

“Strategic Management in Action: an Interview with the Neighborhood Technology Resource Center”, written by the Professional Education department of the Great Cities Institute, the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Dr. Nichol Turner-Lee, Executive Director of [the Neighborhood Technology Resource Center](#) (NTRC), participated in a University of Illinois at Chicago Certificate in Nonprofit Management (CNM) cohort in 2003 that was funded by [the Steans Family Foundation](#) and was designed specifically for management level staff of community-based organizations in North Lawndale.

According to Dr. Turner-Lee, “the strategic planning tools have helped us to position the organization for future growth, and made us much more conscious of how to be a smarter and more effective organization that is sustainable.” Dr. Turner-Lee told UIC that shortly after completing the course, NTRC planned a strategic planning retreat to evaluate the state of the organization, and implemented operational tools learned in the course. In fact, Dr. Turner-Lee found the CNM program so useful to the growth and management of the organization that she enrolled two staff people in the program “so we all can speak the same language.”

“For nonprofit organizations to be successful,” Dr. Turner-Lee asserted, “we must continue to review and evaluate how we are forming and implementing programs and services. We need to be smart in the goals that we strive to reach and always seek efficiency. We also need to be forward thinking, and not get stuck. I have found that nonprofits that are deliberate about the strategic process are much more sustainable and effective in what they do and envision they can do.”

Abigail Bouzan-Kaloustian, one of the staff members that Dr. Turner-Lee enrolled in the CNM program this year, reiterates her executive director’s sentiments by adding that NTRC revisits its strategic plan throughout the year in order to keep the organization and programs moving in the right direction. Ms. Bouzan-Kaloustian believes that the success of NTRC is due in part to its ability to create and carry out their strategic plan. The CNM courses gave her “an excellent opportunity to self reflect and assess where the NTRC currently is and where we want to go in the future.”

To learn more about the UIC Certificate in Nonprofit Management program, or to register for the Strategic Management course, which begins on September 14th, please visit the CNM Web site at <http://cnm.cuppa.uic.edu>.

“Anyone who is leading a nonprofit can greatly benefit from this course,” Dr. Turner-Lee concluded. “I already recommend it to everyone that I know...To do social good, we also need to be efficient internally to make sure the public benefit has a lasting impact.”

NTRC, which opened in 2000, also has locations in the West Town and Bronzeville communities in Chicago.