

MEMORANDUM

TO: MSBA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY COMMITTEE

FROM: 2008-2009 LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CLASS

DATE: August 18, 2009

SUBJECT: FINAL REPORT ON SECURING YOUR FUTURE EXPO

The “Securing Your Future” EXPO was held on Saturday May 1, 2009 at the University of Maryland Samuel Riggs Alumni Center. The EXPO was a huge success and showed the willingness of several public, private and non profit organizations to work together to help hundreds of Marylanders.

I. Overview

This class of Fellows feels that this public service project really met the definition of public service as our project squarely addressed the health, safety and welfare of the community, the project reached a wide range of citizens, and the project promoted economic development. First, the increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters in Maryland has negatively impacted our businesses and individual residents. In recent years flooding, high winds and hail have damaged commercial and private property throughout Maryland, and caused an interruption in our lives and normal business operations. Likewise, if businesses and individuals have not properly prepared themselves financially for these and other unexpected costs, their financial stability is threatened. In addition, effects of various hurricanes that strike different parts of our country have had lingering effects on Marylanders.

Even without the effects of natural disasters, economic markets and predatory lending have threatened every Maryland residents’ financial security. These threats have damaged the health, safety, and welfare of the larger Maryland community. These issues are inextricably linked and both affect a broad range of Maryland citizens. Additionally, these issues have the ability to negatively affect the future of Maryland residents.

Again, the primary goal of the EXPO was to bridge the gap between Maryland’s existing resources and the community. At our EXPO, Maryland residents:

- Gained access to information and resources dedicated to financial literacy and emergency preparedness;
- Attended workshops regarding a number of pertinent issues including, foreclosure and debt management, household budgeting, emergency preparedness, and disaster relief;

- Learned how to prevent or mitigate loss in the event of looming debt and/or foreclosure, or natural disaster;
- Met with, and received information from, local and state agencies, nonprofit organizations, community service providers, and commercial vendors that are located throughout Maryland.

II. Funding

The Fellows began their public service project by reaching out to many organizations for funding to this project. Organizations responded and the project was fully funded by the following sponsors: Maryland Bar Foundation, Maryland State Bar Association, Hispanic Bar Foundation, Venable Foundation, Warren Brown, Esq., Stein Sperling, Sage Policy Group, Inc., Minnesota lawyers Mutual Insurance Company, MSBA Solo and Small Firm Practice Committee, MSBA Young Lawyers Disaster Relief Subcommittee, Lois Hall, Citi Smith Barney, Department of Housing & Community Development, FCC, APABA Maryland.

III. Components of the Project

A. Foreclosure Solutions Workshops

The Fellows also organized the EXPO into three components. First, we partnered with the Pro Bono Resource Center, which holds foreclosure solutions workshops throughout Maryland. What was important about this is not only the help that was given to homeowners that were being affected by the foreclosure crisis in Maryland but that we were able to assist Maryland attorneys with an opportunity to work with those homeowners. A number of Fellows received the training and have continued to volunteer their services.

B. Speaker Series

Second, we had speakers and panel discussion throughout the day on May 2nd. We looked throughout Maryland to get respected experts in their fields and speakers presented important information throughout the day. Our featured speaker was Anirban Basu of the Sage Policy Group, Inc. Mr. Basu discussed the current economy and its effect on Maryland. The schedule of panel discussions was as follows:

10:30 AM – 11:30AM

“Securing Your Business: Financing, Building, and Preserving a Small Business”

Capitalization and Financing for Small Businesses

*Presented by **Allen Cox**, Coalition for Financial Literacy*

Growing and Maintaining a Business the “Smart” Way

*Presented by **Anthony Ruiz**, Capital Region Small Business Development*

Understanding Your Insurance Coverage and Knowing What Questions to Ask

*Presented by **Michael Sharkey**, Dickstein Shapiro, LLP*

11:45AM – 12:45PM

“Securing Your Home: Knowing Your Rights and Avoiding Predatory Lending and Foreclosure Rescue Scams”

Predatory Lending and How to Protect Yourself

*Presented by **Louise Carwell**, Legal Aid Bureau*

Avoiding Foreclosure Rescue Scams

*Presented by **Robert Strupp**, Community Law Center*

Mitigating Loss and Defending Against Foreclosure

*Presented by **Phillip Robinson**, Civil Justice*

1:00PM – 2:00PM

“The Economy and its Effect on Maryland”

*Presented by **Anirban Basu**, Sage Policy Group, Inc.*

2:15PM- 3:15PM

“Securing Your Finances: Preparing Financially in Troubled Times”

Surviving a Layoff

*Presented by **Chris Holcombe**, Citi Smith Barney,*

Investment Strategies in a Down Economy

*Presented By **Bradford Carson**, Folger, Nolan, Fleming & Douglas*

Budgeting, Money Management, and Credit Repair

Presented by Lynus Campbell, Consumer Credit Counseling Service

3:30PM- 4:30PM

“Securing Your Assets: Home Buying, Estate Planning and Avoiding Dangerous Pitfalls”

First Time Homebuyers Guide

Presented by Ron Deitch, HCI Mortgage

Estate Planning

Presented by Brian R. Della Rocca, Stein, Sperling, Bennet, De Jong, Driscoll & Greenfeig, P.C. and Mike Stelmack, Rodriguez & Stelmack

C. EXPO Vendors

Finally, various organizations acted as vendors at the EXPO. Attendees were offered an opportunity to discuss issues and get answers to questions from the vendors. The vendors included: Stein & Sperling, Bennett, De Jong, Driscoll & Greenfeig, PC, Maryland Emergency Management Agency – MEMA, Maryland Association of CPAs, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, PEPCO, Washington Metro Transit Authority, Baltimore Gas & Electric (BGE), State Farm, Small Business Administration, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Small Business Development Center, Maryland Insurance Administration, V.W. Brown, Insurance Service Inc., Rodriguez & Stelmack, LLC, Minnesota Lawyers Mutual Insurance Company, Citi Smith Barney, Making Choices for Independent Living (Ruth Wynegar), United Way, Ferguson, Schetelich, & Ballew, P.A., People’s Insurance Counsel Division of Maryland, College Savings Plan of Maryland, Office of People’s Counsel, Consumer Credit Counseling Service, University of Maryland Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, Federal Communications Commission – Digital Conversion, Legal Aid Bureau, Inc., Community Law Center, Maryland and DC Credit Union Association, Long and Foster broker Lois Hall, the Prince George’s County Association of Realtors, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Sage Policy Group, Inc., Home Depot.

III. Website

The Fellows created a website, www.securinyourfuturemd.com, with the Help of Gore Brothers, Inc., to allow those that attended or and those that did not have the opportunity to attend to have access to the valuable information from the EXPO. This ensures that all the work that had gone into getting information to the community was not

wasted on just one day. For example, anyone can go the website and watch one of the panel discussion for free.

IV. Conclusion

The EXPO was successful on several fronts and the 2009 Leadership Academy Class was successful in creating a unique project that allowed us to work directly not only with the community but with many organizations that are also trying to better the community.

The 2008-2009 Maryland State Bar Association Leadership Academy Fellows included: John S. Bolesta, Maricruz J. Bonfante, Sidney A. Butcher, Amanda M. Downs, Lisa Angela Hall Johnson, Rashid Mahdi, Pooja A. Regmi, Diego J. Rojas, Duane Scott, Reena K. Shah, Rachel E. Stafford, Ginina A. Stevenson and April M. Urban.