



## 2006 Vision Counsel Report

### Introduction

The United Way of Jefferson and North Walworth Counties, Inc. (United Way) has been engaged in a variety of capacity building initiatives during the last two years. The purpose of these initiatives is to more closely align the organization with its key stakeholders—donors, member agencies, and community partners.

The “Vision Counsel” process is the second piece of a three part strategy to address a number of issues identified during a 2004 strategic planning process. The purpose of the process is to seek the wise counsel or advice of informed and influential leaders from the various local communities served by the United Way.

The research-based process was designed and facilitated by Kathleen Eisenmann, UW-Extension, Jefferson County Family Living Agent. It incorporates methodology based on the latest research in effective organizational development. Eleven local leaders participated in a directed discussion on January 4, 2006 designed to elicit their feedback to the following question posed by the United Way Board of Directors:

*“From your perspective, what are the five critical areas of human service needs on which United Way should focus its financial and human resources in the next three years?”*

Their consensus on the response to that question follows in the form of five major areas of needs together with some clarifying notes. Those clarifying notes include additional comments on the needs prioritized and one overriding need identified by the participants, which may affect how a nonprofit organization or community addresses the other needs.

### Five Critical Human Service Need Areas

The participants engaged in a consensus building process involving the generation, organization and selection/prioritization of human service needs. Using a series of individual, small group and large group discussions, the participants selected the priority areas of need using the following selection criteria:

- *Extent to which the need is responsive to United Way vision & mandates*
- *Extent of likely support for addressing need by powerful stakeholders*
- *Extent to which addressing the need has an impact on a broad spectrum of individuals/families*
- *Extent to which **not** addressing the need results in significant consequences*
- *Extent to which a nonprofit organization can likely do something to meet the need*
- *Overall extent to which your gut says this is a critical need and will affect the community well into the future*



In no particular order, the five critical areas of human service needs prioritized are:

- *Strengthening Families*
- *Building and Maintaining Family Financial Stability*
- *Improving Community Health*
- *Integrating Diverse Populations*
- *Addressing the Needs of At Risk Youth*

### **Strengthening Families**

This need area was described to include addressing a wide variety of issues preventing families from being healthy and strong, raising their children to be competent, caring adults, and caring for their older adult members. Those descriptive issues include but are not limited to:

- *Domestic Violence*
- *Poverty*
- *Mental Health Problems*
- *Lack of Access to Resources*
- *Juvenile Delinquency*
- *Ethnic/Cultural Discrimination*
- *Chemical Dependency*
- *Addressing a Variety of Risk Factors*

### **Building and Maintaining Family Financial Stability**

This need area was described to include addressing issues ranging from meeting basic needs to supporting economic development. More specifically, it was described to include, but not be limited to, the following:

- *Access to Basic Needs*
- *Access to Educational Training*
- *Vocational Support/Job Access*
- *Improving Family Self-Sufficiency*
- *Supporting Local Community & Economic Development*

### **Improving Community Health**

This need area was described to include but not be limited to:

- *Improving Actual Individual Health (both physical and mental health)*
- *Improving Access to Affordable Health Care*
- *Supporting Health Education*
- *Addressing Other Tangential Needs Related to Health*



## **Integrating Diverse Populations**

This need area was described to include addressing a wide variety of diversity issues facing our local communities and includes, but is not limited to, the following descriptive issues:

- *Improving the integration our communities in all areas of diversity (ethnic, cultural, racial, gender, age, disability)*
- *Increasing cultural understanding and understanding among different diverse populations in our communities*
- *Promoting the value of youth to our communities' adults*
- *Addressing the needs of our UW-Whitewater students*

## **Addressing the Needs of At Risk Youth**

This issue area was widely discussed and a strong consensus was developed by the participants that this area involved addressing a variety of individual, family and community factors which place youth at risk for negative outcomes and prevent healthy youth development. Some, but not all of those issues, may be addressed in discussion of the other need areas. The participants felt strongly this need area deserved to be listed separately because it is so critical to our communities.

## **Vision Counsel Participants**

Kenneth Abarca	Associate Pastor, Latino Ministry, Whitewater Community Church
Don Battenburg	Lake Mills Community Leader
Vance Dalzin	Principal, Whitewater High School
James Fitzpatrick	Superintendent, Fort Atkinson School District
Lynn Forseth	Campus Administrator, Madison Area Technical College
Paul Majors	Teacher, Whitewater High School
James Nelson	Vice President-Fiscal Services, CFO, Fort HealthCare
Fr. Bill Nolan	Pastor, St. Joseph's Catholic Church
Earlene Ronk	Administrator, Countryside Home
Tom Schleitwiler	Director, Jefferson County Human Services
Russ Walker	Pastor, Whitewater Community Church