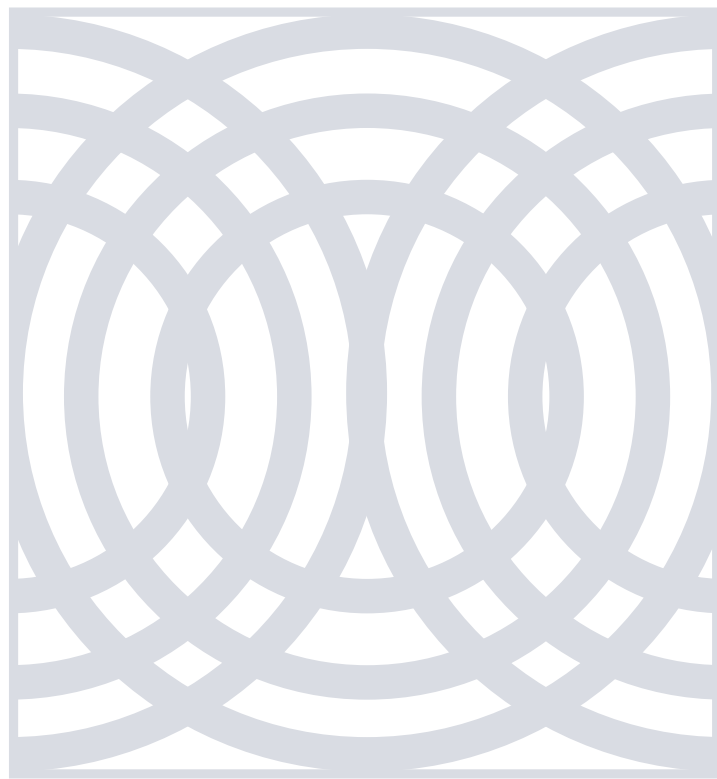


Move the Mountain
LEADERSHIP CENTER



Circles™ Campaign

EARLY RESULTS AND EVALUATION

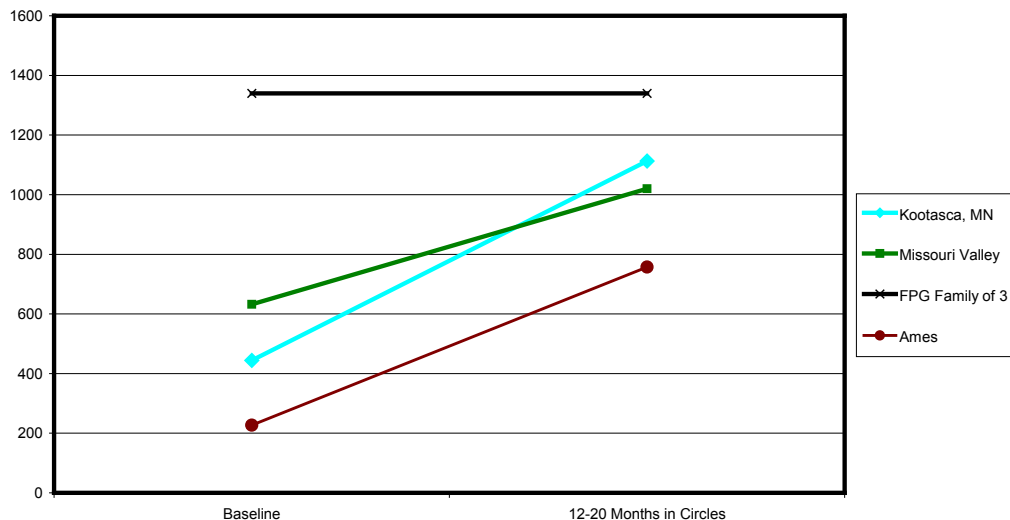


Overview

THE CIRCLES™ CAMPAIGN BEGAN IN JANUARY OF 2007 in a partnership with aha!Process, Inc. and the Bridges program. Prior to 2007, Circles evolved over a decade of innovation funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and numerous other local, state and national sources. It is built on the findings of social capital research (see Appendix II) and our own applications in Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri. The Campaign now reaches out to 18 states and 39 communities. The earlier models were primarily rural and semi-rural settings. Urban models now include: Columbus, OH; Riverside, CA; Syracuse, NY; Waterbury, CT; and Minneapolis, MN; and smaller cities such as Long View, TX; Pensacola, FL; and Cheyenne, WY.

Initial results from three early rural models show that the average earned income of Circle cohorts increases from income below the poverty line, but far from the optimal 200% of poverty guidelines level (black line in table below).

**Change in Average Monthly Income
Kootasca, Ames, and Missouri Valley Circles**



In order to accomplish self sufficiency in today's more difficult economy, Circles™ is now partnering with Bridges to incorporate new self-sufficiency employment and career advancement models. Two major innovators who have utilized Bridges concepts to get exciting results are Quest Sustainable Solutions and Cincinnati Works. (see Appendix I) We expect that the merger of Circles™ with these best practice employment models will strengthen each of our results.

The Circles™ Campaign has a record of serving high-risk individuals and families, as evidenced by data (below) from our early initiatives in Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri:

Profile of families	Ames	Missouri Valley	Kootasca
Caucasian	59%	81%	86%
African/African American	23%	12%	9%
Hispanic	3%	2%	1%
Other	15%	5%	3%
Average Age of Adult at Intake	33	33	
Average Age of parent at birth of first child	21	22	
Single parent	80%	40%	43%
Average number of children	2.2	2.1	
Families with pre-schoolers	49%	43%	36%
Mental health problems reported at intake	57%	38%	55%
Chronic health issues reported	38%	15%	48%
Involved with child welfare system	28%	18%	36%
Domestic violence reported	53%	32%	71%
Involved with criminal justice system	35%	34%	57%
Raised in household with poverty	72%	34%	66%
Abused as a child	75%	52%	55%
High school degree	82%	60%	52%
College degree	20%	11%	9%
Have work history	97%	35%	58%
History with 2 years or more w/one employer	57%	25%	

The table below shows examples from three of the first community agencies to implement Circles™ initiatives. The statistics demonstrate the successfulness of the model in helping people to find jobs and achieve self-sufficiency:

Outcomes	Ames	Sedalia, MO	Grand Rapids
Helping Families Off Welfare			
Participants tracked to date	151	60	25
Participants on cash assistance/food stamps at intake	106	34	36%
Participants now off cash assistance	58	17	
Average years on cash assistance	3.86	3.0	
Average months to get off cash assistance	10.31	8.3	
Annual savings of cash assistance and food stamps	\$491,052	\$38,388	
Helping Families into Jobs			
Participants working at intake	35%	73%	44%
	Improved employment or income		
Participants now working	63%	61%	64%
Average earned income per month at intake	\$227	\$632	\$351
Current average earned income per month	\$757	\$1020	\$1150
Average increase in earned income per month	\$530	\$388	\$775
Total new earned income per year	\$960,360	\$144,811	\$18,406
Rate of return on earned income	540%	129%	
# of community volunteers	289	322	
# of cars transferred	123	8	

A sample of early results to date for Circles™ (Pettis County, MO)

April 2005 – July 2007, 30 months start up phase

Participants

# families involved	78
# of children	175
annual cost of 1 child raised in poverty	\$38,000
projected savings to society if these children are not raised in poverty	\$6,650,000

Engaging the Community

Business's, Partners & individuals who supported Circles™	361
Community volunteers recruited as allies	208
Presentations on poverty to community groups and businesses	52
# of low-income participants who made presentations to community	35

Generating new community resources to help families out of poverty

Donated food	\$36,746.88
Donated Clothing/furniture/toys	\$59,107.84
Cash donations	\$15,540.15
Ally hours in \$, mtg. space, etc.	\$64,167.40
Donated cars	\$33,324.78
Total new Community Resources	\$208,887.05

Strengthen support system

# families report support system improved	50
---	----

Stabilize children's education

increased # children attending school 95% of time	43
increased # children reading at grade level	41

Increase education and training

Secured high school GED	11
entered training/ education program/career services	23

Increase earned income

# who have increased earned income	39
# who have received new jobs	35
Achieved living wage and out of poverty	2
Average earned income increase per month	\$1,190.38
Total annual new earned income	\$219,796.52

Increase assets

# who now have financial plans	29
# who received donated cars	8
# who obtained reliable transportation and/or driver's license to maintain job	12
# who enrolled in Individual Dev accts	3

Decrease public assistance

annual decrease in cash assistance food stamps	\$17,736.00
annual decrease in food stamps	\$30,250.00
total amount of food stamps and cash assistance reduced	\$47,986.00

Returns on investments

Annual costs	\$150,000.00
New community resources directed to families	\$208,887.05
annual increased earned income	\$219,796.52
annual public assistance reduction	\$47,986.00



Program Evaluation

THE NATIONAL CIRCLES™ CAMPAIGN EVALUATION is being conducted by the Wilder Research Center. The evaluation program is critical in ensuring program consistency in Circles™ initiatives across the state and nation, determining which program components are most effective, and providing reliable data on the impact and success of the Circles™ initiatives on communities and individual participants. See Appendix III for new evaluation survey form.

The Evaluation, which begins July 1, 2008 will:

- Provide timely feedback to Circle leaders, allies, guiding coalition members, and agency staff regarding the extent to which project implementation is consistent with the overall Circles™ model.
- Gather feedback from Circle leaders, allies, guiding coalition members, and agency staff to insure program consistency and opportunities for course corrections as needed.
- Provide valid and reliable data on Circle leader progress toward greater self-sufficiency, including comparative data from a matched sample of participants in non-Circle self-sufficiency programs.
- Examine changes in opinions and attitudes related to poverty among those who participate as allies and guiding coalition members.
- Gather information within the communities in which Circles™ are operating to assess project impact on community awareness and the response to poverty, the level of engagement within communities based on the commitment of time and resources by community members and organizations, the presence of poverty issues in the public dialog and media, as well as the development of new coalitions and partnerships that can affect systems of support for people in poverty.

The evaluation process will allow the Circles™ initiative to describe the impact the program has had on Circle leaders, allies, and communities and to assess the potential for systems changes in areas that would affect those living in or near poverty. The The program evaluation will measure process and outcome indicators to ensure that expected results are being achieved and to empower those participating at all levels of the model.

The proposed model will allow Circles™ to document whether Circle leaders have experienced changes in income, level of employment and/or educational achievement, use of public benefits, and support from and connectedness to the larger community. Additionally most of the data collection process will be integrated into the ongoing assessment and goal setting with Circle leaders in a way that allows the evaluation to empower those participating at all levels of the model.

Appendix 1

Quest Sustainable Solutions Results

See study from Stanford University http://www.cascadeng.com/quest/documents/publications/StanfordCaseStudy_WTC.pdf

Costs and Benefits to a Welfare-to-Work Company

NPV @ 20 percent annually

COSTS

Initial Training	\$8,000
Welfare Client Hiring Costs	\$145,000
Transportation Assistance	\$25,000

BENEFITS

Contract Employment Cost Reduction	\$290,000
Wage Subsidies	\$630,000
Gross Pre-Tax Benefits	\$742,000
Federal Tax	(\$260,000)
Tax Credits	\$20,000

NET MARGINAL BENEFIT **\$502,000**

Costs and Benefits to Governmental-Affiliated Agencies

NPV @ 20 percent annually

COSTS

On-Site Caseworkers	\$350,000
Wage Subsidies	\$630,000
Tax Credits	\$20,000

BENEFITS

Reduced Assistance Payments During Program Horizon	\$1,400,000
Reduced Assistance Payments After Program Horizon	\$240,000
Increased Federal Tax Receipts	\$260,000

TOTAL BENEFITS **\$900,000**

Cincinnati Works Results

The tracking and analysis of data allows us to chart our results and make changes to our model as necessary. Some key results are:

- Over 600 Employments annually with an 84% retention rate in the workplace (vs. 25% industry average)
- Preferred source of entry-level workers for 55 core employers
- Average wage \$9.00/hour
- Reduction in poverty-related problems including crime, incarceration, school dropout, etc.
- Improved health and dental care access

See http://www.cincinnatiworks.org/page.php?name=aboutus_results

Appendix II

Social Capital Building within Circles™ Sociology Literature Summary

Michelle Clark, Ph.D.

The mission of Circles™ initiatives is to build relationships across race and socioeconomic class lines in order to realize more positive life outcomes for families living in poverty. By establishing a broader base of middle and upper middle class citizens who are close to people in poverty, people in poverty begin to access broader networks to support their own self-sufficiency, and social and public policy becomes more enlightened. Circles™ is a high impact strategy designed to enhance the social capital of low income people while changing the mindset of the community about poverty and energizing the community into action.

These ideas are based on a large and respected body of literature regarding social capital within the field of sociology. The idea of social capital has been explored since the early 1900s (Hanafin, 1916) and the term “social capital” was first overtly utilized by Jane Jacobs in 1961. Portes (2000) states that social capital is the sociological tool which has been the most utilized by other fields of study and practice.

According to Lin (2001), social capital is the capacity of a person or group to utilize social relationships to mobilize resources embedded in a network structure. Social capital is utilized to produce collective action (e.g. volunteer responses to disasters, neighborhood watch groups) or personal benefit (e.g. obtaining a job, garnering financing for a business endeavor). According to Bordieu (1986), social capital consists of two key components: social relationships and the resources available because of those connections. Additionally, Burt (1997) suggests that social capital is the “opportunity” (as opposed to ability) to access various resources because of one’s network connections.

Social resources theory suggests that people attain higher status by becoming connected with others who have social resources such as power, status, wealth, or networks (Lin, 1990). The quantity of social capital a person possesses depends on the size of the network connections they can mobilize and the amount of resource each person in that network possesses. For example, when a low income person loses a job, the number of people they can turn to for job prospects is small, and the power of those people to activate job possibilities is low. When a state legislator, for example, loses a bid for re-election, the number of people she or he has in a network to draw on for job possibilities is large, and the ability of those people to mobilize opportunities is high.

There are two main types of social capital: bonding and bridging. **Bonding social capital** constitutes close-knit ties among similar individuals or groups. These strong ties provide support within the bonded group, within-group solidarity, but often are barriers to relationships outside the close-knit group. According

to Putnam, bonding social capital is “inward looking and tends to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups” (2000, p. 22). Bonding social capital also tends to unite similar people who tend to have similar resources.

Bridging social capital constitutes links between heterogeneous individuals or groups. These ties are not as strong, but are more likely to be inclusive. Putnam suggests that bridging social capital is the key to mobilizing community resources, acquiring wider variety of resources and sharing diverse information (2000). Although bridging social capital is crucial for acquiring social capital, the significant difficulties in maintaining such heterogeneous relationships is significant. Burt (2002) demonstrates that bridging ties dissolve four times faster than bonding ties.

Saegert et al. (2000) suggest that for poor communities to improve their situations, they must have: a) bonding social capital within the community, b) bridging social capital to access the resources contained by higher status networks, and c) a specific type of bridging social capital referred to as linking social capital that connects the first two with public institutions. Circles™ provides each of these three components.

First, bonding social capital is created through peer relationships with other low-income members. This occurs primarily through weekly meetings and leadership tasks the participants share. Second, bridging social capital is created through the relationships across race and class lines that are contained within the Circle, where each low-income family is joined in intentional friendship by at least three middle or upper income allies. Third, linkage social capital to public institutions is created through the involvement of the public schools, the Department of Human Services, United Way, city government, local colleges, community foundations, business community, and the faith community. Additionally, each month there is a Big View meeting in which participants and allies come together to generate community/public action directed at changing the systems barriers that hold poverty in place.

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Appendix III

Circle Leader Progress Report (April 7, 2008)

Instructions: This progress report should be completed by a Circle Leader and at least one ally, working together to answer the questions. The baseline form should be completed within 30 days of starting in the Circles™ initiative and repeated at approximately 6 month intervals, until Circles™ participation is complete.

If you have questions about the completion of this form, you can call Brian Pittman at Wilder Research (1-800-328-2972, ext. 2691).

When you are done completing the form, please fax it to Wilder Research (651-280-3700), or email it to Lue Thao at lxt@wilder.org.

Statement of Consent:

I understand that the Progress Form is used to learn about the effectiveness of the Circles™ initiative. My participation is voluntary and confidential. No individual information about me will be released. The information will be combined with data from other participants in order to help the Circle initiative learn how to help people to get out of poverty.

I understand the purpose of this progress report and voluntarily agree to participate by providing my information to Wilder Research. All of the information will be kept private, and I can withdraw my agreement to participate at anytime, by calling Brian Pittman at 1-800-328-2972, ext. 2691.

Signature of Circle Leader

Name of Circle Leader (please print)

Witnessed by Ally – signature

Name of Ally (please print)

1. Consent granted Yes Proceed
 Do not continue

Note: If this is a baseline (first time), please answer all questions as if answering them on the first day of your involvement in Circles™.

2. This is a: Baseline report
 Six-month (or later) report

3. Today's date is: _____/_____/_____
Month Day Year

4. Circle Leader Date of Birth: _____/_____/_____
Month Day Year

5. Services, income, assets, and debt

Mark with an "X" if no account or not eligible to receive. Mark with a "0" if no balance or eligible to receive but no benefit.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| a. Food Stamps | \$ _____ |
| b. Public cash assistance | \$ _____ |
| c. Unemployment benefits | \$ _____ |
| d. Other public benefits | \$ _____ |
| e. Child support | \$ _____ |
| f. Supplemental Security Inc (SSI) | \$ _____ |
| g. Monthly gross wages
(yearly/12/before taxes or withholding) | \$ _____ |
| h. Other earned income sources | \$ _____ |
| i. Checking account(s) balance | \$ _____ |
| j. Savings account(s) balance | \$ _____ |
| k. Individual Development Account balance | \$ _____ |
| l. Other investments or accounts | \$ _____ |
| m. Monthly [share of] rent/mortgage | \$ _____ |
| n. Back rent/mortgage owed | \$ _____ |
| o. Overdue utility or other bills | \$ _____ |
| p. Overdue credit card balance | \$ _____ |
| q. Other debt | \$ _____ |

6a. Are you currently employed (including day labor or temp work)?

- Yes
 No (GO TO QUESTION 7a)

6b. If Yes, how many jobs do you have? _____ (Number of jobs)

6c. How many hours did you work last week? _____ (Hours)

6d. Have you changed jobs in the last 6 months? r1 Yes r2 No

6e. What were your total wages (before deductions) last week? _____
 (Last week's wages)

6f. What was your total household income last year? _____
 (Yearly gross income)

7a. Have you graduated from high school?

- Yes (GO TO QUESTION 7b)
 No (GO TO QUESTION 7c)

7b. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- High school graduate
 Some college or technical training
 Completed 2 year degree
 Completed 4 year degree
 Some graduate education (post Bachelor's)

7c. Do you have a GED?

- Yes (GO TO QUESTION 8a)
 No (GO TO QUESTION 7d)

7d. What is the highest grade you have completed? (CIRCLE ONE)

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

8a. Are you currently enrolled in an educational program?

- Yes
 No (GO TO QUESTION 9a)

8b. What are you studying? _____

8c. How long does the program last? _____ (Months)

8d. What diploma, degree, or certificate will you receive when you complete the program? _____

9a. Have you completed an educational program in the last 6 months?

- Yes
 No (GO TO QUESTION 10)

9b. What did you study? _____

9c. How long did the program last? _____ (Months)

9d. What diploma, degree, or certificate did you receive when you completed the program?

10. What is your marital status?

- Married
 Separated
 Divorced or widowed
 Cohabiting (living together in a marriage-like situation, but not married)
 Never married, and not currently partnered
 Other

11a. Hours of employment

- Unemployed
 Working less than 15 hrs/week
 Working 15 – 19 hrs/week
 Working 20 – 24 hrs/week
 Working 25 – 29 hrs/week
 Working 30 – 34 hrs/week
 Working 35 – 40 hrs/week
 Working more than 40 hrs/week
 Unable to work or retired
 Retired

- 11b. Household income sources this month
- No household income
 - Public cash benefits/no earned income for any household member
 - More than 50% public cash benefits, with some earned income
 - More than 50% earned income, with some public cash benefits
 - Earned income, with no public cash benefits for any household member
(Earned income includes total wages, SSI, and child support)
- 11c. Child support
- Eligible, no income benefit
 - Eligible, partial or irregular income
 - Eligible, receives full amount of income ordered
 - Not eligible/not applicable
- 11d. Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Eligible, no benefit
 - Eligible, applied for benefit
 - Eligible, received or receiving benefit
 - Not applicable
- 11e. Adequacy of income for food and shelter
- Unable to meet both food AND housing expenses during the last month
 - Able to meet food OR housing expenses during the last month
 - Able to meet BOTH food and housing expenses during last month
- 11f. In the last four weeks, about how many days did you feel “down” or discouraged?
- None
 - One or two
 - Three or four
 - Five or more
- 11g. Housing stability
- Homeless and not in shelter (is outdoors, in a car, or in a place not meant for habitation)
 - Emergency shelter, doubled up, or notice of eviction/foreclosure
 - Transitional housing (time limited)
 - Subsidized rental housing
 - Market rate rental housing
 - Home ownership

- 11h. Housing affordability (monthly cost for housing and utilities)
- Paying more than 50% of household income
 - Paying less than 50% but more than 29% of household income
 - Paying less than 30% of household income
 - Not applicable/not paying
- 11i. Child care
- Not available
 - Available but inadequate to meet need
 - Available and adequate with subsidy
 - Available and adequate without subsidy
 - Not needed
- 11j. English speaking proficiency
- None or very limited skills
 - Functional skills where there is some support
 - Functional skills, no support needed
- 11k. Financial accounts
- No credit card OR checking account/debit card OR savings account
 - Credit card OR checking/saving account
 - Credit card AND checking/savings account
 - Credit card AND checking/savings AND retirement account (e.g. 401K, IRA)
12. How do you describe your racial or ethnic background?
- Black/African American
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian or Pacific Islander
 - White or Caucasian
 - Hispanic, Latino or Chicano
 - Other (Please describe: _____)
13. Were you born in the U.S.
- Yes
 - No

14. Was your first language English?
 Yes
 No
15. How many adults (18 or older) are in your household? _____
 (Number 18 or older)
16. How many children (age 5 or younger) are in your household? _____
 (Number of children 5 or younger)
17. How many children 6–17 are in your household? _____
 (Number of children 6–17)

18. As of today (IF BASELINE: As of first day of involvement):

<i>Do you have...</i>	Yes	No	Not Applicable
a. a plan for how you are going to get out of poverty?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. an Individual Development Account or savings plan to help you build assets?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. a safe and stable place to live?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. health insurance for yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. health insurance for all of your children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. health insurance for all of your family members?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. a reliable means of transportation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. a friend who will help you out in a crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. a family member who will help you out in a crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. a driver's license?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. any unresolved legal issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. a credit card?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | Yes | No | Not
Applicable |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 19. <i>During the past 6 months have you...</i> | | | |
| a. Donated food, clothing, or other goods to an individual or organization? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Been involved with a committee, taskforce, social action group, or community organization? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Received food, clothing, or other donated goods? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Obtained a car? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Obtained a better paying job? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Paid off a credit card bill? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Opened, or added money to a savings account? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Examined your credit score?
(IF YES: What was your current credit score when you examined it?) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

20. The most important goals I have set for myself in the next 6 months are:

21. If this is not a baseline, please complete the following statement: During the last 6 months, I have accomplished the following on my previously identified goals...

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Please fax a copy to Lue Thao at 651-280-3700 or if you completed a computer version of this form, email it to Lue at: lxt@wilder.org.