



UIC Neighborhoods *Initiative*

Building Partnerships for Stronger Communities and a Stronger University

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The University of Illinois at Chicago

Great Cities Institute

UICNI Welcomes New Coordinators

Each new school year always brings new campus developments UIC Neighborhoods Initiative is no exception. Loomis Mayfield and Atanacio Gonzalez will be taking over as new coordinators, as current coordinator Martin Adams who has worked for UICNI for two and a half years will be leaving.

Mayfield has extensive experience with community and university relationships. Since 1994 he has worked for the Policy Research Action Group (PRAG) at Loyola University, which is a consortium of university and community groups in the Chicago metropolitan area. Mayfield mainly worked on collaborative efforts between faculty and community groups on various topics including community development, housing and workforce preparation. He also instituted the program, Urban Political Economy Discussion Group which fosters interaction between faculty and community people in order to exchange knowledge and promote future relationships.

Last year Mayfield received his Ph.D. in American History from the University of Pittsburgh. His research focused on the recent history of urban development and planning in Chicago. The title of his dissertation, "The Reorganization of Urban Politics: The Chicago Growth Machine After World War II", analyzed the relationship between the economic and political developments in the metropolitan area.



Mayfield said that his academic research helped him in his work at PRAG, since he brought together Chicago area community and faculty members to focus on specific issues in cooperative environment.

Atanacho Gonzalez, Martin
Adams, and Loomis Mayfield

Mayfield also has experience in national politics. In the late 80s he worked in Washington DC as a legislative coordinator for Americans for Democratic Action. The experience gave him insight into the practical realities of policy formation at different levels of government.

Mayfield taught various courses at different universities and has published articles and papers that focus on urban politics, economic development, policy making, demographic changes and the history of Chicago.

Atanacio Gonzalez brings a background of community organizing to the UICNI. He has a MA in Urban Planning from the College of Urban Planning and Public Policy at UIC and a BA in History from California State University at Los Angeles.

Gonzalez has been a community organizer for over 30 years. He has worked with street gangs in East and South Central LA, as well as with people in the rural areas of the south. He has worked with James Carthan, an embattled African American mayor in the Mississippi Delta; the Black Belt Defense Committee in Alabama, a group of civil rights leaders unjustly accused of voting rights violations who were exonerated; and the Aldape Guerra case, where a 19 year old Mexican native was convicted and given the death penalty for killing a police officer in Texas. The case was overruled and the young man was released Gonzalez was the key initiator and national support developer in all of these cases.

Gonzalez has extensive experience in organizational development and fundraising to community organizations. He served as executive director for the Working Group on Electoral Democracy, an organization dedicated to campaign finance reform. Currently he serves on the executive commission of the Continental Front of Community Organizations which is an umbrella of community organization in 22 countries of the Western hemisphere.

For the past three years Gonzalez has worked for the Center for Urban Economic Development and the Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement at VIC where he has authored and participated in numerous feasibility and community development studies. His Masters Project was entitled. "Exploring New Frontiers in Community Organizing" which was based on research, personal experience, an organizing workshop, and interviews of community organizers in the United States and Latin America. He is currently Interim Executive Director of the Humboldt Park Economic Development Corporation and will be leaving that position to join the UIC Neighborhoods Initiative Program. He brings a community perspective to the UICNI and extensive knowledge of community-university partnerships.

Research Scholar Addresses Health Concerns

The Great Cities Institute is proud to have an illustrious alumni scholar on board. Wendy B. Young, Ph.D is the, former associate dean for academic affairs and currently associate professor at the College of Nursing as well as faculty affiliate at the University of Illinois Institute of Governmental Affairs. Last year, Young got a first-hand look at how the federal government address the health policy issues while she was working for U.S. Senate Minority Leader, Tom Daschle (D- S.D.). As a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow, she worked on health care legislation with congressional and White House staff, federal agency administrators, health policy experts and lobbyists. She worked on Medicare and Medicaid, the Kennedy - - Kassebaum bill to provide access to health insurance for workers to change jobs and other health related issues.

Her work as a Great Cities Institute faculty scholar has focused on developing the theoretical framework for knowledge transfer and building a network to support the timely retrieval of research generated knowledge to inform the policy-process. At the request of the Journal of Nursing Administration, she recently published a three part series on current federal health legislation. The June issue addressed federal health policy directions in general, the July/August issue focuses on managed health care consumer protection initiatives, and the forthcoming September issue addresses incremental health insurance reforms to improve access.

As a RWJ Congressional fellow, Young spearheaded a project to describe how information is used in the public policy arena, just published in a new book by the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences: "How Information is Used to Influence and Inform the Policy Process".

Her work on sharing health policy information by linking university federal state efforts in the policy arena provides the community partners opportunities to exchange health concerns with each other.

Final Thoughts and Comments from Martin Adams

This issue marks the end of my tenure as Coordinator of the UIC Neighborhoods Initiative. In looking back at my two and a half years of implementing this program, I am extremely pleased with the developments and improvements that have occurred during this time



My strategy for the development of the UICNI has been similar to what I use to gauge myself in new positions, namely learn how to do the job; then learn how to do it well. Since our first year, we have Martin Adams implemented 14 new programs that are a part of our relationship with community organizations in Pilsen and the

Near West Side. We also began solidifying relationships with existing programs in the neighborhood, where university and faculty members were already working. We began to establish an identity for the university to those who were not familiar with the UICNI, and as a result new business relationships and partnerships have been formed.

Although we had to redefine goals and strategies in some cases and make corrections where needed, we continue to offer an effective and dynamic program that is beginning to build on itself. One of the most noteworthy highlights is the creation of the *Esperanza Familiar* program, stemming from our relationship with The Resurrection Project and the Jane Addams College of Social Work. While the history and objective of their program is a story in and of itself, a new program area was created and built out of our previous collaborations with The Resurrection Project.

I foresee a long ongoing relationship between the university and these communities, as well as dramatic changes taking place within the public housing developments in our area; Homer, Rockwell and ABLA. While we knew that changes were on the horizon

with the Chicago Housing Authority (HUD), we were not certain what would take place or how quickly CHA/HUD would be willing or able to move forward. Clearly, there is much more work to do, and a need to work more cooperatively and efficiently in making these changes. We must ensure that residents' needs are being met while the changes in the environment and new physical and policy developments take place.

After making my announcement to move, I have received several suggestions, both subtle and strong, to put my thoughts and perspective on paper regarding my work with UICNI. It has been widely recognized that developing partnerships between universities and communities is not an easy effort. Anything that I might pass on or add to the knowledge base of community development would be enhanced by such reflections. This article is my first attempt to communicate my thoughts and ideas to make the UICNI an effective program. I have created a list of critical issues that should be taken into consideration when developing a community-university partnership program. Hopefully my next attempt will be a longer and more thoughtful article that I will be able to share with a wider audience.

Lessons learned in creating university- community partnership programs:

1. Build good relationships with community partners
2. Understand and acknowledge history of community-university relationships
3. Internal relationships: relationship and communication with senior members of the university administration
4. Be able to address issues within the university and city agencies

5. Do not oversell programs
6. Develop broad relationships throughout the university
7. External relationships: Have a clear understanding of the university's strengths and interest in partnerships in the areas of research, instruction and service
8. Institutional relationships with key organizations and agencies in the community
9. Consistency with community priorities
10. Ability to leverage funding

Since Chicago will always be my hometown, do not be surprised if I occasionally drop in to ask how things are going!

Good bye and good luck!

Pilsen and UIC Benefit from Growing Relationship

The uniqueness of our program is that it directly channels human and social services into the community development process. It is an ongoing process that strengthens the link between family support and empowerment in the Pilsen community," said faculty member of the Jane Addams College of Social Work, Richard Kordesh.

The partnership between the UIC Jane Addams School of Social Work and the Pilsen community began in 1996 as an attempt to improve the social service delivery in the community. The Resurrection Project, a development corporation in Pilsen that consists of seven Catholic parishes and one social service agency, *Hermandad Mexicana*, had an existing relationship with UIC at that time. However, it sought to extend this collaboration by seeking additional assistance through the UIC Neighborhoods Initiative. A conversation began between Joe Neri of The Resurrection Project, Father Chuck Dahm and other lay leaders of the St. Pius V Church, Barbara Wickell and Robert Weagant of College of Social Work, and Martin Adams of UIC Neighborhoods Initiative. The collaboration meeting focused primarily on family issues in the community, such as violence and child abuse prevention, health care and educational improvements and gang control. Those at the meeting wanted to ensure that the values in the program were compatible with the values and interests in the community.



Instructor for the *Incubators for Youth* program Wayne Arnold addresses students and guests at the Marshall High School

"The Mexican immigrants in this country have deeply rooted cultural and societal norms that sometimes clash with American values and norms. We seek to help them treasure the richness of their own culture as well as confront the oppressive parts of it," said St. Pius V Church parish social worker, Megan Reilly.

In an effort to pinpoint the values, interests and needs in the community, an elaborate report was assembled by UIC Social Work interns, who measured the extent of unmet family social service needs in the Pilsen neighborhood.

The report found that almost 50 % of the community residents are foreign born, hence creating a language barrier between non-English speaking residents and employers, educators and health care providers. Between 1980 and 1990 the crude birth rate was 28.4 per 1,000, the highest rate in the city, hence creating an increased emphasis on children's health, educational and social concerns. Furthermore, the report found that over 50 % of residents over the age of 25 have no education beyond the ninth grade and the high school drop-out rate at one of the community public schools was 53 % in 1990. Some of the reasons for the high drop-out rate was attributed to overcrowded classrooms, the student's desire to enter the labor market at an early age to provide income for their families and intimidation by gangs at the schools and in the neighborhood.



Graduation Ceremony at the Incubators for Youth Program at Marshall High School. Front row: Ayesha Copeland, Takenya Clay, Jonathan Simpson. Back row: Martin Adams, Lawrence Officer, Crandelyn McMath, Bill

The final results of the needs assessment report were presented by the students to The Resurrection Project, community churches and organizations. They identified four major problem areas in the families: Domestic violence that is largely unreported, intergenerational cultural conflicts between US born children and Mexican born parents, a high school drop-out rate of over 50 % and overburdened service agencies doing crisis intervention in combination with the reluctance of the residents to seek help.

"We see a lot of domestic violence in this neighborhood. Some parents have been abused themselves and now have struggles of abuse with their own children. We try to break this generational pattern through interceptive counseling and prevention courses in parenting skills which are culturally sensitive and faith based," said Reilly.

Although the difficulties of funding and language place some limitations on the development of the project, the future looks bright. Some of the factors that have contributed to progress are the commitment of community churches to act as needed service providers, the participation of professional social workers and the practical learning experience for the Social Work students.

"The internships in Pilsen have become an ongoing project where graduate students can gain practical experience as well as bring back what they have learned. This will greatly influence the curriculum and research in the College of Social Work," said Kordesh.

The UIC students have not only helped with research in the community, but they have done research on family support programs elsewhere in the US. The students have also worked with the funding committees to develop a set of funding sources and grant proposals as well as created alternative models for institutionalizing the delivery of services to families in the neighborhood.

"The students played an integral role in designing *Esperanza Familiar* (Family Hope). It was a team effort between the churches, The Resurrection Project and the students," said Kordesh. "The students have been well received by community residents. Their cultural knowledge helps them relate to the residents and understand their needs on a different level than someone who is not familiar with the Hispanic culture."

Industrial Council of Northwest Chicago Launches New Youth Program with Empowerment Zone Funding

The Unity West Collaborative, with the Industrial Council of Northwest Chicago (ICNC) as lead agency, recently received a grant of \$30,000 from the Empowerment Zone for the Youth Business Education Initiative. In 1995, ICNC began working with children and young adults from the Near West Side and the Henry Homer Homes to make them more aware of the businesses within the Kinzie Industrial Corridor and to expose them to member industrial businesses as well as entrepreneurship.

The program began working with the local elementary schools and near-by

Union Park bringing business owners and managers together with the students to explain the items produced and the markets these business operate in. Few of the children and young adults from Homer had ever been through the industrial corridor, nor did they know much about the businesses located there. Virtually all of the program participants showed genuine interest in learning about ICNC's member businesses and opportunities.

At a recent mentoring event which took place at Union Park, five or six business people attended along with "an

army of kids". The children were matched with the business persons to learn about business operations and what skills and education are necessary to work in these fields. Program coordinator, Ben Teifeld stated that the intent of the program was to provide introductory exposure of the business community to youths from the

Near West Side in hope that the program would stimulate thoughts about being an entrepreneur and what it takes to run a business that they may want to go into as a profession. Congratulation to Unity West and ICNC for planning and implementing this new and innovative program. We wish them the best of success in the future.

Arizona State University Hosts Fifth National Conference for University Partnership

This past April, Arizona State University hosted its fifth conference on "Sustaining University- Community Partnerships for Community Building". This is part of an ongoing series of seminars in which directors of university partnership programs similar to 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 of Housing and Development (HUD) to offer Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC). These sessions traditionally served as review sessions where directors engage in lively discussion of successful and unsuccessful efforts to generate additional funding for programs.

Martin Adams, UICNI coordinator, Virginia Sorrells, Assistant Commissioner City of Chicago, Department of Planning and Development (West Area) and Yittayih Zelalem, Senior Planner, Voorhees Center, UIC attended the conference. The theme of this conference, "Sustaining Partnerships", is carried through from previous years by addressing different strategies of community-university partnership. Their team made a presentation on "Building Relationships with City Government/ Public Agencies in which Sorrells concentrated on city perspectives and city-sponsored development programs while Adams and Zelalem focused more on overlap and coordination with the City efforts. In the later section Adams also showed how different spheres of university activities such as research, teaching and service are being coordinated at UIC to create effective strategies for strengthening and institutionalizing our relationship with the communities.

The Affordable Housing Consortium, Pilsen/Near West Side Commercial Development and City Design Center among others will be cited as examples of this orientation. The excerpts from these presentations will eventually be published in Metropolitan Universities focusing on COPCs.

UIC Intern Gains Experience in Washington D.C.

October 12, 1996 marked a significant day in Edgar Hernandez's life. It was a day when he and several thousands of Latinos traveled to Washington DC to march and protest against the anti-immigration and racist agendas that largely affect Latinos in the United States. The emotional experience increased Hernandez's interest in government policy making and authority as well as made him realize the impact citizens have in this process. It resulted in a summer internship in Washington DC.

"This internship has provided me with the opportunity to be exposed to policy development and implementation by the government," said Hernandez.

Hernandez is a graduate student in the Department of Urban Planning at UIC. He received an internship with the Department of Housing and Urban development (HUD), the Office of University Partnership (OUP) and a unit within the Policy Development and Research Department (PD&R) in Washington DC this summer. He works on a project that examines universities that assist their surrounding community in revitalization efforts.

His team is particularly interested in looking at universities that have directly funded brick and mortar activities without the help of grants, donations or matching funds. The funds have been used for the creation of new housing, shopping centers and the establishment of community development corporations. I have had the opportunity to see what other universities are doing in establishing a community-university partnership. I have also had the opportunity to monitor the progress and shortcomings the universities have made in trying to accomplish this objective," said Hernandez.

Upon completion of the masters program, Hernandez hopes to work in a community development corporation. Eventually he would like to study law with a concentration in public interest, civil rights and immigration issues.

"The experience I have gained from this internship is very vital to working in the non-profit sector. My aspirations are to work in the public sector and try to help improve the lives of those who are underprivileged in our society," said Hernandez.

Hernandez is a resident of Chicago's Little Village, a predominantly Mexican neighborhood. He was a student in the Chicago Public Schools for both grammar and high school and a graduate from UIC. Hernandez would like to thank Martin Adams, Joanne Sims and Lauri Alpern for assisting him in obtaining the internship and for the continuous support they have provided.

