



ASSOCIATION OF DISPLACED HOMEMAKER CENTER DIRECTORS

**NEW YORK STATE DISPLACED HOMEMAKER PROGRAM
FEBRUARY 2014**

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for supporting the **New York State Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP)** for the past 36 years by ensuring our funding in the State budget. Your support translates into 21 Displaced Homemaker Programs able to continue to work with women who have no/minimal work experience to get trained and become job ready and able to support their families. Your support helped the Centers to work toward eliminating/reducing the generational poverty cycle in our State.

For those of you who may be newer to your charge of serving the needs of New York, here is additional information about how DHP helps all of our communities. The Displaced Homemaker Program has served your constituents for 36 years. We assist individuals who have lost their sources of income for a variety of reasons and are struggling to escape the welfare system or who are determined NOT to enter the welfare system. They could be your neighbors.....your friends, your family. Every family has someone who has experienced the challenge of maintaining financial security following a death or divorce of a spouse. Or they may be a single parent. Or they may have lost their employment and have been out of work for an extended period of time and are without the skills they need to move forward. While there are other initiatives that assist in various employment situations, the Displaced Homemaker Program has decades of experience dealing with the multiple challenges faced by these families. It has the basic understanding of all of the problems that these families face. Each Center's staff is well trained, many have a long history of working in this difficult arena, and they have the compassion needed to help these families maintain a sense of worth in a situation that can be demoralizing and humiliating. Please take a moment right now to think about someone you know who is overwhelmed with problems and who needs a hand to help them succeed.....and contemplate how this program could assist them. Training, self-development, job referral.....any issue employment related.....we ARE a proven commodity.

This year has proven the most difficult of all for the DHP. Several of our Centers have suspended services in anticipation of state funding. You have never failed us.....you have never failed the needs of your constituents. Displaced homemakers live all around us.....in poverty, with other family members, and yes, even in areas that we perceive to be affluent. Lack of financial resources translates into inescapable poverty for some.....or, it may also translate into a downward spiral from financial stability to welfare.

Our Centers are all well-respected in our respective parts of the state. We are recognized by participants, other service providers, and other public entities. What we need right now is your help, your support. Most of the DHP Programs use State funding as matching funds to bring Federal Dollars to expand the services we provide to Displaced Homemakers and women in poverty. This program is very unique in that each Center examines the most critical needs of its specific area from New York City to Albany to Buffalo and has designed its programs to meet the needs in its own community. The success of this program and why you have proudly funded us for the past 36 years is that the return of this program is \$14.00 for every \$1.00 invested, when you count the earnings of the women we helped to find jobs, the savings to the welfare system, and the benefits of their buying power to the State and local economies.

The Centers have been funded by the State using various sources of monies such as TANF, SNAP, WIA, and also General Funds. The program has been able to reach a very diverse population through this blend. As has been documented, we serve families from all socio-economic backgrounds, from all ethnicities, from all education levels.....a blend of funding allows us to reach out to meet the "need to financially succeed".....it has been broad enough to be inclusive not exclusive of all who need assistance.

This year we are asking for refunding at a level of \$3.5 million to support the services these Centers provide for April 1st 2014 to March 31, 2015. It is important to provide funding for the Displaced Homemakers Program for a period of 12 months in the budget to avoid the 2013 situation of suspending some programs due to lack of funding. Our DHP fiscal year is from November to October and our funding ended at the end of October 2013 as the State budget did not re-appropriate funding for the period from November 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014 as they have done in the past. As a result, some of our Centers have suspended services due to lack of funding.....please be assured that it does not mean that services have ended. All we need is your assurance that we will be refunded to re-establish those programs without a funding gap.

Historically, we have annually:

- Assisted in moving an average of 2,500 families to financial independence
- Moved families to employment that translated into \$14 million of new taxable income
- Served individuals at a cost of less than \$750 per individual served
- Provided training that resulted in a cost per entered employment of approximately \$3,000

Where else do you find a return on investment at that level? Any private business would be ecstatic to see that ROI for their business. But more importantly, where else do you find services provided by any state that includes a component that promotes individual growth of confidence and determination to remain self-sufficient?

A standing comment about government is that periodically "new" programs are "developed".....more often the same programs with a new name. We see it repeat itself over and over. The fact is that the Displaced Homemaker Program is a strong and proven program that New York State has proudly provided funding to for over 36 years. Our home regions know who we are and what can be expected from our services. Its evolution has been one that reflects a partnership between the program and the State's Legislative Representatives. It reflects the trust that we have placed in each other to insure its continuance. No rename.....no same thing with a new name....just the same successful program that YOUR constituents know they can count on.

The need for this program has NOT diminished.....in fact it has escalated. On behalf of all of the Centers in New York State, we are asking you to continue the fight with us to eliminate the generational and situational poverty that women in transition and their families are facing and continue to fund us to enable us to build stronger communities by giving a women all the tools she needs to get her family out of poverty.

Please see that we are funded this year at a level of \$3.5 million.

Again, thank you for all you have done for all of us.

Respectfully submitted, on behalf of the New York State Displaced Homemaker Programs,

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