



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Caitlin Clinard
Account Executive
S&A Cherokee
(919) 674-6020 x148
cclinard@sacherookee.com

Band Together NC Raising Funds to Help Unemployed and Low-Income Individuals

May 22 Concert, Raffle and Silent Auction to Benefit StepUP Ministry

Raleigh, N.C., April 8, 2010 — As of January 2010, Wake County's unemployment rate was 9.2 percent, meaning one in 11 employable adults was out of work. Many of those individuals are among the estimated 2,200 people homeless in the county each night. These stark numbers highlight the urgent need for programs that help individuals get jobs and become self-sufficient.

Last October, [Band Together NC](#), a nonprofit organization that uses musical events to raise funds and awareness for select Triangle charities, announced [StepUP Ministry](#) as its charity partner for 2010. The organization hopes to raise \$150,000 for StepUP through sponsorships, a raffle, silent auction and May 22 concert outside downtown Raleigh's Lincoln Theater headlined by Michael Franti & Spearhead, with local favorites such as The Old Ceremony as supporting acts.

Real Results

Since 2004, StepUP Ministry has helped more than 950 adults gain employment through its Job Training and Placement Program. Six months after placement, 83 percent of graduates remained employed last year. StepUP operates efficiently at a cost of \$1,200 per job placement, less than one-fourth of the estimated \$5,000 it costs the state of North Carolina to place a person in a job.

StepUP's Life Skills Program addresses financial literacy and responsibility, career development, physical and mental health, healthy relationships, and ready-to-rent training. In 2009, the program graduated 66 individuals from its incentive-driven, nine-month program. In addition, 122 children have been served through the Children's Program that offers an age-appropriate curriculum similar to that followed by their parents. The Children's Program provides friendship, academic support and social boundaries for children living through a time of crisis.

“We are extremely grateful for the community support that helps us place so many people in employment,” said StepUP Executive Director Steve Swayne. “Moreover, our focus is not about the number of people we place, it is about each individual person. We are thankful for the ways that StepUP teaches and trains people in the basic skills needed for employment.”

The Road Back

One such individual who has benefitted from StepUP's Jobs Program is Linda Norris. Linda is the 900th person to complete the rigorous week-long job workshop and find local employment. Although she has a bachelor's degree in business and enjoyed a long professional career in nonprofit organizations, Linda found herself out of a job when her employer was unable to secure additional funding after a grant expired. With two children in college, she found her unemployment very humbling.

Linda says she always looks to her faith in God to open doors of opportunity. "I remembered I had referred some people to StepUP, and I recognized that I could use all that they had to offer," explained Linda. "It gave me a sense of what others were struggling with – who they are, where they're going, and how to get there."

StepUP helped Linda find a temporary job at a major medical facility. She enjoys the work and says it feels more like a full-time position while providing her with solid grounding and the ability to keep her eyes open for other positions that match her skills and experience. "I think I would still be unemployed if it were not for StepUP," she added. "Their Jobs Program was extremely valuable and really demonstrates the concept of 'teaching one to fish.' It's an extremely worthwhile program that provides an atmosphere of caring, support and openness."

StepUP plans to use funds from the Band Together NC event to augment staff and services. "We look forward to adding to our employment staff so that more and more people in this county can receive the services StepUP provides," stated Swayne.

"We're always on the lookout for sponsors, but the simple things count too," said Danny Rosin, president and co-founder of Band Together NC. "Buy a ticket for our May 22 event. Donate an auction item. Employ a StepUP graduate. Volunteer. You'll have a great time while supporting a worthy cause."

For more information about Band Together NC, please visit www.bandtogethernc.org, become a fan on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bandtogethernc) or follow @bandtogethernc on Twitter. For more information about StepUP Ministry, go to www.step-up.us or call Development Director Molly Nichols at (919) 781-0156 x110.

###

About Band Together NC

Band Together NC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization composed of business and community leaders and volunteers from across the Triangle. Since its inception in 2001, the organization has helped raise more than \$700,000 for philanthropic organizations through one mission: using music to raise funds and awareness for local charities. Band Together is run entirely by volunteer efforts. For more information, please visit www.bandtogethernc.org.

About StepUP Ministry

StepUP Ministry is an interfaith nonprofit organization that teaches low-income and homeless people to become self-sufficient (stable job, stable home, stable family). Founded in 1988, StepUP annually serves nearly 600 individuals in Wake County. StepUP offers life-skills preparation with volunteer partners and job training/placement. For more information, visit www.step-up.us or call (919) 781-0156.