



University of Illinois Chicago

Great Cities Institute

Neighborhoods Initiative

Evaluation Report

2000 - 2001

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**UIC NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE
EVALUATION REPORT
2000-2001**

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The past year has seen a broad spectrum of change in Neighborhoods Initiative projects and in the way that UICNI is organized. As in past reports, this one will review UICNI projects and UICNI activities separately, but the format will reflect change in project focus and in how UICNI is organized. Specifically, the JCD projects were finished up this year and JCD funds spent down. These projects took up the major evaluation effort this year. We focus on outcomes of these projects in this report. There are several new projects, some completed and some ongoing, and our focus is their objectives and what is being planned, particularly in the community technology arena, where the present (DECCA) project is only the first of a number of projects being planned and for which funding is being sought. A major change has been the inclusion of a set of ongoing and new community health projects as part of the Neighborhoods Initiative. These will be briefly described below (although they have not been evaluated).

The reorganization of UICNI that began in the 1999 retreats has accelerated over 2000-2001. Director Cynthia Boyd has established a Neighborhoods Initiative office on west campus and incorporated several projects and partners, new and ongoing, into UICNI. A major effort has been directed at integrating the east and west campus offices. This has expanded the UICNI coordinator's job. The university leadership of UICNI has also begun to coordinate its activities in a set of regular meetings. The Steering Committee has not only expanded, but it has also begun to form subcommittees that concentrate on specific arenas of activity. These activities are described below, and we focus attention on what the implications of reorganization might be in our final section of recommendations.

NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE PROJECTS: *JCD Projects*

Active JCD Projects, 2000-2001

Affordable Housing Fund

Outcomes: Both The Resurrection Project (TRP) and Near West Side Community Development Corporation (NWSCDC) now have active lending programs enabling neighborhood homeowners to improve and renovate their homes.

Challenges/Facilitating Factors: The initial work with the city to draw down the funding and give the CDC's control over it took far longer than anticipated at the start of the JCD grant period, thus delaying the actual implementation of the loan program. Staff turnover in the DOH was particularly crucial in seriously delaying audits and in getting reimbursements for TRP and Near West CDC staff time. However, a bonus is that staff from the NWSCDC and TRP worked together in sharing problems and solutions on dealing with city administration.

Lessons Learned: This has been one of the more effective projects in developing partnering relations, despite the lengthened time line for initial work with the city. Particularly significant in the last year is the development of shared strategies between TRP and NWSCDC. Staff of these CDC's has met together outside of NI meetings, thus demonstrating that cross-neighborhood relationships can develop through joint work on a shared problem. In this project and the commercial development projects described below, it has become clear that projects involving the City of Chicago are more likely to achieve their objectives when the city does not control the funds.

Near West Side Commercial Development

Outcomes: Construction has begun on the Walgreen's (and an additional 5,000 sq. foot building) at Madison and Western, and recruiting begun for the local residents Walgreen's agreed to hire. Furthermore, now that the Walgreen's is coming in, negotiations have started to bring a supermarket into the shopping center, which was the residents' first choice in the needs survey conducted prior to the JCD grant.

Challenges/Facilitating Factors: As in the other projects requiring cooperation with city government, drawing down the funding took longer than anticipated, delaying actual construction. The discovery of soil pollution at the construction site caused considerable delay in ground breaking. Continuity of leadership at the Board level in NWSCDC has been a facilitating factor in seeing the project through.

Lessons Learned: Need to allow for extension of initial timelines.

Pilsen Commercial Development

Outcomes: For most of this year, Eighteenth Street Development Corporation (ESDC) had been working on acquiring the property they proposed for this project, Thalia Hall, a state historic building requiring at least \$4.6 million in renovation/restoration, with a requirement to keep the large theater space. The \$230,000 in JCD money was not significant in terms of the overall costs of the project. ESDC initially had the support of the alderman and the mayor's office, but publicity in May on the relationship between UNO and ESDC apparently resulted in a withdrawal of city support, and ESDC and the NI coordinator discussed alternatives. (Thalia Hall had not been the property proposed at the beginning of the JCD grant).

Challenges/Facilitating Factors: ESDC has had significant staff turnover over the last 5 years, and the leadership change to a management relationship with UNO this year possibly stabilized the organization, but it gave NI essentially a new partner to work with. There were multiple other challenges involved with acquisition of the building, including the reluctance of the owner to sell.

Lessons Learned: Persons with local development experience but without a direct stake in the Thalia Hall project all stated that it was not a viable project, at least within the near term, and

that the JCD monies were insignificant compared to the sums actually required, so that they could not do much in terms of leverage. The university's greatest resource for a community commercial development partnership project is not money, but technical assistance (e.g., assistance in planning and developing the CDC's capacity for planning). Furthermore, given all the controversy surrounding the use of land by the university as an institution, having NI involved in putting up seed money for commercial development may not be the best way to develop strong community/university partnerships. City involvement helped to turn this project into a political football, as was the case in the Henry Horner needs assessment project in 1997.

Great Cities/Great Careers (The Juarez Project)

Outcomes: Great Cities/Great Careers began in with the inception of the JCD grant as a school-to-work program for Juarez and Crane high schools; Crane removed itself from the partnership early on, and the partnership with Juarez broadened its scope. Key to the partnership with Juarez had been the research led by Connie Yowell, on the mismatch between students' hope for the future and the deficit of procedural knowledge on how to get there. Several pilot projects involving Juarez teachers and students were designed to address this deficit. In the summer of 2000, 22 students from Juarez worked on a literacy-based-on-technology project for 5 weeks, including work on the UIC campus. That particular project was not continued in 2001 due to lack of funding, but the relationship between UIC and Juarez has continued, with UIC English and Education faculty providing assistance to Juarez teachers and helping them access library and other resources. Furthermore, UIC has become an official external partner for Juarez (in accordance with procedures for schools on probation due to low test scores), chosen because of the success of the previous collaboration between Juarez and UIC.

Challenges/Facilitating Factors: High turnover in the administration and staff of Juarez has been the major challenge.

Lessons Learned: Steven Tozer said in 1995 that the success of this project depended on a long-term commitment to partnership between UIC and Juarez teachers and administration. He also said that formulating and achieving project objectives would depend on UIC partners' relationships with the teachers—that whatever happened would be the result of what Juarez teachers thought was valuable enough to work on. The outcomes bear this out. Yowell's work continues to be a model of connecting research to practice, and using this connection to build a school/university partnership. However, despite the success in the Juarez/UIC relationship, there also has been, for the past several years, little sense of involvement with NI or other NI projects from either Juarez or UIC-based partners in the Juarez project. That needs to be addressed if NI's goals go beyond simply spinning off projects to include increasing the synergy among UIC-connected projects in the NI neighborhoods (including projects which are no longer funded directly through NI or GC).

CDC Senior Managers Professional Development Program (Chicago Rehab Network Fellowship Program)

Outcomes: A fellowship program conducted in the initial years of the JDC grant involved recruitment from CDC's throughout the city. After evaluating that program and a hiatus period, Chicago Rehab Network (CRN) decided that a crucial need was for its own Board members (themselves involved, however, in CDC's throughout the city) to meet together to look at the bigger picture of affordable housing. This is consistent with Executive director Kevin Jackson's stated goal: to mount a program that serves to help retain executive directors of non-profits. Matching monies for the program were raised, and the Board voted unanimously for the program, which began with a planning overnight retreat on Jan 17th and 18th, 2001. Meetings include sessions with the Board members alone to share information and challenges, as well as sessions with foundation representatives and other leaders. For the most recent (and ongoing) fellowship program, the fellows organized a national conference on affordable housing that was well attended.

Challenges/Facilitating Factors: Aside from the seed money, the partnership with UIC in this project has included drawing on the NI coordinator and UIC CUPPA staff for occasional workshop presentations; also, CRN has had a CUPPA student intern. However, CRN has taken the lead in planning and funding the project and establishing an independent forum wherein CDC directors can feel comfortable sharing their successes and challenges. CRN did not anticipate the drain on its resources that the first run of the program entailed. Its director was far more active in raising funds for the second fellowship program, but its resources were still stretched, particularly in running the national conference.

Lessons Learned: The CRN board members have identified mentoring and peer support as a need. Also crucial in the fellowship program is to tie each event or meeting to an action point (e.g., developing a plan for working with foundations).

Community Union Day Care Training

Outcomes: The program has graduated four cohorts of childcare providers, in partnership with Malcolm X College. Completion rates for registrants in the program have been high. For the 1st (begun Feb 2000) & 2nd (begun July 2000) cohorts: there were 20 registrants in the first cohort, with 19 program completers (95% retention rate), 38 registrants in the second, with 33 (87%) retained. The third cohort (Nov 15- May 8th, 2001), had 35 registrants, 33 retained (94% retention rate). The fourth cohort (May 22-August 4th, 2001) had 25 students enrolled; 24 completed (96%). The fifth cohort (begun Sept 4th, 2001) has enrolled 26 students. The students have primarily been African American women, but have also included Hispanic women (10% in the first cohort, 12% in the second, 0% in the fourth cohort, and 4% in the fifth) and one South Asian man in the fourth cohort. (Figures supplied by Deborah Wong, program evaluator).

Challenges/Facilitating Factors: Initial plan in the JCD grant was for a childcare facility plus a training program; the training program was the component that proved to be feasible. Strong leadership and commitment from Robert Strom and Ben Kendrick of the Westside Consortium has helped this project, and maintained its link with NI.

Lessons Learned: In Wong's evaluation reports, participants cited financial support and mentoring support as crucial (project used literacy and computer mentors as well as instructors).

Like the Great Cities – Great Careers (Juarez) Project, the eventual success of the program was the result of a long-term commitment by the partners to a single goal, the readiness of the partners to adapt the project's objectives to current exigencies, and a willingness to learn from failure of the project to meet initial expectations without making excuses.

Projects Inactive or Inactive in Target Area, 2000-2001

Citylab in the City Design Center

Outcomes: In the past year, planning studios for architecture and urban planning students were conducted in Garfield Park (Fall 2000) and Morgan Park, but not in the NI target area.

Guadalupano Cultural Center

Guadalupano Cultural Center, a project of TRP focusing on expanding artistic and cultural activities in the community and economic development based on them, was included in the JCD grant at its outset. A community-recording studio ran for two years and a community arts program ran for one year. Space in the old St. Vitus church was used for community arts group until a fire forced them to find other locations. TRP's own retrenchment to its core areas of expertise, in community organizing, housing, and related economic development has been away from arts or social service oriented projects. It does continue to house a day-care center, run in partnership with other organizations.

Lessons Learned: Partners evolve, and partnership relations have to adjust accordingly, revisiting initial goals of funded projects. TRP's initial projections about the economic feasibility of a recording studio lacked a market study of the costs and potential business of a recording studio.

East Campus Projects

From Family Hope to Family Leadership Circle (ongoing)

UICNI has been a partner in the Esperanza Familiar program with TRP and the Jane Addams School of Social Work since its inception in 1996. The goal of this program has always been the empowerment of families to understand and address the challenges that confront them, e.g., domestic violence, school drop out, drugs, gang violence, teen pregnancy, and the like. This goal is accomplished through providing a context wherein family members can join with others in common cause sharing their experiences and learning from one another. A steering committee whose members represented St. Pius, St. Procopious, and St. Adalbert parishes, TRP, and UIC's Jane Addams School of Social Work conducted a community needs assessment and planning for the program for eighteen months, aided by research assistants from Jane Addams. The Esperanza Familiar program was the result.

St. Pius has run its own program independently of the other two parishes. UIC's contribution to the program was the provision of research assistants for needs assessment and planning and, as the program began, interns to assist in facilitating parenting classes, Dr. Richard Kordesh's (Jane

Addams) membership on the steering committee, and funding from UICNI for the research assistants and interns. Interns have worked with the St. Procopius and St. Adalbert parish program.

Early difficulties with the director of Esperanza Familiar (mainly doing part time work for a full time salary) left the major responsibility for running the program to Ana Romero, who was hired to run the parenting and leadership classes offered at St. Procopius and St. Adalbert. Romero's approach to parenting and leadership is based on the work of *Paulo Friere (The Pedagogy of Oppression)*, and it takes advantage of the considerable experience that parents already have in their homes, at work, and in dealing with institutions in the community. As parents share their experiences, the facilitator tries to place these experiences in a wider context of economic and political interests, which impinge on their relationships. By recontextualizing their experiences, participants in the classes are forced to work out innovative responses to old problems. Solutions are, thus, experimental, and participants share the results of their experiments with one another. This sharing of the results of innovative solutions is the key to the success of this approach. It is from these twelve-week sessions in parenting that participants in the leadership sessions are recruited.

When the first director resigned, the steering committee appointed Romero to replace her. Romero then hired Marta Cruz to take her former position. Cruz was a key appointment, because not only does she facilitate parenting classes, but she also had experience in conducting one-on-one counseling sessions, giving the program its own individual counseling component and allowing access to counseling to people who had never had such access.

By 1999, Esperanza Familiar had gained national attention through team presentations at a number of social work related conferences. The teams included Richard Kordesh, Social Work interns, and participants in the program. Esperanza Familiar had also gained local attention, one result being a prestigious Fanny Mae foundation award of \$100,000. By 2000, Romero and Cruz had expanded the program to other churches in the TRP network while continuing to serve the original two parishes. St. Agnes has a particularly active congregation, and both the parenting and leadership sessions were oversubscribed, forcing Romero and Cruz to split them into two sessions each. Mary Queen of Heaven (Cicero) is similarly active.

One of Romero's objectives from the outset has been to recruit parents from the classes to train as co-facilitators. By spring, 2000, Romero and Cruz had trained two women, and by spring, 2001, that number had tripled. In the midst of expanding the program, however, a major organizational change was taking place at TRP.

The Reorganization of Esperanza Familiar

By the mid 1990s, TRP had expanded its programs from housing and economic development to include the delivery of social services. These included day care facilities at its headquarters and elsewhere in Pilsen and Little Village, a community arts program (Guadalupano Cultural Center), and Esperanza Familiar. TRP hired a director of social programs to coordinate these projects, the most recent of whom was Sylvia Puente, who has since left TRP. BY March 2001,

the TRP Board of Directors had decided that the organization should concentrate its resources on its original focus, housing and economic development in Pilsen and Little Village. This was particularly important given the doubling of TRP's membership from its original seven congregations to fourteen churches by 1999.

For Esperanza Familiar, this change has meant either finding a new organizational home or forming an independent organization to pursue the Esperanza Familiar mission. Romero and Cruz, in consultation with program participants, with Janice Hurtig at UIC's Center for Research on Women and Gender, Nacho Gonzalez at UICNI, and with representatives of several other organizations, chose the path of an independent organization, renaming it the Family Leadership Circle with a new Board of Directors that includes Gonzalez. The organization now awaits approval of its status as a formal non-profit (501C3) as Romero seeks new funding. St. Procopius continues to provide office and meeting space, but this is temporary. TRP remains the fiscal agent until the 501C3 status is finalized.

Project Outcomes and their Evaluation

The goal of the Family Leadership Circle remains that of facilitating change in the ways that family members relate to one another regarding issues that are crucial to each of them. In particular, the most critical issue is how member of a family communicate with one another and what they are able to communicate about. These changes follow from changes in how project participants understand the contexts of family issues and how these issues can be confronted.

The goals and objectives of the program have been accomplished in individual cases is patent, in some instances dramatically so. By far the most common change reported is the ways that mothers and children communicate with one another (through mothers empowering their children to speak frankly about their concerns. This change has led to a sharp decline (in most cases elimination) of physical punishment and a drastic lowering of the decibel level in communicating with children. Changes in relationships with spouses are also commonly reported, although these vary from a partnership of equals to divorce. Volunteering in community social programs is another outcome, although less commonly reported. Changes in the workplace have also been reported. This latter change is the most dramatic of the documented outcomes.

One woman, Ida (a pseudonym), brought her complaints about her work situation into a session. These include low pay, dangerous and unsanitary working conditions, sexual harassment, and a union that did not care about these conditions. Ida brought two of her co-workers into the session, and the three of them learned about available options for dealing with employers and with the union, e.g., formal complaints to OSHA. The three women began trying to organize the other workers to protest their working conditions and were met with ridicule. But as they communicated in formation about how to put pressure on employers and the union, some of their coworkers listened. The three women presented their demands to both their union representative and to the employers for changes along with time lines for their completion. With the threat of being written up by OSHA, the union began to move on the changes on the work floor. When the other workers saw the results, they rallied in support of the three women. The rest rooms have

been expanded and cleaned up. The workers now have a rest area with a TV. The women have also demanded a refrigerator for the rest area, a cafeteria, and an equalization of pay with men with the same jobs. The company has also begun to hire more women. Several of the workers are now interested in larger issues of union history and a possible partnership with a workers' rights organization in Little Village. Other workers, both women and men, now consider these three women leaders of the workplace.

Ida is one of about fifteen women, *campesñeras*, who have become the leadership core of the Family Leadership Circle. They range in age from 20 to 50 and all share common experiences in their homes and what it took to change their relationships within their homes. In this largely Mexican immigrant community, empowered women seeking equal partnerships with their husbands are seen as a threat by the latter. They have found different ways to deal with this threat. In most of their situations, couples have reached an accommodation as their husbands have seen changes in their children and the lessening of physical and verbal confrontations with them. All of the women have become involved with community issues, especially education.

Documenting these changes is one thing. Evaluating them is another. Romero has records of the numbers of people attending each of the twelve-week sessions, the numbers of children in childcare provided for session participants, and the number of people who opt for individual counseling sessions with Cruz. What these numbers show is the following.

1. Parenting and leadership session participants have remained steady at about 100 people per year since the program began.
2. The distribution of session participants among the congregations reflects the nature of activism in those congregations. St. Procopius, for example, provides far fewer participants than St. Agnes. St. Procopius is a far more traditional parish, while St. Agnes is more active in sponsoring social programs for parishioners.
3. The numbers of participants do not exactly match the level of activism if the parishes, however. Over the gradual development of the program, an increasing number of participants are recruited by other participants rather than through announcements at masses. There are no precise counts of these, so the percentages of participants recruited from the congregation as opposed to those recruited by other participants is uncertain.
4. The number of participants who opt for individual counseling has more than doubled between 1997 and 2001, but this is in large part due to Marta Cruz being available instead of referral elsewhere.
5. The number of teens accompanying their parents to sessions has remained relatively constant since 1997. The ability to conduct programs for them has varied with the availability of UIC interns who could work with them.

The available figures are indicators of the interest in the program and variations in interest levels over the different parishes, at least in a general way. What the figures do not show is the effectiveness of the program over all the participants. That is, the program outcomes are only anecdotal at this point. What the few documented cases do indicate is that there are at least three levels (or contexts) of outcomes:

- Relationships within the participants' families
- Relationships between participants and their work places
- Relationships between participants and institutions in the larger community

These contexts can be taken as indicators of levels of program effectiveness. But the indicators are only suggestive. Without a clear idea of the number of participants who have experienced change and in which contexts they experience them, we are unable to specify measurable outcomes of the program.

The importance of measurable outcomes of the program is two. First, a clear idea of the percentage of participants experiencing change can lead to modifications that can increase its effectiveness. Second, an understanding of the crucial components of the program for promoting change would make the present planning efforts for the new non-profit organization more realistic.

The Future of the Family Leadership Circle

Current program planning includes the following major components:

- Doing assessments of the needs of each of the participating congregations to tailor sessions for the needs of each population,
- Reaching out to new immigrants, especially young couples, to create informational bridges to such services as English language instruction, documentation, alleviating the effects of culture shock, etc.,
- Building informational bridges between participants and the larger community to learn what is going on in the community and to delineate ways in which participants can become involved,
- Balancing fund raising activities with the formation of partnerships with like-minded organizations, e.g., Family Focus and the Interfaith Leadership Project,
- Refining the parenting class techniques to inculcate critical thinking so that the method of delineating the nature of one's difficulties remains long after the session is over,
- Building on the current base of *campeñeras* to facilitate involvement in the community in a way that expands the core group and maintains coordination among them,

All of these program objectives presuppose a thorough understanding of the effectiveness of the program--what works and what does not work (and for whom). This kind of understanding comes from a careful evaluation of the program. This is a considerable task, given that between 350 and 400 people has participated in the program.

Challenges

Family Leadership Circle begins its independent existence with very little money to match its ambitious goals and its leaders' enthusiasm. Fund raising and cementing partnerships are pressing needs.

Facilitating Factors

An experienced staff with innovative ideas, a solid core of strong leaders, and a program that has achieved national attention. The program has acted as an incubator not only for its participants, but also for UIC students who have interned in its sessions.

Recommendations

- A thorough program evaluation needs to be conducted. The most appropriate and feasible evaluation would be one conducted by former session participants with requisite training as evaluators. Janise Hurtig has agreed to conduct this training, and it should be organized as soon as possible.
- UICNI should continue to support the work of this organization with interns who should be targeted for particular skills that match the organization's program needs.
- UICNI should compensate the Family Leadership Circle for staff time expended in precepting the UIC interns either in dollars or in kind. An example of the latter would be the kind of help in grant writing that Ann Feldman and her colleagues in the English department provided for Mujeres Latinas enAccion.

ABLA Community Services Study (completed)

Telesis Corporation (Washington, D.C.) is the contractor for CHA's redevelopment of ABLA homes. The Chancellor requested that UICNI be involved in studies of residents' needs, services available, and best practices models that would fit the ABLA situation. In the fall, 2000, Telesis subcontracted with Youth Policy Institute (New York City) and UICNI to conduct the first two phases of a three-phase project to plan the redevelopment process. Youth Policy Institute was the directing organization for the first phase, which was the collection of information, called taking stock, of the current situation of services available to ABLA residents, the frequency of usage, and their adequacy for the needs of the residents. YPI designed the survey questions to be asked and the data collection methods. UICNI recruited the students to collect data and administered the pay and space requirements for them. Phase I had been completed by November 2000, but the project report was unsatisfactory, and Telesis terminated their subcontract with YPI, finishing the report themselves.

Telesis retained UICNI for the second phase of the project--collecting specific information from the service agencies working with ABLA residents about what each did and how they did it. This information included collecting published information packets from each organization and agency and doing follow up interviews with agency representatives.

Students also collected information about similar kinds of service providers nationwide using these data as a comparison with those about local providers. In this way, students were able to

work out a set of best practices for community health, employment, and youth development projects that could be used for the next project phase--physical and service planning for ABLA.

UICNI's role in Phase II was similar to that of Phase I: recruiting four Research Assistants for the research, being responsible for paying the students and providing them with work space. Project Coordinator, Chang Lee, attended the weekly meetings between the RAs and their Telesis supervisor, Matt McGuire. Lee's responsibility was to ensure that the RAs were getting useful experience while playing their roles.

UICNI made one further contribution to this project at the request of Telesis. There was a good deal of misinformation and confusion over CHA's plans for ABLA and Telesis's role in redevelopment planning among the most active service providers, especially the West Side Consortium and its member organizations, especially West Side Futures. UICNI hosted a conference where CHA, Telesis, and providers could exchange information. Although UICNI Steering Committee members were invited to attend the conference, very few did.

UICNI RAs' part of the Phase II was completed in early May 2001. Lee reports that he and the UIC research assistants were satisfied with their experience and particularly with Matt McGuire's supervisory style. Lee reports that Telesis personnel have been effusive in their praise of the UICNI RAs.

Comparative Note

The work that RAs did for the two phases of the Telesis project is very similar to that which Social Work students did for the Esperanza Familiar Steering Committee during the planning stages of that project. Not only were the outcomes similar in both projects -- well-researched service models tailored to the local community -- but also the UIC students were well served by the experience. The major difference between the two projects were that the RAs recruited for Telesis were, to the extent possible, chosen from colleges and departments most appropriate to the kind of research they would have to do. So, for example, a medical student was recruited to research health provision models.

Challenges

- Whenever the university has to deal with CHA and/or their contractors, control of a project is always an issue. For example, getting needed information about the project from the Youth Policy Institute and, to a lesser extent, Telesis was like pulling teeth. It became clear early on that UIC would have no input into what data would be collected or how it would be used without committing an enormous amount of time to weekly meetings. UICNI opted for a sub-contract with limited responsibilities rather than a partnership.
- The studies had economic and political implications that were potential land mines, e.g., the potential threat they posed to service providers who depend on contracts with ABLA, the inclusion of Local Area Council leaders in the discussions, etc.

- Universities, government bureaucracies, and for-profit corporations work on very different time lines. Non-profit organizations and university centers specializing in policy work know this all too well. This is the source of enormous pressure and friction when a faculty member's research schedule does not fit with the government's or corporate client's deadlines. Pressures and frictions are exacerbated when students are involved in the research, since they work on a semester, trimester, or quarter system and take classes, leaving the research for when they can fit it into their schedules. This is also common in nursing and public health projects at clinics using students, who may not be available to work at times when their help is most needed. The ABLA Project, especially the fall semester study, is a good example of this more general pattern that challenges most university-community collaboratives.

Recommendation

The provision of research assistants to organizations and agencies in the community has been one of UICNI's staple contributions to its partners from the outset. The use of graduate students to develop best practices models tailored for particular communities is one of those contributions that UICNI should continue to develop, as other engaged universities like University of Memphis, University of Michigan, and University of California and San Francisco State University's Policy Research Institute have.

Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) Grant (ongoing)

This is a partnership between UICNI, Gads Hill, and the Westside Education and Employment Center (WEEC) whose goal is to set up computer centers in the two community organizations. It is funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs at \$40,000 for one year. Each organization serves different populations. Gads Hill's population is almost entirely Hispanic, and their computer project is geared toward teens (Teen Connection), while WEEC's population is ethnically more diverse and older.

Gads Hill plans to put together a computer lab that is less like a laboratory and more like a person's living room. The idea behind this is that most of the teens in this area do not have computers at home, and the layout of the teens' space should look more like a home environment. The lab-room will be divided into sectors--couches where laptops can be shared, desks for desktops, and a lab-like table with networked computers. Gads Hill goals are (1) to introduce teens to computer technology and its uses, (2) improvement in their grades at school, and (3) to help high school students think about, find, and finance college educations. One of the program's objectives is to create a website that the teens manage. Staff at Gads Hill will be trained in the use of the computers and how to use them to aid in teens' school work, searching for colleges and financial aid for their educations, and the like. WEEC has two full time staff and volunteers who will be trained to help clients at the site use the computers and access the kinds of information they seek. What staff wants to provide is educational and skill building, interactive software, e.g., mathematics programs, reading programs, and the like.

Both organizations already have computer equipment, and in both organizations, the equipment is a mix of newer and older computers. Machines will have to be upgraded at both sites along with software. This is particularly the case at WEEC, where the software that staff wants to provide requires Pentium II and Pentium III machines. Both organizations plan to use the UIC campus as part of their programs. WEEC and Gads Hill both plan to conduct campus tours. The purpose is to expose their participants to an environment in which computer technology is part of the everyday working environment. Gads Hill also plans to develop its website, at least in part, at UIC.

Sarah Manewith is the Gads Hill partner in this project, while Sister Virginia Phillips represents WEEC. The UIC representative for this program is John Mudd, recently hired to work on the Certificate in Non-profit Management project in online education and with DECCA. Mudd has previous experience in consulting with non-profits for their technology needs, but this is the first time he has had the opportunity for extended contact with specific organizations. Working with Mudd are two UIC Research Assistants. Each will work with both facilities, but each will also become more familiar with one of them. They will help each organization set up their machines and their software, train staff at each facility, troubleshoot when necessary, and maintain the systems.

Since the receipt of the grant was announced in July, Mudd and the RAs are still in the planning stages with Manewith and Sr. Phillips. Mudd has been discussing specific goals and objectives of the program with each organization with a view toward specifying benchmarks to measure the progress in each program. Gads Hill, for example, expects to serve between sixty and one hundred teens over the first year of operation, tracking each of the teens that use the facility over the year. Mudd and Manewith are currently planning the tracking procedures. Mudd, Manewith, and Phillips are planning equipment upgrades, and Mudd's position is to buy refurbished computers from Dell, where the money spent gets both good equipment and a warrantee for each machine.

Organizational Comment

The DCCA project is the first in a series of community technology projects to be funded. It is one of four projects being planned, with funding being sought for the others. The projects are being planned by a group that includes Nacho Gonzalez, Lauri Alpern, Chang Lee (and two research assistants), Debra Manywith, Susan Vasquez, TRP, Sister Virginia Phillips, Davis Jenkins (GCI), Juan Salgado (Instituto del Progreso Latino), Jim Sosnowski, and Mike Schiffer (CUPPA). While the partners and UICNI research assistants have helped with the proposal writing, the bulk of the work has fallen on Lauri Alpern's shoulders. One of the benefits of the group's work, according to Alpern, is the considerable amount of information pooled together in the process of planning responses to the RFPs.

Gonzalez, after attending a national educational technology conference, is convinced that UICNI is positioned to be a partner in what conference participants are calling a neighborhood network, a set of several community technology centers operating in local partnerships. A good deal of funding for neighborhood networks is available, and this working group is engaged not only in project planning but also in project coordination to take advantage of available funding.

Community technology is rapidly becoming a major new focus of UICNI planning. It is worth noting here that this focus dovetails with a major university-wide objective of developing technology throughout the university system articulated by President Stukel repeatedly since 1998.

Recommendation

There are a few simple record keeping procedures that Gads Hill and WEEC personnel can use to maintain a running count of who uses what facilities, how often, and for what purposes. The procedures depend on the specific objectives of each project. This would give each organization a running count of which objectives are being met and which not. At least the information can serve as benchmarks, allowing each organization to modify its implementation strategies as the program unfolds.

West Side Consortium Community Congress (completed)

Near West Side communities at ABLA and Rockwell Gardens CHA facilities are in the process of redevelopment, ABLA with a Hope VI grant and Rockwell Gardens with another Hope VI grant pending. It is unclear what the populations at each facility will look like, unclear what their needs will be, and unclear who can and will serve those needs. The West Side Consortium, in the face of this uncertainty, called a conference of developers, service providers, city of Chicago representatives, community residents, and other stakeholders to discuss development issues and to plan a set of best practices models of coordinated services for the communities.

Planning for the conference began in December, 2000, and was discussed at the UICNI Steering Committee meeting. WSC invited over 400 stakeholders to attend the conference, held at Malcolm X College on April 6, 2001. The conference, called a congress because of its planning function, was divided into three parts. First, the developers, City of Chicago representatives, CHA Local Area Council consultant, and one LAC president, gave brief presentations stating their organization's position on redevelopment plans. Following the presentations, breakout sessions confronted the nuts-and-bolts planning issues for service delivery in seven interest areas: behavioral health, childcare, economic development, education, employment, medical/health services and youth services. Each session included about 30 participants, one or more facilitators, and two scribes to record the proceedings. The goal of each session was to develop one or more models of service delivery and coordination. Following the breakout sessions was a plenary session where each of the breakout groups reported the results of its discussions. UICNI director Cynthia Boyd recruited and trained the session facilitators and scribes from UIC faculty, staff, and graduate students. Boyd also organized and produced the report of the Congress proceedings, which was distributed in June, 2001.

While Lieber, Pinsker, and Ellen Kang (a graduate student working on the evaluation of the JCD program) were present primarily as scribes, we also observed both the sessions and people's discussions about the sessions at breaks, at lunch, and after the sessions. On the basis of our observations and our reading of the report of the proceedings, several patterns clearly emerged.

- Whatever the reasons bringing participants to the Congress, they were clearly anxious to talk with one another and to hear one another. There was very little in the way of self-serving posturing or organizational self-promotion--who owns the problem?--all too common at these

sorts of conferences. Discussions focused on issues and the details of confronting specific was confronting problems and finding their solutions.

- It was probably too ambitious a goal to expect the breakout sessions to come up with models for service delivery and coordination with only three hours allotted to each breakout session. What did emerge in every case, however, were the crucial elements (or components) that would have to be part of a successful model. The discussions form a firm base for planning of coordinated service delivery.
- The premise of the Congress was that planning for delivery of social services in a rapid redevelopment of the Near West Side would have to be coordinated and integrated, forming a seamless web of relationships between community residents and agencies that assist them. The content of the discussions themselves unambiguously confirm this premise. There was not one breakout session discussion that did not involve issues under discussion in at least two other breakout sessions. Education issues were part of all seven sessions, and employment issues took up education, health, and behavioral health issues, etc.. All of the interest areas interpenetrate with the others, as is patent with even a casual reading of the session reports.
- Coordination of service delivery as a premise for planning had another pathway to confirmation in the breakout session discussions--relationships between the agencies themselves. Repeatedly in the sessions, an agencies' need to know what other agencies are doing was discussed. Information sharing was a theme that ran through most of the discussions, although it was expressed in different ways.

UICNI Support for the Congress

UICNI Director Cynthia Boyd worked with West Side Consortium to organize the breakout sessions, recruiting and training facilitators for each one. This included working out a discussion agenda appropriate for each session and organized in a way to encourage maximum participation by stakeholders who attended each session. Evaluation survey sheets rated the facilitators highly. Boyd also recruited two recorders (or scribes) for each session, instructing each one about what should be noted in the discussions, i.e., not only content, but also any patterns of talk that might emerge from each discussion. An example of patterning would be whether all or most of the session participants spoke, as opposed to a small number of people doing most of the talking. Recorders also took notes on the presentations at the first plenary session.

Once all of the recorders' reports were submitted, Boyd organized the writing of proceedings of the Congress. The report includes an introductory background of the meeting and its organization, summaries of the presentations at the opening plenary session, abstracts of the breakout discussions, recorders' reports of each session, and a brief summary of the closing plenary session. The report, which is 65 pages, is available from either UICNI or from the West Side Consortium.

Challenges

It is clear that no one realized at the outset how enormous the task of preparing the report of the Congress would be. The person hours just in writing abstracts took more than two weeks. Editing the abstracts of the presentations and the reports, the session reports, and collating these with introductions for each of the sessions required not only weeks of work, but also a professional editor. The entire process took three months.

Facilitating factors

- The considerable organizational skills of Ben Kendrick and Robert Strom (WSC) and of Cynthia Boyd
- The timeliness of the Congress is crucial, i.e., the Congress was held as service connector organizations were being considered for each of the Hope VI projects
- The considerable pool of talent and experience that WSC and Cynthia Boyd had to draw on in recruiting stakeholder-participants and volunteers for organizing sessions
- The centrality and the facilities of Malcolm X College

Recommendations

- The provision of facilitators and recorders-scribes is something that a university has to offer to community partners and should continue to be a service that UICNI can provide for its partners. This kind of service not only helps partners, but provides valuable experience in the nitty-gritty problems of development and first hand connections to the people and organizations impacted by development for UIC faculty, students and staff.
- While there is no question that the work of report preparation is a legitimate contribution of UICNI to WSC's effort, there is a question of the advisability of this sort of contribution. UICNI leadership should consider carefully (and precisely) the costs of the staff time and of hiring a professional editor compared with what it would have cost to hire a company specializing in this work to do the editing and collating, leaving only the final editing for UICNI personnel. If the WSC Congress reports it to be a precedent for this kind of contribution, then there should be serious discussion about it within the UICNI leadership and within the Steering Committee. Are there criteria to be met for this sort of contribution? Under what conditions would UICNI staff consider doing this sort of work, etc.?

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECTS (west campus)

Cynthia Boyd and her staff have grouped a number of projects in community health under the UICNI umbrella. We list them here with brief descriptions. These projects have not been evaluated by the UICNI evaluation staff, which has focused on completion of the JCD projects this year.

Resources, Education, and Care in the Home (REACH)

REACH is a nurse directed case management project that provides home visits by experienced community health nurses and community workers. It is funded by the Chicago Families Case Management state contract with Empowerment Zone monies, the Pediatric Asthma Home Care (IDPA) contract, the Developmental Home Care Foundation, and a Healthy Start Case Management contract. The program serves people on the Near West Side through the Miles Square Health Center, the Departments of Pediatrics and Neonatology at UIC, the Maternal Fetal Medicine decision, and the Pediatric Allergy and Pulmonology Clinic at UIC. The project's director is Bertha Paul, RN, MS.

Healthy Schools/Healthy Communities “Better Care for Youth Clinic”

This project has been ongoing since 1995, born of a concept that led to a partnership between the Henry Suder elementary school and the Miles Square Health Center. It is the first federally funded comprehensive primary health clinic in a public school and a model for other such clinics. The clinic provides primary care, acute illness management, mental health, dental and nutritional services, and health education and health promotion to Suder School students and their families. In addition to health and social services, which include home visits and case management, the BCYC also provides after school and summer programs in academic enrichment, recreation, developing life skills, parent engagement, and health education. The Illinois Department of Human Services, the DHHS Bureau of Primary HealthCare, funds it and several foundations in addition to revenue generated through reimbursements. The project director is Regina Ortiz, an RN and MBA, who have worked with this program since its inception. UIC partners include the College of Dentistry, Department of Psychiatry, Human Nutrition and Development, Miles Square Health Center, School of Kinesiology, and the College of Education.

Spirit of Women Health Awareness Initiative (WHA)

This project works to establish collaborations between UIC partners and owners/operators of beauty salons in Austin and Near West Side neighborhoods. Salon owners and stylists receive training in women's health issues, preparing them to make knowledgeable contributions to conversations with their customers. Acting as community based health promoters, salon personnel direct women seeking medical consultations to participating local health care providers or to the Center for Excellence in Women's Health. Project directors are Nancy Tartt and Marilyn Willis, RN, MSN (and Associate Director of the International Center for Health Leadership Development). Partners in this project include the Center for Excellence in Women's Health, Miles Square Health Center, Circle Family Care, Loretto Hospital, West Side Business Improvement Association, UIC School of Public Health, the American Cancer Society, National Black Nurses Association, and Austin Community Beauty Salons.

Communities Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy (RAP)

This is a seven-year, two-phase, federally funded program to address teen pregnancy and prevention from a youth development perspective. The project goal is to build awareness of pregnancy and health issues and to reduce early and subsequent pregnancies through incorporating successful programs into different sectors of the community. These include the Near West Side, Humboldt Park, and West Town. The final phase of the project (1997-2002) identifies and implements community action strategies that address needs identified in the project's first phase. These include

- Community mobilization
- Promoting and providing parent education and skill building
- Promoting and providing sex education and life skill development for youth
- Social marketing
- Job training and employment
- Promoting education and social competence
- Establishing links to adolescent health services
- Policy and advocacy

Funded by the Center for Disease Control, the project is directed by Nancy Tartt.

Plain Talk

Plain Talk is a project to mobilize communities that focuses on targeting adults within communities to be health promoters for teens who are sexually active. Promotion issues are HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, birth control, and other teen health issues. Communities Reducing Adolescent Pregnancies (above) is collaborating with West Side Futures to implement Plain Talk, which targets teen sand adults on the Near West Side. The program is now in its second year, and adults are provided information in a number of areas, such as home health parties, community presentations, and the distribution of written information within the community. Funded by the Center for Disease Control, the project is directed by Nancy Tartt.

Children of the Sun Program

Children of the Sun is a learning curriculum focusing on health, community and family life, education, economic development, and crime and delinquency, all areas that complement the community action strategies listed above for the RAP projects. This learning curriculum is formulated by the National Trust for the Development of African American Men, a non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C.. Director Wali Shabazz has introduced the program and the Afrocentric philosophy that shapes it to three community organizations participating in the Community RAP program in both presentation and community forum formats. Community partners' response to these presentations has been positive. The program is being integrated into the Community RAP program in two stages. National Trust personnel are currently training first, several community residents have been selected as program trustees, and them in program philosophy and organization. They will serve as technical consultants to program personnel. Second, the curriculum will be implemented beginning October, 2001.

Community and Family Life, Education, Economic Development and Crime and delinquency. As you can see, these areas address/compliment the community action strategies listed above

Community Partners for Health

This project provides primary care, acute care, and women's health care in partnerships with other agencies. Current sites for this program are Circle Family Care Community Center, 4909 West Division, and Henry Booth House Family Center at 2850 S. Michigan Av..

Community Mental Health Outreach Program

This is a program based at Suder Elementary School offering a wide set of services to school faculty, students, and their families. Directed by Barbara Preib-Lannon, the program offers the following service areas:

- Class room observations
 - Family consultation and treatment
 - Faculty Consultation
 - In-service Education CPS Faculty (as requested)
- Some of the Selected topics Available:
- ADHD, What it is? What are ways to help?
 - Detecting Child Abuse
 - Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome
 - Advances in Psychotropic Medications for Children
 - What Are Mood Disorders?

Specific services offered to students (and their families when needed) include:

- Play Therapy
- Specialized group therapy ('Sew and Tell')
- Anger management and anger reduction group therapy
- Stress management group therapy
- Evaluation and assessment Services (testing by need by case)

Preib-Lannon works with teachers to identify the kinds of children who can best benefit from the program's services, e.g., children who appear to be constantly preoccupied, unusually anxious, continually sad or depressed, who have a history of misconduct, who demonstrate test anxiety, etc.. Based at Suder for the 2000-2001 academic year, the program is set to expand to Smyth Elementary School for AY 2001-2002.

New Initiatives

There are several new projects in the early planning stages. We simply list these:

- Young Women's Leadership Charter School Based clinic (funded by Polk Brothers Foundation)
- Smyth School-based Clinic Expansion (funding pending)
- UIC/IDH Community Asthma Initiative (Funded July 1, 2001 by the Illinois Department of Public Aid for 1 million plus)
- West Side Federation of Churches (initiative to increase west side African American enrollment at UIC and provide youth services through a west side Church).

NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES

The Reorganization of the Neighborhoods Initiative

The three retreats held in 1999-2000, the creation of the position of UICNI Director and the acceptance of that position by Cynthia Barnes Boyd, and the expansion of the Steering Committee laid the foundation for reorganization of the Neighborhoods Initiative in 2000-2001. The major features of that reorganization are

- The creation of a community health category of UICNI projects located at UICNI West, folding in all of the projects that impinge on the UICNI geographic area
- The creation of a west campus UICNI office, which manages the Community Health projects, that parallels the east campus office with the director spending time at both sites
- The institutionalization of the UICNI leadership in a body that meets on a regular basis to consider and decide on policy issues for the Neighborhoods Initiative as a whole
- The integration of the east and west office staffs in coordination with the integration of the UICNI leadership

The establishment of a west campus component of the Neighborhoods Initiative realizes a goal held by UICNI partners since 1995: the integration of health issues and projects into UICNI's normal operations. This was discussed repeatedly in the old Planning Committee, and several attempts were made to initiate planning for health projects. In the fall, 2000, Cynthia Boyd took a set of ongoing projects in the UICNI area, designated them as UICNI projects, set up the community health office as a UICNI office, and initiated planning and fund raising for several other projects (see Community Health projects above). One of the new initiatives from that office was the West Side Consortium Congress.

The integration of the two offices proceeded in two stages. First, Boyd began regular meetings with the core leadership group of UICNI: David Perry, Lauri Alpern, Nacho Gonzalez, and Pat Wright. These were wide ranging meetings that, by April, 2001, had become retreats. Topics included the basic concepts around which UICNI is organized, e.g., “relationship,” “partnership,” “collaboration,” and the like. By exploring these topics, this group got to know one another’s definitions and positions on policy issues. The differences in individual understandings, as is usually the case, were more interesting than the agreements. Other issues included project types, project management, funding, etc.. Important in these discussions have been issues focusing on the boundaries of the Neighborhoods Initiative area, on the role of the Steering Committee, and on the relationship between Great Cities Institute and the Chancellor’s office. There is difference of opinions on all of these issues within the group that have not yet been resolved. The consensus among the leadership group, which has yet to find a name for itself, is that these meetings have been intense, stimulating, productive, and satisfying. If and how internal differences are resolved on core issues will determine whether or not the group can operate using consensus in decision-making.

The second step in integrating the two UICNI offices was a retreat for the two office staffs held in May, 2001. Individuals on each staff had communicated with one another for specific purposes previously, e.g., Chang Lee talks with Linda Camacho on a regular basis. No one in either office knew everyone in the other, however. This would not have been a particular handicap had it not been for the immense difficulties involved in attempting electronic communication between east and west campuses. These have led to misunderstandings and miscommunication, and the retreat was partly an attempt to resolve and prevent future communication problems. The two staffs spent a good part of their time getting to know one another as individuals (married? children?). This was particularly valuable, according to those we talked with. Each of the staff members explained to the others what she or he does, which was important in putting a context around past communication problems. The palpable wariness people felt as the retreat began had disappeared by the time it concluded.

Challenges

- Time: All of the leadership groups are busy people with full schedules. This is especially acute in the early stages or reorganization when more frequent meetings are necessary.
- David Perry’s duties as interim dean of CUPPA have left him little time for his Great Cities duties, no less intensive involvement with UICNI. These pressures should ease once a new dean is chosen.
- Very different staffs--UICNI west has a staff of forty people, while the east office has only five (not including research assistants). Members of both staffs have responsibilities other than their UICNI duties.
- Incompatible computer systems make emailing between the offices difficult. For example, office computers on the east side can receive email messages from the west side but cannot send email messages to the west side. This makes it difficult for Boyd to do her work at her office at Great Cities, so she spends only one day per week there.

Facilitating Factors

- The combined experience of the leadership and their staffs in forming and maintaining partnerships provides UICNI with enormous potential for new multidisciplinary projects.
- The network of community partners and potential partners increases at a geometric rate.
- The potential for increased efficiency at the management level increases sharply with the potential exchanges between the two staffs.
- Boyd and Gonzalez's management styles are very different but complementary. Boyd's major strengths are in creating new partnership projects and fundraising, while Gonzalez's major strength is in project planning and management. This puts potential pressure on Gonzalez to manage the community health projects, which could hamper his project recruitment activities.

Recommendations

- Rather than managing Community Health projects, Gonzalez (and Chang Lee) can and should work with the west side staff, especially the project managers, communicating about and sharing strategies that can make the management work easier. This is part of the staff integration process.

The UICNI Steering Committee

The Steering Committee had undergone a rapid expansion of its membership under the leadership of Nacho Gonzalez and Loomis Mayfield in 1999-2000. Membership has continued to expand through 2000-2001 as new UIC faculty and staff members and new community organizations and agency representatives attend the committee meetings. This year, new organizations include Gads Hill, West End Employment Center, El Valor, Benito Juarez High School, CUB, Mujeres Latinas en Accion, Cathedral Services, and the Center for Research on Women and Gender. The practice of UIC-Community organization co-facilitators has continued from 2000, with Gonzalez and Ed Lucas facilitating meetings.

The Steering Committee held six meetings between August, 2000 and June, 2001. The first was the fall retreat, held at Agape house just off campus. This was the first meeting that was facilitated by a professional facilitator, Judy Weddle. The attendance at this meeting was sparse, particularly for community representatives, half of whom had never attended a Steering Committee meeting before. After introductions and a brief history of the Neighborhoods Initiative presented by Nacho Gonzalez, Mike Lieber summarized the gist of the evaluation recommendations. This presentation focused mainly on the role of the Steering Committee in guiding decision making on some fundamental issues of UICNI policy, e.g., the question of what constitutes core projects versus fringe projects and the purpose of presentations of ongoing projects to the Steering Committee. Judy Weddle then led a discussion of the group's reactions

to the presentation. The remainder of the retreat was organized as a brainstorming session sorting out and organizing key issues that fell under a list specific goals, e.g., Steering Committee responsibilities, projects, fund raising, etc.. Participants wrote cards with specific ideas for particular goals, and the exercise aimed at sorting and organizing and prioritizing the ideas. The result of the exercise was a set of task categories that needed task forces, and participants signed up for the task force they wanted to work with. Of seven task forces, only one ever met after the retreat. This became the Steering Committee's sub-committee for the organization, responsibilities, and policies of the Steering Committee and was chaired by Cynthia Boyd.

Subsequent meetings developed a pattern that in some ways was familiar and in other ways was quite new in UICNI. Meetings included

- updates on the JCD projects,
- brief presentations and discussions of new initiatives being planned (e.g., technology initiatives for which grant proposals were being written) or being folded into UICNI (e.g., community health projects),
- brief presentations by partners and potential partners on projects they were running or planning that might interest Steering Committee members, e.g., the work Telesis was doing for service provision for ABLA residents, the West Side Consortium Congress (in which UICNI became involved), and the Certificate in Non-Profit Management program (CNM), a community activist awards program initiated by the Center for Research on Women and Gender.

The sheer number of initiatives that came before the Steering Committee had tripled from previous years. Part of this owes to the integration of the Community Health projects. Part of it also owes to partners' involvement in community development projects such as ABLA and Rockwell redevelopment and the grant writing activities focusing on community technology projects (with one proposal funded, two others submitted, and a fourth on hold). There was simply a lot of information for Steering Committee members to digest.

The most striking pattern in Steering Committee discussions has been the amount of information pooling that each project or initiative presentation appears to elicit. For example, at the October 26 meeting, Lauri Alpern's presentation on funding opportunities in community technology elicited information about assets monitoring in North Lawndale and Ameritech's Community Affairs department as sources of information and help. The discussion about the ABLA study (see ABLA Project above) literally pieced together a picture of what was going on and who was involved as both UIC and community partners contributed what each knew about the project. This pattern of pooling information on a topic being presented and discussed has become typical in Steering Committee meetings where it was only sporadic in previous years. We note this here because this was one of the early objectives of the Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Committee (the body which eventually became the Steering Committee) that was realized only on rare occasions. Information pooling has been institutionalized in another way as a spin-off of the sub-committee of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee Sub-committees

Role of the Steering Committee

This committee grew out of the retreat in August, 2000. Chaired by Cynthia Boyd, the committee met twice. The first meeting was designed to produce a list of issues that serve to define the role of the Steering Committee. The second meeting, held in February, 2001, considered these issues in some detail. The major issue discussed at this meeting was the criteria for eligibility for inclusion of projects under the UICNI. The criteria discussed included

- Location at which the project is to be conducted—within or outside the present UICNI area
- Consistency with the UICNI mission: education, Health, economic development, affordable housing, and the arts
- Reflecting partnership between the community and UIC
- Equity in the partnership arrangement
- Participation on the Steering Committee
- Demonstration of community support for the project (letters of support, site visits, etc.)
- Demonstration of partnerships with other organizations
- A letter of agreement specifying the deliverables of the partners
- Willingness to give status reports on the project to the Steering Committee

There was general agreement on some points and disagreement on others. For example, requiring demonstrations of partnerships with other organizations might exclude Great Cities seed fund projects. There was some disagreement on the boundaries of the UICNI area and a good deal of discussion on what constitutes a demonstration of community support.

What constitutes UICNI “support” was a second issue. There have been a variety of projects falling under the UICNI rubric ranging from collaborative projects to endorsement of a project without any other participation by UICNI. One of the community representatives pointed out that given this variety, UICNI could be in the position of sponsoring a huge number of projects. An endorsement of projects in the communities is a particular ambiguous category of support. There was some discussion about the advisability of endorsing projects in which UICNI had neither input nor review.

Boyd reviewed the types of partnership arrangements, which she referred to as partnership types. There are four, including

1. Brokering. UICNI plays a matchmaking role, matching faculty or staff expertise with the needs of a specific community organization’s project.
2. Forming partnerships between UIC and a community organization or organizations. The bulk of the COPC and JCD projects have been of this type.
3. Applications of knowledge. UICNI responds to requests for help in project planning, research for planning (best practices models), or technical assistance.
4. Service learning. Having UIC graduate students working for community organizations as part of the students’ curriculum.

[Note. Most of the students that have worked at community organizations as part of their UIC curriculum have been graduate students applying specialized knowledge, 3. and 4. are in most cases not separate. This was true even in the case of the few undergraduates to work as interns. Their work was based on their special skills and/or training.]

Cynthia Boyd summarized the discussion on criteria for UICNI projects in four points:

- Compatible with the UICNI mission
- Demonstration of community support
- Written agreement with UICNI on project details
- The project must coincide with at least one of the four “partnership types” listed above.

This summary was not explicitly agreed upon as a final list of criteria for project eligibility, however, so it does not represent committee consensus. What it does provide is a solid framework for further discussion, particularly in the leadership group and in the Steering Committee as a whole.

Organizational Comments

We think it appropriate to note two points here--one historical and one concerning the timing of the sub-committee’s deliberations. First, the Steering Committee members made it quite clear in the fall, 1998, that the committee is an advisory body, not a Board of Directors. Community partners were adamant about not wanting fiduciary responsibilities. This, they said, was UICNI’s responsibility. During the first of the fall 1999 retreats, Steering Committee members reaffirmed that position. It also seems clear that subcommittee members see the Steering Committee as more than simply a group to listen and give advice. Advise and consent is closer to what members seem to want, as is consistent with a group involved in and *promoting* partnerships as a means to implement change in both the communities and the university. The nature of the sub-committees discussions has clearly focused on the role of the Steering Committee in the partnership promotion aspect of UICNI.

There is never a bad time for planning the shape and roles of the Steering Committee, especially in the context of rapid change in UICNI organization and activities. These discussions are part of that change process. At the same time, however, these discussions occurred early in the development of the leadership group. The issues that the subcommittee is confronting are core organizational issues for which the UICNI leadership must take ultimate responsibility. It will be necessary at some point to coordinate discussion in the two groups, whether through a joint meeting or submission of a set of recommendations from the subcommittee to the leadership group or both.

Challenges

- Balancing the ambitious program of creating new partnerships that underlay the discussion on criteria of eligibility with the implications of expansion, pointed out repeatedly by Robert Strom in the discussion that can overload the resources and managerial capacity of UICNI staff.

Facilitating Factors

- An ideal mix of members that include UIC and community partners with long experience in UICNI, e.g., Robert Strom, Wilma Ward, and Diane Farley, and relative newcomers to the Steering Committee, such as Pat Dowell, Sarah Manywith, and Cynthia Boyd.

Recommendations

- The subcommittee should work out its relationship with the UICNI leadership group and to the larger Steering Committee. Does the subcommittee report to the leadership group as well as to the Steering Committee? If so, in what order? At what point does the subcommittee report its deliberations to the Steering Committee? When it has specific recommendations for discussion and a vote? When it needs a sense of the larger group's thinking in order to direct its discussions to specific recommendations? Should the subcommittee, for example, use the leadership group as a sounding board before finalizing recommendations for the Steering Committee? These procedural protocols may help to give direction to the subcommittee's work.

The Information Clearinghouse Subcommittee

This subcommittee grew out of a discussion at the January 18, 2001 Steering Committee meeting about the work of the subcommittee on the role of the Steering Committee. Cynthia Boyd circulated a list of issues that the subcommittee was considering, and Pat Wright volunteered to lead a group focusing on information sharing between UIC and community partners. By the end of that meeting, representatives from TRP, ESDC, Citylab, West Side Consortium, and Near West Community Development Corporation had joined this group and had set the time for its first meeting. The group met three times between February and May, 2001.

The first meeting of the group was an organizational one to decide what kinds of issues it would address in a search for information sources. The second meeting was used to explore what sorts of information databases were available for each set of issues, who had access to them, and how they might be shared. The third meeting focused on what work research assistants would do over the summer to get census information ready to post on the UICNI website. While the discussions were somewhat technical, we think it is important to provide a flavor of these meetings to give some idea of what the subcommittee was able to do, especially given the fact that UICNI as an information clearinghouse has been one of UICNI's objectives since its inception.

Categories of information worked out at the group's first meeting included housing development, job development, and education programs and their resources in different communities. The second meeting took up these categories, but began with the more general issue of demographics. This kind of information is necessary for writing grant proposals. The 1990 census data is important at this point for comparison with the 2000 data, which is beginning to be released. With redistricting the first federal priority, population figures coded by race are out now and

available internally at UIC from anthropology-geography (CAGES). Housing data will be available next spring.

UIC also buys information from Claritas (projections, useful for market studies, businesses), the Ready database (home prices and owners by property pin number), Woodstock (refinancing mixed with home purchases detailed by income level and by race), and Dunn and Bradstreet (companies and employees by census tract). All of these can be shared. Besides these data bases, other sources of information emerged from the discussion. These included

- The West Town Study (Construction permits, zoning changes)
- Zoning information is available from aldermen and from the city planning department
- Building court sends out reports each month to people and organizations on their list, and some of this information is available on the city's website
- The Voorhees Center has done a series of studies comparing Woodstock and Ready databases, included, for example in a report on Pilsen. The center bought data for Pilsen and for the Near West Side, all of which it can share.
- The Assisted Housing Database (focusing on rentals and section 8 housing) is available for the entire state
- A survey of industrial properties in Chicago (ESDC is able to share this information)
- A housing inventory for Near West (property ownership and land banking done by Near West CDC)
- Data available on property taxes in Chicago (available from Cook County Commission), analysis of property taxes available from Chicago Rehab Network
- Report on the industrial TIF in Pilsen (ESDC and Citylab have it)
- Empowerment Zone data (Citylab)

Each of these data sources stimulated discussion on who was using it and what its advantages and disadvantages are.

Under Education and Health categories, discussion centered on what types of data is available and what sorts of data is needed and how to get it. Examples of available information sources include the Catalyst Community Renewal Website for statistics on the schools and the Chicago Public Schools website, which has statistical data on 3rd, 5th, and 8th grades. At UIC, information on employees from Pilsen and the Near West Side is available. The College of Education tracks its graduates, and community can sort them.

Information that the group feels is needed includes:

- How the number of housing units affect schools in the area
- The change in schools that follows from changes in the area they serve, e.g., what will change at Crane High School as the area continues to change?
- Lead paint programs in the Pilsen and the Near West Side
- An inventory of programs in health and education in Pilsen and the Near West Side
- The use of new clinics
- The use of mental health services at Miles Square
- Major health problems in the two communities, e.g., asthma, diabetes

- The need for GIS technology to display mapping data on land use on the Near West Side

The third subcommittee meeting in May was devoted to working out the details of preparing census data on Pilsen and the Near West Side for dissemination on the UICNI website. Census data will be broken down into thirteen fields and listed in tables for 1990 and 2000 for the census tracts in the two communities and for the city as a whole. There will be one table for each of the thirteen fields, which include racial and ethnic compositions, income levels, household data, etc.. Work will begin with the 1990 data, which should be completed by the end of the summer. The 1990 tables will be used to set up the 2000 census data as it comes in. Specific pieces of the work were distributed to the research assistants. Some of the tables will need some discussion in order to be understandable, particularly the racial data, since racial categories have changed between 1990 and 2000.

Challenges

Subcommittee members have yet to discuss the details of how the various sources of data controlled by each will be shared with the others. This may be complicated by staff turnover, e.g., at Eighteen Street Development Corporation and at Citylab, whose representatives to the subcommittee have left their organizations. How the information will be made available to the Steering Committee and other UICNI partners is another issue that has yet to be discussed.

Facilitating Factors

This is clearly a project that the subcommittee members wanted to do--the committee took only minutes to form. The sheer amount of detail, which might have appeared tedious to some, only appeared to stir excitement within this group. Every one of the group members had information to share as well as their experiences in using it.

Recommendations: Keep working.

UICNI Coordinator

Nacho Gonzalez's work has expanded with the reorganization of UICNI. He continues to be responsible for managing all but one of the JCD projects, which this year includes not only quarterly reports but also closing down the projects, spending down the remaining funds, and preparing the final evaluation report for the program. These responsibilities have been complicated by two major problems. Because of the city's failure to audit the Affordable Housing Fund expenditures, the program required an extension from HUD and from the City of Chicago. In June, HUD moved the extension deadline up from December 31 to August 31, placing enormous pressure on Near West Community Development Corporation and TRP to take, review, and select applications for approval, basically compressing three rounds of applications into one. The second major difficulty has been piecing together information about JCD expenditures for which Loomis Mayfield was responsible during his tenure as UICNI coordinator. These records were not well organized and had to be extracted from various pieces of paper onto a spreadsheet. Once this information was organized, Gonzalez was able to see

what UIC had spent versus what it still had. After the information had been analyzed (in April), Gonzalez was able to formulate a spending plan, which had to be compressed when HUD moved its deadline. As indicated above, the money for the Pilsen Commercial Development project had yet to be spent because Eighteenth Street Development Corporation had yet to come up with a viable project that fits HUD's guidelines. This money has gone back to HUD.

Gonzalez has also been involved with the Esperanza Familiar (now the Family Leadership Circle) project, representing UIC on its new Board of Directors. He has been particularly active in helping with money raising activities, e.g., looking into a possible relationship with the Annie B. Casey Foundation. Gonzalez represents UICNI on the Medical Center Community Advisory Committee (replacing Loomis Mayfield).

Gonzalez has worked closely with Cynthia Boyd on the reorganization of UICNI and particularly on the task of integrating east and west offices. Gonzalez organized the leadership group's retreat and the staff retreat. He helps to prepare Steering Committee meeting agendas, sits on the sub-committee on the role of the Steering Committee, and facilitates Steering Committee meetings when Boyd is unavailable. While he and Boyd do not agree on every issue, they do listen carefully to each other's positions, and their differences make for a creative tension out of which informed decisions grow.

Gonzalez has taken responsibility for writing the UICNI (east) budget, which has to be integrated into the overall budget. He directs three research assistants, who have worked on parts of the community technology proposals, the UICNI Newsletter, and organizing data on JCD expenditures. He has been part of the discussions with the West Side Federation of Churches, concentrating particularly on recruiting students that might work with them. Gonzalez has also been exploring a possible relationship between UICNI and the State of Illinois's work force development program concentrating specifically on North Lawndale, West Englewood, and Humboldt Park neighborhoods. The program director, Richard Kordesh (formerly faculty at of Jane Addams and partner in the Esperanza Familiar project), wants to use UIC students to work on these projects. Whether UICNI will work with the program depends on what sort of projects they have in mind.

Gonzales represented UICNI at the national University as Citizen conference at Tampa and at the national COPC conference.. He is one of three UICNI representatives and co-founders (with David Perry and Ed Lucas) of the Association for Community and Higher Education Partnerships (ACHEP), a national organization formed to promote university-community collaborations and act as a clearinghouse for information on collaborations and collaborative projects. Gonzalez was invited to represent UICNI at the Man For Friday, a small conference on collaborative projects for community change in Washington, D. C. in March, 2001 sponsored by the Annie B. Casey Foundation and attended by Al Gore. Gonzalez was the only participant currently working in university-community collaborations, and he was asked to make a presentation explaining how UICNI managed to survive the community fallout over South Campus development. His presentation of the history of UICNI's relationships in the Pilsen and Near West side communities evoked a raft of questions, both during and after the session. Gonzalez also used the conference to explore the possibility of a future relationship with the Casey foundation.

Gonzalez has been involved with the Certificate in Non-profit Management program, an on-line set of courses leading to a certificate in this field. Working with Kate Pravera, he took a five-week course in on-line learning and another in Board of Directors development to prepare him to teach, which he has now done once. The teaching role in these courses is more facilitation in its style, working with students one-on-one and getting discussion threads going on email. Gonzalez has formed a relationship with UICNI and the CNM program, not only disseminating information about the program to Steering Committee members, but also providing scholarship funds for UICNI partners to take the CNM courses.

Challenges

- With the end of the JCD program by September and the spend-down of JCD funds complete, fund raising will necessarily become a more important aspect of the UICNI coordinator's job. The resources that HUD has to offer appear to be declining under the Bush administration, and this will force UICNI (and every other university-community collaborative program) to seek other funding sources, competition for which will become keener.

Facilitating Factors

- The UICNI office at CUPPA Hall is better staffed and better organized and smoother running than it has ever been in the past. Part of the reason for this is Nacho Gonzalez's considerable organizational and managerial skills. Another part is the amount of staff support available--an assistant and two to three research assistants per semester. But equally if not more important has been the emergence of Chang Lee as an administrator. Lee organizes the work of the research assistants and makes sure they have adequate space and resources to do their work, keeps track of meetings, appointments, and deadlines for Gonzalez. He has also taken on more responsibility for following up on meetings and telephone calls, representing Gonzalez at meetings he cannot attend. Lee has worked on the three community technology grant proposals, doing proofreading, getting support letters, collecting information to go into the proposals. He has assisted in the staff hiring process. He does the detail work in organizing meetings, e.g., the Steering Committee, sends notifications and reminders to meeting participants, and takes care of meeting arrangements. He has developed a keen understanding of the UICNI mission and is knowledgeable about NI projects and partners. Lee's growth into his Project Coordinator position is precisely the sort of support we recommended for Martin Adams repeatedly during his tenure as UICNI Coordinator. He is developing a good relationship with Linda Camacho and Kim Brock in the UICNI west office, making the integration of the two staffs much smoother than it might have been. Lee's work allows Gonzalez to focus on the issues and details of program planning, fund raising, and project management. One example of the difference this makes is the comparison of UICNI's responses to the ending of funding for the Pilsen Parent Leadership program and of the Esperanza Familiar program, arguably the two most successful programs of change in UICNI. When COPC funding ended, no one had the time to search for new funding to continue the program, and it quietly died despite participants' desire to continue and expand

it. The UICNI response to the threat to Esperanza Familiar's continuation has been to help the program find new sources of organizational and foundation support.

Recommendations

- The UICNI Coordinator's role in the west side office, if any, needs to be clarified quickly to allow Gonzalez to plan his east side activities, particularly identifying new projects and fund raising.

The UICNI Director

The UICNI Director's position did not come with a detailed job description when Cynthia Boyd accepted it. Boyd is in the position of growing the job as she works through her relationships with her colleagues at Great Cities, comes to understand their projects, their relationships with the communities their work serves, and her own relationships with the communities, which continue to expand. This is not an unfamiliar situation for Boyd. What makes the situation promising is that Boyd shares the sense and importance of the UICNI mission with Perry, Alpern, Wright, and Gonzalez. In particular, according to Boyd, she sees the promise of a new and different kind of UIC-community relationship that is inherent in the UICNI mission.

One of the more challenging parts of the UICNI directorship has been Boyd's becoming familiar with the UICNI leaders. Because of David Perry's deanship, conversations with him have been difficult to schedule. Moreover, Pat Wright was on sabbatical while Boyd was familiarizing herself with UICNI in 1999-2000. Given Wright's key role in the development of the UICNI, Boyd has had to learn about Wright's roles in Steering Committee and leadership group meetings this year, mainly in the context of leadership group meetings, which began in the winter, 2001.

Boyd's work as director is divided among four categories of activities:

- Community Health Projects (see above)
- Establishing a UICNI office on west campus and integrating the UICNI west and east offices into a single organization
- Representing UICNI (and Great Cities) on and off campus
- Relationships between UICNI and the Chancellor's office

Community Health Projects

As described above, the seven ongoing projects have been folded into the UICNI. Another four projects are at the beginning stages, and one of the new initiatives--the WSC Congress--is already complete. Boyd works with community partners to formulate projects, seeks funding for them, and shepherds proposals through the submission process. Boyd selects project directors to manage funded projects. Like the UICNI east office, UICNI west project managers work with multiple projects. Besides project directors, Community Health Project staff includes

- Three physicians
- Three nurse practitioners
- Four nurses
- A medical assistant

- clerical staff
- a dietician
- a dentist
- two case management staff
- seven community workers

The UICNI west office includes business manager Paula Henderson, program manager Linda Camacho, and events coordinator Kimberley Brocks.

UICNI West and the Integration of East and West Offices

Boyd has had to do some reorganization of the Community Health Projects office to make it a UICNI west office. Educating staff about UICNI and reorienting them in terms of their institutional connections, the audience for the outcomes of their work, and even how they answer the telephone are examples of the reorganization process. Reorganization and reorientation at UICNI west is part of the integration of east and west offices, as indicated above, seeking to join community health with community development issues. The leadership meetings and leadership group and staff retreats are part of this same process. Another part of the integration process is the development of the Steering Committee, which had already undergone considerable expansion under Mayfield and Gonzalez before Boyd's appointment as director. The role of the Steering Committee was the central organizational issue of both the 1999-2000 evaluation report and of the fall UICNI retreat. Of the seven task groups formed at the retreat, the one on the role of the Steering Committee was the only one that actually convened. Called a subcommittee and chaired by Boyd, it has addressed some but not all of the issues outlined in the evaluation report recommendations.

Representing UICNI and Great Cities On and Off Campus

Part of the work of establishing the UICNI west office is creating visibility for it among the several colleges center, and schools that comprise the wide ranging health complex. Creating visibility on campus is not a new challenge UICNI. An evaluator's survey of eight of the thirteen UIC deans in the spring, 1997, revealed that while all of them had some knowledge about Great Cities, only three knew what the Neighborhoods Initiative was. Of the other five deans, two were aware of UICNI projects in their colleges, but were unaware of the UICNI sponsorship of those projects. Boyd's strategy in raising awareness of Great Cities and UICNI among her health sciences colleagues has been to use every opportunity to inform and excite them about UICNI. These opportunities include meetings, conversations, on-campus conferences, letterheads, email signatures, the way phone calls are answered (both by office staff and answering machine), and the like. Including seven ongoing projects under the UICNI umbrella has involved informing community partners about UICNI and its implications for their organizations. As new partnerships and new projects are generated, information about UICNI inevitably expands into the community.

Boyd, like Gonzalez, Perry, and Lucas, represents UICNI at professional meetings in and outside Chicago. During 2000-2001, for example, Boyd represented UICNI at the University as Citizen

conference at the University of South Florida and at the Campus-Community Partnerships for Health in San Antonio Texas. Each of these is important in different ways. The University as Citizen conference is one of a series of national meetings on engaged universities and follows the first such national meeting held in Chicago and sponsored by Great Cities and the International Center for Health Leadership Development at UIC in 1998. This meeting addressed major issues of university engagement in communities. Subsequent conferences have addressed more specific nuts-and-bolts issues of university roles in community development. The conference in Tampa, where presentation proposals were refereed, brought together five nationally known university-community collaborative programs, of which UIC was one. Boyd presented a history of UICNI, its major collaborative challenges, and how UICNI projects met those challenges. Boyd was part of a panel that followed presentations by the five universities that addressed the sorts of institutional challenges that all such programs face. [Nacho Gonzalez, Janet Smith, Eve Pinsker, and Mike Lieber also gave presentations at the conference on specific aspects of collaboration.] The importance of these conferences is both enhancing UICNI's national visibility and the exchange of important information through networking. One example, detailed below, is the mutual exchange of useful models of organizing program evaluations between UICNI and Ohio State University extension office.

Campus-Community Partnerships for Health (CCPH) is a national organization founded in 1997 and based in San Francisco. It sponsors annual conferences and maintains a newsletter for the promotion of health programs conducted in local communities by community-university collaboratives. Its members include universities, community organizations, non-profit agencies, and governmental agencies concerned with health aspects of community development. UIC's International Center for Health Leadership Development has been a member of CCPH since 1998, but UIC's participation in CCPH conferences began when Cynthia Boyd attended the 1999 conference. Boyd gave a presentation at the 2001 conference on UICNI and the Community Health Program. UICNI has had national visibility in community development collaboration since 1995, but this is the first time it has had national exposure in the health arena.

Presentations in Chicago include those made to the Behavioral Health Care organization, a professional association, the Side Consortium. On campus presentations include one to the College of nursing and a medical leadership group and one to the fellows group of the International Center for Health Leadership Development. All of the Chicago presentations have included information about the Great Cities Program, Great Cities Institute, and the Neighborhoods Initiative.

Relationships with the Chancellor's Office

Chancellor Sylvia Manning places a high priority on UIC engagement in Chicago communities, seeing UIC as an engaged university. This is evident in her public speeches and her interest in Great Cities and the Neighborhoods Initiative. The most recent instance of her priority is the creation of a central office of external affairs to be directed by Arthur Savage, who will provide some coordination among the several program areas on campus that engage the Chicagoland area and beyond. An external affairs committee preceded the new office, and David Perry, Nacho

Gonzalez, and Boyd were members of that (now defunct) committee. Gonzalez and Boys also sat on the Chancellor's ABLA task force.

Boyd has had a cordial relationship with Manning since her appointment to replace David Brosky. She has a longer-term relationship with Savage, where she played a number of different roles on the west campus, ranging from her work in the Vice Chancellor's office to her work in the College of Nursing. UICNI is probably better positioned within the Chancellor's office than at any time since James Stukel's chancellorship. The ABLA project and the project with the West Side Federation of Churches have both come to UICNO from the chancellor through Boyd.

Challenges

- Coordination of UICNI activities at UICNI west equivalent to what Gonzalez provides for UICNI east
- The continuing irony that UICNIs far better known in Berkeley and San Francisco, Birmingham, Alabama, and Belfast, Northern Ireland than it is on the UIC campus
- Educating the chancellor and the director of external affairs about UICNI and why it is considered highly by other universities and by HUD and about the minimal organizational capacity necessary for UICNI to work with community partners

Facilitating Factors

- Boyd's uncanny knack for spotting and recruiting talented people, putting them in positions where they are productive, and developing them for positions of greater responsibility, and for inspiring loyalty from her staff
- Boyd's extensive networks among faculty, staff, and administration on campus, in several Chicago communities, non-profits, and agencies, and in federal and state offices

Recommendations

- As Boyd presentations of UICNI and Great Cities to health sciences colleagues and to community organizations could usefully include Gonzalez and community partners to talk about their experiences
- Boyd and the leadership group should consider the preparation of a set of briefing papers on UICNI for the chancellor and director of external affairs

CONCLUSION

THE IMPLICATIONS OF REORGANIZATION FOR A UICNI PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The UICNI leadership group and the Steering Committee each has a range of roles that it could play in UICNI policy, project planning, project accountability, and the like. The clearest difference between them at this point is their institutional positions, which places fiduciary responsibility within the UICNI leadership. Each is in the process of defining and organizing its

roles. As members of both groups, Boyd and Gonzalez link the two, especially the subcommittee on the role of the Steering Committee.

Whatever the name--Planning Committee, Steering Committee, or some other name--the major role for this amorphous group has been constant from the inception of UICNI. This was meant to be, and at crucial times has been, UICNI's think tank. There is very little that UICNI does (or could do), other than budget related issues that could not properly and profitably come before the Steering Committee. This is so because of its composition, which includes the entire range of people and organizations involved in UICNI activities. This guarantees that a wealth of brainpower and experience will be brought to bear on any issue that comes before this body. What is not guaranteed, however, is optimal attendance at Steering Committee meetings and the optimal scheduling of issues that bring out the full potential of this diverse and talented group.

Attendance and participation in meetings of partners, from the old Planning Committee to the current version of the Steering Committee, are affected by a number of factors. Our observations over seven years tell us that agenda – which determines what participants at the meetings *do* -- is the most significant variable and active recruitment for meeting attendance the next most significant variable affecting attendance and participation. Meeting venue has no noticeable effect on attendance with but one exception. Meetings held on the Near West Side get a preponderance of Near West Side partners (and residents) with few Pilsen members attending and vice versa when the meeting is held in Pilsen. Meeting time has a slightly more significant effect. Afternoon meetings draw less people than morning meetings or noon meetings. Part of this owes to the agenda for afternoon meetings, however. NI Update meetings, which presented information on NI projects, drew only those directly connected with the projects being presented and few others. End-of-year Steering Committee meetings are advertised as mainly celebrations with only a short business agenda.

Given that the Steering Committee was a small group from 1996 through spring 1999, attendance varied with the agenda relative to other commitments of the members. The City of Chicago representative, for example, only attended those meetings that bore directly on the city's role in JCD projects--the Affordable Housing Fund and the Commercial Development projects--and this only until Near West got the Madison and Western site for its Walgreen's project. Other members attended most regularly when projects in which their organizations were partnered were scheduled for updates. One meeting in the spring of 1999 included two project presentations (neither of which were UICNI projects) that pre-empted the rest of the agenda. Attendance at the meeting that followed was very low. Organizational turnover, especially at TRP and ESDC, also affected attendance. Three Steering Committee members missing a meeting with this small a group represented 25% absent at that meeting.

Part of the UICNI reorganization planning was the expansion of the Steering Committee from twelve to about twenty-five members to include past, present, and potential partners as well as people on and off campus knowledgeable in community development issues. Loomis Mayfield, Gonzalez, Wiewel, Alpern, and Pat Wright achieved expansion through sustained personal contact and recruitment. This effort began in June, 1999, and the result was the largest UICNI meeting since the early Planning Committee days in 1995, whose participants were also heavily recruited by the same leaders. Recruitment through personal contact continues to be important in

2000-2001 both for new partners (e.g., Gads Hill and WEEC) and for introducing new organizations to UICNI, (e.g., the Center for Research on Women and Gender and El Valour, both of which sent representatives to multiple meetings).

The agenda of Steering Committee meetings has developed a consistent pattern over the year to fit a two-hour time slot and to involve the maximum number of members. Project updates, for example, have changed from a formal presentation format to a brief account of current state and information that other members might find useful, e.g., Wilma Ward's accounts of how to get city officials to do their jobs. Project updates take as little as two and as much as seven minutes, allowing three to four updates per meeting. Information about new and planned projects is another agenda item, and, as noted above, these brief presentations have elicited a good deal of information pooling. Presentations have played a much smaller role in Steering Committee agendas than previously, and the current policy is that presentations will be limited to non-UICNI projects that can have a potential impact on UICNI partners, e.g., the Certificate in Non-profit Management, for which UICNI has provided scholarships for interested partners. [*We note here that one of the most frequent requests from community organizations since 1993 has been providing credentials for community partners. This is the first UICNI related program to do so.*] Discussion of policy issues (other than at retreats) has been largely restricted to subcommittee meetings and to brief reports of those meetings to the Steering Committee. Brief announcements that close meetings have the same function as presentations.

Policy discussions in the subcommittee on the role of the Steering Committee have adopted a list of criteria to apply to potential projects to determine eligibility for UICNI status. A project must fit the UICNI mission, must include a letter of agreement, must match at least one of the four types of partnership [described above], must demonstrate community support, etc. The advantage of this approach is that it delimits criteria in clear terms that are (or appear to be) objective. There is a letter of agreement or there is not; the project involves one of the four listed forms of partnership or it does not, etc. The major disadvantage of this approach to policy is that it provides no way of prioritizing project proposals. This was pointed out repeatedly during the discussion by one of the community partners (and repeatedly ignored). This is not said to rebuke the subcommittee members but to point out the most recent instance of a pattern of raising and then ignoring fundamental issues on which policy is built only to have the issue come back in some other form.

Lost in discussions during the reorganization of UICNI has been a central issue raised by Pat Wright during the fall 1999 and winter 2000 retreats and by the evaluators at the fall 2000 retreat. **What are core projects and what are fringe projects?** Judy Weddle transformed core and fringe *projects* into core and fringe *issues* during the fall, 2000 retreat, presumably to fit with the technique she was using to organize issues. Core and fringe projects did not disappear, however. They came back in another form as Barbara Castellan (Gads Hill) and others repeatedly asked, "What is it that you want to do?" The question appeared to be treated as rhetorical each time, since no one ever attempted to answer it. The same issue reappeared at a subcommittee on the role of the Steering Committee meeting discussing criteria for including new projects under the UICNI umbrella. Robert Strom (WSC) twice pointed out that the combination of criteria proposed (see last paragraph) permitted a wide variety of projects and relationships that would result in UICNI being swamped with projects with no way to prioritize them. This is to say that

core projects versus fringe projects not only a specification of UICNI goals, but also a practical issue of project priorities. UICNI resources are not unlimited. How are they most effectively used to address UICNI goals?

One of UICNI's limited resources is partners' time. UICNI projects are collaborative. Therefore what are core and what are fringe projects must be decided collaboratively. How is this best done given the limitations on partners' time? We recommend two organizational steps to address this issue.

Step 1. Focusing the 2001 Retreat on Core/Fringe Projects

If collaborative projects continue to be the focus of UICNI activities, then what constitutes core projects remains the central UICNI policy issue. The retreat is the one occasion when a large group of partners is together for an extended period of time. This is the proper venue for confronting the issue. We recommend that discussion focus on delineating the attributes of a core project in a general way. By "general way," we mean a set of features that a core project has, e.g., the kinds of outcomes a project is planned to bring about, the kinds of situations the project is designed to change, the kinds of contexts most appropriate for intervention, etc.. The better each feature is illustrated by specific examples, the clearer and richer the discussion. However, the danger is substituting the example for the feature, so the discussion facilitator will need to insure that the general project features that the examples represent are explicitly stated. The reason for a general definition of core project is that it should be equally applicable to education, health, housing, economic development, and any other quality-of-life issue of change that can be implemented by a collaborative project. The difference between core and fringe projects should follow from the definition of the former.

We further recommend that the facilitator guide the discussion by focusing on the relation of projects to the NI mission, i.e., to bring discussion of project features back to the general question, What sort of projects most effectively fulfill the NI mission and overall goals? This builds on the work of previous retreats. We do not recommend that discussion focus on revising the existing mission and goals, but on starting from there and asking what are the implications of these goals for what projects NI should seek to incubate and support?

Step 2. Working Groups to Specify and Implement Core and Fringe Projects

We recommend the formation of working groups to implement Step 1. We propose that the working groups be a combination of subcommittees of the Steering Committee and the working groups that Pat Wright has called for. The UICNI working groups of the mid-1990s focused on issues around which projects could be developed. These were specific rather than general issues. For example, one working group was formed to deal with issues of hiring Near West side and Pilsen residents as full time UIC employees and procuring UIC contracts for goods and services for businesses in those communities. The working group formulated a project (which had been written into the HUD COPC grant) that would organize recruitment in these two communities and then sent out an RFP to a number of community organizations. The group evaluated the proposals that were submitted and made a recommendation to the UICNI coordinator for which should be accepted. The committee met once after that to submit a report evaluating the factors leading to the failure of the project to the Chancellor's ABLA Task Force. The working groups

that we recommend retain the functions of project development, project selection, and project monitoring, while adding more responsibility for project generation. They also differ from their predecessors in several other features, however.*

- (1) Each working group is responsible for a more general arena of community development, for example, K - 12 or life-long learning, community economic development, and the like
- (2) Each one combines two or more traditionally separate arenas, e.g., K - 12 could include education, but also health services, health promotion, and health education, such as the project at the Suder Elementary School.
- (3) Each working group, therefore, is multi-disciplinary, necessitating a variety of expertise among its members.
- (4) Each working group formulates a model (or models) of the kinds of projects it wants to develop, deciding how to use the models in (a) seeking partners to develop a project and/or (b) assessing proposals that are referred to it against the models for fit and for prioritization.
- (5) Each working group monitors the progress of its selected projects and is responsible for evaluating each project.
- (6) The working groups are accountable to the Steering Committee for project selection, project updates, and annual project evaluation and group activity reports.
- (7) UICNI coordinator(s) are at minimum members of each working group and a link between them. The UICNI Project Coordinator is responsible for minutes of each working group meeting.
- (8) The Steering Committee and working groups meet on alternate months with each working group being represented at every Steering Committee meeting with an update prepared for each meeting (including distribution of minutes of each meeting if the Steering Committee requests them).
- (9) Working groups are structurally subcommittees of the Steering Committee and each reports to the Steering Committee.

Working Groups should be small enough to make frequent coordination between members logistically feasible, but large enough to include members from organizations representing a diverse range of expertise and strengths. The topical foci of working groups should permit creative, cross-disciplinary approaches to social problems and neighborhood development. These foci should allow members to develop innovative proposals for projects that they feel can effectively address-shared concerns, in addition to responding to RFPs or NOFAs they learn

* The working group organization we are recommending here is an adaptation of a model used by the Ohio State University's Universities In Neighborhoods Community Outreach Partnership Center. The recommendation is collaborative--the model of evaluation that they use for their working groups is an adaptation of Eve Pinsker's model for cluster (multi-project) evaluation formulated in 1996.

about or that NI staff may refer to them. Thus the structure and focus of the working groups ideally permits them to be effective as think tanks or idea incubators. However, Working Groups should also be effective practical contexts for information sharing and coordination of program activities across organizations. (An example of the latter that has already occurred is the sharing of strategies for dealing with city offices, and standardization of forms, between TRP and NWSDC staff working on the Affordable Housing renovation loan program).

The following list is a preliminary suggestion only for how working groups could be topically structured. It is based on opportunities observed for linking across current projects, as well as on projects that have been associated with NI in the past, or proposals that have emerged in previous discussion (e.g., more effectively linking K-16 education and school-based programs). Potential overlap should *not* be a criterion used to develop a list of Working Group topics. Given the comprehensive approach to neighborhood development that NI represents, reflecting the systemic interconnections of community strengths and challenges across domains such as health, social services, physical environment, education, economic development, crime and safety, etc, there will always be potential overlaps between topical areas. If development or implementation of a particular project or proposal requires it, it should be possible to refer some discussion or coordination to a smaller task group or subcommittee including people from different Working Groups. Furthermore, if the same organization or department sends representatives to different Working Groups, intra-organizational communication also becomes a vehicle for coordination of activities across Working Groups.

Suggested Working Groups:

- (a) K-16 Education: school-based programs including health clinics or other programs using school facilities as well as educational programs such as linking primary feeder schools, work with Juarez or Crane high schools, career-prep programs for primary or secondary school students, programs helping neighborhood students make the transition to UIC or other higher education (after as well as before admittance to college, thus including LARES and AAAN).
- (b) Adult Education, Training, and Workforce Development: programs for adults focusing on developing the capacities and skills of residents and others who work in the neighborhoods, including adult literacy and GED, parenting skills, training for nonprofit management, entrepreneurial training, InfoTech or other job skills training.
- (c) Housing and Neighborhood Physical Development: programs focusing on bricks-and-mortar physical development as well as increasing access of residents to physical resources and involvement of residents in planning for development; includes programs for affordable housing, commercial development, developing green spaces and recreational facilities, transportation and communication infrastructure.
- (d) Health and Social Services: programs focusing on increasing the availability and quality of health and social services for neighborhood residents, including planning for integration and access to services (Westside Community Congress), and programs focusing on problem areas such as asthma, diabetes, substance abuse, violence and safety.

This restructuring of the Steering Committee ensures that the most important decisions UICNI makes are deliberated and made collaboratively. It also ensures that implementations of those decisions are monitored and assessed collaboratively. This implies that Steering Committee agendas would be formulated around working group activities and that UICNI leadership group activities would need to be coordinated with working group activities, e.g., seeking funding for proposals generated by the working group. It also means that new partners or potential partners attending Steering Committee meetings get a more panoramic view of UICNI than in the past. The nature of participation in UICNI also broadens and deepens, depending on how the Steering Committee decides to organize the working groups, e.g., on a voluntary basis, as a requirement of partnership on a project, etc..

Finally, the nature of UICNI evaluation procedure changes in this recommended restructuring. The changes are as follows.

- Working group members and UICNI evaluators work together to construct a matrix of information working groups need to assess areas of progress of each project for which it is responsible and to provide the group with efficient ways to get the needed information,
- Evaluators and working group representatives work with project partners to spell out project objectives clearly enough to delineate a set of benchmarks that indicates progress toward the objectives.
- Evaluators work with project partners to devise simple, time efficient procedures for partners to collect the data that will provide benchmark measures. In cases of glaring inconsistencies between benchmarks and actual indicators, partners and evaluators will confer to explain the inconsistencies and use them to reconfigure benchmarks to be more realistic.*
- Data collected by project partners is reported to the working group for its annual report. The working group is in a position to compare its projects (with the help of the UICNI evaluators, if requested) to see what patterns recur across projects and what is unique to each.
- UICNI evaluators have two areas of responsibility--(1) consulting with working groups and project partners to design and conduct their own project evaluations and (2) to focus their own data collection efforts on partnership issues and the relationships between the UICNI leadership, the Steering Committee, and the working groups.

Since 1995, evaluation has served both to provide feedback to UIC and community partners and to build capacity in the UICNI, the UIC anthropology department, and for graduate students in other colleges who learned evaluation techniques, got course credit for doing evaluation research, and acquired a marketable skill. With the recommended redesign of UICNI evaluation, evaluation methods are to be used to build capacity in the partnering organizations and in the working groups. Evaluation thus becomes a tool for partners to get the information they need for

* This process has already begun with the DECCA project.

their own purposes (including the design of grant proposals). Partners wishing to expand their evaluation capacities have the option of coursework at UIC in several colleges depending on the sort of information each partner needs. Comparison of project evaluations by the working groups also builds analytical capacities of its members.

This leaves UICNI evaluators' time free for collecting and analyzing information on partnership issues at the project, working group, Steering Committee, and leadership group levels. Particular attention would have to be paid to the working groups, their relationships with project partners, relationships between working groups, and relationships between working groups and the Steering Committee and the leadership group, at least for the first two years. A graduate student researcher would be assigned to each working group to do two things--one would be to collect information from project partners that would supplement data collected by the partners as needed by the working group. The second task would be observations of how the group goes about its work and conducts its relationships with partners, other working groups, etc..

The UICNI evaluators, to sum up, will consult with working groups and project partners for their evaluation needs, supervise graduate research assistants, continue to debrief UICNI staff, and collate evaluation materials for the annual UICNI evaluation report. The responsibility for evaluation data will be distributed among project partners, working group members, graduates research assistants, and the UICNI evaluators.

Why All of This Organizational Work? Why Now?

This is a crucial time for sustainability of UICNI, as previously, the HUD COPC and JCD grants and their requirements de facto affected what were treated as "core" and "fringe" projects. Staff support through Great Cities remains; however, without a central grant providing a core for UICNI projects, what UICNI becomes is really up to the partners. It is the partners (hopefully, both university and community-based) who will seek funding for projects and decide what benefits they can receive from association with UICNI, not only from the university-based staff but also from synergy with other UICNI projects and partners. It would perhaps be useful for the NI Coordinator or Director to summarize at the retreat what the resources are that UICNI members can now draw on: the UICNI staff, what guidance UICNI community partners can get on tapping into other university resources, help in identifying outside funding sources, etc.

More important is the fundamental premise that underlies our recommendations. UICNI has seven years of partnership experience with its successes, its failures, its synergies, and a lot of lessons learned. UICNI partners know how to form and sustain collaborations. UICNI partners know the difference between cooperation, collaboration, and partnership and what facilitates and impedes each one. UICNI is a nationally recognized program that has been emulated within and outside the United States. Instead of letting the next large grant define what UICNI does, the UICNI partners--**and only the UICNI partners**--have the right to and ought to do that kind of defining. Leadership in setting the agenda for collaborations needs to come from the people and organizations that plan and organize and conduct the collaborations, and few are better at doing those things than UICNI partners. But one does not set the agenda until one has the agenda. The price of not formulating an agenda is going through the contortions of reinventing ourselves

every time funding agencies adopt a new set of buzzwords. Our recommendations are designed to facilitate the process of formulating the agenda for collaboration that will guide what UICNI does and what funders need to pay attention to and put money into. That is the payoff of knowing what constitute the core projects of UICNI.