



UIC Neighborhoods *Initiative*

Building Partnerships for Stronger Communities and a Stronger University

Fall 1996

The University of Illinois at Chicago

Great Cities Institute

Minority Business Opportunity Month

Eighteenth Street Development Corporation's Small Business Development Center

Each year city and state governments spend millions of dollars in purchasing services and merchandise from business. In order to increase Latino business involvement and opportunities, Eighteenth Street Development Corporation (ESDC), Congressman Luis Gutierrez's Office, and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) will hold the first annual Latino Business Procurement Opportunity Month. This event is expected to educate and familiarize Latino firms with the importance and opportunities of obtaining Minority Certification status with the City and State, and increase the level of Latino business leverage in securing affirmative action goals with the major public and private institutions.

The impact would be the increase of sales for Latino owned firms and consequently the generation of additional growth and employment.

Eighteenth Street Development Corporation, Congressman Gutierrez's Office and the University of Illinois at Chicago have sponsored a series of educational and technical assistance workshops especially designed to generate business and awareness throughout the month of November. The following workshops were scheduled; "Minority Certification: Doing Business with Government", "Bidding Process", and "What UIC Purchases".

New Dean Carries the Great Cities Theme into the UIC College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs

The appointment of Wim Wiewel as the new Dean of the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs (CUPPA) demonstrates the commitment of the University of Illinois at Chicago, to continue in the spirit of the Great Cities theme.

When asked about these driving forces Wiewel said, "Great Cities expresses UIC's commitment to address urban issues in the Chicago Metropolitan area. CUPPA was created as the lead unit to implement this commitment. The key characteristics of this commitment match those of the college: an emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches; the integration of teaching, research, and service; and an emphasis on working with others, both within and outside of UIC. In short, most of what we do, in the academic programs and the centers; already expresses this commitment. I will work to support and enhance these activities."

There are many new opportunities for the college. "By working with other colleges, we develop many new joint programs that meet the demands of today's rapidly shifting employment markets," Wiewel stated.

On his commitment to participation and partnership Wiewel said, "Colleges as well as communities work best when everyone has a sense of ownership and participation. Both within the college and in our approach to professional work, we must emphasize participation by stakeholders. Inevitably, this requires a balancing act between the autonomy of individual units and need for cooperation and integration at higher levels."

Furthermore, Wiewel said, "We must seek to work with other units at UIC, as well as external organizations such as government, business, civic, and community organizations as we address urban issues of planning, policy, and governance."

Briefly...

*** Save the Date...** Fourth Annual Great Cities Winter Forum will be held December 6, 1996, from 8 am to 2 pm. The theme of this year's forum is "Chicago: Global City". The purpose of the forum is to examine the impact of globalization on Chicago and other cities. Panel discussions of the presentations made by the Chicago delegation at the United Nations Conference in Istanbul, Turkey, in June will also be included. The Winter Forum will be held at the Chicago Illini Union, 828 S. Wolcott, Chicago, IL, 60607. For more information or to

register, please call (312)413-8008.

*** Technical support being established...**

The Neighborhoods Non-Profit Network, (NNNet) funded through the UIC Neighborhoods Initiative program, has provided Internet access to over fifty community organizations in Pilsen and the Near West Side.

The NNNet has made a commitment to continue to provide technical assistance and service support to those organizations currently involved in the program. In order to do so, the organizers

of the NNNet are currently working on developing a phone and technical support network for community agencies; plans are underway to identify a computer consultant who will be able to provide technical assistance and also "trouble shoot" for smaller problems. For more information please contact Deepthi Jain at 413-9128.

*** UIC Award of Merit to Lauri Alpern...**

Lauri Alpern, Associate Director of the Great Cities Institute, was awarded the UIC Award of Merit on November 13, 1996. The award is given to

faculty and staff for their program development. She has invaluable work on the Great extraordinary contributions to been recognized for her Cities Program. Congratulations

United Nations Conference in Review

In June, 1996, delegates from cities across the United States and world attended the United Nations Conference on Urban Development in Istanbul, Turkey. Chicago's delegation to Istanbul included UIC faculty and staff as well as UICINI community partners. As a review of the conference, members of the Chicago delegation have presented their views and reflections:

Pat Wright, UIC Nathalie P. Voorhees Neighborhood Center Associate Director, Dave Ranney and Ting-Wei Zhang, CUPPA Professors, presented a case study on the development of Chicago's Near South Side. The Near South case study was prepared in partnership with four community organizations.

The case study focused how public participation can affect local government decision-making on urban issues. "It was clear from our discussions that globalization of domestic economies is destabilizing cities in the North and South hemispheres. People are experiencing reduced economic opportunities and erosion of municipal services and social welfare programs," commented Pat Wright,

The case studies documented people's response to these conditions by organizing themselves into community based organizations. Some governments are respectful of these community based efforts, there is a need to institutionalize people's participation in the decision-making process of local government. National laws can help clarify the powers of local government and provide local governments with the authority to act on citizen in-put. However, no matter how great the success of institutionalizing forms of participation, there are political reasons why local government may choose to ignore citizens. Therefore, building capacity of community organizations also means creating the kind of political climate in which citizens make their voices heard.

Atanacio Gonzalez, an Urban Planning and Public Affairs student, also made the trip to Istanbul and said, "The trip to Habitat II in Istanbul, Turkey was a learning experience. I learned so many things: the commonalities of our urban problems, the difference between the developing countries of Africa and Asia with those of the industrialized west; how we can learn from each other, experiences, information sharing, and cultural exchanges; the importance of large national and regional organizations and how they relate to their constituencies, what they should and not do; the important role of world bodies like the United Nations and its affiliates, and lastly, how we have to think long range and comprehensively about urban living in transportation, employment, housing, environment, green space, and community decision making."

Edgar P. Lucas, Executive Director of Renacer Westside Community Network and UICNI community partner, was also part of the Chicago delegation. One of his primary goals was to learn

how other countries are addressing housing needs and to be able to apply some of these alternatives in the Near West Side when he returned.

Through the course of the conference Lucas was faced with the universality of urban problems; that is, the problems faced in Chicago are the same all over the world. There were other countries who had some extremely interesting approach to community building. Two innovative models were presented by Sri Lanka and India. These models were unique because they actively sought community participation in the government decision making process in regards to work being done in their communities.

Members of all the world delegations agreed for open dialogue to help one another in addressing urban and community problems in the future.

UPDATE: Construction Begins at Henry Homer

Construction is underway on new homes in the West Haven community. Overall, the redevelopment project is moving slower than expected, though progress is being made.

The first 20 units under construction on the "superblock" site bounded by (Lake St., Washington Blvd., Hoyne Ave and Leavitt St.) will be ready for occupancy next month. Half of the units will be for working families at 50 % to 80 % of the median income level, and half for non-working families.

In total, 466 units will be completed by summer, 1998. Of these, 200 units will be constructed on the superblock, 100 units will be scattered throughout the community west of Western Avenue, 100 units will be located between Madison Street and Washington Boulevard, and 60 will be placed south of Madison Street.

A lengthy contract negotiation period appears to be nearing completion, which will allow a long awaited needs assessment of families who will be occupying replacement homes at Henry Homer to soon get underway.

A project team composed of Near West Side agencies and UIC faculty and staff members have been negotiating with CHA on a contract to conduct a needs assessment for families that will occupy the new replacement housing. Approved as a part of the Consent Decree governing the Homer Redevelopment effort, the assessment will be used to determine families' need for services that will compliment their housing needs.

The team of organizations and individuals that has been working on this effort includes representative from the Horner Residents Council, the Unity West Collaborative, the Westside Consortium, Chicago Commons and UIC faculty and staff members. Political Science Professor Barry

Rundquist, a former Great Cities Institute Scholar will be the Principal Investigator and Martin Adams is serving as the project coordinator.

Toni Henle, UIC Center for Urban Economic Development, will be coordinating the development of a computerized listing of available services throughout the Near West Side.

HUD Hosts Fourth National Conference for University Partnership Programs

During October, Martin Adams, UICNI Coordinator and James Isaacs, Executive Director of the Eighteenth Street Development Corporation attended a conference on Sustaining Community-University Partnerships hosted by the University of Delaware. This was one of an ongoing series of meetings in which directors of University partnership programs similar to the UIC Neighborhoods Initiative come together to discuss issues and share their experiences. Over 40 major universities and colleges across the country have been funded by the Department Housing and Urban Development to offer Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC). The theme of the conference, sustaining partnerships, carried through all of the seminars

offered. Participants discussed strategies for strengthening and

Institutionalizing their relationships with their surrounding communities and furthering their commitment to community service. Adams led a session on Creative Resource Development for Community Partnerships in which other COPC directors engaged in a lively discussion of successful and unsuccessful efforts to generate additional funding for programs.

Just prior to the conference, HUD announced additional grants made during a third round of funding. This included 15 grants of up to \$400,000 for new COPC programs and 12 institutional grants of up to \$1000,000 for previous COPC recipients.

Residents Become Business Owners:

Chicago Housing Authority Sponsors Entrepreneur Training Program

The Chicago Housing Authority is taking a proactive approach to provide alternative opportunities for its' residents. The newly created Economic Development Division has introduced an Entrepreneur Training Program designed to identify residents in various public housing developments who can be trained to develop business that C.H.A. potentially may contract with to provide various services to the public housing developments.

The C.H.A. Entrepreneur Training Program is run by Ron Carter, Director of Economic Development, and Philip Fairweather, Manager of Resident Enterprises. The C.H.A. Economic Development Division has put together a support network to help the residents learn all facets of business

development. Part of that network includes contracting with community organizations to help form long lasting partnerships in helping residents move towards economic empowerment. C.H.A. has executed a consulting agreement with Renacer Westside Community Network; Inc. Edgar P. Lucas, Jr., Executive Director of Renacer, taught Business Plan Development for the first class of entrepreneurial trainees. "The community needs for C.H.A, to help its residents become self-sufficient and to help them become permanent stakeholders in their respective communities," stated Lucas. The first ten graduates have started businesses ranging from appliance repair to construction.

The Economic Development Division is also in the process of establishing its own Chamber of Commerce, the Resident Owned Business Organization (R.O.B.O.). The purpose of the R.O.B.O. will be to provide on going support to the resident businesses and to organize the businesses so they will be able to support, network, and share information with each other. The Economic Development Division is also researching the idea of starting a community development credit union to help keep resident spending power in the community and make funding available for automobile, business, and home loans.

For more information, please contact Philip Fairweather at 791-8500, extension 4646.