

PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Our Mission Statement: The PLAN Fund is a Dallas based micro-lending organization providing hands-on money management, business training and small business loans to assist low income entrepreneurs to start or expand their own business.



2008 Didsbury Circle, Suite B, Dallas, TX 75224

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Directors' Update *Anthony Pace*

Dear Friends - Welcome to our first issue of the PLAN Fund's newsletter, Plan for Success. Our goal with Plan for Success is to provide our readers an insider's glimpse of the important work that the PLAN Fund is doing in the low and moderate income communities of Dallas County. Here forward you can expect to hear from us on a quarterly basis. Below are highlights from this issue:

- **Member Spotlight**, we introduce you to one of our PLAN Fund entrepreneur alumni. New board member Sam Hills describes how he built his business up from the grassroots.
- **Program Updates**, we discuss how our Mentorship Program is making a critical difference in our entrepreneurs' businesses.
- **Industry Insights** feature experts in microfinance. What better person to kick this series off than our board member and President of Grameen USA, Alex Counts who gives his views about microfinance from a global perspective.

- **Donor's Corner**- Bank of Texas and State Farm give their perspective about why their organizations are contributors to the PLAN Fund from the view of a long term and first time donor perspective.



PF Development Committee: Gwen Moore, Irvin Ashford, Anthony Pace, Alex Counts, and Barrett Howell

- And finally there is Loans Stats our opportunity to share with you about recent loans and the entrepreneurs behind them who are making things happen.

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LOAN STATS

Since inception PF has provided 448 loans, totalling \$652,000. Average loan size \$1,450.

RICKEY KENDRICKS received his 5th loan for \$4,000. Rickey will apply his loan to expand into a 3rd phase of his business, financing higher quality cars.

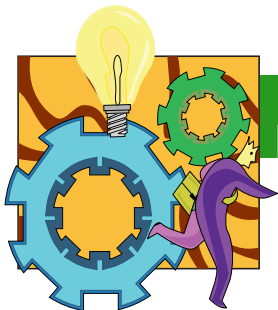
CLARENCE MOSELY returns to the PLAN Fund after a leave of absence and pays off his 3rd loan. Clarence has a floral design company.



JANIE JOHNSON, a PF member since year 2000 was approved for her first loan worth \$1,200 to purchase physical fitness equipment that she was previously rent-

ing for \$350 month. Janie's company, "Future Leaders Now" has been a viable business since 1980.

CATHERINE JOHNSON, a PF member since 2000 received her second loan for \$2,100 and will use her loan to purchase candle making machinery. As a result, Catherine will have more control over her candle operations lowering her cost and increasing her profit margin.



PROGRAM UPDATES

Benjamin Franklin once said, "There are two ways to acquire wisdom; you can either buy it or borrow it. By buying it, you pay full price in terms of time and cost to learn the lessons you need to learn. By borrowing it, you go to those men and women who have already paid the price to learn the lessons and get their wisdom from them."

Would you like to share your wisdom with PLAN Fund entrepreneurs and help them be successful?

We created the mentor program because we realized that many of our clients do not have access to mentors. Our clients who have had a

mentor develop a more solid business plan, submit a high quality loan application, deal more powerfully with the challenges of their business and pay back the loans reliably.

We are convinced that our clients have the best chance for success in their business (and as PLAN Fund clients) by having a mentor. Many business people know that it's much easier to build your business by bouncing ideas off others, learning from their mistakes, and broadening your circle of contacts in the community.

Will you offer one hour a week to help one of our entrepreneurs launch or expand their small business?

To be a mentor, you fill out an application, attend an orienta-

tion, meet your match and get started!

We are preparing to double our mentor program and are making some exciting changes to make our program more action and success-oriented.

What do you need to be a mentor?

- Business Knowledge
- Commitment
- Patience
- Compassion
- One hour a week either in person/by phone and or email

To find out more about the mentoring program, please email or call Marilyn Sutherland at kodish@swbell.net or 214-797-9916.

A PLAN Fund entrepreneur is waiting to hear from you!

DIRECTORS' UPDATE continued from page 1

We are excited about our recently redesigned website, www.planfund.org, this is the best way to keep up with the latest news on the PLAN Fund, program update, new loans etc. Perhaps the most interesting spot on our website is our Biz Directory section under Other features Our Entrepreneurs. Here you will find contact information of our hard working entrepreneurs and how you can purchase their products and services. Under the Program Section is our PF class schedule. In our Get Involved section you will find information on what volunteer opportunities we have and how to donate online.

Finally, let me briefly mention the story of one our entrepreneurs, Clarence Mosely, who has been a PLAN Fund member since 2000.

Clarence is a skilled floral designer who started his business as a hobby and then became successful enough to turn his business into a full time job that supported his family. Last fall Clarence became very ill with shingles and was hospitalized for several months. As a result of his illness he was unable to make rental payments on his business and consequently lost all of his equipment. In January 2006, Clarence returned to the PLAN Fund and paid off his final loan payments. Clarence's business is in a restart state. Like a Phoenix he is determined to rise again, as he says, "I may have lost my former business, but the PLAN Fund has helped me realize that I have business skills that will return my business to success." Clarence's determination and pluck to turn his fortune around represents the best of what the PLAN Fund stands for.

IT IS THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF FOUNDATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS THAT THE PLAN FUND IS ABLE TO SUSTAIN OUR PROGRAM.



DONOR'S CORNER

This quarter PLAN Fund received funding from a first time corporate donor, State Farm who provided the PLAN Fund with a \$7,500 grant. "Our company supports the PLAN Fund because they share our commitment to communities as our communities are the foundation and lifeblood of society. **STATE FARM** is committed to supporting nonprofits like the PLAN Fund that foster economic development and revitalization in communities", states Linda Bethany, State Farm Community Citizenship Manager. In December, 2005 the **BANK OF TEXAS** provided PLAN Fund with a \$10,000 grant. Bank of Texas has been a loyal supporter of the PLAN Fund since 2000.

Other 4th quarter 2005 and 2006 contributors in support of our program were received from:

- **COMERICA BANK**
- **GRAMEEN USA**
- **HAROLD SIMMONS FOUNDATION**
- **HILLCREST FOUNDATION**
- **LEKHA SINGH FOUNDATION**
- **DEAN & JEAN PEYTON**
- **WACHOVIA BANK**
- **M.B. & EDNA ZALE FOUNDATION**

Industry Insight

Alex Counts

In recent years microfinance has become a viable movement, industry or sector – call it what you want, but it is now a permanent part of the world’s financial system and arsenal against injustice. People have long known that many millions of people in this country and beyond were effectively excluded from the global financial system, with little or no access to loans for starting or expanding small businesses, reasonably priced insurance policies, and convenient places for their savings. What has changed is that institutions like the PLAN Fund have shown that these financial services, complemented by training and advisory services where needed, can be provided cost-effectively in distressed communities to hard-working, self-employed people with dramatic results.

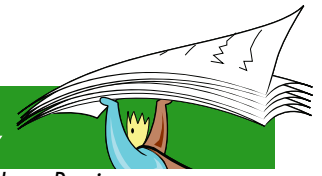
Under the leadership of Anthony Pace and a strengthened Board of Directors, the PLAN Fund has been incorporating best practices in a forward-thinking way. For instance, strategic alliances are clearly the wave of the future, and the PLAN Fund has forged a promising

one with Accion-Texas – a micro-lender with a different, complementary approach – that builds on its alliances with myriad local social service organizations and financial institutions. Another positive trend is developing client-driven products and services, that are truly responsive to the needs and opportunities of low-income micro-entrepreneurs. The business trainings that are now being delivered to PLAN Fund clients are clearly meeting a critical need as articulated by the people we are working to assist.

Many thousands of people in struggling Dallas neighborhoods have entrepreneurial talent but no access to capital or a peer network to support them in creating their own job and, in time, jobs for others. So they languish in low-wage jobs that take them far from their families in many cases. The PLAN Fund is making solid progress in promoting community economic development through micro-enterprise support and microfinance. I believe it is gearing up for its best year ever.

NOTEWORTHY

Irene Dominguez



2006 HAS BEEN A YEAR OF REVIVAL FOR THE PLAN FUND WITH MANY NEW CHANGES.

We have added many benefits to our program including a new curriculum for training as well as new partners that will enhance the opportunities for our clients to grow and develop their businesses.

We have also increased our center presence while partnering with ICDC Business Assistance Center, the West Dallas Business Assistance Center, and The MEED Center BAC. As a result we have PF centers in four different areas of Dallas County.

PF new partners for 2006 include:

- The MEED Center (BAC6), Multi-Ethnic Educational and Economic Development Center
- Womens Southwest Federal Credit Union
- ICDC (BAC2)
- Hispanic Chamber (BAC3) in West Dallas
- ACCION Texas
- AVANCE

These new partners offer our clients more opportunities for business networking and seminars.

Other special services available to our clients are mentoring and credit repair services.



NEWS AND NOTES

We currently have on-going classes at the following locations:

MONDAY EVENING

@ 6:30 P.M.

GDHCC—BAC3
2060 Singleton Blvd
Dallas, TX 75212

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

@ 6:45 P.M.

The Parks @ Wynnewood
2002 Didsbury Circle
Dallas, TX 75224

TUESDAY EVENING

@ 6:30 P.M.

ICDC—BAC2
4709 Spring Ave
Dallas, TX 75210

THURSDAY EVENINGS

@ 6:45 P.M.

The MEED Center—BAC6
1327 No. Peak Street
Dallas, TX 75206

New classes form regularly at these locations. Please call the office at 214-942-6698 or check our website for more details. www.planfund.org

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



SAM HILLS IS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF S&A OXYGEN EXPRESS.

This past September the PLAN Fund achieved a milestone when Sam Hills joined the PF board and became the first former PF borrower to become a board member. Not only does Sam bring an astute business knowledge to PF board but, as importantly, he brings an insider's view of the PF program.

Prior to his business career, Sam had a distinguished 26 year naval career and honorably retired in 1996 as a Senior Chief Petty Officer. Sam was in

the durable medical equipment industry for 7 years when he started S&A Oxygen in January 2003. When Sam started his company it was a one person shop, he was responsible for everything including: sales, marketing, operations, delivery, office manager etc. As a new business without a track record, no commercial bank would provide Sam with the necessary capital to kick start his business. The PF provided the seed capital of \$1,500 in 2003 and a year later Sam received a second loan for \$3,000. By the end of 2005, in just over two and a half years, through sheer

determination and a vision to succeed, Sam has grown his business from an idea into a stellar company with seven full time employees and annual revenues that approach \$500,000. Sam's motivation and energy is infectious. PF takes every opportunity to invite Sam to present at PF orientation meetings to motivate and inspire new prospective members. His 2 minute elevator speech is well known in the DFW Metroplex minority networking circles because he never misses an opportunity to promote his company and the PLAN Fund.

DIRECTORS:

Gwen Moore, *Chair*
Marilyn Kodish-Sutherland, *Past Chair*
Results
Barrett Howell, *Vice Chair*
Haynes & Boone, LLP
Theresa Acosta Lee, *Treasurer*
Texas Mezzanine Fund
Mary Bailey, *Secretary*
Texas Capital Bank
Irvin Ashford
Comerica Bank
Alex Counts
Grameen Foundation, USA
Sam Hills
S&A Oxygen Express
Claudia Mirza
Akorbi
Regina Nobles
Catalyst Consulting
Daniel Oh
American Airlines

VOLUNTEERS:

Anthony Coleman
Austin Bankhead
Beatriz Castillo-Vincent
Charlotte Hudgin
Cliff Hand
Gabriela Quezada

STAFF:

Anthony Pace, *Executive Director*
Mariela Salas De Leon, *Center Manager*
Irene Solis Dominguez, *Center Manager*

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The PLAN Fund

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