

October 19, 2000

Office of the State Budget
1122 Lady Street, 12th Floor
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear South Carolinians:

Section 1-31-20 of Chapter 31 of the 1997 Cumulative Supplement of the 1976 Code of Laws of South Carolina, as amended, states, “The commission shall meet at least monthly *to study the causes and effects of the socioeconomic deprivation of minorities in the State and to implement programs necessary to address inequities confronting minorities in the State.*”

With this purpose statement in mind, the Executive Director and members of the Commission’s Board established the agency’s mission statement in keeping with the mandate of the enabling legislation. Aware that the agency’s activities must not duplicate services and programs provided by other state agencies and entities, staff persons set out to identify: 1) gaps in program services, and 2) existing programs that data indicated were not effective in reaching minorities. Through brainstorming and subsequent research of existing literature, the indicators of deprivation were identified. With this information, the mission statement of the agency was narrowed to address any issue that contributed to deprivation that was not being addressed or was not being addressed effectively by state, local and/or private entities.

During Fiscal Year 1999-2000, the Commission operated with only two of the seven board seats filled. Because of this situation, it was determined that it was inappropriate to move forward with the development of the agency’s strategic plan until more board members were appointed. As the report will indicate, those appointments have been made and the agency has begun the process of moving the agency toward performance excellence.

If you have questions about this letter of transmittal or any of the information discussed in the attached report, please contact me at the number listed on this correspondence.

Sincerely,

Janie A. Davis
Executive Director

Attachments

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR MINORITY AFFAIRS

ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

Fiscal Year 1999-2000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Commission for Minority Affairs was created in 1993 and staffed in 1995. Over the past five years, most of the agency's work has involved conducting research to determine the severity of minority deprivation and identifying which associated deprivation issues would be addressed. With the Commission's limited staff, we focused our attention on two areas in order to meet the requirements of our enabling legislation and mission statement: 1) Research and 2) Father Absence/Re-engagement. These may be described as our program areas, even though they are not line items in the budget. It is important to note that the Commission does not provide direct client services.

1) Research

Program Goal: To provide data and properly analyzed information to the public regarding issues relevant to the status of minorities in South Carolina.

Outcomes: The number of inquiries for information and copies of publications produced by the Commission increased over the past year and has consistently increased since the agency's existence. Although the number of inquiries have increased, we are unable at this time to determine how the information provided was used to effect change. The agency is currently beginning to put in place components of the Malcolm Baldrige System for Excellence. However, we have not implemented the Information and Analysis component as of the writing of this document. Currently, the Board and staff are setting goals as a part of the Strategic Planning process. We will move forward to put in place other components of the Malcolm Baldrige System during FY2000-2001.

Customer Focus: The State's citizenry, especially minorities.

Partnership: The agency entered into an agreement with the Institute on Poverty and Deprivation to explore working together to conduct research and to obtain grants to address issues related to poverty and deprivation. Additionally, efforts are underway to add scholarly researchers from the University of South Carolina to this partnership. This will strengthen the partnership to include a state agency, a non-profit entity, and an educational institution. This partnership would appeal to foundation funders who especially insist on partnerships and collaboration among organizations

- seeking funding.
- Challenges: The Commission continues to have a limited research staff. Currently, there are two FTE's assigned to the research unit. However, only one position is devoted entirely to research. The other FTE shares research responsibilities with several other areas of responsibility.
- Barriers: The lack of sufficient funding for research personnel is a serious barrier. With a limited staff, the amount and level of research possible are also limited which makes forming partnerships even more important.
- Opportunities: Increasingly other state agencies, i.e., Department of Social Services, Department of Health and Environmental Control, and the University of South Carolina, are contacting the Commission and exploring opportunities for partnerships. We see the potential partnering with USC as an opportunity to strengthen the agency's research capabilities. We have asked the General Assembly to increase the agency's budget by \$200,000.00 during FY2001-2002, so that the agency can afford to contract with scholarly researchers from the University, and other research institutions and organizations.

2) Father Absence/Re-engagement

- Program Goals:
- 1) To serve as a catalyst to move the State of South Carolina towards creating a Statewide Fatherhood Initiative;
 - 2) To provide technical assistance to communities establishing fatherhood initiatives; and
 - 3) To educate the public of the tragedies associated with father absence.
- Outcomes: Through the work of the Commission and others, i.e., the Providence Hospital Sister's of Charity Foundation, the Department of Social Services, staffers from the Governor's Office and members of the General Assembly, Governor Jim Hodges identified father absence/re-engagement as a state concern because it impacted the well-being of children and families. By letter, Governor Hodges notified cabinet agency heads and other state entities including the Commission, that he was formally designating the Department of Social Services as the lead cabinet agency to oversee the work of establishing the first Statewide Fatherhood Initiative. The consistent raising of the issue by the

Commission over the past three years was the catalyst that sparked discussions and ultimately, state action by Governor Hodges.

- Customer Focus: Established fatherhood initiatives, philanthropic organizations funding fatherhood initiatives, local grassroots organizations, county councils, mayors, business leaders, and citizens.
- Partnership: In FY 1999-2000 our work within state government and with local counties has helped us with establishing successful partnerships as discussed above in “Outcomes.” Partnerships were established with programs in the following counties: Marlboro, Charleston, Anderson, and Richland.
- Challenges: Staffing and funding for the effort has been an on-going problem over the years.
- Barriers: Funding, staffing, turf issues and public trust.
- Opportunities: To work with state agencies, businesses, and philanthropic organizations through collaboration, thus providing communities with the technical assistance and resources needed to develop programs that directly address poverty. Our efforts with this initiative has reached the point where real collaboration and partnership can become a reality. Because the problem of father absence is very complex and must be addressed from many directions, no one state organization can create a successful initiative without many partners. Additionally, the Board has approved the continued work on this goal as a part of the strategic planning process.

From an agency perspective, the Board and staff had just begun its efforts to implement performance excellence at the end of FY1999-2000. Newly appointed members of the Board attended a Board and Staff Retreat where the Executive Director and the two senior staffers provided training for Board members regarding the purpose and mission of the agency. The original author of the legislation creating the agency spoke to the group and discussed what his original intent and purpose were for introducing the legislation that now exists. From this foundation, the Board and staff began its work on the agency’s first Strategic Plan in July 2000. At the writing of this report, the Board and staff are nearing completion of the agency’s plan.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs is a think-tank which exists to provide leadership, focus and direction in addressing problems of deprivation and poverty among minorities in the State of South Carolina. The Commission exists to “study the causes and

effects of the socioeconomic deprivation of minorities and to implement programs necessary to address inequities confronting minorities in the State.” The Commission is unique in that it is the only such entity of its kind established at the agency level whose sole purpose relates to minorities, the issues confronting them, groups representing them, policies/laws affecting them, and initiatives directed towards helping them. The Commission was established to address any issue pertinent to alleviating minority deprivation, i.e., fatherlessness, illiteracy and educational deprivation, teenage parenting, lack of community and business economic development, high crime and illegal drug activity, and other related issues.

LEADERSHIP SYSTEM:

During FY 1998-1999 and most of FY1999-2000, the Commission operated with only two out of the seven board seats filled. Because of the impending election and the fact that a new Board would likely be seated, long range planning for the agency was put on hold. With the election of Governor Jim Hodges, six of the seven seats have been filled, with the advice and consent of the Senate. Leadership from a majority Board has been key to beginning the process of looking at every aspect of the Commission’s work.

The Executive Director recommended to the Board members that after their initial Board Retreat and Training in May 2000, there needed to be a commitment of time to develop the agency’s first Strategic Plan. That commitment by Board and staff members occurred and the process is well underway. The staff and Board will complete the Strategic Plan by the end of 2000.

The Commission is managed on a day-to-day bases by the Executive Director, who ultimately determines the direction of this small agency of six employees, inclusive of the Executive Director’s position. Two senior staff persons provide advice and information on a daily bases concerning agency operations and programmatic activities. Both of these individuals have attended Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Training during FY1999-2000 and will be encouraged to attend more in-depth training in FY2000-2001. Additionally, the Executive Director will also be involved in more training in order to determine how to implement the system in a cost effective and time saving manner that is not overwhelming to the small staff.

Because the staff is small, a limited number of formal staff meetings were held. Rather, individual discussions are used as a means to determine employee satisfaction. Employees have been afforded the opportunity to attend staff development and training courses as a means to improve their performance. The agency pays related costs. All employees are allowed to attend professional conferences that provide current information applicable to their areas of responsibility. The agency pays related costs. Additionally, employees were awarded bonus pay during FY1999-2000. Flexibility was afforded persons needing time off for family and medical leave and flex time is utilized by the staff.

CUSTOMER FOCUS AND SATISFACTION:

Our customers and stakeholders are many, i.e., The Governor, Members of the General

Assembly, Board members, minority and other citizens, other state agencies and institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, churches, local elected and appointed officials, etc. Each of these customers requires various levels of support and services. We determine what each client and stakeholder wants by what they request. Our goal is to meet their expectations by providing the information or service requested in a timely manner and as requested. We determine our customers' requirements, expectations, and preferences by providing at minimum the services and programs mandated by our statute.

Given the limited resources of the Commission, we felt the best way to communicate with our customers was through our WEB page. Clients may respond directly on-line through e-mail to any staff person. We are in the process of developing other instruments and assessing what is the most cost effective way for this agency to get the information desired without incurring a costly postage bill.

As a part of the Strategic Plan, more attention will be given to devising a formal plan of action for acquiring additional information about customer needs and their level of satisfaction with the services provided by the agency.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS:

PROGRAM NAME: Administration Program

Staffing: Executive Director (1)
 Management Coordinator (1)
 Program Coordinator (1)
 Research Analyst (1)
 Fiscal Technician (1)
 Administrative Specialist (1)

Total: 6 Permanent FTE's

PROGRAM COST: State Funding - \$379,117.00

1) Research

Program Goal: To provide data and properly analyzed information to the public regarding issues relevant to the status of minorities in South Carolina.

Program Objectives:

- 1) To provide the citizenry of South Carolina a single point of contact for information regarding the State's minority population.
- 2) To prepare factual information to be used in shaping new public policies and local initiatives.

3) To compile a statewide statistical abstract on minority affairs.

Program Results: 1) The research staff produced the agency's annual *Statistical Profile by Counties* in keeping with the agency's mandate to study the causes and effects of the socioeconomic deprivation of minorities in the State. Because of the usefulness and popularity of the document, we distributed approximately 1,000 printed copies.

2) The research staff responded to requests for publications, information and/or technical assistance via the agency's Web page. On the average, the agency's Web page received 442 "hits" per month. This represented more than a 96.0% increase over the previous year's "hits" (225 per month).

4) On an average the research staff received and responded to 40 telephone and/or written requests for information and/or technical assistance on a monthly basis. This represents a 75.0% increase over the previous year.

5) The research staff continued to build the agency's database of pertinent information regarding the State's minority population. The building of this database of statewide information was in keeping with the agency's mission to establish a database of statistical information for distribution to members of the General Assembly and other entities capable of affecting change and to provide the citizenry with a single point of contact regarding the State's minority population. This information is constantly requested by citizens of South Carolina as well as citizens of a number of other states.

2) Father Absence/Re-engagement

Program Goals: 1) To serve as a catalyst to move the State of South Carolina toward the creation of a Statewide Fatherhood Initiative;

2) To provide technical assistance to communities establishing fatherhood initiatives; and

3) To educate the public of the tragedies associated with father absence.

Program Objectives: 1) Establishment of Fatherhood programs in every county of the state,

2) Interagency Collaboration,

3) Establishment of public-private ventures, and

4) Decrease in negative behaviors associated with father absence.

Program Results: The Commission first recognized father absence as a major contributing factor to poverty and deprivation in 1997. Since that time, the agency has been relentless in its efforts to bring this issue to the attention of the Governor, members of the General Assembly and local leaders capable of bringing about change. The Program Coordinator for the Institute for Responsible Parenthood and the Executive Director have attended numerous meetings over the past four years, hammering the facts about father absence and its impact on the minority population and families in general. As previously stated, a major step forward has been made as a result of efforts by other entities, as well as the work of the Commission in serving as a catalyst to bring the issue front and center. The letter by Governor Jim Hodges designating the South Carolina Department of Social Services as the lead agency to oversee a statewide fatherhood initiative is the first major step towards changing how families are defined and provided services in this State. These were not issues within state government circles until they were raised by the Commission. Therefore, we were successful in serving as a catalyst to effect public policy change.

In providing technical assistance to communities, we worked directly with fatherhood initiatives in Marlboro, Charleston, Anderson, Richland, Greenville, Aiken, Orangeburg, and Allendale counties. Our work has resulted in several programs receiving substantial grant awards from the Sisters of Charity Foundation totaling in excess of \$500,000.00. Tangibles such as the Governor's declaration that DSS would serve as lead state agency in establishing a statewide fatherhood initiative and the grants being awarded by the Sisters of Charity Foundation, are examples of the kind of results we are getting from our efforts to relate to father absence/re-engagement.