



**Catholic  
Charities**  
Northwest Florida  
*Giving Help. Giving Hope.*

# E-NEWS UPDATE

BY

MARK DUFVA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
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## **Council on Accreditation (COA)**

Finally, after all these years of pain, hard work and apprehension we accomplished a major milestone with the completion of our peer site review on February 11-14. Hilda Shirk and Cindy Stewart arrived in Panama City on Sunday Feb. 11 and spent the day with Diane Williams and her staff at our transitional shelter. On Monday at 9 am they met with the Leadership Team for the entrance interview and then immediately met with members of the Board and never stopped reviewing and interviewing until Wed. morning. They were tough, but fair, open and honest. At 11:30 on Wed. they conducted an exit interview and shared the following findings:

- 1) Recognized the unique configuration and difficulty with our structure of four separate regional offices spread across 14,000 square miles (contextual accreditation).
- 2) Acknowledged the incredible and talented staff across the agency and how hard we have worked over the last 2 years to establish a culture of quality.
- 3) Acknowledged to good work and performance of existing programs and future direction and potential for growth and success.
- 4) Identified the following areas for improvement to meet standards:
  - a. Governance—Identified policy for handling investments, but no review or implementation by Board (possibly due to the fact that we have no investments)
  - b. Governance—Identified need to establish Board level “Audit Committee” to select auditor and review audit findings
  - c. Immigration—Identified need to document casework on social services and community integration, in addition to legalization paperwork
  - d. ETO—Recognized the extreme difficulty with implementing a new database software simultaneous to COA
  - f. Whistleblower Policy— Identified need to adjust P&P to ensure staff follow the “chain of command”
  - e. Shelter— Identified our shelter as not meeting the “enhanced” standard for transitional shelter, but rather as “low demand”

In approximately 45 business days we will receive a written report called a **Preliminary Accreditation Report (PAR)** that outlines the issues identified above that keep us from achieving accreditation status. We will then have 45 business days to respond to the PAR by submitting the required corrective action. These are specific, prescriptive steps that we must do to be accredited. The PAR and our response will then be submitted to the Accreditation Commission who will decide one of the following:

- o Full Accreditation
- o Pending (this status is reserved for those organizations that need to submit additional documentation)
- o Deferred Status (this status can be from three to twelve months)
- o Probation
- o Suspension

None of the issues identified were of any significance that would prohibit us from obtaining accreditation and we are completely confident that accreditation status will be received sometime in May or June. *A special thanks goes out to every staff and Board member who contributed to helping us accomplish this incredible milestone.*

## **Marketing & Communications**

The 2005/2006 Annual Report should have arrived to more than 3000 recipients across the diocese. The official roll-out date for our new web-site has been delayed until March 1. Please visit <http://cc.ptdiocese.org> to get a glimpse of the site in progress.

## **2008 Budget Process to Begin February 19**

**Boards and staff will begin building the July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008 budget in the next 2 weeks. All will be asked to participate in building the budget from the ground up.**