

# Partnership

news and information from *The Partnership for New Communities*

## Community partnerships ensuring successful transformations

### Partners in Transformation event offers attendees opportunities for collaboration

Collaboration is playing a vital role in nurturing a sense of community in the Chicago neighborhoods where bricks and mortar revitalization is well underway, this according to panelists at the recent Partners in Transformation event.

The event, co-sponsored by The Partnership and The Donors Forum of Chicago, offered business, civic, and philanthropic leaders a rare view of the unprecedented collaboration that is transforming not only the city's urban landscape, but also the lives of thousands of its residents.



80 attendees also learned about the status of the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation, including successes and continuing challenges; and opportunities for engagement in this significant endeavor.

Panelists Jonathan F. Fanton, President, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Lew Collens, President, Illinois Institute of Technology; Terry Perucca, President, Bank of America, Illinois; Quintin Primo, Co-chairman, Capri Capital; and Don Randel, President, University of Chicago provided an untold story of how their civic leadership is helping to deliver on the promise of the Plan.

CHA CEO Terry Peterson thanked The Partnership and other community partners for their past and future efforts to ensure the Plan's success, adding that he sees the vision of "healthy, mixed-income communities offering the same quality-of-life and access to opportunities that every other neighborhoods of Chicago offers" as an important part of "the Mayor's legacy, Chicago's legacy, and America's legacy".



*Partnership Co-chair Jonathan F. Fanton led panelists at the October 19 breakfast forum as they discussed the impact of civic engagement on what Fanton referred to as an opportunity for a model negative situation, like the city's former public-housing situation, to emerge as a positive national example for change.*



*The panelists spoke specifically of their organizations' involvement with commercial and residential development, employer-assisted housing, workforce development programs, and other community revitalization efforts in a number of transformation communities.*

For more on this event, including the remarks of both Jonathan F. Fanton and Terry Peterson, visit

For more information about The Donors Forum of Chicago, co-sponsor of this event, visit

## South side "commercial desert" receives widespread attention New study suggests income, race, place determine residents' shopping options

Many neighborhoods in Chicago's predominantly black south side represent a "commercial desert," where it's far easier to find a liquor store than a grocery store or pharmacy, according to a recently released study by Metro Chicago Information Center. The study, funded by The Partnership, identifies income, race, and place as key factors in determining residents' shopping options.

The study's title, *Chain Reaction: Income, Race, and Access To Chicago's Major Player Grocers*, refers to the self-perpetuating nature of the city's "commercial desert" syndrome. Retailers such as Starbucks or Jewel-Osco grocery stores create a "chain reaction" that attracts like businesses, while neighborhoods dominated by liquor stores and pawnshops struggle to attract higher-end stores, according to the study's authors.

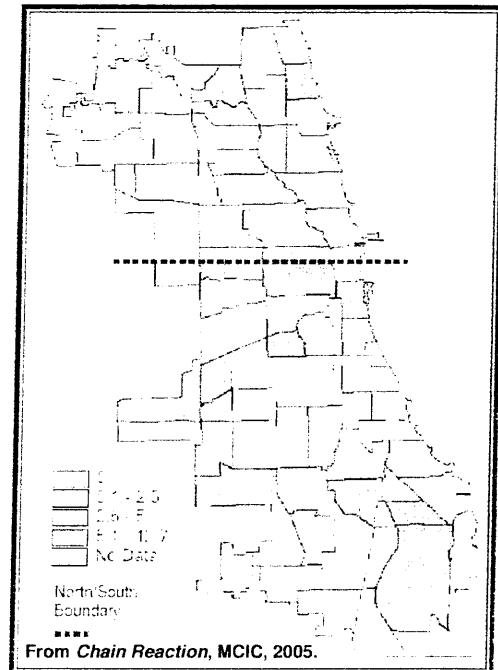
The researchers' findings have received attention in local and national television, radio, and print media, including articles in the USA Today and a radio interview with Mari Gallagher, senior researcher and author of the study, on WGN 720 AM. The Partnership's support was also recognized in the widespread coverage.

A community forum to be hosted by MCIC will discuss the study's findings and their implications for Chicago communities. Registration for the November 11 forum reached capacity within one day of the forum's announcement. The next issue of Partnership Update will feature a wrap-up of this event.

MCIC's study, *Chain Reaction: Income, Race, and Access To Chicago's Major Player Grocers*, can be accessed at: [www.mcic.org/Research/CommunityDevelopment/ChainReactionChicago.pdf](http://www.mcic.org/Research/CommunityDevelopment/ChainReactionChicago.pdf)

A podcast of WGN's October 12 interview with MCIC's Mari Gallagher is available at: [http://www.wgnradio.com/wgnradio/podcast/mcic/2005/10/12/wgn\\_radio\\_news\\_podcast.html](http://www.wgnradio.com/wgnradio/podcast/mcic/2005/10/12/wgn_radio_news_podcast.html)

Chicago Major Player Grocers  
Per 100,000 Population



From *Chain Reaction*, MCIC, 2005.

### Quote of Note

"You can greatly reduce the concentration of poverty in these neighborhoods by helping people move to other neighborhoods, by building a different kind of mixed-income housing, by using your zoning and regulatory systems to basically compel the private sector to do this."

"If you have economic integration, to be frank, the businesses will come, because small businesses, regional grocers, the Wal-Marts or even the Walgreens will track economically integrated communities and communities that can show they have purchasing power. If you build neighborhoods of extreme poverty, the businesses won't return."

-- Bruce Katz, scholar at The Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program, discussing rebuilding areas of New Orleans. Efforts to bring these areas back, he says, must include plans to eliminate poverty that have been successful in other urban centers. For more from The Brookings Institution on Hurricane Katrina's issues and aftermath, visit [www.brookings.edu/papers/2005/08/01\\_katrina\\_katz](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2005/08/01_katrina_katz)

## New Consortium Will Assist Businesses With EAH Programs

Kicking off the new small business consortium for employer-assisted housing (EAH) over 50 small business owners attended a recent forum co-sponsored by Fannie Mae, Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) and MPC REACH partners—Local Economic & Employment Development [LEED] Council and the Spanish Coalition for Housing.

Forum participants learned about a new EAH model, funded by a start-up grant from The Partnership, that enables small businesses to offer their employees EAH without the counseling and administrative

costs involved in larger EAH programs. If the businesses invest in down-payment assistance to help their income-eligible employees live near work, then LEED Council and Spanish Coalition for Housing will provide homeownership counseling in exchange for the company's state tax credits. The first round of counseling is expected to begin this fall.

Speakers at the forum pointed to the importance of promoting homeownership opportunities through employer-assisted housing programs as a key element of mixed-income community development and as the latest human resource best

practice, with a major bottom-line return on investment.

MarySue Barrett, president of the MPC, noted the many benefits for employers—improved employee retention and reduced recruitment & training costs—and employees—shorter commute times, down payment assistance, and quality home purchase counseling.

More information on EAH programs can be found at [www.metroplanning.org](http://www.metroplanning.org). For more information on the consortium, contact Eve Pytel at LEED Council, 773-929-5552 ext. 236, or Jane Hornstein at MPC, at 312-863-6040.

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## QCDC Center for Working Families to assist youth, adults New program to provide specialized financial and employment services

The new **Quad Communities Development Corporation's Center for Working Families** will open in January at the Abraham Lincoln Center and will serve residents of Chicago's Bronzeville community.

In addition to providing participants with specialized financial and employment services, the Center will provide focused attention and support to youth (ages 17-24) in the Quad Communities who face a combination of issues and challenges, including high school truancy and drop out issues, youth unemployment rates, and Chicago Housing Authority lease qualification rules.

The coordinated efforts of the Center for Working Families, QCDC, and Abraham Lincoln Center, will:

- ◆ Identify and engage all youth ages 17-24 who are unemployed and/or not enrolled in school.
- ◆ Ensure that all youth clients earn a high-school equivalency degree and successfully complete a rigorous job readiness course to learn important "soft skills" that will prepare them for future employment opportunities.
- ◆ Provide resources, support and advocacy for youth and their families in order to maximize the potential for these youth to have successful employment experiences.
- ◆ Place every youth client with an employer that provides them with adequate compensation, benefits and career advancement opportunities.



This component of CWF services, which will gain from a partnership with Jobs for Youth and Little Black Pearl, will serve as a model in the region for how to develop and operate a community-based employment project that meets the job opportunity needs of young adults while also satisfying the high-quality labor force needs of employer clients.

Opportunities for economic development in the West End community

**Employment opportunities, financial literacy tools help to stabilize families**

Near West Side Community Development Corporation's new employment coach has placed 20 of Near West Center for Working Families' 44 participants in full- and part-time employment, with those numbers expected to grow in the coming year.

Of those 20 clients who have obtained employment to date:

- ◆ 3 clients went from working 20 hours to 40 hours per week;
- ◆ 2 achieved hourly wage increases (\$7.00/hr. to \$8.00/hr. and \$9.25/hr. to \$10.50/hr.); and
- ◆ 18 are still employed.

Additionally, 37 participants received financial stability/asset building services, of which:

- ◆ 33 obtained copies of their credit reports and received training on how to analyze the reports and their scores;
- ◆ 31 developed a budget based on estimated and actual income and expenses;
- ◆ 14 clients received specialized counseling for issues including excessive debts, identity theft, retirement, bankruptcy, tax problems, school loans, and child support discrepancies.

In the coming year, Near West's CWF will provide assistance to 55 residents in the Westhaven community.

**Looking at the clients of  
Near West's Center for Working Families**

Gender:	75% Female, 25% Male
Race/Ethnicity:	100% African American
Percentage with children:	75.6%
Average age:	37 years
Currently employed:	7 full-time, 6 part-time
Average hourly wage (most recent job)	\$9.08
Median monthly household income:	\$425.50
Percentage with debts they are unable to pay off:	51.1%
Percentage reporting difficulty paying monthly bills:	42.2%
Own their own home:	2%

**Highest Level of Education Completed by Enrollees**

□ Below 8th Grade	2%
■ Below H.S. Graduation	27%
□ H.S. Graduation	35%
□ GED Completion	27%
■ 1-3 Years of College	5%
□ 4-Yr. College Graduation	2%
□ Trade School	2%

**West End Tour highlights community development opportunities**

A recent tour of the West Side community surrounding Rockwell Gardens showcased opportunities for commercial and business development in support of the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation.

The November 3 tour informed Leadership Greater Chicago Fellows about opportunities for their involvement activities that will contribute to a strong economic base for the community. LGC Fellows are among the 500 corporate executives, government officials, entrepreneurs, school principals, doctors, lawyers, clergy, community organizers and directors of nonprofit organizations who have graduated from the organization's Fellows Program since its inception in 1985.

The tour also highlighted the collaborative efforts of LGC, The Partnership, Marcy-Newberry Association, and other community partners in encouraging economic growth in the area that will offer jobs to support families and help new mixed-income communities thrive.

For more information on Leadership Greater Chicago, visit [www.lgc.org](http://www.lgc.org).

Chicago offering successes, challenges to Louisville peers

## Casey Foundation's *Making Connections* initiative engages The Partnership's knowledge and experience in peer-to-peer learning activities

The Partnership hosted a team from the Louisville Housing Authority during the group's recent visit to Chicago for a peer match to learn how Chicago public and nonprofit agencies are supporting public-housing and other low-income residents as part of the Plan for Transformation.

During the visit, The Partnership hosted a panel presentation, which featured officials from the Chicago Housing Authority and Chicago Department of Human Services who discussed effective case management approaches to supporting public housing residents in obtaining and retaining quality employment while working toward financial stability and economic security. The Partnership also hosted the visitors for a small reception and dinner following the presentation.

This event, organized as part of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Making Connections* initiative, informed current efforts to create thriving mixed-income communities as part of the HOPE VI revitalization occurring in several Louisville neighborhoods.

### Have you visited The Partnership's website?

Now featuring news and resources, updated frequently to include past issues of *Partnership Update*, news coverage of The Partnership and related issues, a calendar of upcoming events that welcomes submissions from Partners, and links to research reports and other resources.

[www.thepartnershipfornewcommunities.org](http://www.thepartnershipfornewcommunities.org)

### Would you like to receive Partnership Update electronically?

E-mail The Partnership to subscribe:  
[info@thepartnershipfornewcommunities.org](mailto:info@thepartnershipfornewcommunities.org)

## The Partnership for New Communities

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### Partnership Update November 2005

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

*The Partnership Update* is published bi-monthly 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, highlights of relevant research findings and copies of recent news coverage.

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