

2002 Annual Report Executive Summary

Desert Communities Empowerment Zone

This past year our focus for DACE was continuing to establish ourselves within each community and overcoming the entrenchment of many residents and organization that DACE and its mission was a reality. After two years of minimal activity and uncertainty of funding, DACE has made huge strides to establish itself as a catalyst and partner within the communities. As DACE's reputation grows, so does the demand for our attention and participation in community activities. The need to expand our vision to become a strong proactive leader within our communities made funding secondary to the technical assistance and capacity development of the residents.

DACE and its Board also adopted a philosophy to become an entrepreneurial organization that could meet the communities' needs while providing revenue to DACE. The basis of our community based asset model is anchored in empowerment. Our efforts are driven from the communities' involvement and interaction on all projects. Both through increasing their capacity with education and awareness of their responsibilities as residents while encouraging their participation collaboratively and cohesively in all local activities. In this way, their existing talents and experience are optimized towards shaping the future development of their community. DACE painted a broad stroke this year in its activities that include the following highlights:

1. RANCHO Housing Alliance, Inc. continues to grow by identifying potential new affordable housing residents. Through their focus on education, qualification, and financing of residents for affordable housing, staff is proactively establishing Rancho as a strong presence in Eastern Riverside County.
2. DACE Immigration and Tax Services-making great strides at dispelling fear by providing assistance and referral for a variety of social, economic, and citizenship related services
3. Established partnership Santa Rosa Del Valle to support insurance coverage for low income individuals in accordance with children's mobile health services
4. DACE Regional Community Resource Center continues fully rented as non-profit mall. Over 100 community events held in the building in the past year above those sponsored by DACE.
5. Development of DACE's recruitment and retention of diversified staff both in ethnicity and prior experience and knowledge towards creating greater capacity under new philosophy as an operating sustainable entity.
6. Formalization of internal systems that has resulted in the development of planned community development, funding, project management and community outreach towards moving projects to implementation. „« Desert Communities Christmas Project- increased participation this year to garner more than \$9000 dollars with twice as many donors. The distribution of the bags was again coordinated by DACE staff with community leaders and the local schools.
7. Continued involvement in monthly community meetings and identification of concerns and issues affecting the community. Example is our co sponsorship of the Blythe Housing Summit, a bi monthly forum to discuss housing needs and opportunities in the Palo Verde Valley.
8. Creation and support to community advisory committees and providing leadership training to ensure proactive & effective involvement.
9. DACE's development of community based facilities to provide infrastructure and environment for other supporting services to operate.
10. Outreach to the private more affluent communities neighboring the EZ to raise awareness and identify

private philanthropic resources to partner in the continuing development of our programs