

Review and Moving Forward

*FOCO is on the right track
moving into 2009.*

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The **Federation of Community Organizations (FOCO)** currently provides services and development opportunities for voluntary sector organizations in the Halifax Regional Municipality. Our role is:

- to build the capacity and strength of member agencies
- to provide a unified voice on issues of relevance to the sustainability and growth of the sector
- to provide networking opportunities to share good practice ideas and ways of working
- to develop and extend training and educational opportunities
- to deliver advocacy where appropriate
- to foster good working relations and inclusion to support the voluntary sector to interact positively and proactively with other voluntary agencies, with government and with the public and private sectors

Unified, the voluntary sector is an influential player in sustaining communities, by taking a role as an equal partner with the private and public and business sectors

FOCO Vision Statement

Our successes to date

FOCO is involved in a number of development and leadership activities within and across the sectors. Here are some examples of the successful work being achieved:

- ✓ FOCO acts as a resource and clearing house and has provided information on compensation packages and rates as well as policy manuals and acts as a signpost and contact information point between and amongst agencies.

- ✓ FOCO has developed a number of active alliances across sectors and has co-hosted information and training sessions in partnership with the United Way and with Dalhousie Non-Profit Leadership Program and Acadia Centre for Social and Business Entrepreneurship.
- ✓ FOCO has facilitated and organized personal and professional development workshops and discussions.
- ✓ FOCO coordinates and facilitates bi-monthly Executive Director meetings to provide a secure and confidential space to discuss current issues, concerns, ideas and solutions specific to managing and leading in voluntary sector agencies
- ✓ FOCO facilitates annual Community Leadership Celebrations in the month of October . This event celebrates the invaluable and often unrecognized volunteer contribution of the Chairpersons of sector agency Boards of Directors. The idea was conceived at an Executive Director Leadership circle.
- ✓ FOCO facilitates Annual Christmas breakfasts in the month of December. This event offers the opportunity for members, friends and associate members of FOCO to gather in a festive and celebratory atmosphere, network, exchange information etc.
- ✓ FOCO was a national partner in the first "Innovations – Shared Services – Adding Value to Non-Profit Agencies" project.
- ✓ FOCO's Executive Director was part of the organizing committee for the Counterparts Gathering, held in Halifax in February 2009 – a cross-Canada event for sector and government representatives.
- ✓ FOCO is partnering with Phoenix Youth Programs on a Province-wide research project to provide an in-depth report on salaries and compensation packages for voluntary sector agencies across Nova Scotia.

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- ✓ FOCO organized, in conjunction with the Human Resources Council for Nonprofit/Voluntary Sector, a province wide event on human resource needs for the sector in September 2007, and continues to work with the HR Council on various seminars and stakeholder meetings.
 - ✓ FOCO undertook a local feasibility study funded by the Department of Seniors. This research and report looks at "Time Banking" – an alternative form of volunteering which is internationally recognized as re-building communities
 - ✓ FOCO's Executive Director sits on the Nova Scotia Volunteer Community Advisory Council, as well as a variety of National, Provincial and Regional committees, networks and "think tanks"
 - ✓ FOCO administered the Volunteer Resources project, a substantial resource list for volunteer organizations to be housed in libraries across the Province. Funding provided by the Department of Health Promotion, Protection and Volunteerism.
 - ✓ FOCO issues a regular newsletter which keeps members up to date with events and news as does our website.
 - ✓ FOCO thanks the United Way for the continued use of office space and facilities.
 - ✓ FOCO thanks the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and Volunteerism for its financial support in 2009.
 - ✓ FOCO thanks the many local hotels and businesses for their on-going support.

Moving into 2009, the Board of Directors wants to focus on these significant issues:

- Development of FOCO as a viable and sustainable umbrella organization
- Increasing membership of the Federation and of the Board of Directors

*"FOCO is a valuable resource
and the networking is great!
DM and JM*

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