

We are proud to unveil the 2011 *Community Focus* report. For the last seven years this community report card has assessed the strengths (blue ribbons) and weaknesses (red flags) of the Springfield-Greene County community. This year's collaborative project continues the tradition of looking at our community through various lenses in order to help guide, direct, and formulate initiatives to address community issues. Additionally, efforts to track the indicators from all *Community Focus* reports have been improved with the addition of a new section that provides a snapshot of all reported blue ribbons and red flags.

Over the last several months numerous community leaders and volunteers came together to discuss the status of our community and share information in order to create this year's report. During these discussions, recurring themes emerged which signaled shared experiences throughout our community. These themes are evident throughout the eleven sections of the *Community Focus* report.

Four primary blue ribbon themes are reflected in this year's assessment. In 2004, the *Community Focus* report concluded that collaboration and the mobilization of resources were necessary to help shape our community into one that makes it a great place to live and work. Numerous examples of collaboration of resources, groups of people, individuals, and goals run throughout this year's report. The spirit of collaboration is evident and the benefit of people working together for the common good of our community is coming to bear. A second recurring theme this year is our community's willingness to address issues. We have identified those areas of concern in past reports and are addressing them. Third, our community has the ability and desire to be innovative in terms of new programs, partnerships, and concepts in order to keep our community fresh, interesting, and engaging for its current and future citizens. Finally, our community continues to look forward to ensure a better future.

Like recurring blue ribbons, several red flags also are consistent throughout this year's report. Mostly driven by the slow-to-recover economy and financial weaknesses throughout the public and private sectors, red flag themes include insufficient funding, poverty issues, economic uncertainty, and child abuse and neglect. These concerns are consistently referenced throughout the report and, unfortunately, we feel these are likely to prevail as red flags in the future.

We hope this report is received as well as in previous years and that it continues to help drive the actions of our community and its citizens to make improvements. Once again, we would like to thank the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Junior League of Springfield, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Greene-County Library District, and United Way of the Ozarks for providing resources to bring you this year's report. Without their support, this report would not be possible.

Sincerely,



Jill Reynolds, CFP
Chair, *Community Focus*
Steering Committee



Cristina M. Gilstrap, Ph.D.
Facilitator, *Community Focus*