that provided them the option of asking for additional help on budgeting, credit, saving, paying down debt, etc. We have been given 6 individuals who want the one-on-one assistance offered by United Way.

PENDING PROJECTS

Vern's Blue Book for Middle Managers: Amongst various other projects, Vern Farnsworth, Director of Public Policy and Development, is currently working on editing and publishing his "Middle Management" hand book which will be available for distribution in the near future on our NFDM website.

Sealund & Associates Software Program: The Education Department and NFDM Management Team met with representatives from Sealund & Associates for a demonstration of their "Alaris Financial Literacy e-Learning Courses" which features engaging avatars, interactive exercises, and entertaining simulations. This computer program is one that may be incorporated into the Education Departments current curriculum.

FDIC HBCU Pilot Program: NFDM will actively participate in a pilot program targeting Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) with the FDIC. As an Alliance Member of the FDIC, our organization will play a key role in train-the-trainer sessions with professors and staff of the colleges as well as provide expert information within the lecture series model. This program is scheduled to start during the fall of 2010.

GET REAL (Responsibilities, Employment, Assets, and Living) E-Learning Portal: The National Disability Institute and the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University are teaming up to create a new online information source to answer questions about important topics such as Tax benefits, financial planning, and Individual Development Accounts to name a few. As a leading expert on Managing Credit, NFDM's Education Financial Advisor Marlene Ware has been invited to become a part of Get REAL (Responsibilities, Employment, Assets and Living), and e-Learning Advice Portal.

First Time Homebuyer's: Currently, NFDM's Housing Department has two First Time Homebuyer applications that were sent out in April and there is one scheduled class pending.

The White Book: This personal resource book, created by Financial Literacy Advisor Marlene Ware, is one where families may keep all of their important papers and documents secure and in one place including;

- **Identifications:** Social Security cards, driver's license, passport, citizenship papers, etc.
- **Medical:** Immunization records, prescriptions, physicians, health insurance, etc.
- **Retirement Accounts:** Pension, social security, IRA, 401K, etc.
- **Home:** Deed, homeowner's insurance, lease, renter's insurance, etc.
- **Accounts:** Banks, credit cards, investments, PIN numbers, etc.
- **Will:** Power of Attorney, Living Will, Will, Life Insurance, etc.

Florida Youth Shines: April 11-14, 2010, Niurka Rosario and James Feazell will be traveling to Tallahassee, FL to speak in front of the Children's Cabinet on the importance of financial literacy education for kids transitioning of out of the foster care system.

ONGOING PROJECTS

Ways to Work: This seminar is continuous and takes place on the 3rd Saturday of every month. NFDM is the financial literacy component for their low / moderate income applicants to receive consideration for automobile loans. The Education Team has developed a relationship with Family Service Centers Inc., an innovative program that provides small loans (\$500-\$4,000) to low - income working parents specifically for car purchases or car repairs. The program assists families toward self - sufficiency by providing loans to those who might not otherwise qualify for credit, or who might fall victim to predatory lenders. Financial education and credit - building skills are also a vital part of this loan process.

Pinellas County Pregnancy Centers: Marlene Ware delivers monthly financial literacy seminars to expectant mothers and their partners at Pinellas Park Pregnancy Center, Countryside Pregnancy Center, and Largo Pregnancy Center. Pregnancy Plus Medical and Kimberly Home have chosen to take advantage of the extended seminars that consist of 4 weeks of *Money Smart* curricula.

Pinellas Habitat for Humanity: The Education Team continues presenting seminars on predatory lending as well as pre and post - purchase counseling for debt management at Pinellas Habitat for Humanity. The team is also providing them with *Money Smart* seminars on a monthly basis and volunteering their time during Habitat community activities.

Community Action Stops Abuse (CASA): The Education Team is currently scheduling monthly seminars for this residential center for domestic abuse. A modified FDIC *Money Smart* curriculum (Personal Finance for Independent Women) is used as well as seminars on "Budgeting for Vacations" and "Budgeting for the Holidays."

Juvenile Detention Center (JDC): The Education Team continues a relationship with the teenage boys and girls at the Juvenile Detention Center by introducing them to the "It's My Life" and "Start-Up Cost" curriculum.

Largo High School: The Education Team introduced the Largo High School seniors to the "It's My Life" curriculum and the *Cent\$ability* game. We return each quarter to teach a new group of seniors. We will continue with the economics classes and the 9th grade social studies students.

Junior Achievement (J.A.): Members of the Education and Housing Teams continue to partner with Junior Achievement at schools throughout Pinellas County providing monthly volunteer efforts. We often setup a follow-up visit with the schools to present our financial literacy program.

The Haven: This is a protective home for victims of domestic violence. The Education Team continues to offer monthly workshops to women who are on their own, often with children, and without many resources.

Reverse Mortgage Counseling's: Counseling by a HUD approved housing counseling agency is a requirement for borrowers to obtain reverse mortgage. We satisfy this by counseling individuals based upon the reverse mortgage loan program that they choose. We provide individuals with information on: loan amounts, payment options, home ownership requirements, advantages, and program benefits. Our purpose is to make sure that the homeowner has all the information needed when it comes to their reverse mortgage.

NFDM One-on-One Credit Counseling's: Eric Muñiz conducts free one-on-one counseling to all of our employees. He also accepts referrals on the phone or in person. The sessions help clients gain a better understanding of issues related to money management and personal finance. The Housing department also accepts calls for all homeownership needs (first time homebuyer, predatory lending, foreclosure prevention, etc.).

Hillsborough County Prosperity Campaign: The Education Team continues to maintain an active partnership with this group, including distributing Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) materials and recruiting volunteers to work at the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites during tax season.

Wealth Building Coalition of Pinellas County/Prosperity Campaign: Community leaders from various non-profit organizations meet every second Wednesday of every month from 9am-10am to discuss issues relevant to Pinellas County non-profits.

Abe Brown Ministries: The Education Team, as a possible partner in their work with the prison system, has contacted Abe Brown Ministries, formerly Prison Crusade Ministries. Abe Brown partners with all 67 prisons in Florida working to help prisoners and parolees achieve productive and spiritual lives.

Big Brothers Big Sisters: Eric Muñiz facilitates morning and evening presentations for families in the Kinship Care Program through the Big Brothers Big Sisters Organization. Eric speaks to the families about budgeting, credit, and debt management.

The Spring of Tampa Bay: The Education Team provides monthly financial workshops at this transitional housing center for women who are victims of domestic violence. Most recently Linda Haknasar and Marlene Ware began a series of homeownership classes that will provide these recovering families with the education that will prepare them for homeownership.

HBIF (Hispanic Business Initiative Fund): HBIF currently provides NFDM with all of their turn downs for small business loans after determining the availability of credit for their clients. NFDM has been recommended as HBIF's number one resource for consumer credit counseling's and will soon see an increase in DMP's and one-on-one credit counseling's due to this partnership. Eric Muñiz has been assisting HBIF clients for the last three years.

The Children's Board of Hillsborough County: As of the second quarter of 2009, NFDM became part of the Children's Board Administrative Services Organizations (ASO) as a "Financial Coach" where we will generate referrals via fifty-six Case Management organizations and affiliates.

National Counsel On Aging (NCOA) Partnership: NFDM formed a partnership with the National Counsel on Aging (NCOA), a non profit senior advocacy group headquartered in Washington, DC. NCOA has partnered with NFDM to assist in providing reverse mortgage counseling nationally to the senior population. NCOA is a HUD approved intermediary, which means they receive direct grants from HUD to provide reverse mortgage counseling services. NFDM is now providing upwards of 90% of all NCOA requests for reverse mortgage counseling in all 50 states and currently provides approximately 40 reverse mortgage counseling sessions per day. Each session takes 1.5 hours to complete. HUD anticipates a 30% increase in NCOA counseling requests during this 2010 calendar year.

College Student Orientations: Marlene Ware and Vern Farnsworth continue to provide financial literacy education to graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in the University of South Florida (USF), St. Pete College, and Eckerd College. The focus of the orientations vary but mostly concentrates on how the {financial} choices we make when we are young impact {retirement} choices we are able to make as we age.

Great American Teach-In: For the 5th consecutive year NFDM has participated in the Great American Teach-In where Education Department team members visit local schools to not only speak about their current positions and what their jobs entitle but also provide an interactive demonstration of their youth curriculum "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly" to the classes they visit. This financial literacy curriculum stresses the importance of saving for retirement at a young age.

New Wachovia / Wells Fargo "Hands On Banking" Financial Literacy Program: Towards the end of 2009, the Education Department attended a two - hour presentation and demonstration of Wachovia / Wells Fargo's new "Hands On Banking" financial literacy program. This program is now replacing the FDIC *Money Smart* program the Education Department was utilizing as curriculum for their presentations.

Keep It Safe & Secure Financial Literacy Program: This program helps to build financial knowledge, security, and confidence for military men and women returning from deployment, transitioning out of the military, and pre-deployment.

Housing Foreclosure and New Homebuyer Counseling: January - March 2010, five clients are in their trial mortgage modification period, waiting for the permanent loan modification to be worked out by their lender. Two clients are in mediation and are currently undergoing the required budget counseling. One preliminary document request has been sent out to a homeowner and we will be actively working to get them back on track with their mortgage and one does not have sustainable income to support the home. Housing has sent out 24 First time Homeowner Seminar applications referred by Bank of America (BOA). Seven applications were not returned and we are actively working on following up with them to schedule their class. Out of that 24, 14 First Homebuyer One-On-One Seminars have been completed. Seven are pending closing and the remaining seven have not found housing. Most candidates qualify for \$135,000 in housing value or more. We actively search out HUD approved agencies in geographical areas that we do not presently cover to make it easier for clients to do a face-to-face counseling. All of our supportive counseling now includes a Benefits Check-up to insure that clients are aware of any other resources (State and Federal) that they may qualify for.

Business Fundamentals: This Spanish-language workshop is designed to teach Hispanic entrepreneurs in Pinellas County the basics of starting a business, developing a business plan, and controlling finances. Workshops are offered several times monthly from February through May 2010 at local libraries.

Keep It Safe Seniors (KISS) Financial Literacy Program: The KISS (Keep It Safe Seniors) curriculum based on the *Money Smart* "Keep it Safe" module, is one that speaks on the financial challenges unique to the senior population and includes topics such as; monitoring your financial affairs, getting organized, what to do if you lose your wallet, steps to take if your identity is stolen, staying away from predatory lenders, and more.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & NETWORKING

Starbucks Coffee: Niurka Rosario developed a partnership with the manager at a local neighborhood Starbucks where we currently receive donations for our weekly seminars. This enables NFDM to trim expenses while providing participants with snacks.

School Advisory Committee (SAC): Marlene Ware represents NFDM as a community business partner during monthly School Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings at Lynch Elementary School where the focus is to assist in the development and evaluation of school improvement plans, designed to meet state education goals and student performance standards.

Guardian Ad Litem (GAL): Niurka Rosario continues her work with foster children by attending monthly child visits, court visits, and other meetings related to this program. Although the main goal of GAL is re-unification with the parents and/or legal guardians, this may not always be true for all cases. Niurka's two foster children, brothers, were re-unified with their mother on November 7th, 2008 but the transition has not been a simple one and therefore Judicial Reviews and Status Conferences continue to take place on a monthly basis at the Downtown Tampa Court House. Niurka anticipates this case to close by the summer of 2010.

The Breakfast Optimist Club of St. Petersburg: Marlene continues her weekly meetings at the Breakfast Optimist Club of St. Petersburg, one of the oldest volunteer organizations in Pinellas County. Their emphasis is on youth and creating stronger families through education. Marlene participates in various community functions throughout Pinellas County sponsored by the Breakfast Optimist Club including: Get Downtown – First Friday (proceeds of the wine/beer tents and the water/soda tent go to a different local charity each month) and preparing dinner for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House in St. Petersburg once each month.

Pinellas Opportunity Council (POC) Advisory Committee: James Feazell, referred by POC Director Ed Dickey, is a member of the Pinellas Opportunity Council Advisory Committee where he assists with quarterly projects and ideas for marketing to increase membership, bring more exposure, and inform community members of POC's credit union to name a few.

Share, Florida: Tim Caske, Director of Share Florida, was invited by Niurka Rosario and Marlene Ware to present his organization's services during one of HECM's Team meeting. Share, a non-profit organization, builds and strengthens communities through volunteer service while offering services on high quality food. Niurka has been a long time supporter of this program and has referred many families for both community service and food packages. Current NFDM monthly volunteers of this program include Marlene Ware and John Lockwood along with relatives, spouses, and friends.

Pinellas Ed Foundation: James Feazell, Marlene Ware, and Niurka Rosario are current judges for the Teach for Excellence grants' recipients. This is the third year NFDM has been involved with the Pinellas Education Foundation/Pinellas County Schools Teach for Excellence Classroom Grant Selection Committee. Each year, hundreds of Pinellas County teachers from elementary, middle and high schools submit creative and innovative proposals for making learning come alive in their classrooms.

Wealth Building Coalition / Pinellas Prosperity Campaign: Marlene Ware is a member of the Outreach Committee and Asset Building Sub Committee. The mission of The Wealth Building Coalition is to promote and expand economic and asset-building opportunities for low and moderate income households throughout Pinellas County by concentrating on goals such as; promoting awareness and increasing understanding of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program through an ongoing and coordinated marketing campaign, expand and improve community access to free income tax preparation at sites throughout the county in partnership with the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program and local organizations, and emphasize and support linkages to essential asset-building programs for low and moderate income households through: financial education training utilizing the FDIC *Money Smart* curriculum, homeownership education for new home ownership and refinancing existing mortgages, and additional asset-building strategies.

Bank on St. Pete: The Bank on St. Pete project is modeled after the highly successful Bank on San Francisco program. Several financial institutions, community organizations, and financial literacy educators have collaborated to assist the unbanked citizens of St. Petersburg, Florida in their pursuit to become sound personal money managers. James Fezell serves on the education subcommittee which develops the content, reporting, and curriculum for the project. This program will allow participants a “second chance” to establish a positive relationship with a financial institution.

Real Economic Impact Tour (REI Tour) Planning Committee: Marlene Ware and Niurka Rosario are on the planning committee for the Real Economic Impact Tour (REI Tour), a national outreach initiative which delivers information on free tax preparation and filing assistance along with other asset building strategies to low-income persons with disabilities.

NFDM Social Media Sites: NFDM has recently joined the mainstream by creating social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter as a means of communicating, keeping up to date with announcements, and current events. Other benefits of these sites include targeting population segments as well as creating and publishing advertisements of choice.

NFDM Foreclosure Prevention Outreach: January – March 2010, NFDM’s Default Counseling continues to be at the top of our list in bringing our clients the most current information on programs that they could possibly take advantage of in their mortgage dilemma.

Disability Employment Forum: February 3rd, Marlene Ware and Janet Lang attended Enable America’s Annual Disability Employment Forum which brought together experts from both the business world and the disability community to discuss the current state of disability employment in this country. Speakers for this event included Kathy Martinez, head of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Dr. Susanne Homant, President and CEO of The Able Trust, a statewide foundation dedicated to creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities, and Marnie Hoover, a Senior Project Manager with the IBM Human Ability & Accessibility Center driving internal awareness and programs to make IBM an accessible workplace.

KINSHIP of Hillsborough & Pinellas Counties: February 2010, Niurka Rosario and Marlene Ware presented to the KINSHIP Support Group of Hillsborough County on the evening of February 9th where Marlene spoke on the importance of teaching children at a young age to have an understanding of their guardian’s expenses in order to assist with diminishing household costs, such as electricity and groceries,

while planting the seed of saving for the future. Niurka provided an overview of the financial services NFDM provides as a resource for families and their children. Niurka also attended the KINSHIP Services Network of Pinellas Collaborative Meeting on the morning of February 16 where she provided Case Managers and Supervisors information and handouts on NFDM Services. Niurka and Marlene have another KINSHIP presentation and children's activity scheduled on the evening of April 22nd for the KINSHIP Support Group of Pinellas County.

USF Tampa School of Aging Studies: February 19, Marlene Ware taught this upper level two-hour class focused on credit, saving (retirement and emergency), and avoiding debt that is not secured. Knowing that too many people, living too many years and having saved far too little, will place increasing tax demands on smaller working generations, we want to educate the younger generations about the critical need to begin saving now. Our efforts addressed the fact that these students should be planning ahead for the day when they must simultaneously support their children's education, their parents' eldercare in addition to paying their own bills and funding their own retirement.

2010 Parade of Senior Services: March 12, George Roe, Marlene Ware, and Niurka Rosario participated in the "2010 Parade of Senior Services" in Ocala, FL at the Central Florida Community College's Ewers Center where more than 60 government, non-profit, and public service agencies in participation provided literature, answered questions, and offered services to the senior citizens of Marion County.

Returning Wounded Warriors (RWW): March 12, Denver, Colorado, the Returning Wounded Warrior Event, attended by NFDM's Housing Department, was overwhelming successful in speaking to approximately 150 veterans concerning financial wellness.

Welcome Home Heroes: March 13, USF Sun Dome, this outreach event was attended by three of our Counselors where they distributed informational brochures and handouts to assist our veterans in understanding the need for budgeting and credit awareness.

University of Florida (UF) Extension Credit Class: March 17 & 24, as part of an ongoing University of Florida Financial Literacy event, the Education Department was requested to teach a one - hour class on "Credit." The class listened to strategies to increase their credit scores, how to fix errors on their reports, and behaviors that could pull their score down. There was also a discussion about the Credit Card Act of 2009 that changed some of the rules regarding credit card usage. There was a second follow-up class for those individuals who pulled their credit reports and wanted individual information.

Yellow Ribbon Event: March 20th, Lake Buena Vista, FL, this pre-deployment event for the National Guard was held for men and women deploying to Afghanistan. This event was very relevant because the families (spouses, children, parents, etc.) were invited to sit through the informational sessions and they were able to visit the vendors for additional support. There were close to 400 families in attendance.

TAPS MacDill Seminar on Credit: March 23rd, this was the second MacDill TAPS event that NFDM has been invited to speak as experts on credit. There were about 47 men and women currently transitioning out of the military in attendance. NFDM will be on the TAPS list of guest speakers for all of MacDill events.

CONCLUSION

During the first quarter of 2010 the Education and Housing Departments have continued to work diligently to promote financial literacy and homeownership education. The energy and enthusiasm displayed by the members of our teams have helped to move us forward. Our numbers speak for themselves;

Education

Our final tally of seminar information for this first quarter of 2010 is as follows:

- Adults: 1257
- Students: 444
- Spanish Seminars: 15
- One-On-One Counselings: 37
- Total Seminars: 109

Housing

- Housing Seminars: 0
- Individual Housing Counseling (New Clients Only): 26
- HECM Counseled: 1942
- New HECM Counselors: 0