

Partnership **Update**

 news and information from *The Partnership for New Communities*

Partnership surpasses \$10 million investment milestone in Chicago neighborhoods

The Partnership for New Communities announced on June 11 that it has surpassed the \$10 million mark in issuing grants to benefit Chicago neighborhoods.

The Partnership, a collaborative of Chicago's corporate, philanthropic, and civic leaders, was established in 2003 by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and The Chicago Community Trust to support the success of the Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA) Plan for Transformation.

"The Partnership is committed to helping the City and our community partners work toward their vision of vibrant neighborhoods and greater opportunity for Chicago families," said Maria P. Hibbs, Executive Director, The Partnership for New Communities. "The combined efforts and active leadership of Partnership members are making a real difference in neighborhoods and in the lives of community residents."

Hibbs pointed out that The Partnership's work is made possible through support from Chicago foundations and corporations, including \$1.5 million from Bank of America, its largest corporate investor and a committed Partnership member.

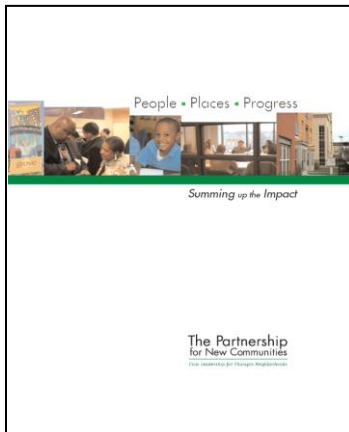
"Bank of America has a long history of supporting organizations that pair our resources with the innovation that happens at the neighborhood level," said David Rudis, Illinois President, Bank of America.

"Our investment in The Partnership addresses two of Chicago's most pressing issues — sustainable employment and better housing. The Bank of America grant will provide residents with new workforce opportunities while supporting the Chicago Public Housing Authority's neighborhood transformation plan," he said.

(continued on p. 2)

Report highlights funding impact

The Partnership has released ***Summing up the Impact***, a report describing the economic and social impact of The Partnership's grant support on such areas as job placement, commercial investment, homeownership and community revitalization.



Over the past five years, Partnership support has helped organizations to:

- Place more than 2,800 public-housing residents in jobs;

- Provide pro bono business consulting to 77 entrepreneurs as they start or expand their businesses;
- Encourage 36 companies to offer employer-assisted housing to workers moving into mixed-income developments.

In addition, institutions represented by members of The Partnership's Advisory Committee have made investments or have announced planned investments totaling \$750 million in our communities of focus.

You can find the report on our website:

[Summing up the Impact Report.pdf](#)

Summing up the Impact



Check us out on the Kennedy!

The Partnership for New Communities is among the organizations featured on the wall mural adjacent to the Kennedy Expressway near Ashland Avenue. Bank of America is highlighting several of its community partners on the familiar landmark. The mural is expected to be in place through the summer.

\$10 million in grants aim to strengthen communities

(continued from p. 1)

The Partnership has reached the two-thirds mark of its \$15 million commitment to help strengthen communities being developed under the Plan. The \$10 million awarded to date represent 48 grants to 29 organizations working to build community, prepare residents for work and help them find jobs, and attract commercial and other business investment. The average size of these grants is \$208,000.

"In 1999, the City of Chicago began a multi-faceted initiative to transform the lives of CHA residents and the communities that

encompassed the CHA's entire portfolio of 25,000 public-housing units throughout the city," said Lewis A. Jordan, the CHA's Chief Executive Officer.

"Almost a decade later, that vision is becoming a reality, and the CHA — in conjunction with one of its most significant civic supporters, The Partnership for New Communities — has made a tremendous impact on the lives of many of its current and former residents. We thank The Partnership for its continued support through our past and present endeavors, and look forward to many future successes."

“Hybrid” community market launches in Bronzeville

The summer launch of the Bronzeville Community Market has residents buzzing about the goods, services and activities now a part of the neighborhood.

The market, which opened on June 15, will operate every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through October 26. It will offer an array of fresh fruits and vegetables health and wellness activities and entertainment.

Come experience the
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The Partnership supported Sustain, Inc. to work with the Quad Communities Development Corporation (QCDC) to plan and develop aspects of the project.

“Currently, the vast majority of food related businesses within the Quad Communities are limited service and low-end grocers and fast food restaurants. While the supply of quality food is low, the demand is high,” according to QCDC.

Labeled a “food desert” in a Partnership-supported research report, two of the four neighborhoods within the Quad Communities, as well as four adjacent communities, have little or no access to grocery stores.

Lack of access to quality food was confirmed by 200 residents responding to the Bronzeville Market Community Survey.

Key findings included:

- Only 6% of respondents selected community area stores as their top produce provider ;

- 84% of respondents drive to their shopping destinations;
- 73% of respondents have shopped at a farmers’ market; however, 27% of respondents have not largely due to inconvenient locations and lack of awareness.

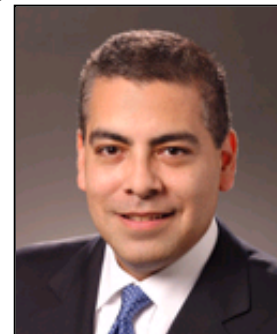
The Bronzeville Community Market is located between 4400-4500 South Cottage Grove Avenue. For vendor and sponsorship information, contact Market Master Zuri Thompson at: (773) 268-7232 or ZuriThompson@yahoo.com.

Ruiz joins Partnership Advisory Committee

The Partnership for New Communities welcomes Jesse Ruiz, a Chicago attorney and chair of the Illinois State Board of Education, to The Partnership's Advisory Committee. The committee oversees The Partnership's operations and grant making strategy.

"We're honored that Jesse has agreed to share his talent and his time with The Partnership," said Partnership Executive Director Maria Hibbs.

Ruiz is a partner in Drinker Biddle & Reath's Corporate and Securities Group concentrating on mergers and acquisitions, including international transactions. In September 2004, Governor Rod Blagojevich appointed him chairman of the Illinois State Board of Education, which oversees the operation of the state's school system for 2.1 million students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade and administers an \$8.8 billion annual budget.



Ruiz also serves on the Board of ComEd, an Exelon company; the Chicago History Museum; the Chicago Legal Clinic, Inc.; Heartland Alliance; MALDEF; and National Museum of Mexican Art.

Ruiz earned his law degree from The University of Chicago and his B.A. degree in economics and business administration from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Connecting Opportunities session helps employers hire smart

Small business owners picked up some "Fundamentals of Smart Staffing Decisions" at a Partnership-hosted *Connecting Opportunities* session at a networking breakfast featuring the services of Harborquest, Inc.

Business Solutions manager Al Jacoby explained that Harborquest – a social enterprise that combines high-quality workforce development training with an employer-focused staffing business – helps low-income workers earn a living while serving businesses needing reliable, minimally skilled workers.



Harborquest President John Plunkett (left) and Business Solutions manager Al Jacoby (right) participated in an informal question-and-answer session with small business owners.

Harborquest offers customized staffing solutions to help its business partners find quality workers for manufacturing, hospitality, security, food service and direct marketing industries.

Harborquest's direct-hire service, *20/20 View*®, allows businesses to evaluate job candidates' performance in their own work setting before committing to hiring them for full-time employment. Through a grant from The Partnership, this "transitional" period is providing valuable on-the-job training to Chicago public housing residents with little or no work experience.

The Partnership launched its *Connecting Opportunities* event series in March 2007 – co-presented by Chicago Community Ventures and Heartland Human Care Services. At this initial meeting, more than 40 small business owners came to learn more about Heartland's transitional jobs program, 20 followed up to learn more about becoming a partner employer and four have partnered with Heartland.

The recent Harborquest event was co-hosted by the Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) and Chicago Community Ventures. Special thanks go to WBDC and Exelon Corporation for providing the venue for this forum.

Partners' Conference cultivates grantee connections

More than 50 Partnership grantees and colleagues kicked off springtime by spending a day "Cultivating Connections" at the Garfield Park Conservatory.

The 2008 Partners' Conference not only updated participants – professionals from the fields of workforce and economic development, social services, and research – on Partnership-supported programs and the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation, but also encouraged them to discuss pressing issues facing Plan for Transformation neighborhoods.

Working group topics included: communication and engagement, neighborhood development strategies, and data and metrics.

Linda Kaiser, Managing Director of Resident Services for the CHA, outlined the Plan's progress and informed participants about recent policy and program changes. The Chicago Jobs Council's Leise Grimmer presented an update on Opportunity Chicago, a five-year, \$23 million workforce development initiative to help public-housing residents prepare for work, find jobs and remain employed.

"It was inspiring and motivating to learn the magnitude of this endeavor (the Plan and The Partnership's work) - the geographical scope of coverage, the extensive diversity of the various initiatives and the undeniable impact it has had on our communities," said one participant. The day's activities "gave us a feeling of interconnectedness with the other PNC agencies, and we all became 'one book, one story'."



Anne Cole (center) from the Metro Chicago Information Center works through discussion questions with other members of the Data Working Group.

Partnership Update

June 2008

The Partnership for New Communities is a funders collaborative bringing together business, civic and philanthropic leaders to invest in strategic economic development, community-building and employment-related initiatives to promote large-scale improvements in the neighborhoods most affected by public-housing transformation in Chicago.

Partnership Update is published regularly by The Partnership for New Communities to provide information on a variety of topics, including status reports on the CHA's Plan for Transformation, updates on The Partnership's activities and projects, and highlights of relevant research findings.

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An afternoon bus tour drew on the expertise of John Gerut, Assistant Director of Development, CHA; Shirley Newsome, Board Chairman, Quad Communities Development Corporation; and Michael Quinlan, Project Director, Near West Side Community Development Corporation's Madison Retail Initiative. Tour participants saw housing construction under way in mixed-income developments on the Near North, Near West and South sides of the city and learned about other development plans in those communities.

They also had an opportunity to see the products of creative collaborations between two community development grantees and local youth talent – banners along the Cottage Grove commercial corridor and artwork in the windows of for-lease properties near the intersection of Madison and Western.

Residents 'in the clear' through utility payment program

More than 1,400 Chicago Housing Authority leaseholders took a major step toward self-sufficiency by resolving overdue electric bills through the All Clear Fund, a program created through a partnership between the CHA and ComEd this spring.

Through All Clear, residents who owed \$500 or less as of their December 2007 bill agreed to pay half of what was owed, with the CHA and ComEd paying the rest, up to \$250 per customer. Under the program 1,450 leaseholders paid a total of \$100,000, with the CHA and ComEd combined paying the remaining \$100,000.

"Often families just need a boost in getting their finances on track," CHA CEO Lewis Jordan said. "We're doing all we can to help residents get on their feet and make a final housing choice. The All Clear Fund brought more than 1,400 families closer to that goal."

Before the February announcement of All Clear, ComEd and the CHA saw an opportunity to work together to eliminate one aspect of a family's budget that may have become a serious detriment to their financial well-being. Program participants were able to use personal funds, assistance from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program or other utility payment programs for their portion of payment.

"ComEd wants to be a resource for customers," says Anne Pramaggiore, ComEd executive vice president, Customer Operations, Regulatory and External Affairs. "Our participation in the All Clear Fund is part of our ongoing effort to provide financial assistance programs to help customers most in need pay their bills."

ComEd Chairman and CEO Frank Clark is a member of The Partnership for New Communities Advisory Committee.

Adola Crowder, who received \$126.78 in matching funds, praised the program as a huge help for low-income families who had trouble with high winter bills. "I don't make a lot of money, so it was a wonderful experience to have someone step in my time of need," Crowder said.

The Partnership for New Communities

Civic Leadership for Chicago's Neighborhoods

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TechReach**Manpower brings job opportunities to residents**

When Manpower, Inc. was selected as Opportunity Chicago's basic office industry specialist, it was charged with two big tasks: deliver skill-specific trainings to help CHA residents access employment opportunities with Manpower's extensive network of clients, and to improve employer engagement with that same network in the development of new training programs for entering and incumbent workers.

The answer: TechReach.

Supported by The Partnership for New Communities through the Chicago Workforce Board, this 18-month program is expected to help 160 individuals gain the skills needed to work in entry-level administrative positions.

As a for-profit staffing firm, Manpower's model is slightly different from the transitional jobs and customized skills training programs offered by Opportunity Chicago's non-profit workforce development providers.

Participants who complete one or more of Manpower's training modules in general office, bank teller, customer service/call center, data entry, accounting, and industrial skills may follow one of several paths to employment. Some find direct placement in permanent positions with Manpower's employer clients. Others are hired directly by Manpower's staffing business and are placed in various temporary assignments with Manpower's Chicago-wide client network. Manpower set up shop in January at the Charles Hayes Center and began recruiting area residents immediately. Only a month after the program began, 22 individuals had completed one of the skill-specific 30 to 60-hour TechReach trainings and 15 had already been hired by Manpower and assigned to various temporary staffing assignments.

Program manager Leah Miller said the entire Manpower Chicago team is enthusiastic about the opportunity to bring this program to a new audience.

"As a team we are passionate about changing attitudes and giving hope to TechReach



Tirrell Dudley leads his classmates in a TechReach training exercise at the Charles Hayes Center.

participants, that they can have a career and not just a job. We have had participants actually say that they never thought they could do certain jobs. We are honored to work for Manpower Chicago Tech Reach in this capacity, and we look forward to helping the CHA and the Chicago community for a good time to come."

The Ford Foundation, Aspen Institute, and the U.S. Department of Labor have all endorsed the TechReach model, which now involves dozens of private sector government and nonprofit organizations throughout the U.S and Canada. The comprehensive resources Manpower uses for assessment, testing, work-readiness training, placement and tracking in its staffing business are powerful support tools for TechReach participants and project partners alike.

Cottage Grove Corridor gets boost from local banks

A new loan product created through a public-private partnership with three local banks is providing a pool of \$12 million in flexible, low-interest loans for businesses and property owners on Cottage Grove Avenue and intersecting streets within the commercial district.



The Quad Communities Development Corporation (QCDC) wants the new Cottage Grove Restoration Initiative Fund to provide a valuable incentive that will help attract more retail and service businesses to the Cottage Grove commercial corridor.

“While we have a pipeline of developments that will deliver close to 300 units of residential housing and nearly 75,000 square feet of commercial space to the corridor within the next 24 months, our objective is to immediately restore existing buildings and provide leasable space to a number of small business owners that have expressed interest in our

community,” said Bernita Johnson-Gabriel, QCDC executive director. The Quad Communities includes Kenwood, Grand Boulevard, Douglas and Oakland.

The Fund was created in partnership with ShoreBank, Harris Bank, and Citibank, and will be administered alongside the City of Chicago’s new 43rd & Cottage Grove Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF). Attractive features of the fund include below-market interest rates, flexible repayment schedules and commercial tenant recruitment assistance.

“The innovative loan pool demonstrates the potential for what can be accomplished when local organizations, encouraged by their commitment to creating new economic opportunities that strengthen the community, work together,” said Tony Smith, ShoreBank executive vice-president, Commercial Banking Services.

“The loan pool will leverage the community’s residential development to help catalyze additional commercial and retail opportunities that will make Bronzeville a destination where more people will want to live and work,” Smith said.

The Partnership’s economic development investments with QCDC total \$400,000 to date, including \$320,000 in multi-year support for QCDC’s Cottage Grove Commercial Revitalization Initiative.

The CGRI is a multi-step plan for the economic revitalization of the Cottage Grove commercial corridor and surrounding trade area. It has included LISC/MetroEdge research, beautification and landscaping projects, business recruitment, commercial leasing assistance, and the development of a new neighborhood theme and design concept.

For more information, read the full press release at www.qcdc.org



Little Black Pearl Arts Workshop’s Executive Director, Monica Haslip, unveils the soon-to-be-released Grove Design Features Catalog that will be available to businesses along the Cottage Grove Corridor. Property owners will be able to select “contextual design upgrades that will reflect the character of the corridor.” The indoor & outdoor design features will be produced by artists at Little Place Pearl Art & Design Center.