



Dear *IDA Insights* Readers:

The people of this region have and will continue to be its strength. As we continue our recovery process and move forward to a new year, it is our challenge and goal to advance the work of asset development in our region.

In this newsletter you will learn more about the funding resources available with FMS and tools for tax season. This issue also includes information on the recently released *Arkansas Assets and Opportunity Scorecard 2005*.

Anyone with post disaster financial management expertise, please contact me at nirvin@fndmidsouth.org. I am also soliciting suggestions for our 2006 Regional Asset Building Conference. I look forward to having the opportunity to work with you and meet everyone in our region working toward asset development. Have a wonderful and blessed holiday season.

If you have any ideas for future *IDA Insights* issues, would like to feature news from your IDA program, or just want to say hello please contact Necole S. Irvin at 601.863.0495 or at nirvin@fndmidsouth.org

Sincerely,
Mid South IDA Initiative Staff

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Deadline Extended!!

The original deadline, October 31 was extended. The new deadline for grant proposals for operational funding for existing IDA programs was December 20, 2005 to

accommodate the multitude of difficulties experienced by everyone in the region. Grant awards will be made in January 2006.

Please visit our website, www.fndmidsouth.org to learn about the **other available resources for non-profit organizations throughout our region with our Hurricane Recovery and Restoration Fund**. This fund was established soon after Hurricane Katrina. 100% of the contributions made to the Fund will benefit nonprofits in the Mid South, particularly in Southern Louisiana, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and the Alabama Gulf Coast, working to rebuild the lives and communities of those affected by the disaster. For more information or to donate on-line, please visit our website, www.fndmidsouth.org.

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Policy & Funding Update:

If you have not yet completed the CFED third annual IDA Program Survey, please take time before the new year to fill out the survey. It will take less than 20 minutes. The survey can be found: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=408161255728>

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities 2006 "Make Tax Time Pay" Tax Credit Community Outreach Kit is ready.

The Kits provide new materials on both the EIC and CTC, including English and Spanish posters and flyers, details on new qualifying child eligibility rules, a fact sheet booklet on the EIC and the CTC, an updated guide to strategies for promoting these credits - including new material on outreach in rural and Native American communities and to homeless workers, a booklet on opportunities to link workers to free tax help and asset development programs, and current tax forms for each credit. (You can see last year's kit at the website: www.cbpp.org/eic2005/index.html)

These tax credits continue to be vital work supports for employees in low-wage jobs, helping many to afford transportation, childcare and out-of-pocket health care expenses. This year, for thousands of families that lost their homes and jobs as a result of the disastrous hurricanes that hit the Gulf Coast, the credits will be of the utmost importance as they struggle to rebuild their lives. Special outreach efforts are needed to such families, particularly to inform them about special rules in effect that could provide some hurricane survivors a larger credit than in the past.

This Kit can be used to assist members of your network to conduct outreach and link workers to free tax filing assistance and financial services, as well as to engage organizations who are not yet very familiar with these issues. Any organization can request one kit free of charge. Generally, when ordering in bulk quantities, there is a \$3.00 per kit charge. To order kits, or if you have any questions or concerns please contact the Center at: eickit@cbpp.org or 202-408-1080. Please email Shaunya Owens at owens@cbpp.org with any questions or for more information check out the two sites listed below.

<http://www.cbpp.org/eic2006/>
<http://www.tax-coalition.org/index.htm>

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IDA Story: Southern Good Faith Fund

Southern Good Faith Fund's most recent state policy report entitled, Arkansas Assets and Opportunity Scorecard 2005 is now available. This report provides useful information on what Arkansans are doing in building assets and offers recommendations for state policy changes. The report examines several kinds of key assets including education and homeownership.

Arkansas is currently one of 26 states that operate a state-funded IDA program. The scorecard is available on their website, www.southerngoodfaithfund.org. Please visit the site to obtain a copy of this report and learn more about IDA programs in Arkansas and the Arkansas Assets Coalition.

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