



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

James Bell Associates Awarded Key OFA Contract to Provide Evaluation and Technical Assistance

Arlington, VA, July 14, 2008 – James Bell Associates, Inc. (JBA), a nationally recognized evaluation research firm based in the Washington D.C. area, was awarded a key contract with the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) to provide evaluation-related technical assistance (TA) for its federally mandated *Healthy Marriage, Promoting Responsible Fatherhood, and Tribal/TANF Child Welfare Grantees* programs.

The Office of Family Assistance, in partnership with the States, Territories and Tribes, promotes temporary assistance and economic self-sufficiency for children and families. In 2006, the OFA awarded discretionary grants under its legislative authority to 235 research and demonstration projects – funding 125 Healthy Marriage programs, 100 Responsible Fatherhood programs and 10 Tribal/TANF programs. To ensure that information from these projects is evidence-based and helps inform the field about effective practices and approaches producing successful results, the OFA contracted with James Bell Associates to provide evaluation-related technical assistance to its grantees.

JBA, led by project director James DeSantis, Ph.D., will be assisting grantees in building evaluation capacity where needed and helping to enhance the rigor of evaluation designs when implemented. Using their innovative three-phase approach that entails needs assessment, TA planning, and delivery of evaluation TA, JBA will be systematically assessing each grantee's need for evaluation TA by reviewing available documentation. The findings of these assessments will then be used to plan the content and format of TA to support grantees in the implementation of their evaluations. Evaluation TA is both proactive on the part of JBA and responsive to TA requests initiated by grantees.

At the request of OFA, JBA will also be facilitating a collaborative process with other OFA TA contractors to identify "Promising Practices" among the Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage grantees. The goals being twofold: to ascertain grantees that have promising programs; and to learn from and share those aspects most effective in regards to their implementation and the direct and positive impacts on OFA's clients.

James Bell Associates is well respected for its independent program evaluation and customized applied research in the health and human services arenas. As performance measurement spreads to national discretionary grant programs funded by Federal agencies and private foundations, JBA has increasingly provided evaluation technical assistance (TA) and training. While TA and training are often embedded in program evaluations, JBA is proficient in projects that focus solely on building program evaluation capacity through phased TA and training modalities.

JBA looks forward to working with the Office of Family Assistance in facilitating their strategic goals and missions.

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