

# The ACT Ministry -What a wonderful blessing!

By Lisa Morris

On October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2002 the Asbury Career Transition ministry held its first meeting. ACT was formed as an answer to several of Asbury members' expressed need of a support group during a time of unemployment. It has grown into a vital ministry that has served over 211 people throughout the Birmingham area over the past four years.

There are presently 40 active participants in the ministry. Many are not members of Asbury. The ACT ministry has always been open to anyone in the community that needs our services. This aspect of the ministry has provided a wonderful outreach opportunity. Recently, it has taken our members an average of five months to find a job. In 2003-2004, it was taking an average of eight months.

There are currently 30 people that serve as volunteers with the ACT ministry as mentors, resume coaches, prayer partners and ministry event coordinators. Several of our volunteers are not even members of Asbury. Many of our volunteers are also past participants that have returned to help others because they have "been there" and know what it takes to get a job today. Our volunteers are serving others as we have been encouraged to do in *2 Corinthians 1:4*, **He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others.**

Several previous participants have written and expressed how ACT has been a blessing in their lives:

*"The ACT ministry came along at a point in my life when things had just about reached their bleakest. Asbury and the ACT group volunteers have had the ability to transcend all denominational faiths and lend sincere helping hands and support to everyone, no matter what their background or religious beliefs. I can honestly say that I could not have survived the ordeal my family and I went through without all the help and broad shoulders that were extended to me. The ACT ministry helped me turn things around, deepened my faith in God and helped me to more clearly realize that we are all His children, we are all one big family and together there is nothing we cannot accomplish."*

*"The meetings I attended were most helpful – I needed to hear from others that I was not the only person in this situation. The guidance provided helped me face my fears of searching for another job."*

*"I appreciate the time my mentor and resume coach spent helping me update my resume (it had been about 10 years since I had updated it). There*

*were so many changes in the HR hiring world out there that I was not aware of and their input on "what" I said about myself and "how" I said it was just invaluable. Most importantly, knowing that there were many prayers and spiritual support for my efforts gave me a calm sort of confidence that did not let me give up!"*

*"I would like to thank all the ACT ministry volunteers for their dedication, patience, understanding and encouragement during my career search. The whole process is a humbling experience, especially when nothing seems to be working in your job search. I thank God every day for having the opportunity to meet and get to know them."*

*"I walked into my first ACT meeting scared to death of putting into words exactly who I was and what I wanted. Compassion, encouragement, perspective, patience and most importantly grace – were all found in abundance for me at Asbury. My life is better because of all of you. May God continue to bless you."*

Based on this heartfelt feedback, I can honestly say that our vision four years ago - "to provide a safe haven and caring ministry, to share knowledge and information, and to offer support in a confidential Christian atmosphere for those who are experiencing transitions in employment" has been fulfilled. What a wonderful opportunity to follow Jesus' teachings as referenced by Paul in *Galatians 6:2* **Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.** It is with a thankful and joyful heart that I report that the ACT ministry is going strong as we start our fifth year.

The ACT ministry provides bi-monthly meetings, mentoring, resume and interview coaching, prayer partners, networking and most recently – actual job leads. If you would like to participate in the ministry, volunteer with the ministry (even if just to be a networking contact), or if you know of a job opening, contact Lisa Morris at [ACTMinDirector@aol.com](mailto:ACTMinDirector@aol.com). To learn more about our ministry, please visit our web site: [www.asburyonline.org/ACT](http://www.asburyonline.org/ACT).