



Center for People in Transition

Achieving personal and
professional self-sufficiency

2021-2026 Strategic Plan



Table of Content

Advisory Board	4
Vision, Mission and Values	5
Organizational Description	6
Organizational Services	6
Organizational Accomplishments	7
2021-2026 Strategies, Goals and Objectives.....	8



Advisory Board
2021-2026
CHAIRPERSON

Peggy Van Natta Schoen
Supervisor, General Assistance / NPA Food Stamp Programs of Gloucester County (Retired)

Steve Awalt
Retired Senior Accountant
Rowan College of South Jersey

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Barbara Turner
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Jeanne M. LaBuz
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Melissa Lafferty
Instructor I
Business Studies Division
Rowan College of South Jersey

Vicki Hills
Retired
Wealth Management

Amy Charlesworth
Program Specialist
Center for People in Transition

Amber Bonnet
Assistant Store Manager TD Bank, Certified
Life Coach & Business Owner



VISION

Provide services to displaced homemakers who are experiencing an emotional and/or financial crisis caused by; divorce, death of spouse, and unemployment to reach a new beginning of self-worth and self-sufficiency.

MISSION

Assist displaced homemakers (someone who has lost their main means of support through the death or disability of a spouse or as the result of separation, domestic violence and/or divorce) to become emotionally and economically self-sufficient through life skills training, education or vocational training, advocacy and supportive services.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Center for People in Transition respects and accepts the diversity of our clients and firmly believes that each displaced homemaker deserves the opportunity to evolve from a life of shattered dreams to a life emanating dignity and self-worth.

VALUES

Center for People in Transition affirms the following values and beliefs:

Commitment to Clients

Each client has the potential of overcoming the negative obstacles during this transitional time if given the support and resources to enhance their personal and career growth.

Commitment to Confidentiality

Every client has the right to privacy and confidentiality and we will continue to respect these rights at all times.

Commitment to Preventing Further Mental Health Deterioration

Services provided by the Center can be instrumental in preventing a client's mental health from deteriorating to a deeper level with grave consequences.

Commitment to Community

Displaced homemakers are our primary clientele but we will continue to make every effort to provide group services to other members of our community in assisting to enhance economic growth and quality of life.



Commitment to College

Displaced homemakers are our primary clientele but will continue to take the extra step to assist the college in areas that can enhance the lives of students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

Center for People in Transition (the Center) started in 1981 by Gloucester County College (renamed to Rowan College of South Jersey on July 1, 2019) to assist women returning to school. Since that time the Center has expanded its mission and has become a semi-independent social service agency dedicated to assisting displaced homemakers to become self-sufficient. We are also identified as one of the 20 Displaced Homemaker Centers in the New Jersey network.

In 2019 Rowan College of Gloucester County merged with Cumberland County College becoming Rowan College of South Jersey. The merger resulted in jointure of both Gloucester's and Cumberland's Displaced Homemaker's programs in the efforts to represent Rowan College of South Jersey and provide exceptional services to our clients.

The Center receives no funding from Rowan College of South Jersey (RCSJ). It is externally funded through grants from the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division on Women (DOW) since 1985, and the United Way of Gloucester County (UWGC) since 1988. The College provides fiscal monitoring and space. The Center maintains a separate Advisory Board to assist with its functions.



ORGANIZATIONAL SERVICES

The Center provides the following services:

- Assessment to determine individual needs
- Referrals to community resources
- Professionally facilitated workshops for people going through separation, domestic violence, divorce and/or unemployment
- Workshops dealing with self-development
- Computer literacy courses
- Vocational testing and assessment
- Information on returning to school or vocational training at any level
- Financial aid and scholarship leads
- Job search skills, including resume writing, interview techniques and developing job leads
- Legal and financial workshops



OVERALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The DCF DOW grant requires that we serve 90 new displaced homemaker clients a year. Our service to displaced homemakers has consistently exceeded this required amount.
- Our life skills and informational workshops are open to the public and are attended by an additional 600 to 700 men and women a year.
- The Center sends out by mail as well as electronically a newsletter two times per year describing all of the Center's upcoming activities to approximately 3,000 clients, social service agencies, community-based organizations, mental health, and legal professionals. The Center strives to be responsive in a timely manner to each prospective client that calls for services.
- All services continue to be FREE OF CHARGE for displaced homemakers.
- Vast majority of clients have successful outcomes as a result of seeking one on one services and / or attending workshops.
- Over the last 29-40 years approximately 21,000 people from Gloucester County and its surrounding areas have benefited from our legal, financial and life skills workshops and support groups.
- We have served over 6,000 displaced homemakers, helping them to come to grips with the emotional trauma of separation, divorce, domestic violence, death, or disability of a spouse.
- Additionally, in 2019 Rowan College of Gloucester County merged with Cumberland County College allowing us to work with the Displaced Homemaker's program of Cumberland in our efforts to provide exceptional services.
- Since that time, we have become the lead model for the Displaced Homemaker's program of Cumberland County as we provide services in representation of Rowan College of South Jersey.



2021 – 2026

STRATEGIES, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

- GOAL # 1* Strive to acquire the funding to service displaced homemakers and members of the Gloucester County community.
- a) Show justification to the Department of Children and Family, Division on Women and United Way of Gloucester County that many successful outcomes are being achieved, and increased funding is a necessity in order to service the growing numbers of individuals who need assistance.
 - b) Quantify successful outcomes by information on quarterly, bi-annual, and annual monitoring and fiscal reports; and qualify successful outcomes by client feedback of the services provided.
 - c) Pursue donations from individuals and businesses dedicated to the Mission of the Center.
 - d) Investigate additional grants and donation opportunities.
 - e) Reach out to local, county and state government officials on an ongoing basis to explain our services and to ask for their support of the Center’s funding.
- GOAL # 2* Continue to communicate with our funding sources with information and to express our appreciation of their support of the Program.
- a) Director will interact with Department of Children and Family, Division on Women on a regular basis thanking them for their support as well as being responsive to their requests for our presence at State affairs throughout each fiscal year.
 - b) Director will make every attempt to be responsive to the requests of United Way of Gloucester County whenever there is a need for our presence at events and meetings.
 - c) Director will spearhead on an annual basis thank you letters to local, county and state government officials expressing appreciation for their support of the Center’s funding.



GOAL # 3 Continue evaluating the requirements to increase professional development amongst staff in order to meet the needs of our clients.

- a) Show justification for this need to our present funders and other possible donors through number of individuals being served, successful outcomes reports and client evaluations.
- b) Reduce costs in supplies used by the Center and for our clients.
- c) Staff will be vigilant in reviewing product pricing on a continuous basis and make recommendations to Director as far as purchasing.

GOAL # 4 Continue to work with our clients in achieving the necessary training / education which is needed to obtain jobs and become self-sufficient.

- a) Director will continue to serve in dual capacity with the Program Specialist administering and interpreting career inventories and teaching ways to do realistic career research so clients set up goals that are closely related to job market trends.
- b) Director will continue to assist clients in choosing appropriate training / educational facilities that are aligned with realistic career goals, and will also refer to sources for financial aid including scholarships.
- c) Director and Program Specialist will continue to work with clients on resumes, interviewing skills, dress for success, job search skills, and job leads.

GOAL # 5 Continue to provide our clients with resources to assist in their children's physical, educational and emotional needs.

- a) Work with collaborative agencies and local businesses in providing backpacks and schools supplies.
- b) Provide funds (i.e., gift cards) to clients to assist in meeting their children's basic needs of food.
- c) Refer clients to other agencies for children's' clothes.
- d) Offer workshop on parenting for families in transition.
- e) Assist clients whose children have dropped out of school by referring the children to GED programs.



- GOAL # 6 Recruit additional professionals to facilitate workshops FREE of charge and justify workshop viability based on enrollment for those with paid professional facilitators.
- a) Center will offer four new pro bono workshops per fiscal year.
 - b) Director will continuously cost justify the implementation of workshops by number of registrants versus cost to run the workshop.
 - c) Program Specialist will continuously make all necessary follow-up calls to registrants to obtain firm yes attendance commitments so Director can make sound decisions as to the implementation of workshops.
- GOAL # 7 Continue to collaborate with other agencies to keep current on information in each of their respective services to best meet the needs of our clients, and to continue to reach out to businesses within the community to stimulate job leads for clients.
- a) Staff will do in-service seminars with the agencies that primarily meet the needs of our client every three years.
 - b) Staff will continue to communicate with partner agencies whenever the need arises for services, case management or case follow-up.
- GOAL # 08 Streamline the Center's Plan of Action (POA) procedures in order to provide improved direction and case management for our clients whom we meet in one-on-one sessions that have multiple needs.
- a) Reevaluate yearly the POA utilized by staff for intakes and career goals.
- GOAL # 09 Improve our workshop evaluation procedures to aid in collecting more thorough statistical information for measurable outcomes and improvement of services.
- a) Director will continue to improve the process that ensures that facilitators distribute workshop evaluations and that the evaluations are completed by the participants.



- b) Director will continue to communicate with facilitators that participants should be told that their feedback is a necessity not only for measurable outcomes but also continuous improved services based on their needs.

GOAL # 10 Continue to publicize our services and outreach to displaced homemakers and members of the Gloucester County community.

- a) Program Specialist will maintain mailing and email lists, arrange for internal advertising throughout RCSJ's campus, and work with the Career and Technical Education Department for external coverage in its representatives.
- b) Director will request press release coverage from RCSJ's Public Relations Department and arrange any media coverage when feasible.
- c) Director and staff will meet with agencies and businesses whenever a request is made or a need is recognized.
- d) Staff member(s) will attend events at the college to let perspective RCSJ students and their families know about the Center's services.



GOAL # 11 Continue to be responsive to our host agency, Rowan College of South Jersey (RCSJ) when requests are made in efforts to continuously maintain the very positive working relationship that exists between Center for People in Transition and the staff and students of Rowan College of South Jersey.

- a) Center's staff will continuously remain approachable and will gladly respond to questions as students make inquiries as they pass through our office area or in the hallways.
- b) Center's staff will participate in College events by providing information about our services as perspective students pass through our office area.
- c) Center's staff will make every attempt to serve on committees whenever possible as long as it can be accomplished without interfering with the daily job responsibilities as set forth in the grants' guidelines.
- d) Center's staff will provide in a timely fashion all reports that are needed by RCSJ's Administrative staff.
- e) Center's staff will remain responsive to the needs of students, staff and their families experiencing difficult times in their lives.
- f) Increase collaboration with current, on-campus college partners such as Rowan University, Wilmington University and Farleigh-Dickinson.
- g) Increase collaboration with our counterpart Displaced Homemaker program of Cumberland.

GOAL # 12 Review Strategic Plan to evaluate that the strategies, goals, and objectives continue to meet the mission and vision of the Center.

- a) Staff will review annually and will hold discussions with Advisory Board to gain further input as it relates to possible need for changes.



Center for People In Transition
Gloucester County's Displaced Homemaker Center

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The Center for People In Transition is funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Division on Women, and the United Way. The Board of Trustees of Rowan College of South Jersey is committed to providing a work and academic environment that maintains and promotes affirmative action and equal opportunity in all categories of employment and education. The Board will continually attempt to carry out its responsibilities to provide all persons with equal access and fair treatment regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, atypical heredity cellular or blood trait of any individual, non-applicable disability or because of genetic information or refusal to submit or make available the results of a genetic test. For questions concerning discrimination, call Affirmative Action Officer, at 856.415.2154. For disability issues, contact ADA/504 Officer, Office of Special Needs, at 856-415-2265.