

Hello Friends of Charleston County Human Services Commission,

Charleston County Human Services Commission is conducting a poverty simulation as part of its Fall Staff Retreat Wednesday, November 3 from 8:30am-12pm at the Mt. Moriah Family Life Center. At least 15 volunteers are needed to staff the simulation. Volunteers must be able to attend a 2-hour training Monday, November 1 at 6pm.

Compensation and refreshments will be provided. Please share this information with your clients, customers, students, family and friends. Since volunteers will be able to receive compensation in the form of a \$20 Visa gift card, it will not interfere with any TANF benefits they might receive. Anyone over the age of 16 can volunteer. The opportunity to volunteer is open to the public.

The simulation provides participants with the opportunity to assume the role of a low-income family member living on a limited budget. The experience is divided into four 15-minute sessions, each of which represents one week in which the participant must provide for their family and maintain their home. The purpose of the simulation is to help participants better understand the decisions low-income families make every day, and the fears and frustrations they feel. The simulation is **not** a game and the intent is **not** to put low-income individuals on display. It is an experiential exercise that uses role play and props to create deeper awareness among those who serve low-income families. If needed, I can provide you with hard copies of this information for you to share with others. Please let me know of anyone who may be interested in volunteering or have them contact me. Thank you so much and have a great day!

For more information on poverty simulations, please visit these sites:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsKW2v7BlIM&feature=related>

<http://www.caaptv.org/index.html>

FACT: As of 2009, 43.6 million Americans live in poverty. This is the largest number in the 51 years for which poverty estimates have been published. One out of five children under the age of 18 lives in poverty.¹ These figures are expected to have increased in the last year as the economy has declined.

¹*Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009.* US Census Bureau, September 2010

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