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Revitalization Underway for Community Alliance

Within only the first few months of the new year, the Community Alliance of Citrus County is undergoing a major revitalization campaign. With the hiring of a new Facilitator for the group, comes the beginning of a new era for the Alliance.

Formerly known as the Shared Services Alliance which began in 2007, the group changed its name in 2010 to the Citrus County Community Alliance, and then recently reversed the components to have the emphasis on Community Alliance, with county name following. Operating as a collaborative effort between different agencies and organizations in the county that predominantly specialize in health and human services, the Citrus group is similar to other networks and alliances in the 5th circuit and the state.

The Community Alliance of Citrus County has two levels of participation which include a Membership group, and a CEO Roundtable. The Membership meets monthly to share information, discuss community projects, and bring together resources for the betterment of the county. The CEO Roundtable provides executive level leadership and helps to oversee the operations and objectives of the Alliance. Serving as the current Chair for the CEO Roundtable is Patricia Thomas, Circuit Judge for the 5th Judicial Circuit.

It became tasked to Judge Thomas after she became the Chair for the CEO Roundtable to find a new Facilitator for the Alliance. In November of 2012 a search process began with the assistance of current Membership Chair Cara Meeks (Devereux Kids Neighborhood Project), and Danielle Damato-Doty (a past facilitator for the Alliance). The selection process was finished in December and the formal hiring of the new Facilitator, Renea Teaster, was completed in early January.

Teaster comes to the Alliance as the former Marketing Coordinator for the Citrus County YMCA. "Her experience with non-profits, along with her background in marketing and public relations will help to bring a new awareness of the Community Alliance," says Judge Thomas. "We interviewed many great candidates, but felt Mrs. Teaster possessed particular skills that would enable us to revitalize this group and provide new direction."

Since Teaster started in mid-January, she has worked closely with current Membership Chair Cara Meeks on several projects and is enthusiastic about the future of the Alliance. "I wanted to hit the ground running and try to establish rapport with members along with setting some new objectives," says Teaster. "I see the Community Alliance of Citrus County as a very important group that can help to fill some gaps in the area and that excites me."



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Since starting her position, Teaster is already working on a new plan to educate everyone around on what the Community Alliance is about. With that in mind, a new logo, website, and facebook page have been developed and implemented. "It is important that we bring attentiveness to our group so that we can make the connections necessary in the community to achieve the goals we set," says Teaster.

Membership meetings are open and held on the first Tuesday of each month at the County Extension office located at 3600 West Sovereign Path in Lecanto. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 2nd at 8:45am with networking beginning at 8:30am.

For more information on the Community Alliance, please visit the new website at www.citrusalliance.org or contact Renea Teaster at (352) 341-7075 by phone, or by email at facilitator@citrusalliance.org.