



## Archives



Congressman Tony P. Hall, Ohio (D) presents plaque to Bank President James Wolfensohn

## Congressman Honors Bank for Remarkable DC Outreach Effort

Recovering addicts and homeless men find employment in IFC Legal

**January 16, 2001**—In a moving ceremony last week at Bank headquarters, US Congressman Tony P. Hall presented James Wolfensohn with a plaque honoring him for "the pioneering and innovative approach the World Bank Group has taken to improve the lives of the homeless and disadvantaged in the Washington Metropolitan Area."

Under a program that few staff know about, IFC's Legal Department has over the last three years employed 24 former drug addicts graduating from Gospel Rescue Ministries, a homeless shelter and drug rehabilitation center.

"We're tremendously proud of you and this award should go to you," Wolfensohn said to Jennifer Sullivan, IFC Deputy General Counsel who has spearheaded the program.

Sullivan was volunteering at Gospel Rescue Ministries when she realized that many of its residents were employable. "We definitely had work they could do—filing, data entry, messenger and mailroom work," she told the *Washington Post*. Budget constraints meant that a lot of clerical tasks were going undone.

The program is a win-win situation in that the men get training and income to rebuild their lives, says Sullivan. The department benefits from cost-effective help, as well as the socioeconomic diversity these staffers bring. It has also increased teamwork in the department, which works together to help the new recruits and offers them a volunteer mentoring program.

"I see changed lives," said Gospel Rescue Ministries Director John Jackson at the ceremony, "truly trophies of God's grace."

Speaking at a Congressional hearing in July, Hall said: "Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to your attention the commendable actions of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Legal Department, the private sector arm of the World Bank...The IFC Legal Department has been



Hall and Wolfensohn with, from left to right, the Honorable Davis Robinson, Reverend Hervin Green, and Gregory Padgett and Clayton Scott, Sr., both graduates of IFC Legal Outreach Program. Padgett now works in IFC Syndications and Scott in Legal Records



Robinson, IFC Legal's Michael Cortese, Hall, Wolfensohn, Attorney Rod Wenner, IFC Deputy General Counsel and founder of the IFC Legal Outreach Program Jennifer Sullivan, Green, Padgett, Scott, IFC Executive Vice President Peter Woicke and Gospel Rescue Ministries Director John Jackson

involved in a joint effort with Gospel Rescue Ministries (GRM), a homeless shelter and drug rehabilitation/educational training center for men on the edge of DC's Chinatown neighborhood. This partnership has helped rebuild the lives of numerous formerly homeless individuals."

At the award luncheon the Congressman went on to say that "So few people in the U.S. know what the Bank does, but it is so important in the world... They don't have to do this... This is the World Bank, an international organization with programs outside of this country... to have the World Bank make this happen is a wonderful thing."

"This is something that we believe should be normal for us in this community," said Wolfensohn. "In recent years we have realized that we have profited enormously from the community and it is important that we participate in this community."

Gospel Rescue Ministries provides homeless and drug-addicted men with housing and puts them through a program that includes psychological counseling and prepares them for their high-school equivalency degree. Candidates are carefully screened for participation in the IFC Legal's outreach program.

Like the larger pool of employees, a few have not worked out, but the majority have. In 1999, all of the GRM men currently on staff were nominated by their Legal Department colleagues for quick-strike awards that recognized their efficiency and effectiveness. Some of these short-term employees have been so successful that they've gone on to regular positions at IFC. "The men in the program have proven themselves to be team players who exercise a good deal of patience and tolerance in dealing with colleagues," says Sullivan. Ten graduates are currently working in the Bank Group.

The program, said Wolfensohn is particularly interesting for the Bank in light of the work we do. "Dealing with issues of poverty is our business. We have learned that to deal it this is not by charity, the poor want opportunity. In our work we try to create a win-win environment, where the disadvantaged are part of the solution and we benefit from it."

"Thank God for the Bank," Clayton Scott, Sr. told Reuters. The 53-year-old, formerly homeless and crack-addicted, now earns \$11 an hour. "I'll stay here as long as they'll have me. It's a great place. The people here treat you as if you are somebody."

"You're not here because of charity, but because you're doing a good job," Wolfensohn reminded the IFC staffers, and thanked them for showing they can be part of the solution.

"People at a disadvantage don't want charity. They want options and a chance for self esteem and the chance to be part of the solution not the problem."

"We believe that this partnership is a model for other organizations," said Sullivan. "There are unemployed people in every American city and in emerging markets worldwide. The business and charitable communities can do a great deal to transform our neighborhoods, if they work together."

Wolfensohn also expressed the desire to see the program expanded and sees it as a model not just as a DC program, but in developing countries, where we can share our experience with businesses and other institutions with operations in these countries.

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