

Teen bank models generate interest

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The idea of student-run banks has been met with great enthusiasm and support. Operating student banks in underserved communities provides financial education, positive role models, workforce development and exposure to educational opportunities.

Dory Rand, Supervising Attorney of the Community Investment Unit, recently presented to a group of potential bank partners at *Banking on Our Youth and Our Community*, an interest meeting sponsored by Philadelphia high school, Kensington International Business/Finance and Entrepreneurship High School and the FDIC. Representatives from the FDIC and North Fork Bank also presented. Eileen Maicon Weissman, principal of Kensington, shared her proposal to develop a student-run bank in the mostly minority and low-income high school.

During her presentation, Rand discussed why student-run banks represent a viable solution to many of the problems that face students in largely unbanked and underbanked communities. As the lead coordinator of the Curie Branch of Park Federal Savings Bank in Chicago, Illinois and as a consultant to subsequent student-run banks that have opened in the Bronx, New York and in Fresno, California, Rand has seen just how positive the results can be for students, schools, communities and banks involved in the project.

Rand cited the Cardinal Branch of Mitchell Bank in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the first-ever student-run bank, as laying the foundation for the concept and feasibility of student-run banks in predominantly unbanked and underbanked communities. The Milwaukee branch, which opened in August of 2000, has reported over \$800,000 in deposits and has successfully integrated itself into the predominantly Hispanic and Immigrant community.

In the Shriver Center's goal to actively engage in asset-building advocacy and Rand's efforts to share her learnings with schools, banks, regulators and other interested parties, she has presented to hundreds of people across the country and created a video and complete guide to establishing student-run banks. Rand has played an integral role in the development of the teen bank in the Boys and Girls Club of Mississippi Valley in Moline, Illinois (scheduled to open in late 2008) and continues to advise on the importance of student-run banks as a means to provide financial education, positive role models, workforce development and exposure to educational opportunities.

For more information on student-run banks, please contact Kelly E. Slay at kellyslay@povertylaw.org or Dory Rand at doryrand@povertylaw.org. To view *A Guide to Establishing Bank Branches in High Schools* and video, *Branching Out*, please visit <http://www.povertylaw.org/advocacy/community-investment>.

