Helping Low-Income Individuals and Families Build Financial Resources

Friday, January 29, 2010
2:00pm to 3:00pm EST

Register online at http://webapps.dol.gov/wb/mentor2_ssl.asp or by phone at 202-693-6767 to receive the toll free call-in number and passcode.

- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) can help individuals with limited income and limited wealth meet their savings goals by providing a “match” which serves as both a reward and an incentive to continue saving. Join us to learn how to find an IDA program in your area.

- January 29, 2010, is Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Awareness Day! Join us to learn about the EITC and other tax-related ways to generate financial resources.

- Do you spend most or all of your available income on basic necessities, such as food, clothing, and shelter, leaving little money for building emergency funds or long-term assets (financial resources)? Join us to learn how banks and other community organizations are reaching out to low- and moderate-income individuals, including those with disabilities, to provide opportunities to build assets.

- What innovative financial products and services are available to help individuals build assets and/or obtain credit? Join us to learn about affordable small dollar lending.
programs, “split refunds,” U.S. savings bonds, alternatives to fee-based overdraft protection, “credit builder” loans, and savings account-linked products.

Assistant Secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy Kathleen Martinez and Women’s Bureau Deputy Director Latifa Lyles will join the following speakers to discuss tools and strategies for building economic assets:

Elizabeth Jennings, an Associate with the National Disability Institute in Washington, DC, and The Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University, is a national consultant on asset development strategies for persons with disabilities. She currently works on asset building strategies for individuals with disabilities throughout the State of New York under New York’s Medicaid Infrastructure Grant and provides training on the impact of work on Social Security benefits under Florida’s Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. Elizabeth has a Bachelor’s of Art in Sociology and minors in Black Studies and Women’s Studies from Florida State University.

Richard Keeling began his career with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in 1982 and worked several years in the compliance division of the government as an auditor, instructor and manager. In 2001, Richard was selected to his current position as a Senior Tax Analyst in Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication (SPEC) of the Wage & Investment Division. His primary responsibility is working with the “Taxpayers with Disabilities” program. This program strives to provide more widespread access to tax information and free tax preparation to taxpayers with disabilities as well as asset building strategies to improve their economic well-being. In addition, Richard is involved with the IRS’ hiring initiative to recruit, employ and retain veterans and other people with disabilities.

Luke W. Reynolds is Chief of the Outreach & Program Development Section in the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Headquarters in Washington, DC. Prior to his current position, he was the FDIC’s Community Affairs Specialist in Southern California. Luke promoted and supported Money Smart, a financial education curriculum designed to help individuals outside the financial mainstream develop financial skills and positive banking relationships. He worked to help financial institutions and community organizations understand ways to bring the unbanked into the financial mainstream and shared “best practices” for tools such as IDA matched savings programs and the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Luke holds a baccalaureate degree with High Distinction from Indiana University where he studied public financial management and economics and a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree from Loyola Marymount University Law School in Los Angeles.

A question and answer session will follow the presentations. Transcripts and audio recordings of past WiSeUp Teleconference Calls are available online at www.wiseupwomen.org.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau’s WiSeUp project is dedicated to helping workers reduce debt and increase savings and investments. In addition to teleconference calls, the WiSeUp project consists of a curriculum offered online and in classroom settings and an online “Ask the Experts” feature. For more information, including how to register to become a WiSeUp participant, expert, or service provider, please visit www.dol.gov/wb or www.wiseupwomen.org. Also, now check out WiSeUp on YouTube www.youtube.com/WiseUpWomen.