

# THE POVERTY IMMERSION

a virtual experience of life on the edge

**The Poverty Immersion** is a unique interactive experience that helps people begin to understand what life is like with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress.



*"The emotional stress and realistic nature of this workshop increased my understanding of all of these issues. I thought the immersion was highly thought provoking and well done."*



*"Thank you so much for putting on such a professional, organized, and meaningful poverty immersion.... I think it was extremely effective in communicating exactly the messages we wanted to convey... What a great way to examine poverty in our communities."*

## IMPACT

*The Poverty Immersion helps professionals, policy makers, community leaders and volunteers better understand and serve people living in poverty.*

**Professional Development** - build capacity by strengthening employees' customer service and decision making skills.

**Strategic Planning** - facilitate organizational and governmental planning and policy development to better serve people in poverty.

**Community Development** - create greater awareness of poverty in your community to create a foundation for change.

**Volunteer Training** – improve the effectiveness of volunteers in your organization through greater understanding of clients' needs.

## EXPERIENCE

*The Poverty Immersion lets people walk in the shoes of someone living on a limited income.*

Although it uses play money and fictional scenarios, a Poverty Immersion is a facilitated role play – not a game. It is a powerful experience that takes only three hours of time, but makes a lasting impact. It builds a greater awareness of the issues facing people in poverty, and helps build a foundation for change – personally, professionally and in our communities.

During a Poverty Immersion 40-80 participants assume the role of a low income family member living on a limited budget. They are instructed to provide food, shelter and other basic necessities for themselves and their families, using resources they receive through a random assignment. Aiding in the workshop are volunteers who play the role of social service workers, bankers, school teachers, grocers, law enforcement, etc., providing a 'community' with whom the participants interact. It sounds simple enough until attendees are faced with the impossible daily dilemmas that are common to the poor.

*The Poverty Immersion changes attitudes and challenges stereotypes about the working poor.*