MR FOUNDATION
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The "MR-Foundation", by design is to financially support the many projects and programs for the mentally retarded in the South Louisiana area. The initial concept of the "MR-Foundation" was to establish an economic foundation to assist in developing the Alleen Center, Acadian Village and The Tropical Gardens built by the Lafayette Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc. Since that time the goals of the "MR-Foundation" have expanded to assist all of the programs for the retarded in South Louisiana and on a national level.

Once the Alleen Center project is complete then the "MR-Foundation" will assist any local associations for retarded citizens that need help in developing their community services.

The "MR-Foundation" is a non-profit, tax exempt corporation led by business men and concerned citizens in South Louisiana.

The "MR-Foundation" will be able to accept any type of donation either cash or in the form of real property. Any and all donations can be used as a tax write-off, while at the same time helping the retarded help themselves.

TOURIST ATTRACTION

The Alleen Center is a 32 acre section of land located in the South of Lafayette Parish. It was donated to the Lafayette Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc. by Mr. & Mrs. Elias John Alleen. The Alleen Center will be the new home for all of the services for the retarded in Lafayette Parish. The Alleen Center will be servicing students and clients from a seven parish area. Through the donated workshop, under the direction of The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, to the newly designed Day Developmental Center for infants and the brand new work activity center for retarded adults, a new concept in community service for all of the retarded is being developed.

A major part of The Alleen Center, The Acadian Village and Around-The-World Tropical Gardens will be the future economic support base for the Lafayette operations. The Acadian Village is a renovated 18th Century South Louisiana Community. The many houses, some date as far back as 1810, will be a small collection of Acadian Architecture. Through support of the Acadian Knights of Columbus, the central area of the village will be an authentic Catholic Chapel built to represent the years of 1850-60. The General Store or Trading Post will sell handcrafts items produced by the retarded and many volunteers. The village is set to be opened by July 4, 1976.

The Around-The-World Tropical Gardens is also part of the Alleen Center and surrounds The Acadian Village with a wonderland of plants and vegetation. The "Gardens" depict six tropical regions of the world in plants.

RESIDENTIAL CARE

There is a recent awareness among the experts in the fields of mental retardation of the need to bring most of the retarded that are in state and private institutions home to live in their home communities. It has been found that institutions stifle the growth of the retarded person and prevent them from growing. The retarded person must be given the opportunity to develop to his or her full potential. The New Alleen Center will go a long way to provide the retarded citizen these opportunities.

Through the excellent training already established in the different programs sponsored by the Lafayette Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc. and the new ideas in The Alleen Center, the retarded person can become a self sufficient, productive member of our society. The only gap that was found in The New Alleen Center was a residential facility. These plans are undereway. Through the validity of The "MR-Foundation" and the success of The Gardens and Village, the Residential Program is in the near future. The current plan, under the direction of Mr. Dan Breaux of Breaux, Breaux and Champoux, Architects is set to house some 200 retarded persons in a community home type atmosphere: providing a place for the retarded person to live out their life in loving and happy surroundings. The cottages will be designed on a small home basis housing four people to a wing and some 16 per cottage.

With South Louisiana having it's own large community home complex it will serve the many smaller communities in the surrounding areas that can't afford the construction of their own facility.

This is another aim of the "MR-Foundation", upon completion of The Alleen Center and it's programs, to provide funds to other local associations on either a grant or loan basis so that the smaller communities can build their community services for the retarded in their homes areas.

RESOURCE CENTER

The total Alleen Center will be available for students from all state and private supported universities to provide a resource area, for future teachers, therapists, psychologists, and technical personnel with a planned future in mental retardation or special education. The many facets of the "Alleen Center" will also provide training including agriculture, horticulture, commercial nursery operations, engineering, and other related fields.