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Our Town News

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Your Community News Magazine

Happy
4th
of
July

Photo Collage By

Marc Gagnon pg 3

Coupons Deals Inside • pg 28

Calendar of Events • pg 54

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Get Back Your Independence With Help From Gateway Community Outreach

By Nicol Jenkins, Editor



As Fourth of July nears, Gateway Community Outreach continues to focus on helping people reclaim their independence and financial freedom. For 18 years, Gateway's mission has been to actively address the issue of hunger and seeks to safeguard and protect our most vulnerable community members. Unlike other organizations, Gateway Community Outreach has a 90 day treatment plan which focuses on stabilization to help the entire family. They also offer emergency assistance through their food and ancillary services.

"Our goal is to keep working with them until they are stabilized. With our economic crisis, our numbers have increased. People who were not normally in the poverty level now don't have a job, and we are here to help them through this difficult time," said Carol Ray, Founder, President and CEO of Gateway Community Outreach.

Gateway makes a difference and has made a difference in the lives of over 180,000 families since its inception in 1995 and continues to provide services with compassion and care to their clients. Gateway provides a comprehensive crisis management program and has a dedicated staff and over 200 volunteers who continuously monitor all intake procedures, tracking performance and computer data input on a weekly basis.

To ensure that clients needs are continuously being met, Gateway is able to contract with individuals to not only monitor the sites and address any questions or concerns of the clients, but to also provide job search assistance and other



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referral services if necessary. This was accomplished in part by Private, Government and County grants, as well as personal donations from people across the nation.

Gateway collaborates with over 80 agencies throughout the county for emergency assistance concerns, as well as providing rent and mortgage assistance through FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) funds. Through direct and personalized assistance, it is often possible to work through a family's crisis and get people "back on their feet" before any significant damage is done.

Financial Seminars are also available to educate clients on budget counseling and foreclosure prevention services. Free summer tutoring programs for grade school and middle school students are also available.

"The need has increased. Right now, we service over 8,000 families. Our main focus is prevention. We try to keep people in their homes and just help them to get through a difficult time so they are still independent," said Ray. "The education component is so important. We offer free seminars and provide information needed to help people in our community." Carol Ray finds it rewarding to be able to keep families together.

"We have had many success stories of people coming back and saying that Gateway Community Outreach has helped them so much. It is satisfying to see this. We also would not be able to do all that we do without the help of our volunteers. They really do make a difference," said Ray.

Gateway Community Outreach is located at 291 SE 1st Terrace Deerfield Beach, FL 33441. For more information, call 954-725-8434. You can also visit their website at www.gcoflorida.org or email gatecomm291@aol.com.

