

## **1. Please give a fifty word summary of the project.**

Our Time Bank's *Resources to Empower the Disenfranchised* ("Project RED") project will expand our grassroots, community-based social networks, mobilizing individuals and social service agencies to eliminate social injustice and inequity. By valuing and rewarding historically disenfranchised and excluded individuals, we seek nothing less than a change in our social system.

## **2. Describe your group and its recent history.**

The Golden Town Time Bank (GTTB) is a part of an international movement of Time Banks where neighbors help neighbors and strangers become friends. We are people who might otherwise not know each other, trading time and talents using "Time Dollars" to rebuild the core economy of family, neighborhood, and community throughout Golden Town.

Time Dollars are an alternative currency in which the medium of exchange is time. For every hour a member spends doing something for someone in the community, he or she earns one Time Dollar. Then that member has a Time Dollar to spend on having someone do something for them. Time Dollars are deposited in a "bank" and are tracked by computer software. They can be withdrawn at will and spent on a whole range of talents and services provided by other members. All services – from dog walking to phone calling to plumbing repairs to guitar lessons – are welcomed and valued equally.

The types of services offered are not the typical market services one gets paid for in the cash economy. They are the mentoring, nurturing village services you might think of when you hear the phrase "It takes a village to raise a child." Among our most frequently exchanged services are cooking, teaching, minding children and elders, gardening, light home repair, and local transportation.

Time Banks build strong local communities through a parallel economy of people taking care of each other. Earning and spending Time Dollars are ways to reweave community one hour at a time, turning strangers into an extended family. The concept is simple, but the effect is profound.

In great part due to the generous support of the Strong Funders in 2005, almost half the members of the Good Faith Church of Great Town created the Golden Town Time Bank. We began with a successful ten-week "Time Bank Experiment," then took the steps necessary to become a fully operational Time Bank committed to working for social justice and strengthening our church.

Our Time Bank is now open to anyone in the greater Golden Town community and is moving toward greater independence with the support of a Strong Funders grant in 2006/7. We are working on a memorandum of understanding with the Church that will define the Time Bank as an independent organization. Our existence will continue to benefit the social justice and outreach work of the church, and our Time Bank will continue to reap benefits from its association with the church, including in-kind donations of reduced rent for office space and a home base for our monthly potluck gatherings.

During the fall and winter of 2006, the Coordinator and "Kitchen Table" (KT) began actively recruiting new members in the community. Our Outreach Committee is developing a training program for Time Bank members who want to speak to the greater community on behalf of the Time Bank. Our Coordinator has made presentations to 10 local agencies to encourage them to

join and benefit from membership. Four non-profit organizations and one for-profit small business have joined the Time Bank and are exchanging services actively. In the past two years, we have grown from just a few members to over 100. Nearly half of those members come from outside the church. In the past two years, members have exchanged more than 10,000 hours. Currently, Time Bank members offer over 300 different services.

In June of this year, we face the tremendous challenge of hiring a full-time Coordinator. Our Kitchen Table has recognized that our heavy dependence on the generosity of our current Coordinator, who works more than full-time although she has committed only to a part-time position, is not in the best interest of our organization. We will hire a second part-time Co-Coordinator or a new full-time Coordinator as soon as we secure funding for the position. Our expansive growth requires at least one full-time staff person, and we are excited about this new phase of our development.

A large part of the work of the Coordinator involves presenting information to the community about the time bank. We have a presentation scheduled with leaders of Women, Work, and Community, an organization committed to improving the economic lives of Connecticut women and their families. We are also developing a new relationship with the Regional Area Agency on Aging (RAAA), a group that provides support for Southern Connecticut's elderly population who wish to maintain their independence. In May of this year, RAAA clients will benefit from a Time Bank "Clean-a-thon" where our members collect pledges to support their efforts cleaning the homes of seniors who receive services from RAAA. These outreach activities have presented themselves to us, organically, without the need for further outreach into the community. We think this is a good sign for our future outreach activities, which the KT will solidify at its retreat for March 21.

**3. Describe more fully the project for which you are applying. Describe the issue(s) your organization addresses through this project, and what specific actions you are taking to address the issues. Outline the project's goals, activities and timelines.**

Project RED will expand the goals we had when we began the Time Bank. Time Banking offers a powerful new approach for change to the economic and social structures that affect our community; now we want to organize to create that change. We seek to:

- change the unjust distribution of resources,
- strengthen the informal support systems of family, neighborhood, and community
- empower community members to find and use their strengths
- provide opportunities for everyone to be both givers and receivers, and,
- facilitate the trading of individual time and talents.

Through Project RED, we will build relationships with area agencies serving the elderly, children, and people living in poverty. Project RED will focus squarely on strengthening the social support systems of family, neighborhood, and community for those populations. We will work proactively to develop Time Banking opportunities for social service agencies.

Time Banking is not meant to replace the services of paid, social service professionals – work that we value highly. However, an effective Time Bank provides an experience of human interdependence that is not based on charity or money payments. Our work can create an infrastructure to help social service agencies achieve better results. Time Bank communities.

In the past year, social service organizations have started asking how the Golden Town Time Bank can help their populations integrate more fully into the community. One of our first examples is our recent work with Helping and Hopeful Neighborhood Center, who joined the Time Bank in early 2007. Located in a neighborhood where 35% of school age children live at or under the poverty level, Helping and Hopeful offers those children caring relationships, safe structured activities, educational support and opportunities for service, leadership and teamwork. The organization will hire Time Bank members to tutor the students who use the Helping and Hopeful facilities, and Helping and Hopeful is offering use of their computer lab to Time Bank members for Time Dollars. We have also begun discussions with the Program Administrator at the Department of Health and Human Services about reaching their client base with information about the Time Bank.

Our planned activities for Project RED consist of campaigning to mobilize individuals and social service agencies to be valued and rewarded for the work they do while we strengthen the infrastructure of our community. From September 2007 to September 2008 we will:

Activity	Person/Committee Responsible
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Develop & maintain database of local area social service agencies and community groups ( <i>ongoing</i> )	GTTB Office Staff
Call directors of agencies, invite to meet w/Coordinator ( <i>ongoing</i> )	Coordinator/Outreach Committee
Hold meetings with agency directors ( <i>ongoing</i> )	Coordinator/Outreach Committee
Call community groups, request time for presentations ( <i>ongoing</i> )	Coordinator/Outreach Committee
Present information to agency staff and community groups ( <i>ongoing</i> )	Coordinator/Outreach Committee
Identify Time Bank member to take on position of Organizational Member Care Liaison ( <i>September</i> )	Coordinator/Outreach Committee
Create materials to engage organizations, presenting benefits of Time Bank membership; lists of possible services they might offer/request; how they might earn and spend Time Dollars ( <i>October</i> )	Organizational Member Care Liaison
Share information about member organizations via the website, newsletter articles, availability of agency brochures ( <i>ongoing</i> )	Website Committee/Membership Engagement Committee
Write press releases (as appropriate) announcing new organizational members ( <i>ongoing</i> )	Coordinator/Outreach Committee
Convene breakfast or luncheon meeting of agency directors and community group leaders for feedback and input; discuss plans for the future ( <i>January</i> )	Organizational Member Care Liaison
Organizational Members Fair where agencies make presentations or display information; held at the monthly potluck ( <i>February</i> )	Membership Engagement Committee (potlucks)/ Organizational Member Care Liaison
Create video tape for use in presentations and on public access television highlighting organizational members ( <i>August</i> )	Time Bank member/Coordinator

**4. Describe your specific evaluation plan. How will you know you have succeeded? What outcomes are you working to create? What measures will you use?**

While we have established quantifiable outcomes, we feel strongly that it is the qualitative data that will reveal the truth of our successes. Our Coordinator, office staff, and the Membership Engagement Committee members are in regular contact with members, getting feedback and collecting exchange stories. Our newsletter features an interview with a member each month. Our monthly potluck gatherings frequently feature the stories of our members. We will gather member experiences both informally and as a role of the Membership Engagement Committee. We expect to hear about improvements in the lives of the disenfranchised. We expect that the social service agencies joining the Time Bank will report enthusiastically about how Time Banking has changed the lives of their clients.

Our goals, program strategies, and objectives for Project RED are as follows:

GOALS	PROGRAM STRATEGIES	OBJECTIVES
To develop strong social networks that value and reward individuals who are disenfranchised, particularly those who are receiving support from professional social service agencies	Involve people with limited support and resources in the Time Bank	Present Time Bank information to meetings of five community groups (e.g., schools, soup kitchens, senior lunch programs)  Identify and mobilize 10 people receiving TANF benefits to join the Time Bank to complete their required “countable hours” while being paid in time dollars for their efforts  A total of 50 new members will join/be active in the Time Bank
To increase the effectiveness of professional social service agencies	Develop a community-driven infrastructure for clients of social services	Meet with eight social service agencies to explain the work of the Time Bank  Invite agencies to join the Time Bank, with a goal of having five new organizational members  Produce video documenting agencies work with the Time Bank; present on cable access, distribute to area organizations and other Time Banks  Monitor exchanges to ensure organizational members are exchanging a minimum of one service each month

**5. Describe how your organization operates and how decisions are made. Who is in your decision-making group? Who is accountable and how?**

Our Coordinator is responsible for the daily operations of the Time Bank. Our Kitchen Table (KT) is a member-led group responsible for creating and overseeing policies and procedures. Our committees - Coffeehouse, Fundraising, Membership Engagement, Outreach, and Website - consist of members who ensure the smooth operation of the Time Bank under the guidance of our Coordinator, bringing their decisions to the KT for approval.

For our entire two-year existence, we have relied very heavily on our Coordinator. We now recognize the need to establish clear guidelines for decision-making and accountability – something our KT will address on March 21 at our planning retreat.

**6. Who will carry out the project's plan, and what are their relevant skills and experiences?**

Coordination of our Time Bank and Project RED will require full-time leadership. The KT will set a plan for this at our planning retreat; the plan will likely involve hiring a new coordinator to share duties with our current coordinator. The co-coordinators will be responsible for carrying out Project RED. Our current Coordinator, Darling Goodwoman is a retired school teacher with boundless passion and energy for this work. Her planning and communication skills are outstanding. She has been the foundation for our small but quickly growing membership organization for the past two years; she is our rock.

**7. Who do you define as your community? How do you reach them?**

Our community initially consisted of the members and friends of the Good Faith Church of Great Town. As our Time Bank grows, our community broadens. We define “our community” as anyone interested in being involved in the Time Bank, with a loosely defined geographical area of the Golden Town region. Project RED’s aim is to reach traditionally disadvantaged and underserved constituencies, such as the elderly, the disabled, and young people.

Since we are moving into this new phase of our development where we will be an organization independent of the Good Faith Church, we have established an Outreach Committee to address what we believe will be a great need in the future. Our Coordinator has already been very active in communicating our mission with local area individuals and organizations.

Part of our outreach efforts will include continued participation in community events, such as the Festival of Trees in Great Town and the Chalk on the Walk festival in Great Town.

We distribute fliers in the community and regularly publish articles in area newsletters and newspapers. Our plans to actively reach out to more members of the Golden Town community are in their formative stages and will be more structured in the coming months.

**8. Describe the ways your Board and staff are representative of the communities and issues you are working with.**

We are pleased that our KT includes a wide range of constituencies, including senior citizens, young parents, disabled adults, members of the LGBT community, men and women, Good Faith Church members and non-Good Faith community members, and both affluent and economically disadvantaged people. Our KT group resides in the Golden Town area, which is how we loosely define our community.

**9. List the individuals, committees or organizations that have contributed significantly to this project through money, time or other forms of support. Please list funding sources and dollar amounts for your organization for the last two years.**

Our fundraising activities are just recently catching up with our Time Bank's energetic growth. Our current Strong Funders grant (REAP and SOW) is focused on creating a sustainability plan using Kim Klein's *Fundraising for Social Change*. We are using Hildy Gottlieb's *FriendRaising* as a resource as well. With our REAP and SOW project, we have focused our efforts on establishing a financial sustainability *plan*. Because of this focus on planning, activities raising funds will support this year's funding needs rather than the next fiscal year, when Project RED is scheduled to begin.

We are pleased to report that our committee is now acting on our financial sustainability plan with hopes to soon raise funds for the next fiscal year. Our longer-term plans include focusing on our social entrepreneurial project (the Great Town Coffeehouse), community fundraising appeals, and three annual fundraising events. One of those annual events happens this May when we will hold a "Clean-a-thon" for the support of elderly community residents. Our plan outlines our expectation that we must limit dependence on grant funding in fiscal year 2008-2009.

We are most excited about our social entrepreneurial project, the Great Town Coffeehouse. Thanks to the generosity of the Good Faith Church, the Time Bank receives all proceeds (after expenses and paying performers) from this monthly event. The possibilities for expanding this effort are tremendous. At this point we expect an average of \$400 income each of the 10 months, though we expect the program to grow in the next year and have already added an additional concert for children this month.

Our members are generous, but we have only begun to establish an environment where financial support is commonplace. We are careful to avoid the implication that giving is required for members since we are reaching out to people living in poverty (in particular with Project RED). However, we believe that everyone is capable of giving, and the generosity of our members with their time has been inspiring. Our bi-annual membership funding appeal will be sent to members in the next week and we have already received feedback that members are "just waiting to be asked."

Despite the fact that several of our KT members live with limited incomes, we are pleased to report that over the past two years we have financial support from 100% of the KT. The following charts show our sources of funding for the past two years:

Chart deleted for privacy (pie charts)

## **10. Please describe your organization's or group's social change philosophy.**

Our group's social change philosophy follows the **five core values** we subscribe to, that Time Dollars express:

- *Assets*: Everyone has strengths.
- *Redefining Work*: The work of creating healthy homes, neighborhoods and community must be recognized, validated, and rewarded.
- *Reciprocity*: Giving that empowers the recipients of help to give to others is more powerful than giving that goes only one-way.
- *Social Capital/Social Networks*: Social networks based on trust are key to community life
- *Respect*: Every human being matters.

Our Time Bank exists so we can make justice, equity, and compassion in human relations the norm rather than the exception. As we reach out to the most isolated among us with Project RED, we will continue sharing our social responsibility philosophy throughout the greater Golden Town community.

## **11. How will your project help to bring about systemic change on the issue you are addressing?**

When our community is truly interconnected, we will have:

- a stable economy with no one left behind.
- well-employed and well-educated people.
- strong communities of healthy and interdependent (not isolated) people.

Critical to improving and strengthening the work of existing social service agencies is the active participation of those agencies' service recipients. TimeBanksUSA describes the "revolutionary implications" based on the experience of Time Banks and social service agencies since the creation of TimeBanking in the 1980s:

*Once put into effect, the revolutionary implications that TimeBanking holds for the social service world became clear: people can help themselves by helping others, and they can convert their personal time into purchasing power by using their own skills and talents. As sponsoring non-profits organizations began to make use of TimeBanking, the effects moved beyond "self-help" to system change. The reason was simple: Efforts to address major social problems prove more effective in reaching their hoped-for potential when they can enlist and engage the target population as contributors and co-producers. TimeBanking enables organizations to create connectivity, reciprocity, trust, and informal support networks that remain even after the paid intervention is over. Whether providing eldercare, childcare, juvenile justice, education, family preservation and wrap-around services, healthcare, community development, or individual casework, programs and service professionals consistently find that when client participation is absent, initiatives fail to realize their potential. Our framework...confronts this dilemma by redefining clients as partners and co-producers who can earn Time Dollars as a validation and reward for their contributions.*

Please refer to Attachment H-1 for more details about how we will use our social change philosophy in Project RED to organize to bring about systemic change leading to a more just society.

The North Cotswolds Community Time Bank, or *Fair Shares*, in Gloucestershire, UK sums it up clearly on their website, “Many recent attempts to regenerate communities have failed to secure on a consistent and sustained basis the involvement of a critical mass of socially excluded people.” At the Golden Town Time Bank, we believe the active participation of historically disenfranchised people is essential to systemic change. With the continued support of the Strong Funders, we anticipate Project RED will be a powerful force for change. Thank you for your consideration.