

*J. Marion Sims
Foundation*

PERSPECTIVES

FOUNDATION AWARDS \$873,580 IN RESPONSIVE GRANTS

The J. Marion Sims Foundation awarded 9 grants during the October 2008 Responsive Grants cycle totaling \$873,580. "We're pleased to be able to make these grant awards to such effective and dedicated organizations," said President Jim Morton. Grant funding will support the following projects and programs in Lancaster County, Fort Lawn and Great Falls:

- **American National Red Cross, Lancaster Chapter - \$15,000 for one year** to provide emergency assistance to families who are victims of fires and other natural disasters
- **Family Promise of Lancaster County - \$184,662 over three years** for seed money to enable an interfaith network of 13 local churches to serve homeless families
- **Good Samaritan Medical Clinic - \$51,300 for one year** to provide free healthcare services to indigent patients from Lancaster County, Fort Lawn and Great Falls and to open a new satellite office in Great Falls
- **HOPE - \$20,250 for one year** for capacity-building assistance to improve the agency's crisis assistance work
- **KARE - \$110,123 for 18 months** for operational assistance and crisis assistance funding
- **Lancaster County and Lancaster County Council on Aging (joint applicants) - \$444,495 over three years** to startup the *Lancaster Health Ride* program, which will provide transportation for Lancaster County residents in need of healthcare services
- **Lancaster County Council on Aging - \$12,000 in matching grant funds for one year** to enable the agency to purchase a van for the Indian Land senior center
- **Mt. Calvary Outreach Center - \$10,000 for one year** to support a summer program for high-risk youth in Kershaw

HOLLY FURR NAMED NEW PROGRAM OFFICER FOR RESPONSIVE GRANTS



Holly Furr will begin her duties as JMSF's new Program Officer for Responsive Grants on March 2

Holly Furr has been named as the Foundation's Program Officer for Responsive Grants, effective March 2, 2009. She succeeds Sabrina Niggel, who is leaving the position at the end of February, and whose departure was announced in the fall of 2008.

"I'm pleased to have Holly join the Foundation staff in this role," President Jim Morton said. "Holly is a dedicated nonprofit professional with years of experience in the nonprofit field in Lancaster County. She will make a great addition to the Foundation."

Furr has been employed with The Children's Council in Lancaster for 9 ½ years, most recently in the role of Home Visitation Director. Her experience also includes several years as an early interventionist with the Chester/Lancaster Disabilities and Special Needs Board.

A native of Lancaster, Furr holds a BA degree in Psychology from Columbia College. She also holds a certificate in nonprofit organization management from Winthrop University. Involved in a number of activities and organizations locally, she is a member of the Lancaster Prevention Coalition and has been a member of both the advisory board and governing board of the Discovery School in Lancaster.

Furr resides in Lancaster with daughter Mary McInville and son Garren.

All of the affairs of the J. Marion Sims Foundation are governed by these core values: integrity, excellence, empathy, creativity, humility, responsiveness, learning, and respect.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

-James T. Morton



Several years ago I wrote a column for *Perspectives* entitled, "In Praise of Nonprofits and Volunteers." In thinking about this column, my mind was drawn again to that topic. It's fitting to praise them once more.

Lancaster County, Fort Lawn and Great Falls are hurting. In the midst of a severe national recession, unemployment has soared. Labor is plentiful; jobs scarce. South Carolina's rate of 9.5% in December 2008 was the nation's third highest. Chester County, at 17.3% ranked third in the state; Lancaster County, at 13.9%, ranked seventh. Whatever one thinks of its methodology (and it certainly can be questioned), *Forbes* magazine rated Lancaster the most vulnerable city of its size in the US.

Financial and economic pressures mount on individuals, businesses, governments, funders, and nonprofit organizations. The lines are heartbreakingly long at the Lancaster County Employment Security Commission building, as they are at every agency that provides crisis and basic needs assistance. Through it all, in the face of hardship, stress and soaring de-

mand, the resilient staffs and volunteers of nonprofit organizations persevere, delivering services to those in desperate need.

The words that ended that last column will end this one, too. They seem more appropriate now than ever: "Hundreds of workers are employed in nonprofits who labor for wages significantly below what they could earn in other private sector jobs. For them and their volunteers, rewards come not in a paycheck, but in the changed lives of those they touch.

"We're sometimes told that there aren't as many heroes today as there used to be. I submit that we too often simply look in the wrong places. Heroes are in our midst every day. They are worthy of our gratitude and thanks."

DON'T LOSE YOUR TAX-EXEMPT STATUS!

Nonprofit organizations with less than \$25,000 in gross receipts are now required to file Form 990-N. Smaller nonprofits began using it last year to report on tax years ending on or after December 31, 2007.

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 mandates that the IRS revoke the tax-exempt status of any organization that fails to file a Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-PF, or 990-N for three consecutive years. **Revocations will happen automatically beginning in May 2010.** A nonprofit that loses its exemption because of failure to file will have to reapply to the IRS for exemption.

There's something we all can do to improve the situation: spread the word. If you volunteer with, work for, or give to a smaller nonprofit, make sure the organization's leadership knows about the 990-N. Encourage acquaintances associated with other small nonprofits to do the same. If they want more information, refer them to www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=169250,00.html.

TEACHERS' PET GRANT PROGRAM

The J. Marion Sims Foundation has awarded 90 Teachers Pet Grants so far in the 2008-2009 school year. There is one cycle left for teachers to apply for funding for this school year. Applications should be submitted by March 31st for consideration. Please visit our website (www.jmsims.org) for more information.



Students in Cheri Collins' class at Great Falls Elementary work on stories for the project "I'm a Real Author of a Fairy Tale." Pictured from left to right are Aaron Blakely, Landon Dickerson, Jamarcus Culp and Lekia Cunningham

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LANCASTER AREA LITERACY COOPERATIVE WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR

Since beginning its Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Initiative in 2002, the Foundation has acted as a catalyst for forming a collaborative approach to creative literacy programming and services. Grantees funded by the Foundation have formed the Lancaster Area Literacy Cooperative (LALC), a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, to ensure a cohesive and comprehensive approach to improving the rates of adult literacy.

In January, the LALC hired Sherry L. Browning as the organization's first executive director. Mrs. Browning, a Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE), brings to the position over twenty five years of nonprofit management experience, including having started two nonprofit organizations. Max Melton, the LALC board chairman, introduced Mrs. Browning to the members of the Lancaster Area Literacy Cooperative at the January 23 quarterly meeting of adult literacy and basic skills programs held at USC Lancaster.

The mission of the LALC is to reduce illiteracy and encourage life-long learning by promoting cooperation within an integrated network of literacy providers. It seeks to fulfill its mission by providing an effective forum for advocacy, sharing resources and expertise, and facilitating sustainability of programs.



(Pictured left to right) Dr. Mary Henderson, JMSF Program Officer for Special Initiatives, Jim Morton, JMSF President, Sherry Browning, LALC Director, and Max Melton, LALC Board Chair at the January 23 adult literacy quarterly meeting

JMSF WELCOMES SOUTH CAROLINA GRANTMAKERS NETWORK



The J. Marion Sims Foundation hosted representatives from the South Carolina Grantmakers Network to an exciting day of Adult Literacy and Basic Skills site visits on February 5. Left, Dr. Charmaine Stradford, program coordinator of the Map To Success family literacy program at the Lancaster Housing Authority and one of her students demonstrate the *ReadOn* adult reading program and *SuccessMaker* computer assisted program for school age children. Shown left to right are James T. Morton, J. Marion Sims Foundation president, Geales Sands of the Frances P. Bunelle Foundation in Pawley's Island, Veronica Pinkett-Barber of the Central Carolina Community Foundation in Columbia, Cookie Sprouse of the Chapin Foundation in Myrtle Beach, Mamie Nicholson of the Self Family Foundation in Greenwood, Dr. Stradford, and Prayon Truesdale, student/tutor, Map to Success program.

Other site visits and presentations included Communities in Schools of Lancaster's YouthBuild workplace literacy program, the Learning Institute for Tomorrow (LIFT) health literacy program, and the Brooklyn Springs Elementary School Home Literacy Trail family literacy program. The group also heard presentations from the Multi-Cultural Information Center citizenship literacy program and the Community Powerhouse family literacy program.

Our vision is a healthy community with high expectations and unlimited opportunities for all its people.

FOUNDATION HOLDS CRISIS ASSISTANCE MEETING FOR LOCAL NONPROFITS

Lancaster County Partners for Youth, the United Way of Lancaster County, The Springs Close Foundation and the J. Marion Sims Foundation recently co-sponsored an information-gathering session focusing on crisis assistance in the Lancaster County area. Leaders representing 15 organizations that serve as first responders or are involved in other ways with individuals and families in need of emergency assistance with basic needs (such as food, shelter, clothing and utilities) participated in the session, held on January 14 at USC-Lancaster.

Organizational consultant Dr. Tim Neuman facilitated the dialogue, the purpose of which was to build a shared understanding and gather more complete information on the current crisis situation as well as its impact on organizations and others helping with basic needs.

Participants shared experiences and learned about how other organizations are being challenged and impacted by the growing demand for basic needs assistance and other help, and began to identify potential ideas for meeting future challenges posed by increases in demands for crisis assistance.

The organizations that participated in the session expressed a desire to continue meeting for ongoing discussion and strategizing, and in response, the JMSF has offered to facilitate another forum in early March.



Sally Sherrin of the Lancaster County Council on Aging (right) and Dianne Barnes of Christian Services work together to address critical issues surrounding crisis assistance work in Lancaster County, Fort Lawn and Great Falls.

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*The mission of the
J. Marion Sims
Foundation is to support
programs and projects of
prevention and education
that enhance the health
and wellness of the
citizens of Lancaster
County, South Carolina,
and the communities of
Great Falls and
Fort Lawn.*