



GRANTS & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MINISTRY 2009 Update

Following the Spring 2009 authorization by the Foundation Board of Directors, the Grants & Financial Assistance Committee and Staff implemented the development of the new Grants & Financial Assistance Ministry. With a goal of distributing **\$8,000 in 2009** through the New England Conference Districts, announcements were communicated with the eight Districts, District Superintendents and the Annual Conference at its session in June.

We are having ongoing conversations with District Superintendents and District leaders, and are responding to inquiries by prospective applicants. Inquiries include a variety of opportunities and needs:

- ◆ scholarship support for programs providing care and tutoring for children
- ◆ help reducing building debt and building congregational stewardship
- ◆ assistance in developing local funding networks for outreach ministries
- ◆ training for debt counselors

Our conversations with District leadership and with inquiring agencies/congregations are helping to forge new relationships. Connections are being made with persons skilled in grant writing and in community organizing, and congregations are learning more about the Foundation's services, and may become loan applicants or capital campaign customers. As churches and leaders become more familiar with the Foundation and its mission and ministry, new partnerships are being established. *For it is in our giving that we receive.*

First 2009 Award Recipient

In addition to the District grants, the United Methodist Foundation of New England and the United Methodist Economic Ministry, Salem, Maine, partnered to work together on ministry and financial development. A \$2,000 grant has supported staff leadership and development of a Crafter's Guild to expand the skill development opportunities offered to the community.

This new ministry will bring local people together to learn handcrafts, share resources and talent, and to market their products in the region and through New England. Some of the products will be "green" and include creative "re-purposing" of thrift shop donations such as old wool sweaters that are felted and then used to make purses, mittens, pins, checkbook covers, and eyeglass cases. By offering space and resources for skills and talent development, this ministry will strengthen individual's sense of purpose and supplement family's income. The ministry is modeled after UMEM's successful Christmas wreath project which has helped several families supplement their income by several thousand dollars that they have used to pay heating bills, property taxes, or to provide food and medical necessities for their families.

In addition, the UMEM Board of Director's has worked with the United Methodist Foundation to create and adopt an Endowment Policy to use in the development and marketing to prospective donors and groups able to support the work of the ministry. The Endowment will be seeded with an existing account and launched October 24th during UMEM's 40th Anniversary Celebration.

First 2009 District Grant

Seeking to develop a stronger financial foundation for their After School Ministry, the Brockton Church and Community After School program will use a matching grant from UMFNE to challenge individual donors to step up their support. In addition, a \$500 grant will support the purchase of supplies for the program. The Advisory Board will work with UMFNE staff to assess their current funding resources and explore ways to diversify and strengthen local resources and donor commitment (including education about planned giving vehicles and endowments) to create more fiscal stability. Already strongly supported by the local church and other philanthropic agencies, our attention will focus on helping the Advisory Committee to strengthen these relationships and solidify the finances of the ministry for the next 3-5 years or more.

Six other applicants and projects are currently in process for consideration in 2009.

*Prepared by the Grants and Financial Assistance Committee
August 2009*