



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Giles County

Program Title: F.O.C.U.S. Focus on Communities Utilizing Services

Program Category: Community & Economic Development/Health & Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Chris McKlarney

Title: County Administrator

Department: Administration

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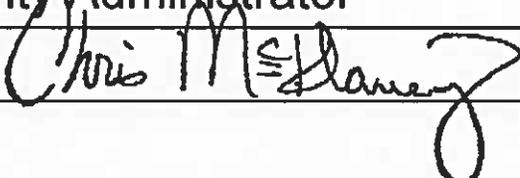
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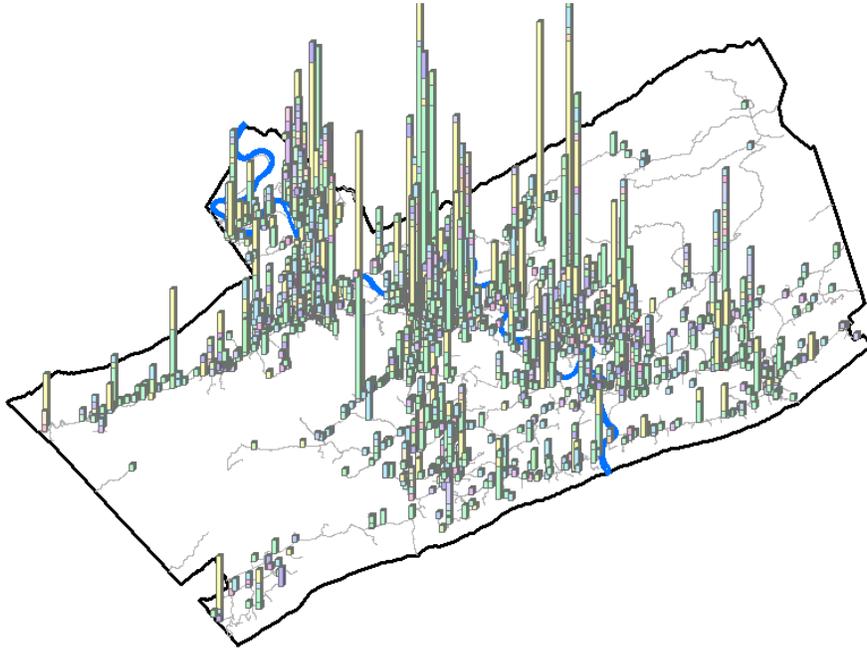
SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: Chris McKlarney

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 

**Virginia Association of Counties
2016 – Achievement Awards Submission
F.O.C.U.S. – Focus on Communities Utilizing Services
Giles County, Virginia**



Background Information: Giles County is not unique in the respect that it has many highly skilled and effective organizations providing reactive services in response to the needs of our citizens. These organizations include, but are not limited to: Department of Social Services, New River Valley Community Services, Early Head Start/Head Start, Giles Sheriff's Office, Giles School System, Community Health Center, Carilion Hospital, CHIP, various courts, various police departments and the Virginia Department of Health. A major percentage of the reactive services provided, like other communities, are as a direct result of the low socio-economic status of a small percentage of our citizens.

State the Problem, Challenge or Situation: In spite of the fact that we do have highly effective providers, we also continue to have new generations of citizens with low socio-economic status who suffer all the consequences that relate to this, and as a result, utilize a disproportionate percentage of our reactive services. An article published this June in the highly-respected New England Journal of Medicine, entitled *Saving Tiny Tim – Pediatrics and Childhood Poverty in the United States* addresses the direct correlation between a child thriving and the health, education and economic status of the family overall – their socio-economic status. Quote: *The imperative of working against child poverty goes beyond even the coordination and referral that can help our (pediatric) patients take advantage of these (intensive early care and education) programs. Mitigation is important, but isn't enough without working for systemic changes that reduce child poverty by changing the larger balance between what families earn and what they owe.* Giles County is work to change the prevalence of poverty and its' related symptoms, through the implementation of the FOCUS Program.

How the Program Fulfilled the Awards Criteria: We firmly believe that FOCUS meets all of the criteria specified. Explained below:

1. **Innovative:** Early in 2015, it was decided by Giles County Administration and the Giles County Board of Supervisors to take a detailed look at exactly where, and by whom, reactive services were being utilized within Giles. The goal is to impact positive social norms change through a more focused and efficient delivery of all responsive services, especially within the specific, identified community clusters.

Twenty-two different data address points were collected. Incidents by address included; circuit and district court records/incarcerations, truancy, domestic calls, 911, police, fire and many others. These were assembled by color coated categories on GIS overlays and assigned to the physical locations where these individual incidents occurred. It quickly became apparent that service expenditures were concentrated in distinct community clusters within the county. For example; one-percent of physical locations (91 addresses) utilize 25% of all provided services. Five-percent of physical locations utilize 55% and 10% utilize 71% of the many millions of dollars of reactive services provided within the county (these figures do not include expenses such as school department, public works, etc.). Note that the remaining 90% of all physical locations in the county only use 29% of services.

The process of building a more efficient and accountable identification and referral system has been implemented. It is clearly understood that the tools necessary to help individuals and families break out of the cycle of poverty and multi-generational dysfunction can be delivered more effectively with a coordinated and focused service provider approach. The establishment of relationships and trust with the residents of the FOCUS Communities is what is beginning to provide the necessary access in order to affect change through this focused approach.

2. **Promote intergovernmental cooperation and/or cooperation with local, state and federal entities and/or a private enterprise in addressing the problem.**

The partners list of FOCUS members is extensive and includes all branches of Giles County Government and numerous regional and state agencies. Diversity within the stakeholder partnership allow FOCUS to address multiple protective and risk factors within the human condition of our FOCUS community citizens. Partners include a total of 77 distinctly separate organizations/programs/entities, etc., to include: Community Health Center, VA Department for Aging and Rehab, Commonwealth's Attorney, Board of Supervisors, Department of Social Services, five town police departments, Sheriff's Office, Public Schools, local courts, Goodwill/Workforce, Hartley Chidester Attorneys, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Early Head Start and Head Start, New River Community Action, New River Community Services, New River Valley Regional Jail, New River Community College, Pearisburg Community Market, Giles Early Education Program, Giles Rescue, faith based community, Delegate Yost, Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance and the Women's Resource Center.

3. **Provide a model that other local governments may learn from or implement in their own localities.**

The efficacy of FOCUS will clearly be compounded as adjoining areas integrate all or part of this process within their jurisdictions. We have presented the FOCUS model to principals in the Radford City Government on several occasions. As well, their IT personnel has been shown the technicalities of the mapping component of FOCUS. Additional model presentations include: graduate students at Radford University and a group of multiple agency representatives at the New River Valley Livability Conference. Giles is more than willing to share information on any of its programs. In closing the "criteria for selection" section, we are unaware of a model with any similarity to FOCUS.

Tell how the program was carried out including financing, staffing and results.

During the latter part of 2015, the mapping project was completed and a program outline developed. The stakeholders were identified and convened; brainstorming and designing an implementation model. A FOCUS community, Orchard Grove, was selected from the mapping component and FOCUS became operational.

At present, additional funding is not required for FOCUS, and staffing is achieved through present County Special Projects and Community Service staff. Results to date include multiple referrals to Early Head Start and Head Start, recruitment of students in the Orchard Grove Community into work skills training programs and the installation of a reading library within the community. There have been community events provided, with others being planned to include a six week series of cooking classes that offer double SNAP dollars for raw materials; and a *Bike Safety Rodeo* in collaboration with the Pearisburg Police Department in an effort to further the understanding, especially with younger residents, that police are there to serve and protect – not be feared. A recent indicator of program success, according to the Pearisburg Chief of Police, was that the calls for service to the Orchard Grove community have decreased 60-70%. It is important to emphasize that FOCUS is designed to address multi-generational issues resulting in short, but most importantly, long-term impacts to be realized into the future of Giles County.

Overview: Focusing On Communities Utilizing Services – FOCUS

Early in 2015, it was decided by Giles County Administration and the Board of Supervisors to take a detailed look at exactly where, and by whom, reactive services were being utilized within Giles. The goal, to create positive social norms change within the identified high use clusters through a more focused and efficient delivery of reactive services. Twenty-two different data address points were collected. Incidents by address included, but are not limited to: circuit and district court records/incarcerations, truancy, domestic calls, and fire. These were assembled by color coated categories on GIS overlays and assigned to the physical locations where these individual incidents occurred. It became apparent that reactive service expenditures were concentrated in distinct clusters within the county. For example: one-percent of physical locations (91 addresses) utilize 25% of all provided services. Five-percent of physical locations utilize 55% and 10% utilize 71% of the many millions of dollars of reactive services provided within the county (these figures do not include expenses such as school department, public works, etc.).

The FOCUS process is creating a more efficient and accountable identification, referral and reactive service system. It is understood that the tools necessary to help individuals and families break out of the cycle of multi-generational poverty can be delivered more effectively and in a more comprehensive fashion, with a focused services approach. The establishment of relationships and trust within the FOCUS Communities is what provides the necessary access and engagement in order to affect change within these communities. Partners in FOCUS include all service providers (over 70) within Giles County.

Summary: F.O.C.U.S. – Focusing On Communities Utilizing Services

Early in 2015, it was decided by Giles County Administration and the Board of Supervisors to take a detailed look at exactly where, and by whom, reactive services were being utilized within Giles. The goal is to create positive social norms change within the identified high use clusters through a more focused and efficient delivery of reactive services. Twenty-two different data address points were collected. Incidents by address include, but are not limited to: circuit and district court records/incarcerations, truancy, domestic calls, and fire. These were assembled by color coated categories on GIS overlays and assigned to the physical locations where these individual incidents occurred.

It became apparent that service expenditures were concentrated in distinct clusters within the county. For example: one-percent of physical locations (91 addresses) utilize 25% of all provided services. Five-percent of physical locations utilize 55% and 10% utilize 71% of the millions of dollars of reactive services provided within the county (these figures do not include expenses such as school department, public works, etc.) The process of a more efficient and accountable identification and referral system is being built by county staff and stakeholders. Giles understands that the tools necessary to help individuals and families break out of the cycle of poverty and multi-generational dysfunction can be delivered more effectively with a focused approach. The establishment of relationships and trust within the FOCUS Communities is what will provide the necessary access in order to affect change. Partners in FOCUS include all service providers (over 70) operating within Giles County.