



A. C. T. S.

ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITIES TRANSFORMING SYRACUSE

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ACTS MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

All Saints Roman Catholic Church
Catholic Charities Diocese of Syracuse
Congregation Beth Shalom-Chevra Shas
First United Methodist Church of Minoa
Franciscan Collaborative Ministry
Grace Episcopal Church
Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church
Hopps Memorial Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church
Immanuel Temple Church of God in Christ
Immanuel United Methodist Church in Camillus
Islamic Society of CNY
James Street United Methodist Church
Lighthouse of Love Ministries
Living Water Church of God in Christ
Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church
Service Employees International Union 1199
South/Onondaga Valley Presbyterian Church
St. Andrew the Apostle Roman Catholic Church
St. Anthony of Padua Roman Catholic Church
St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church
St. James Roman Catholic Church
St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church
St. Joseph the Worker Roman Catholic Church
St. Lucy's Church
Temple Concord
Tucker Missionary Baptist Church
University United Methodist Church
Victory Temple Fellowship Church

ACTS-ION REPORT

ACTS Fundraising Flourishes

ACTS raised over \$30,000 through its first grassroots fundraising banquet since the rebuilding of ACTS began in 2005. ACTS member congregations stepped up to the challenge selling more ads and tickets than the original goals. We also had tremendous corporate support from the Syracuse Community Health Center, Syracuse University, the Gifford Foundation, and others. In addition, there were proclamations read from the mayor's office, the county executive's and the governor's office, praising ACTS for our "powerful grassroots voice," and committing to continue our partnerships as we transform our region.

Furthermore, ACTS received \$25,000 from the Central New York Community Foundation for a second staff organizer position to begin in 2009.

ACTS "Faith & Democracy" Meeting: A Testament to our Growing Power for Good

At the ACTS Faith & Democracy meeting on Sunday, Oct. 26, 2008, over 1000 members of ACTS came together to demand change. ACTS is growing stronger than ever before in its history, with 26 member organizations. We are now interfaith (Christian, Jewish, and Muslim), interracial, and urban/suburban.

The climax of the meeting was the challenge to both state officials and candidates for federal office to expand the outreach and resources for child enrollment in Child Health Plus. There are over 8,000 children in Onondaga County who are eligible yet uninsured. Then candidate Congressman Dan Maffei committed publicly to overturn the past vetoes of President Bush for an expansion of federal support for the State Child Health Insurance Program. He also committed to meet with ACTS within 50 days of taking office to work with us on our national legislative agenda: healthcare reform (HCAN), quality public education, equitable economic development and job creation, investment in infrastructure and mass transit, and compassionate and comprehensive immigration reform.

The ACTS task forces were also recognized for the tremendous progress they have made:

- **Justice Taskforce:** helped smooth re-entry of persons formerly incarcerated by giving them a valid state DMV ID as CNY's Republican and Democrat state senators and assembly members have agreed to co-sponsor legislation to amend DMV policies
- **Healthcare Taskforce:** worked to increase enrollment numbers in Child Health Plus as it coalesced the Onondaga County SCHIP coalition (made up of county and state government, our region's private insurers contracted for SCHIP, and ACTS) in order to work on technical and marketing improvements
- **Youth Taskforce:** expanding the successful AVID program to help students do better in school, graduate; and go on to college
- **Economic Development/Jobs Taskforce:** promoting a ground-breaking Community Benefits Agreement connected with the \$1 billion Joint School Construction Board project to yield good jobs, training, and community improvements as schools are rebuilt

ACTS at the Gamaliel Foundation International Leadership Assembly 2008: Realizing the Promise

Leaders of the Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse traveled to Washington, D.C., on December 3-5 to join thousands of other Gamaliel Foundation affiliate members and allies at the "Realizing the Promise: A Forum on Community, Faith & Democracy". In 2007, in Iowa, we received a promise from then candidate Barack Obama to make certain that, when elected, grassroots leadership of Gamaliel and allies would be at the table during the transition to help shape the agenda. ACTS representatives traveled to realize that promise.

On Thursday, December 4, the members of the ACTS delegation participated in health care and immigration reform rallies and visited members of Congress in the capitol building. Linda Ervin of ACTS chaired the inaugural meeting of Gamaliel New York with the other five Gamaliel affiliates in New York State (NOAH – Niagara Falls, Voice – Buffalo, ARISE - Capital Region, Northwest Bronx Clergy and Community Coalition, and LION – Long Island). Gamaliel NY had close to 300 people in Washington, DC!

The crowning event was the Realizing the Promise forum at which the representatives from President-elect Obama's office spoke with over 2500 people of the Gamaliel affiliates and allies from throughout the nation. ACTS President Rev. Kevin Agee was honored to be among those on stage leading the assembly in the opening prayer. Melody Barnes, the Director of Domestic Policy Council for President-Elect Obama assured the group that the Obama administration shared our concerns about health care, economic stability, education, and immigration, and it planned to address all these issues in timely fashion. Valerie Jarrett, Co-chair of the Obama-Biden Transition Team and White House Senior Advisor and Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Relations and Public Liaison, addressed the group with the reaffirmation that the promise was real.



ACTS Faith & Democracy Meeting
October 26, 2008
Most Holy Rosary Church



Realizing the Promise
December 4, 2008
Washington D.C.

