



2008 ASSETS LEARNING CONFERENCE  
**Advancing America's Assets Agenda**  
Expanding Opportunity, Promoting Prosperity & Mobilizing Communities



expanding economic opportunity  
September 11-13, 2008  
Washington, DC

presenting sponsor  
**WAL\*MART**



**DEAR COLLEAGUES,**

CFED is pleased to invite you to the 2008 Assets Learning Conference – Advancing America’s Assets Agenda: Expanding Opportunity, Promoting Prosperity and Mobilizing Communities, September 11-13, 2008 in Washington, DC.

This biennial event is expected to draw more than 1,200 attendees to the nation’s capital to learn and share our innovations and progress in policy, practice and research – exceeding the record-breaking attendance of our last Conference in Phoenix in September 2006.

As election 2008 draws near, economic insecurity is emerging as an issue of profound importance. The Conference will showcase the most effective and enduring strategies for creating real economic opportunity and financial security for all Americans, with special attention to protecting the middle class and maximizing prosperity for all.

Asset-building practitioners, policymakers, researchers, advocates, financial services providers and funders will explore these issues through provocative and participatory plenary sessions, workshops and roundtables. Featured topics will include new asset-building policy initiatives at the federal, state and municipal levels; innovative practices to connect EITC outreach with other asset-building efforts at tax time; strategies to link individual and community asset-building efforts, and the latest research on children’s development accounts, emerging financial security products, and asset poverty for middle- and low-income Americans.

Given the location of the Conference, its proximity to the presidential election and the strong policy theme, an important feature this year will be visits to Capitol Hill. Indeed, the first day will provide several opportunities to go deep into federal policy issues, including an opening plenary, a pre-conference advocacy session and the Hill visits themselves.

The Conference will also provide several unique networking opportunities including a welcome reception on Capitol Hill, a networking reception at the Conference site, various roundtables and more.

We thank our Learning Conference Partners and many generous sponsors for their significant contributions to this conference – their partnership is invaluable to us and the expanding asset-building field. Finally, we thank the many individuals who submitted session proposals and helped us craft such a rich and dynamic program, as well as the presenters and moderators who will make it come alive.

We hope to see you in September!

*Andrea Levere*

Andrea Levere  
CFED President

**CONFERENCE LEARNING PARTNERS**

- Association for Enterprise Opportunity
- Center for Financial Services Innovation
- Center for Social Development
- Credit Builders Alliance
- First Nations Oweesta Corporation
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- National Community Tax Coalition/Center for Economic Progress
- National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions
- NeighborWorks America
- New America Foundation
- United Way of America
- World Institute on Disability



# About the Conference

## CONFERENCE PURPOSE

The 2008 Assets Learning Conference is the place where a diverse group of leaders come together to discuss innovations, vision and strategies in assets practice, policy and research. Representing nonprofits, foundations, governments, policy advocacy organizations, private sector companies and academic institutions, as well as assets program participants and accountholders, conference participants focus on furthering a single purpose: to encourage action and advance America's assets agenda.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

The 2008 Assets Learning Conference is specifically designed for asset holders, local IDA and asset-building practitioners, state IDA and asset-building coalitions, national IDA and asset-building organizations, policymakers, corporations, researchers and foundations.

## BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

Conference participants will have the opportunity to learn about assets policy, as well as research and practice innovations that support policy. Attendees will also get a chance to network with other advocates, policymakers, accountholders, practitioners, researchers and business representatives.



## SHARE INNOVATIONS, VISION & STRATEGIES

- Over 50 concurrent sessions, organized into four tracks – policy, practice, research and innovation – covering a wide range of today's vital issues
- 5 plenaries, including breakfast with accountholders
  - Small group roundtables about specific topics in asset building

## FOSTER COMMITMENT TO ACTION

- Visits to legislators on Capitol Hill, including a prep session on policy and advocacy
- Federal and state policy plenaries, featuring the latest information on asset-building policies
  - Presentations on CFED's *2007-2008 Assets and Opportunity Scorecard*, which measures how hard or easy it is for families to achieve the American Dream

## CONNECT LEADERS TO MOBILIZE FOR CHANGE

- Welcome reception with legislators on Capitol Hill
- Networking reception at the Conference hotel

## PLUS ALL THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL!



# About the Asset-Building Field

**Assets move families beyond living paycheck to paycheck and give them tools to plan for the future.**

CFED and its partners have long been advocates for state and federal asset-building policies and the role they play in alleviating poverty and bolstering financial security for individuals and families.

In the 1990's, CFED and its partners led the development of the Individual Development Account (IDA) and asset-building field. They organized the seminal American Dream Demonstration, which established the efficacy of IDAs and matched savings and led to the creation of the Assets for Independence Program in the Office of Community Services. These efforts have significantly contributed to the creation of the nearly 600 IDA programs in existence nationwide today.

More recently, CFED and its partners launched the SEED (Saving for Education, Entrepreneurship and Downpayment) Initiative to develop, test and promote a progressive and universal system of matched savings accounts for children. Local, state and federal children's savings account legislation has already been developed and is being pursued across the United States.

CFED's *2007-2008 Assets and Opportunity Scorecard* looks at how families are doing across the states, and measures state policies that affect this picture. Organized by state, race, gender and income, the *Scorecard* provides the most comprehensive assessment of financial security, business development, homeownership, health care and education assets of the states available today. It offers a sharply strategic view both of the economic drivers and of the asset-building policies that can accelerate the spread of economic opportunity. CFED will release a special supplement to the *Scorecard* that updates the data related to household net worth and asset poverty in light of the current economy and outline effective strategies for asset preservation.

Through their work, CFED and its partners have learned the critical importance of state and federal policy development that supports not only IDAs but also larger matched savings, financial education and asset-building strategies.

We are at a crossroads. Asset and income inequality continues to increase and low-wage and middle-income working Americans are finding it more difficult to achieve and maintain economic stability. At the same time, Americans' awareness of the importance of assets as a fundamental building block for economic stability is growing and so are the opportunities to promote prosperity through public and private policies.

NOW is the time and Washington, DC is the place for the asset-building field to come together at the 2008 Assets Learning Conference and mobilize for action.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In Fiscal Year 2005, the federal government allocated \$367 billion to asset-building policies designed to help Americans build their savings and accumulate wealth.



# Conference Session Tracks

The following schedule and session descriptions are designed to help you personalize your own conference agenda. Sessions are identified by track so that you can easily develop your agenda according to your particular interests. You may attend sessions in any of the four tracks.

## POLICY

The Policy track will examine asset-building policy initiatives at the local, tribal, state and federal levels. Particular emphasis will be given to the 12 core policies highlighted in the *Scorecard*. Policy track sessions will provide guidance for practitioners to actively engage in promoting such policies.

## PRACTICE

The Practice track will feature effective practices in asset building from across the United States. Emphasis will be placed on sharing the experiences of practitioners and highlighting new models for program design, implementation and scale. Sessions will examine matched savings and financial education products and services for diverse populations in a variety of settings and at different stages in life.

## RESEARCH

Data and research are powerful tools to advance America's assets agenda. The Research track uncovers the latest findings and helps shape the future research agenda of asset stakeholders. Topics include IDA program findings, research on children's savings accounts, the current state of wealth inequality and the "near poor," the role of insurance in asset preservation, as well as the latest research on behavioral economics.

## INNOVATION

The Innovation track will feature new and emerging issues, practices, policies and partnerships in the field of asset development and preservation. Since the future of the assets field depends largely on the ability to take policies and practices to scale, sessions will explore the link between individual and community assets, new markets for asset-building initiatives, and innovative systems to bring asset building to a broader group of people.

### DID YOU KNOW?

For every \$1 in net worth held by households headed by white adults, households headed by minorities have just 13 cents.



# Conference Schedule

## WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

- 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.** Registration Desk Open
- 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.** Native Asset Building Pre-Conference Session

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

- 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.** Registration Desk Open
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.** Lobbying 101: Hill Visit Preparation
- 10 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.** Opening Plenary I: Advancing the Assets Agenda
- 11:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.** Keynote Luncheon
- 1:45 p.m. – 5 p.m.** Capitol Hill Visits (Buses leave at 1:45 p.m. The first visits will be scheduled for 2:30 p.m.)

### 1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Concurrent Sessions I

POLICY	PRACTICE	RESEARCH	INNOVATION
NO POLICY TRACK DUE TO CAPITOL HILL VISITS	I.1 Involving Teens in Banking and Investing	I.5 Rethinking the Middle Class: Financial Insecurity Among the Non-Poor	I.7 Community Development Approaches to Homeownership
	I.2 Advancing the Assets Agenda to Americans with Disabilities	I.6 Building Assets in Native Communities through EITC and Tax Preparation	I.8 Prepaid Cards: Innovations in Creating Financial Access for Underbanked Consumers
	I.3 Assets for Life: Extend Your Agency's Capacity with Allied Professionals		I.9 New Innovations in Asset Building that Leverage Markets to Reach Scale
	I.4 Portable and Relocation IDAs: Moving Beyond Place-Based Asset-Building Programs		

### 3:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Roundtable Sessions I

**Evening** Reception on Capitol Hill (Buses will leave the Hotel at 5:15 p.m. for participants who did not go on Capitol Hill visits. Buses return to the hotel after the reception.)

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

**7 a.m. – 5 p.m.** Registration Desk Open

**8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.** Plenary II: Nonprofit Innovation in Serving the Unbanked

**10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.** Concurrent Sessions II

POLICY	PRACTICE	RESEARCH	INNOVATION
II.1 The Role of Cities in Helping People Build Assets	II.6 Credit Building is Asset Building	II.9 SEED Research: A Test of Children's Development Accounts	II.12 Fundraise, Do Taxes and Asset Build at Employer Sites
II.2 Developing a State Policy Agenda	II.7 Helping Housing Authority Residents Move into Unsubsidized Homes	II.10 Preventing Asset Loss: The Role of Insurance	II.13 America's Best Kept Saving Secret: U.S. Savings Bonds
II.3 Federal Assets Policy Update	II.8 CDFIs: Policies to Practice	II.11 Poor Finances: Assets and Low-Income Households	II.14 Asset Building and Entrepreneurship in the Borderlands
II.4 Creating a Sustainable Asset Policy Coalition			
II.5 Improving Retirement Coverage for Low- and Moderate-Income Workers			

**12 p.m. – 2 p.m.** Plenary III: Creating the Investment State

**2:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.** Concurrent Sessions III

POLICY	PRACTICE	RESEARCH	INNOVATION
III.1 Existing Federal Resources for Matched Savings Programs	III.5 Children's Savings Accounts: Opportunities and Challenges of Implementation	III.9 The Effect of IDAs on Account Holders: Recent Research	III.12 Emerging Solutions for Short-Term Credit
III.2 Asset Limit Reform: Policy, Practice, Research and Advocacy Tools	III.6 Maximizing the Value of Financial Education	III.10 Behavioral Economics and Asset Building: Insights and Applications	III.13 Innovative Approaches to Asset Building and Community Development
III.3 Supporting Children's Savings Accounts: State and Federal Policies	III.7 Asset Development in Microenterprise Organizations	III.11 Education IDAs: Creating Partnerships for Access to Education	III.14 Building Microbusiness Assets Through the Tax Code
III.4 Foreclosures and Neighborhoods: The Issues, The Options, The Impact	III.8 Asset Building and Financial Service Advocacy for Immigrant Communities		

**4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.** Roundtable Sessions II

**Evening** Networking Reception

# Conference Schedule (Cont.)

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

**8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.** Plenary IV: Breakfast with Accountholders

**10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.** Concurrent Sessions IV

POLICY	PRACTICE	RESEARCH	INNOVATION
IV.1 Using Local Asset Poverty Data to Advance State Policy	IV.5 A Path to Stability: Matched Savings Accounts for Foster Youth	IV.8 Designing and Implementing a Comprehensive IDA Program Evaluation	IV.11 Land Rich: Development Assistance for Cash-Poor Land Owners
IV.2 State and Federal EITC	IV.6 Crafting and Communicating Your Asset-Building Message	IV.9 Race, Asset Ownership and Economic Mobility	IV.12 Building Security and Value with Homeowners in Manufactured Home Communities
IV.3 State and Federal Resources for Homeownership	IV.7 Credit Union Partnerships for Asset Building and Asset Protection	IV.10 Predatory Lending and Asset Preservation	IV.13 IDAs for Community Development: AFI New Grantee Initiative
IV.4 Creating a Participatory Policy-Making Process			

**12 p.m. – 2 p.m.** Lunch and Closing Plenary V: Taking Action Back Home

## Pre-Conference Session

### NATIVE ASSET BUILDING PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION

*Presented by Oweesta Corporation, CFED, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City and First Nations Development Institute*  
September 10, 2008, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

This one-day pre-conference session will provide the opportunity for Native asset-building practitioners to share their knowledge and experience and network with others in the field. Participants working with financial education, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), entrepreneurship, homeownership and investor education programs will discuss their best practices and challenges. They will also hear about resources to support strong institutions like Native Community Development Financial Institutions and asset-building strategies such as affordable lending, IDAs, Earned Income Tax Credit outreach and free tax preparation services. Representatives from Native asset-building coalitions will talk about their formation, and participants will have the opportunity to discuss launching coalitions in their regions. Join your colleagues for an exciting, interactive day of fun and information sharing. Pre-registration is required.

# Conference Plenary Descriptions

## **LOBBYING 101: CAPITOL HILL VISIT PREPARATION**

This session prepares participants to become inspired and committed assets advocates on Capitol Hill for the afternoon Hill visits and in the future. Join an interactive discussion with new and experienced advocates on the "Dos and Don'ts of Lobbying." Learn how to share your expertise in promoting savings, homeownership, education and entrepreneurship to encourage legislative action. Hear recommendations on how to connect with policymakers and ensure a successful interaction, and get a brief overview of nonprofit lobbying rules.

## **OPENING PLENARY I: ADVANCING THE ASSETS AGENDA**

Since the 2006 Assets Learning Conference, the asset building field has made great strides in framing and passing legislation to support wealth creation and opportunity at the federal and state levels. However, there is still an urgent need to expand the incentives, policies and products that help families save and build wealth, especially in light of the subprime mortgage crisis. Hear from a diverse group of advocates and policymakers about the top legislative priorities for asset building in the final months of the 110th Congress and beyond, and how we can work together to amplify our impact.

## **PLENARY II: NONPROFIT INNOVATION IN SERVING THE UNBANKED**

*Designed by The Center for Financial Services Innovation*

The essential role of access to and use of high-quality financial services as a key to wealth building has been increasingly recognized by stakeholders across the field. Through the Nonprofit Opportunities Fund, The Center for Financial Services Innovation invests in grantees that help bridge the gap between the financial services industry and underbanked consumers, serving as a testing ground for pre-market products and new distribution channels. In this session, hear from CFSI, their pioneering nonprofit partners and funders about their innovative work in addressing underbanked consumers' short-term financial needs and promoting their longer-term financial well-being.

## **PLENARY III: CREATING THE INVESTMENT STATE**

To allow more Americans to become asset owners and investors, we need to invest in individuals, families and the communities in which we live, especially those at the lower end of the economic spectrum. This plenary will recognize more than a decade of innovative investment in the asset-building field by foundations, donors and policymakers and frame out an ambitious and creative agenda for extending wealth creation opportunities to millions of Americans over the next decade, with a special focus on addressing the racial wealth gap in this country.

## **PLENARY IV: BREAKFAST WITH ACCOUNTHOLDERS**

The always-popular Breakfast with Accountholders provides participants with an opportunity to hear from individual and children's development account holders about their experiences with asset-building programs and the impact it has had on their lives.

## **CLOSING PLENARY V: TAKING ACTION BACK HOME**

State and local policies are important to helping families build assets and safety nets. The *2007-2008 Assets and Opportunity Scorecard* looks at how families are doing across the states and measures state policies that affect this picture. This interactive plenary will highlight the work of the *Scorecard* partners, discuss groundbreaking state and local policies that promote asset building, and engage participants in developing action plans to improve assets and opportunities in their home states and municipalities, while proposing ways to strengthen the infrastructure that connects and informs advocates throughout the country.



# Policy Session Descriptions

## II.1 THE ROLE OF CITIES IN HELPING FAMILIES BUILD ASSETS

This session will focus on the role of local city governments in supporting or launching strategies to help families save, build and protect assets. A panel of city leaders will discuss how and why cities continue to become engaged in asset building, the types of comprehensive policies and programs they are currently implementing, and tangible results that underscore the need for a continuum of asset-building services at the local level.

## II.2 DEVELOPING A STATE POLICY AGENDA

This session will help participants to understand how to develop and advocate for a comprehensive asset-building policy agenda at the state level. Participants will be briefed on the 12 core policies in CFED's *Assets and Opportunity Scorecard* – a good starting point for any state. In addition, participants will learn from state-level advocates about their successes and challenges in developing an asset-building policy agenda in their particular state.

## II.3 FEDERAL ASSETS POLICY UPDATE

This session will provide an overview of how federal policies invest in asset building and look at current efforts to change federal asset-building policy. Examples include proposed regulatory changes to the Assets for Independence Program, expansion of IDAs through tax credits to new populations such as farmers or foster youth, and strategies to ensure that existing savings products work for low-income people.

## II.4 CREATING A SUSTAINABLE STATE ASSET POLICY COALITION

This session will discuss three different approaches to building, structuring, governing and funding statewide asset policy coalitions. Presenters will speak about the initial formation and the structure and governance of their coalitions, the opportunities and challenges of the different approaches, and the kinds of issues that arise. At the conclusion of the session, participants will have a plan and resources for establishing or expanding a state asset policy coalition in their home state.

## II.5 IMPROVING RETIREMENT COVERAGE FOR LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME WORKERS

Workers today are living longer, are more likely to face reductions in Social Security benefits, and are less likely to participate in defined benefit pension plans. Unfortunately, many of our public policies do not reflect the increased responsibility placed on individuals to prepare for their own retirement. This session will discuss policy solutions crucial to improving retirement security for the millions of low- and moderate-income individuals who are working and living in this changing pension landscape.

## III.1 EXISTING FEDERAL RESOURCES FOR MATCHED SAVINGS PROGRAMS

Are you looking for program funding and matching dollars for your clients? Meet with program administrators from three of the largest asset-building programs in the federal government – Health and Human Services' Assets for Independence Program, Office of Refugee Resettlement and HUD's Family Self Sufficiency program – to discuss funding opportunities and the most popular strategies for IDA programs.

## III.2 ASSET LIMIT REFORM: POLICY, PRACTICE, RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY TOOLS

This session will provide an overview of how asset limits used in determining eligibility for state and federal public benefits create savings disincentives for low-income individuals and persons with disabilities. Participants will learn policy strategies and practical advocacy skills to raise or eliminate asset limits or exempt categories of assets, based on examples of successful and unsuccessful state and federal legislative and administrative advocacy efforts.





### III.3 SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S SAVINGS ACCOUNTS: FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES

One of the most promising ideas for universal asset building is to establish a children's savings account for every child at birth. This session will provide a briefing on current proposals for children's savings accounts at the state and federal level. Participants will learn about the key features of these proposals, their prospects for gaining approval through the political process, and some of the key design questions that those drafting the legislation had to address.

### III.4 FORECLOSURES AND NEIGHBORHOODS: THE ISSUES, THE OPTIONS, THE IMPACT

2007 has witnessed an explosion of foreclosure and subprime issues that continue to affect individuals and neighborhoods. While solutions are still in formation, the impact on the assets of low- and moderate-income people and their communities continues to worsen. Join this panel for an up-to-the minute conversation about on-the-ground research on the real and perceived impact on neighborhoods, the experiences of community-based groups in working with foreclosures, and policy solutions at the state and local level.

### IV.1 USING LOCAL ASSET POVERTY DATA TO ADVANCE STATE POLICY

This session will describe how to create and use local asset poverty data tools, as a complement to the CFED *Scorecard*, to advance state asset policy and a build constituency for asset-building policies. Presenters will discuss the impetus for creating the data tools and how the data were translated into effective messages and pitched to local media. Participants will draft steps for using local data to educate policymakers and constituents in their states about asset poverty.

### IV.2 STATE AND FEDERAL EITC

One of the largest and most effective wage support programs for low- and moderate-income families is the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which supplements the earnings of workers. Every year millions of Americans use EITC refunds to pay current bills and start saving for the future. This session considers federal efforts to encourage asset building with tax refunds and also efforts at the state level to enact their own EITCs.

### IV.3 STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES FOR HOMEOWNERSHIP

Learn about resources for using IDAs toward home purchase, including the Federal Home Loan Bank's Affordable Housing Program, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's housing programs, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's programs. This session also considers the creative use of soft second liens to create a revolving line of downpayment assistance.

### IV.4 CREATING A PARTICIPATORY POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

Partnerships between policy advocates and community leaders can have significant impact on educating policymakers and the broader public, mobilizing diverse stakeholders and communities, and changing public policy. This session will highlight the work of two asset-building groups to incorporate community-level input into the policy-making process, from identifying solutions to crafting effective communication messages. Presenters will discuss the benefits, challenges and strategies for engaging low-income community members in asset-building policy initiatives.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

More than two-thirds (67%) of voters believe that the federal government is doing too little to educate people about investing and managing their finances, 62% think the government is not doing enough to help families save or invest for the future, and the same proportion feel that the federal government is doing too little to help more young people afford college.



# Practice Session Descriptions

## **I.1 INVOLVING TEENS IN BANKING AND INVESTING**

Session participants will hear from teachers, bankers and community leaders about innovative partnerships and programs designed to give minority, immigrant and underprivileged high school students the financial skills and experience they need to succeed in the mainstream economy and achieve their educational and career goals. Participants will learn how to help teens build assets by operating student-run banks in high schools and incorporating stock market investments and games into the school curriculum.

## **I.2 ADVANCING THE ASSETS AGENDA TO AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Real Economic Impact (REI) Tour has mobilized over 400 community-based practitioners and national partners to bring awareness to serving and reaching workers with disabilities who are neither filing nor receiving the EITC. In this session, learn how your organization can join other communities in providing free tax awareness education and tax preparation assistance for persons with disabilities.

## **I.3 ASSETS FOR LIFE: EXTEND YOUR AGENCY'S CAPACITY WITH ALLIED PROFESSIONALS**

Allied professionals, such as financial planners and Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) can extend an organization's capacity to serve clients by delivering workshops and coaching to complement IDA and Earned Income Tax Credit programs. This session will help participants understand the role of financial planning in building assets, how to cultivate and manage relationships with professionals, and how to develop service delivery standards for coaching programs.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

15.5% of Americans have zero or negative net worth.

## **I.4 PORTABLE AND RELOCATION IDAs: MOVING BEYOND PLACED-BASED ASSET-BUILDING PROGRAMS**

Traditionally, IDAs assist people in purchasing an asset in a specific target market. Given the extraordinary circumstances of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and potential future disasters, we must look beyond the traditional placed-based IDAs and create an updated asset-building strategy, such as a portable IDA. This session will look at efforts to create asset-building products, programs and policies for those impacted by these hurricanes living in Texas and the Greater New Orleans area.

## **II.6 CREDIT BUILDING IS ASSET BUILDING**

In today's economy, a credit score is a valuable financial asset and credit building is fast becoming one of the most cost-effective asset-building tools. Recent innovations in the credit industry open up new opportunities for practitioners to help their clients build credit and assets toward financial self-sufficiency. This workshop will share Credit Builders Alliance's (CBA) research and policy successes, as well as tools and strategies for building credit from CBA's toolkit and credit measurement tool.

## **II.7 HELPING HOUSING AUTHORITY RESIDENTS MOVE INTO UNSUBSIDIZED HOMES**

This session will highlight the challenges and achievements of the Women's Opportunities Resource Center's (WORC) 3-year partnership with the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) to help 200 PHA families become self-sufficient through homeownership. The initiative includes IDAs, housing counseling, financial education and strategies that help participants to leverage funds with Family Self Sufficiency monies and other available grants.

## **II.8 CDFIs: POLICIES TO PRACTICE**

This session will describe the role of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), with a special focus on Native CDFIs, in promoting asset building and access to capital in the areas of affordable housing and home ownership, entrepreneurship and matched savings. The unique capacity of CDFIs to pair expertise in debt financing with new approaches to savings mobilization will be highlighted, with the aim of engaging more CDFIs in strategies to build both individual and community assets.



### III.5 CHILDREN'S SAVINGS ACCOUNTS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

This session will highlight lessons learned in operating children's savings account (CSA) programs through the Savings for Education, Entrepreneurship and Downpayment (SEED) Initiative. Panelists will share their experiences and insights on such topics as: how to reach out to communities and recruit accountholders, how to build trusting relationships among participants, and best practices for providing financial education to children, youth and parents. This session will also examine opportunities for the next generation of CSAs in Native communities.

### III.6 MAXIMIZING THE VALUE OF FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Financial education can be the most transformational part of asset-building initiatives, but programs need to make it relevant to participants' lives in order for the training to be effective. This session will present new research on the power of financial education and its link to account ownership, and will discuss innovative strategies for providing financial education to diverse populations.

### III.7 ASSET DEVELOPMENT IN MICROENTERPRISE ORGANIZATIONS

Owning a business is a critical path to building assets, and microenterprise programs played an early role in the implementation of IDA initiatives. Today, programs increasingly are taking a multi-faceted approach to asset building that includes financial literacy training, credit counseling, credit repair products, savings products (e.g., IDAs) and help in accessing the EITC. This session will provide an updated look at the role and status of asset development work within microenterprise development organizations.

### III.8 ASSET BUILDING AND FINANCIAL SERVICE ADVOCACY FOR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

While the immigration debate has been raging nationally, organizations across the country have been exploring the economic future of immigrant communities. Asset-building products and services ease the financial integration of immigrants and refugees into mainstream economies, but obstacles can bar their access to financial institutions. Expert panelists will share proven marketing and program design strategies to reach out to this culturally diverse market and improve their knowledge of and access to asset-building financial services.

### IV.5 A PATH TO STABILITY: MATCHED SAVINGS ACCOUNTS FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Youth in foster care face challenges in achieving financial stability, particularly once they age out of the foster care system. Matched savings accounts can help these young people learn financial skills and accumulate savings for the future. This session will provide an overview of the needs of youth in foster care and will explain why IDAs and children's development accounts are an effective tool for serving foster youth.

### IV.6 CRAFTING AND COMMUNICATING YOUR ASSET-BUILDING MESSAGE

Achieving success in advancing asset building at the policy or community practice level requires an ability to communicate clearly and persuasively about issues of income, wealth and poverty. Using recent public opinion research, this session will provide participants with an opportunity to learn about the strength of public support for asset building and children's development accounts, and the messages, themes and arguments that most persuasively convey their importance.

### IV.7 CREDIT UNION PARTNERSHIPS FOR ASSET BUILDING AND ASSET PROTECTION

In recent years, a growing number of credit unions are reaching beyond their membership, seeking to expand services to the underserved. Credit union partnerships with community-based organizations and community development financial institutions (CDFIs) are proving an effective strategy for making these services accessible in communities dependent on fringe financial services. This session will trace the historic role of credit unions in asset building and showcase successful credit union partnerships for asset building and asset protection.



# Research Session Descriptions

## **I.5 RETHINKING THE MIDDLE CLASS: FINANCIAL INSECURITY AMONG THE NON-POOR**

Over 50 million families in America earn between \$20,000 and \$40,000 – too much to receive public benefits, but too little to be financially secure. This session will present several new studies that document alarming rates of financial insecurity among low- and middle-income households. Presenters will identify factors that undermine efforts to accumulate and preserve assets and discuss efforts needed to blunt the effects of a shrinking middle class.

## **I.6 BUILDING ASSETS IN NATIVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH EITC AND TAX PREPARATION**

In recent years, the highest use of Refund Anticipation Loans in the U.S. was near Indian reservations. This session will highlight research conducted in Native communities to measure EITC contributions to community economic development and to gain a better understanding of consumer needs at tax time. Representatives from efforts serving Native clientele will share results from a survey conducted during filing season and discuss a variety of innovative techniques and approaches to EITC campaigns.

## **II.9 SEED RESEARCH: A TEST OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS**

Saving for Education, Entrepreneurship and Downpayment (SEED) is a major practice, policy and research initiative designed to test the efficacy of children's development accounts. The Center for Social Development at Washington University, the University of Kansas, and the University of Michigan are conducting studies of SEED. This session will focus on the Pre-School Demonstration and Impact Assessment, Youth In-Depth Interviews, Parent Surveys, Account Monitoring Research and the SEED for Oklahoma Kids Experiment.

## **II.10 PREVENTING ASSET LOSS: THE ROLE OF INSURANCE**

Health insurance and protection against asset loss were selected by participants in the 2006 Assets Learning Conference as their top policy priorities. This session will present research on the crucial role that access to health and other insurance products plays in helping families build and keep assets. Presenters will also suggest ways that practitioners and policymakers can more effectively deploy insurance products and policies to prevent asset loss by low- and moderate-income families.

## **II.11 POOR FINANCES: ASSETS AND LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS**

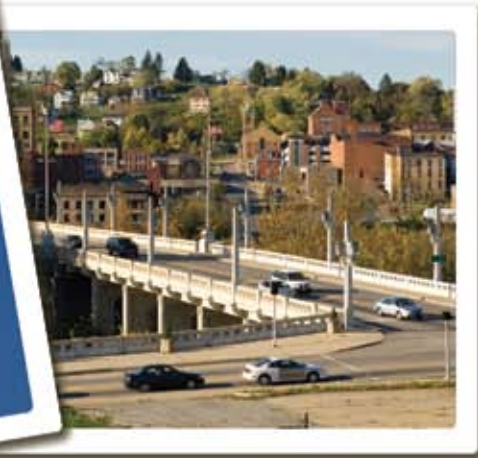
The Poor Finances project is a series of reports that seek to assess and synthesize the state of knowledge on asset accumulation and asset-based policies for low-income individuals and families. Researchers from the project will present their findings on the factors and mechanisms that support or impede asset accumulation and will discuss the policy implications of their work.

## **III.9 THE EFFECT OF IDAs ON ACCOUNT HOLDERS: RECENT RESEARCH**

What are the long-term effects of matched savings and asset purchases on IDA program participants? Several recently released studies examine this question on a national, state and program level. The authors of these studies will discuss the findings and their implications for IDA programs.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

17 million Americans live in manufactured homes.



### **III.10 BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS AND ASSET BUILDING: INSIGHTS AND APPLICATIONS**

How do people make financial decisions? The answers may be surprising. Research in the emerging field of behavioral economics suggests that small (and inexpensive) changes in program and policy design can yield large differences in participation and impact. This session will help practitioners and policymakers consider how they can incorporate lessons from behavioral economics to improve their own asset-building programs.

### **III.11 EDUCATION IDAs: CREATING PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

Education IDAs are a relatively untapped opportunity for low-income individuals to finance the soaring cost of post-secondary education. Nationally, less than one-third of IDAs are spent on education and even fewer projects are designed to target and meet the needs of education IDA savers. This session will present findings of an ongoing research project, as well as practitioners' outcomes in designing education IDA programs and partnerships to increase access to post-secondary education for low-income families.

### **IV.8 DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A COMPREHENSIVE IDA PROGRAM EVALUATION**

This session will focus on practical steps to create and implement a comprehensive evaluation strategy for an IDA program, including attention to asset attainment and retention, financial literacy, customer satisfaction and stakeholder satisfaction. Participants will answer questions such as 1) Who are the stakeholders and what do they want to know? 2) What data and infrastructure are necessary? 3) What barriers/challenges are anticipated? 4) Who should be involved in the process?

### **IV.9 RACE, ASSET OWNERSHIP AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY**

Recent research exploring the relationship between race, asset ownership and economic mobility underscores the importance of asset-building and preservation strategies in overcoming racial wealth inequality. Speakers in this session will present a literature review of existing research, put forth a theoretical framework for understanding the causes of wealth disparity, and discuss the implications of the findings on policy and community practice.

### **IV.10 PREDATORY LENDING AND ASSET PRESERVATION**

Recent innovations in mortgage lending products have resulted in the unprecedented expansion of consumer access to credit. Yet such innovations have not been met with commensurate consumer protections and policies to prevent predatory lending and asset-stripping practices. This session presents recent research that examines the extent to which innovations in credit products have spurred predatory lending practices and the effectiveness of targeted anti-predatory lending state laws.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The net worth of the average American household headed by a woman is \$48,500 versus \$82,400 for households headed by a man.



# Innovation Session Descriptions

## **I.7 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES TO HOMEOWNERSHIP**

Homeownership is a fundamental asset-building strategy and a community development strategy. Place-based organizations working to create homeownership opportunities are interested not only in improving life opportunities for homebuyers but also in helping revitalize their neighborhoods. Local Initiative Support Corporation's (LISC) programs are working with Community Development Corporations (CDCs) across the country to pursue both goals. Panelists will discuss their experience with these initiatives and explore the connections between homeownership initiatives and broader community development strategies.

## **I.8 PREPAID CARDS: INNOVATIONS IN CREATING FINANCIAL ACCESS FOR UNDERBANKED CONSUMERS**

*Designed by The Center for Financial Services Innovation*

By adjusting business models to meet consumers where they are, local community-based organizations are uncovering significant potential in providing financial services to the millions of individuals who are currently underserved by traditional banking outlets. At this session, learn the basics of prepaid products, hear from community organizations that are marketing and distributing prepaid cards to underbanked consumers, and leave with a better understanding of the potential for financial services distribution by nonprofits.

## **I.9 NEW INNOVATIONS IN ASSET BUILDING THAT LEVERAGE MARKETS TO REACH SCALE**

Despite the success of asset-building innovations such as IDAs and split refunds, they do not meet the full scale of the need. This session will review new research that examines innovations to leverage markets and build assets for all, including taking advantage of common assets like the carbon absorption capacity of the sky, new models of distributing ownership in the workplace, and new forms of economic risk insurance to protect assets.

## **II.12 FUNDRAISE, DO TAXES AND ASSET BUILD AT EMPLOYER SITES**

This session will focus on ways to involve employers with low-income employees in promoting tax credits, asset building and other work supports through outreach and mobile tax sites. Presenters will discuss implementation strategies, employer recruitment, software that can be used in the workplace to facilitate projects, and ways to make effective fundraising pitches. Participants will learn about public and private benefits that assist in asset building such as childcare, energy assistance, 401(k) plans and healthcare.

## **II.13 AMERICA'S BEST KEPT SAVING SECRET: U.S. SAVINGS BONDS**

This session will make the case that U.S. Savings Bonds are a valuable and unique asset-building product, especially well suited to low-income and/or first time savers. Panelists will showcase results from several pilot studies conducted by D2D Fund, H&R Block and their partners where savings bonds were offered to low-income clients. Participants will also hear suggestions for adding a savings bond offering in connection with Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) programs.

## **II.14 ASSET BUILDING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE BORDERLANDS**

This session will focus on a university-community-media collaboration in low-income and working-poor Latino communities in the Southwest border areas of Texas, California, New Mexico and Arizona. Panelists will discuss the use of tax refunds to capitalize microbusinesses; mixed-status family and extended family asset resource 'pooling', especially in affordable housing; community-based organizations' financial fitness outreach using culturally-competent delivery mechanisms; and tax/fiscal policy awareness campaigns using 'telenovela' (docudrama) formats.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The family home is the single largest asset for most American households.

### III.12 EMERGING SOLUTIONS FOR SHORT-TERM CREDIT

*Designed by The Center for Financial Services Innovation*

Underbanked consumers frequently turn to high-interest payday loans to meet their short-term cash needs, often to the detriment of their financial well-being. In this session, hear from a range of innovative institutions about their exciting new small-dollar, short-term credit products that represent an affordable alternative to more predatory options.

### III.13 INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ASSET BUILDING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community and economic development planning, underway in communities across the country, offers numerous – and often untapped – opportunities for residents to build financial assets (e.g., access to financial services, savings and home, business and real estate equity). This session will explore different approaches to community planning that target asset-building outcomes for low-income community residents. Participants will learn about strategies, targeted beneficiaries and outcomes to date, and the challenges and lessons learned by each community.

### III.14 BUILDING MICROBUSINESS ASSETS THROUGH THE TAX CODE

While starting a business is an important asset-building strategy, there is limited understanding of specific program strategies for using microbusinesses to build assets. This session will bring together practitioners from Earned Income Tax Credit, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and/or microenterprise programs that have pioneered the development of microenterprise tax preparation. Presenters will explain how tax preparation can become an important strategy to scale up microenterprise services and to link microbusiness start-ups with household asset building.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly all government support for asset building is through the tax code. For every \$1 the U.S. government spends on direct asset-building outlays, it gives up \$582 in tax revenue in exemptions and credits.

### IV.11 LAND RICH: DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FOR CASH-POOR LAND OWNERS

Many inter-generational land owners have faced obstacles to developing their assets because of clouds on titles, family disagreements and lack of knowledge. Land Rich Inc. was established to help cash-poor land owners understand and develop the value of their real estate holdings. In this session, representatives from Land Rich Inc. will highlight key resources and processes for helping families navigate through these obstacles to enhance their families' and communities' quality of life.

### IV.12 BUILDING SECURITY AND VALUE WITH HOMEOWNERS IN MANUFACTURED HOME COMMUNITIES

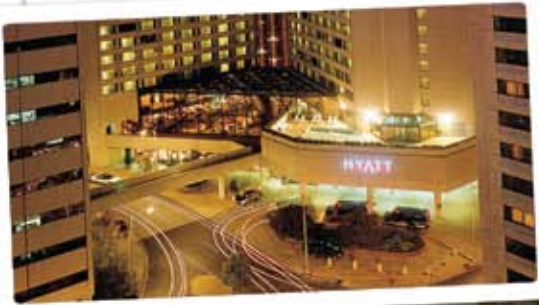
Resident-ownership has been demonstrated to improve security, increase access to conventional residential financing and engage citizens in local democracy. Building on local experiences – both challenges and opportunities – ROC USA is partnering with national organizations and local partners to develop a systems-based approach to improving the security and asset-building qualities of this affordable housing sector, a sector that is home to 3.5 million homeowners nationwide.

### IV.13 IDAs FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: AFI NEW GRANTEE INITIATIVE

This session will present case studies on successful AFI IDA programs that have leveraged significant local matching and other resources by linking their outcomes to local priorities for community development and neighborhood revitalization. Participants will learn about the roles that credit unions, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and Weed and Seed sites have played in developing innovative programs, lessons learned from these experiences, and the potential for establishing a more sustainable model of AFI IDAs.



# Conference Site, Registration Info



## CONFERENCE SITE

The Hyatt Regency Crystal City welcomes the 2008 Assets Learning Conference. Sitting beside the glistening Potomac River, Hyatt Regency Crystal City is just minutes away from shopping, dining and entertainment in Alexandria, Georgetown and downtown Washington, DC. Our hotel is adjacent to Washington's Reagan National Airport and is easily accessible from the major highways in the area. While staying at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City you will enjoy the ultra plush, pillow-top Hyatt Grand Bed™, stylish redesigned bathrooms, beautifully framed artwork, flat-screen TVs, an iHome docking station and complimentary 24-hour access to the hotel's Hyatt Stay Fit Health Center. For more information on the hotel, map and directions, and local attractions, visit our home page, [www.crystalcity.hyatt.com](http://www.crystalcity.hyatt.com).

All participants must register for the conference before making hotel reservations. Lodging information will be provided to all registrants as part of their confirmation materials.

## REGISTRATION

The quickest and easiest way to register is online by visiting [www.assetsconference.org](http://www.assetsconference.org). The Conference website will be continually updated with additional details about conference speakers, sessions, roundtables, plenaries and events. We hope that you will visit early and often! If you prefer to register by mail or fax, a printable .pdf form with the address and fax number is available on the Conference website.

All registrations received by September 9, 2008, will be confirmed by e-mail unless otherwise requested. After that date, your confirmation materials will be available on site.

Confirmation materials contain information to assist you in planning your conference attendance and will serve as your receipt. All balances due, including purchase orders, will be listed in your confirmation materials. Please note that although you will receive a confirmation e-mail when you sign up for the Conference, your registration will not be processed until full payment is made.

## REGISTRATION FEES

**On or before June 11, 2008**  
\$550 per person

**After June 11, 2008**  
\$650 per person

Your registration fee includes breakfast, lunch and morning and/or afternoon breaks for three days and two receptions.

**REGISTER BY JUNE 11 TO SAVE MONEY!**

**[WWW.ASSETSCONFERENCE.ORG](http://WWW.ASSETSCONFERENCE.ORG)**

**Completed registration forms and FULL payment must be received no later than June 11, 2008 (11:59 p.m. EDT) to qualify for the early bird rates. After that date, the regular registration rates will automatically apply.**



## PAYMENT

Credit card payment is accepted for registration online, by fax and by mail. We accept American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa.

Payments by check must be in U.S. dollars (USD); electronic checks will not be accepted.

If you secure your registration with a purchase order, a copy of the purchase order must accompany the registration form by mail, e-mail or fax.

Your balance must be paid in full in order for you to gain entry to the Conference. Payments made by mail must be postmarked by August 25, 2008. Payments not postmarked before August, 25, 2008 should be brought to the registration desk and paid on site.

## CANCELLATIONS, REFUNDS AND TRANSFERABILITY

If you must cancel your registration, please do so in writing (e-mail, mail or fax) by August 11, 2008. Your registration fee, less a \$100 administrative fee, will be refunded in the same form in which payment was made within 30 days of your cancellation date. Registrations cancelled after August 11, 2008 will not be refunded. Registrations are transferable within your organization. Please call 800.279.3244 to make these arrangements.

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND STIPENDS

A limited number of Travel and Expense Scholarships and Registration Stipends will be available to accountholders enrolled in an Individual Development Account or Children's Development Account program and to practitioners employed by a community-based, nonprofit asset-building program. The exact number of awards will be determined based on available funding and the results of the selection process.

Application forms and guidelines will be available on the Conference website, [www.assetsconference.org](http://www.assetsconference.org), on April 14, 2008 and applications are due no later than May 12, 2008. Scholarships and stipends are made possible by the generosity of our sponsors, including Presenting Sponsor Wal-Mart and Initial Platinum Sponsor Bank of America.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Over 45% of the subsidies from the three largest asset-building policies currently go to households whose average income exceeds \$1.25 million.



# Capitol Hill Visits

Capitol Hill Visits are your opportunity to educate Members of Congress and their staffs about the importance of asset-building policies and how asset-building programs in their home states and communities are transforming people's lives. Legislators are more effective at drafting, promoting and supporting legislation after hearing from their constituents about local asset-building efforts. During Capitol Hill visits, participants from the same legislative districts will be grouped together to advocate jointly for the kind of policies that will allow low-income families and communities to become more financially secure and build wealth. Whether it's your first time visiting your elected officials or you've made several visits in the past, everyone has an important perspective to share, so we hope you'll join your colleagues for an inspiring afternoon on Capitol Hill.

## SIGNING UP FOR A CAPITOL HILL VISIT

If you are interested in visiting your legislator on Capitol Hill, please be sure to sign up for a visit on your registration form. A member of the CFED Policy Team will e-mail you a confirmation message that will include the legislators' names, meeting times and locations. CFED will work with you and others from your state to schedule your visits. Given the time constraints of members and their staff, you may be joined by more than one conference attendee from your state on the visit.

If you have already scheduled a meeting or have suggestions or questions, please contact:

Carol Wayman, CFED  
ph: 202.207.0125  
fx: 202.408.9793  
cwayman@cfed.org



## DID YOU KNOW?

The average amount of mortgage debt owed by Americans is nearly \$124,000.

# Contact Information

For questions about registration and participant services, contact:

## 2008 CFED Assets Learning Conference

ph: 800.279.3244 (9 a.m.-5 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday except government holidays)

\*After hours, please leave a voice message

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Among workers in the United States, roughly 40% participate in employer-sponsored retirement plans.



CFED thanks the organizations that have provided early support for the 2008 Assets Learning Conference. To inquire about sponsorship opportunities, contact Anne Li, Development Director, at 202.207.0145 or ali@cfed.org.

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